

TRENDSJOURNAL

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“Freedom OR Tyranny?”

by Pilar de la Torre, pilart.com

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TRENDS ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT



U.S. MARKETS FRONT

Today, marking its fastest recovery in history, the S&P 500 broke above its all-time high that was set in February before government lockdowns sent the broader market index tumbling.

The NASDAQ also hit a record high today, but the Dow was down 66 points.

As we have continually noted, there is no relationship between Wall Street and Main Street. The hard data and financial facts prove the Federal Reserve and Washington have injected scores of trillions into Wall Street to keep the money junkies high.

In this week's column by Gregory Mannarino, "[FINANCIAL FRANKENSTEIN 2020](#)," he says, "Global stock markets, none more so than the U.S. market, are in a 'Maximum Distortion' phase. The Maximum Distortion phase can exist for a

long period of time, but the longer the phase lasts, the more profound the next phase will be: Total Meltdown.”

Considering the Fed and D.C. Gangs have invented money pumping schemes undreamed of, there is no way to accurately forecast the time and date – as Gerald Celente had with the 1987 Stock Market Crash, the Dot-Com Bust, and the Panic of '08 – of the upcoming “Total Meltdown.”

To clearly illustrate the disparity between Wall Street and Main Street, this was the feature front page headline in yesterday’s *Wall Street Journal*: “Cyclical Stocks are Leading Latest Leg of Market Recovery.”

Turn to Page 3 and read the headline: “More People Go Hungry and Seek Food Aid as Recession Takes Toll.”

The story notes some 20 percent of Americans with children at home don’t have enough money to buy enough food. As the “Greatest Depression” sinks deeper, the numbers will rise.

Yet, Wall Street hits new highs as Main Street hits new lows.

Off With Their Heads 2.0

To illustrate the great divide, today, the Institute for Policy Studies reported the wealth of the top 12 billionaires in the U.S. recently blew past \$1 trillion dollars.

They said each had a wealth surge of 40 percent or a combined increase of \$283 billion.

“This is a disturbing milestone in the U.S. history of concentrated wealth and power,” said Chuck Collins, a director for the Washington D.C.-based progressive think tank. “This is simply too much economic and political power in the hands of 12 people. From the point of view of a democratic self-governing society, this represents an Oligarchic Dozen.”

TRENDPOST: As of 13 August, the S&P 500 index had risen in every trading day this month except one. The bull market’s steadiness is due to the Fed’s willingness to keep pouring cheap money into the economy and the belief the COVID Panic will recede.

Markets are optimistic now because of “an environment where the virus situation gets better, but we still have a ton of stimulus in the system,” said Ilya Feygin, Managing Director at WallachBeth Capital.

Also, markets did not react negatively to the choice of Kamala Harris as the Democratic vice-presidential nominee because she is seen as more moderate in economic matters than others who were in contention.

TREND FORECAST: *After taking a \$100 hit last week, Gold prices have bounced back, closing at \$2,001 per ounce.*

Gold keeps rising higher as U.S interest rates trend lower and the dollar keeps declining.

And with the “By their deeds you shall know them” expectations that Washington and the Feds will continue to pump trillions of dollars into the financial systems and the general economy in hopes of keeping them from crashing... the lower the dollar will fall and the higher gold prices will rise.

TREND FORECAST: *The pent-up demand from the lockdowns and supply chain disruptions nudged consumer prices up last month.*

However, despite rising inflation, considering the perilous economic state of the nation, it will not prod the Federal Reserve (or other central banks) to raise interest rates, thus pushing gold, a hedge against inflation, higher.

And not just any kind of gold.

The market for wearables has plunged during the pandemic but gold-centered exchange-traded funds (ETFs) have added record numbers of investors. To meet investors’ demand, SPDR Gold Shares now owns more than 1,200 tons and holds more gold than the national bank of India or Japan.

Gold only makes up about 3 percent of portfolios, according to Bank of America, compared to 10 percent in 2011.

Thus, there is more upside potential, since, as the greater the demand for gold, the higher the prices will rise.

While it is old news to **Trends Journal** subscribers, since we were the first to identify the “Gold Bull Run” over a year ago when it was trading at \$1,332 per ounce, now Wall Street – bearish back then – is echoing our bullish forecast.

Cross-Border Capital foresee gold’s prices rocketing to \$2,500 or even \$3,000 within 18 months.

Bank of America also sees gold rising to \$3,000 within a year... if the virus returns and economies are shut down again.

Ole Hansen, commodities strategist at Saxo Bank, agreed with us when he said recently, “The reasons for holding gold and silver have not gone away.”

On the silver front, we maintain our forecast that it will have greater percentage increases than gold and will rise above \$50 per ounce.

REAL YIELDS ON BONDS GO NEGATIVE



In early August, real yields on U.S. bonds linked to inflation sank below -1 percent, a record low.

The sinking yield reflected investors’ fears of a long, slow economic recovery and the abundance of dollars in world markets could ignite inflation.

The negative yield continues to drive investors toward stocks and other assets that have a better chance of appreciating.

With bonds offering no income or dividends, gold and silver, safe haven assets, will continue to rise.

We forecast interest rates in the U.S. will go negative as the nation sinks deeper into the “Greatest Depression.”

U.S. BUDGET DEFICIT TOPS \$2.8 TRILLION



The flood of federal stimulus and support dollars into the economy, combined with tax revenue lost as millions are jobless and businesses fail, has pushed the federal deficit to a record \$2.8 trillion so far this fiscal year, which ends 30 September.

The current year's deficit is 224 percent greater than the \$867 million logged a year earlier.

So far this fiscal year, the U.S. government has spent \$5.6 trillion, up 51 percent year-on-year. The treasury's receipts are \$2.6 billion, down 1 percent from the same period in 2019.

Most of that revenue was collected before the economic shutdown took hold. With a slow economic recovery, the deficit this year could reach \$3.7 trillion, the Congressional Budget Office estimated.

TREND FORECAST: Again, the larger the debt bubble grows, and we forecast it will grow for years to come, the lower the dollar goes. And, the deeper the dollar sinks, the higher gold prices rise.

STATES, CITIES CUT SPENDING AS REVENUE DISAPPEARS



Without federal aid, state and local governments will lose about \$500 billion in revenue over the next two years, lopping three points off the U.S. GDP, costing four million jobs, and hobbling any U.S. economic recovery, Moody's Analytics concluded in a research report.

And with less tax revenue coming in, there are forecasts states will face at least budget gaps of some \$555 billion dollars through next year.

State, county, and municipal governments already cut spending an average of 5.6 percent in 2020's second quarter. Local governments have laid off some 1.2 million workers since February.

Aware of the trend, Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell worries that more government job cuts and shrinking budgets will "hold back the economic recovery if they continue to lay people off and if they continue to cut essential services."

Governments below the federal level put \$2.33 trillion into the economy in 2019, about 10.9 percent of GDP, and employed 13 percent of the American workforce.

States entered the current crisis with a median 7.8 percent of their revenues set aside for emergencies, compared to 4.8 percent when the Great Recession struck in 2008.

The reserve, however, has not been enough.

Politicians have “concerns about spending” more stimulus money “but the cost of doing nothing is worse,” said U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy, whose state faces a 46-percent plunge in revenues due to the loss of tourist dollars and the collapse of the global oil and gas industry.

TREND FORECAST: *As tax revenue streams dry up, America’s already rotted infrastructure will further decay. Already, over 700 cities have cut back on buying equipment, fixing roads, and upgrading infrastructures according to the National League of Cities.*

And, the lower tax revenues go, the more politicians and bureaucrats will do increase taxes. This in turn will escalate anti-tax movements and new political party formations.

RETAIL SPENDING RISES AGAIN IN JULY



U.S. retail sales advanced 1.2 percent in July, the third consecutive monthly rise, the U.S. Department of Commerce reported.

July sales were 1.7 percent above February’s, the month before the pandemic struck and the economy began to implode.

Spending was heavy on appliances, electronics, health products, and restaurant meals.

Last month, production at factories, mines, and utilities gained 3 percent in July, following a 5.7-percent bump in June, the U.S. Federal Reserve reported.

However, signs indicate that consumers' spending surge might have been temporary, especially now that the \$600 weekly federal unemployment has ended and \$1,200 stimulus checks have been either banked or spent.

During the first week of August, just 36 percent of consumers spent the same amount or more on retail purchases than during the first week of August 2019, according to research firm GlobalData.

The retail figure is also 57 percent less than that from the last week of June this year.

Consumers also used their credit cards in stores less in late July and early August than they did a year earlier, Earnest Research said. Restaurant spending also dropped early this month, data from OpenTable shows.

"Many households are being more cautious now that enhanced unemployment benefits have dried up," said retail analyst Neil Saunders at GlobalData.

Traffic to retail stores decreased in early July, when the last of the federal \$600 stimulus checks were received, but has leveled off since then, the Jeffries Group analysis firm said.

Many households used the stimulus benefit to pay down bills and increase savings. As the economic shutdown has dragged on, some households began to spend the money on delayed major expenses such as appliances or home repairs.

Earlier this month, Donald Trump signed an executive order instating a weekly \$300 unemployment benefit but that is unlikely to reach out-of-work households until some time in September.

TREND FORECAST: Any semblance of recovery has been generated by Washington pumping money into businesses big and small and unemployment benefits, which in fact, generated more income for many unemployed than they were making when they were employed.

Indeed, as Walmart Chief Financial Officer Brett Biggs said today, "Stimulus was definitely impactful to the consumer in the second quarter, and we're watching what's going on in Washington, and how we're going to progress with a new stimulus package."

When government money dries up, retail will go down.

As we had forecast when politicians began the lockdowns in March, there would be economic starts and stops and ups and downs, but the long-term trend will be sharply down as America and world sink into the "Greatest Depression."

CONSUMER PRICES RISE IN JULY



In part as a result in response to July's increase in consumer spending, the shortage of products, and supply chain disruptions, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose 0.6 percent in July, equaling its rise in June and upsetting analysts' forecast of a 0.3-percent hike.

The rise was greater than June's 0.2 percent and put consumer prices 1 percent above their level a year ago.

The hike in July's index was the biggest single monthly bump since January 1991.

Gasoline prices jumped 5.6 percent, and the average price of a used car edged up 2.3 percent because people began driving more as state and local economies reopened.

"The July CPI readings should end any speculation that the... slump in demand" caused by the economic shutdown "will quickly push the economy into a deflationary spiral," said Paul Ashworth, U.S. economist at Capital Economics.

TRENDPOST: *The rate at which prices are currently rising leaves them below the U.S. Federal Reserves' inflation limit of 2 percent inflation a year. Thus, not only*

will they not raise them to cool inflation, it portends the Fed will lower them to juice the economy.

However, supply chain disruptions are pushing prices higher. As the dollar declines, it will take more of them to buy products and services, thus pushing inflation higher long term.

Again, the higher inflation goes, the higher gold and silver prices will rise.

HOW THE MIDDLE CLASS IS SHRINKING



As the rich have gotten richer, America, once the “Land of Opportunity” is seeing its middle class shrinking smaller.

Long before the COVID Panic pumped trillions more wealth into the bank accounts of the wealthiest, income growth for Americans in their prime working years has narrowed from 27 percent to 8 percent from 2002 to 2016, compared with the period from 1967 to 1982, according to research from the George Washington Institute of Public Policy.

Partly as a result, the number of people able to earn their way out of poverty has declined from 43 percent during the earlier period to 35 percent more recently.

Comparing the two periods, the proportion of the workforce falling out of the middle class into poverty has risen from 5 percent to 11 percent.

The number, however, of earners in the upper middle class – people making more than \$108,000 a year – has grown significantly, especially among African-

Americans, who rose from 1 percent of the category in the early period to 14 percent in the second.

The top economic tier, defined as households earning more than \$380,000 a year, has seen their incomes grow by 48 percent, almost twice as much as the 26-percent growth at the U.S. median income level.

In recent years, education has become increasingly tied to income. From 1967 to 1982, 37 percent of earners with a bachelor's degree or higher were in the upper middle class; in the more recent period, 59 percent were.

The middle class is shrinking because more people are earning their way into the upper middle class and more are slipping into poverty.

Some points “are worth drawing out,” said labor economist Stephen Rose, the study’s author.

“The main reason for the shrinking of the middle class is the increase in the number of people with higher incomes; there has been a significant increase in the number of Americans experiencing downward mobility; [and] the growth of median incomes for working-age adults over a fifteen-year period has declined sharply.”

TREND FORECAST: The “*OFF WITH THEIR HEADS 2.0*” trend we had forecast will accelerate as income disparities widen. There will be will increased labor strikes, union membership, socialist movements, and new political parties.

SMALL COMPANIES FARED WORSE THAN LARGE IN SHUTDOWN



Again, connoting the income disparity between the rich and middle class, big and small, companies listed on the Russell 2000 of small-cap publicly-traded companies collectively lost \$1.1 billion in 2020's second quarter, compared to \$18 billion in profits a year earlier, reported FactSet, a data company.

Goodyear Tire & Rubber lost \$696 million in the quarter, for example, as sales shrank by 41 percent, compared to a profit of \$54 million a year earlier.

Larger companies listed on the S&P 500 index suffered a 34-percent setback in profits but still posted \$233 billion in earnings.

The Russell 2000 is 5.6 percent below its 1 January mark, while the S&P is up 3.2 percent on the year, despite shedding 30 percent of its value in March.

Big companies have the financial “strength to ride out whatever is thrown at them,” said Margie Patel, a portfolio manager at Wells Fargo Asset Management.

In comparison, small companies lack the strong balance sheets and higher profit margins that buffer them against sudden shocks.

“Small-cap companies don’t have the flexibility” to reduce costs, “especially when there’s no revenue coming in,” noted Liz Young, market strategist at BNY Mellon Investment Management. “They are the companies that will need help in this crisis.”

SMALL BUSINESSES DISAPPEARING BY THE THOUSANDS



About 800 small businesses – defined by the Small Business Administration as having no more than 1,500 workers or less, depending on the sector – have gone

bankrupt from mid-February through 31 July. The American Bankruptcy Institute expects the 2020 total could be up 36 percent from last year.

The number of businesses permanently shutting down, bankrupt or not, is orders of magnitude higher.

Of the 80,000 businesses closed from 1 March through 25 July, 60,000 had five locations or fewer, according to Yelp, the online review site.

About 58 percent of small business owners fear their businesses will not survive the current crisis, according to a U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey.

Before the economic shutdown, the U.S. was home to about 28 million small businesses, which made up 99.7 percent of American businesses and accounted for roughly 44 percent of the nation's economic activity, according to the Small Business Administration.

TRENDPOST: As Gerald Celente says, “Opportunity misses those who view the world through the eyes of their profession.” While this section of the ***Trend Journal*** is financially-focused, the socioeconomic and geopolitical ramifications of a shrinking middle class and devastation to small businesses must be taken in full context to access the emerging trends.

We are most concerned that violence – which has already escalated across the nation and around much of the world – will become the New ABnormal if measures are not taken by the public and private sectors to better balance the income divide.

MASKS ESSENTIAL TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY, FED BANKER SAYS



The U.S.'s inability to control the spread of the COVID virus is hampering the economic recovery, said Eric Rosengren, chair of the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston, on 12 August.

“Common-sense precautions, such as wearing masks... are much less costly than having to shut down whole sectors of the economy,” he said.

“We must get the virus under control in order for a sustainable economic recovery to take hold,” he added.

New data indicates the economic recovery that began with a spurt in June is “losing steam,” Rosengren said, echoing comments made by Fed chair Jerome Powell.

TREND FORECAST: As detailed in this and previous issues of the ***Trends Journal***, mask wearing, especially the types the general population are wearing, are not “Common-sense,” as they are not, by the scientific data, effectively stopping the virus.

Moreover, we forecast the longer populations are forced to wear masks, the faster and deeper economies will fall... particularly in the retail, hospitality, tourism, trade shows, entertainment, and restaurant sectors, as joy is sucked out of life by a masked society living in fear.

NEWSPAPERS SEND JOURNALISTS HOME



The Tribune Publishing Co. is taking a page from other corporations and assigning journalists from five newspapers to work from home, allowing the company to give up leased office space.

The five newspapers are the *Capital Gazette* in Annapolis, MD; the *Carroll County Times*, MD; the *Morning Call* in Allentown, PA; the *New York Daily News*; and the *Orlando Sentinel*.

The company said it saw “no clear path forward” to returning the reporters to shared office space.

The company has not paid three months’ rent for most of its spaces and is negotiating with landlords for “various forms” of rent relief, including terminating leases.

Tribune Publishing also owns the *Baltimore Sun*, *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Hartford Courant*, among other papers.

TREND FORECAST: *The more newspapers and newsrooms that close, the less reporters on the beat and the greater the news hole will grow. Once-upon-a-time, newspapers had bureaus in nations and state capitals across the globe. Reporters covered governments and business in cities and towns.*

And now, with media consolidation, not only is the general public getting less news and information, they are getting one-sided, short sided reporting that fits political agendas and personal interest.

RECORD NUMBER OF EMPTY APARTMENTS IN MANHATTAN



As we had forecast in March, there would be a great exodus of people leaving densely populated, expensive cities to “escape the virus” and rising crime rates.

Around the world and across the nations, that trend has become reality.

At one point last month, 13,117 apartments were listed for rent in Manhattan, more than double the number a year earlier and setting a record for the 14 years since the data began to be tracked.

The island's Upper East Side saw the greatest number of vacancies, with a 39-percent decline in new leases.

The number of new leases signed in July dropped 23 percent year-on-year, with landlords offering an average of 1.7 months' free rent, free cleaning services, and gift cards for Home Depot and other retailers to lure prospective tenants.

Median rent for a two-bedroom apartment is now \$4,620.

Apartments fell vacant as office workers were freed to relocate to their homes, enabling many to seek cheaper housing outside of the city. Leases also were broken by many of the estimated 500,000 New Yorkers who lost their jobs during the economic shutdown and small business owners were forced to close up shop.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: Home prices are rising in the Hudson Valley north of New York City faster than anywhere else in the U.S. as urbanites permanently flee the City for the exurbs that give them "social distance" but keep them close to the Big Apple.

Here in Kingston, New York, about 100 miles north of the city, homes sales are up 18 percent compared to the same time last year.

TRENDPOST: About half of Manhattan's apartments are owned by individuals or small businesses rather than large real estate management companies. These small-scale owners usually lack the savings to continue to pay for mortgages, property insurance, and maintenance without cash flow from tenants' rents.

The loss of tenants is likely to have a cascading effect, creating a downward spiral: as the City's property tax revenue falls, it will be forced to cut services, street maintenance, and other basic expenses, leaving NYC a less desirable place to live and hobbling landlords' ability to raise rents.

RETAIL CHAINS ABANDON MANHATTAN



In one of the U.S.'s marquee retail centers, the trendy Kate Spade fashion stores are boarded up for good. Victoria's Secret and Gap have reopened stores in other states but not here. Subway and Le Pain Quotidien have walked away from dozens of sites.

Chipotle and Shake Shack report stores in the northeastern U.S., including Manhattan, are underperforming the rest of the regions in which the chains operate, according to Nick Setyan, an analyst with Wedbush Securities.

Gap's Rockefeller Center store is still dark and has stopped paying its \$264,000 monthly rent. A T.G.I. Friday's near Rockefeller Center and another in Times Square have not yet reopened, although the chains are open elsewhere around the U.S.

"There's no reason to do business in New York," said Michael Weinstein, CEO of Ark Restaurants, which owns 19 eateries.

"I can do the same volume in Florida in the same square feet as I would have in New York, with my expenses being much less," he added. "The idea was that branding and locations were important, but the expense of being in this city has overtaken the marketing [commandment] that says you have to be there."

He has vowed never to open another restaurant in Manhattan.

Many retail chain stores were supported by the steady flood of tourists and foreign visitors through the City. Now that those shoppers have disappeared, along

with the tide of daily commuters to the City's office towers, the sky-high rents, real estate taxes, and other fixed costs attached are "unsustainable," one retail chain executive said.

TREND FORECAST: As we have forecast in detail, New York City is on the first wave of the "Greatest Depression" decline. It will not "bounce back" for many years.

As for Governor Cuomo's prediction in June, "You want to talk about a turn-around – this one, my friends, is going to go in the history books," while he was dead wrong, it has been ignored by the media.

GLOBAL ECONOMIC TRENDS



BRITISH ECONOMY PLUMMENTS 20 PERCENT IN SECOND QUARTER.

Britain's economic output dropped 20.4 percent in the year's second quarter compared to the first, marking both the country's largest quarterly drop and its worst recession on record since 1955.

The British economy has shrunk to the size it was in 2003. Annualized, the rate of contraction would be 59.8 percent.

Construction spending dove 35 percent. Industrial production was off 17 percent and services, the largest sector of Britain's economy, contracted 20 percent.

Business investment pulled back 31.4 percent; government spending shrank 14 percent; and consumers spent 23.1 percent less. The hospitality industry was down by at least 75 percent.

The economic plunge came in April and May, with June's performance bouncing back 8.7 percent as retail, manufacturing, and the housing market all perked up. Construction led the rebound; services rose 7.7 percent.

The magnitude of the economic decline was greater in Britain than in France, Germany, and other European countries which eased their lockdowns earlier.

During the period, the French economy shrank 14 percent, Germany's 10 percent, Italy's 12 percent, and Spain's 19 percent. U.S. GDP was down about 10 percent.

Britain suffered a steeper drop because about 12 percent of its economy depends on personal contact services, compared to about 10 percent for the European economy in general. It also is more dependent on consumer spending than many other countries in the region.

U.K. employers shaved 1.6 percent from workers' pay, the first decline since 2015 and the worst since 2008's Great Recession.

An estimated 730,000 Britons have lost their jobs since March, with the country recording its greatest quarterly job loss since 2009.

The figure would be much worse without a government program that pays part or all of workers' wages, even if they do not work, so they will not be reported among the jobless.

The program, which currently supports as many as 9.6 million workers, ends in October.

"Hundreds of thousands of people have already lost their jobs and, sadly, in the coming months many more will," said treasury secretary Rishi Sunak.

A third of British companies are planning more layoffs between now and October, a recent survey found.

To help young workers find a place in the economy, Britain's government will pay six months' wages for some new hires and will promote apprenticeship programs.

The government also will continue its program of tax cuts and stimulus spending, Sunak added, and noted the longer an economy recovery takes, the greater the risk of permanent damage to the nation's financial and employment future.

As an added nudge to the economy, Boris Johnson's government will spend the equivalent of \$69 million to provide discounts for meals eaten in pubs and restaurants on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

The Bank of England has said the U.K.'s economy will need through 2021 to recover to a pre-pandemic level.

The U.K. suffered more COVID-related deaths than any other European country because its population is older and more ethnically diverse, giving the virus more of its favored victims.

TREND FORECAST: *While investor sentiment on the British pound has turned increasingly positive recently, long term it will be hit with downward pressure as The Bank of England continues to lower interest rates and the government pumps in more money to boost the failing economy.*

SPAIN LOSES MORE THAN A MILLION JOBS. About 1.35 million jobs have disappeared from the Spanish economy since 1 February, according to the Spanish National Statistics Institute (INE). Just over a million of them were lost in the second quarter.

Spain's unemployment rate of 15.6 percent is the highest in the European Union.

In the first three months of 2009, as the Great Recession took hold, Spain lost 770,899 jobs.

In April through May this year, Spain lost an average of 11,800 jobs every day. The loss is the greatest since 1976, when records began to be kept.

Another one million workers are still considered to be employed because the government is paying all or part of their wages. Many of the jobs exist only on paper, as companies remain without customers or capital to restart work.

The government payment scheme ends next month, when hundreds of thousands of these workers are likely to join the ranks of the officially unemployed.

Only 13.9 million people, or 35 percent of the workforce, were actually working during the second quarter, the INE reported. The rest were on the government payment scheme, off the job due to illness, or self-employed workers who had shut down their businesses, for example.

Spain's economic shutdown lasted from 16 March to 22 June but localized lockdowns have since occurred as COVID case numbers flared again in spots.

Spanish workers were under strain even before the shutdown. In 2019, 5.5 million people wanted more work than they could find and 22.2 percent of the labor force were gig workers under short-term contracts.

From 2009 through 2016, in real terms, pay for a Spanish worker fell an average of €3,200 per year, according to the International Labor Organization.

TREND FORECAST: As we noted in the COVID section of this ***Trends Journal*** and others, the government's locking and re-locking down of the Spanish economy will keep pushing the economy lower and the unemployment rate higher.

GIG WORKERS IGNORED IN INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS. European governments have showered money on businesses to subsidize wages and salaries for more than 60 million workers idled by the economic shutdown, but the wage-support programs offer no help to gig workers and other self-employed people who, instead, must rely on unemployment benefits, which are far less generous.

Unemployment benefits often replace only half or less of a self-employed or contract worker's income and may end after a few months. After that, recipients must apply for welfare.

Since 2010, amid the economic crisis, European companies have increasingly turned to gig workers and short-term contractors to carry out more and more specialized tasks.

Of Europe's 15 million jobless workers in June, about 40 percent were short-term contractors from tourism, food services, and other up-close-and-personal industries hit hardest by the shutdown, according to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Many workers have sold cars, homes, and drained their meager savings to meet basic expenses.

Several government-paid furlough programs will end between now and November, casting previously spared workers into the jobless pool. Airbus, British Airways, Renault, and many other European corporations have warned they will lay off millions of workers across the continent if government employment subsidies disappear.

In France alone, a million more jobs may vanish, the government said.

TREND FORECAST: *The real unemployment numbers, who is being affected, and what the implications will be (which we have outlined) are being under-reported by the governments and the media.*

The “Greatest Depression” has begun. It won’t make the mainstream headlines until the equity markets crash.

CHINA’S BOND MARKET SURGES. Offering interest rates of 2.5 percent, China’s bonds denominated in renminbi had lured \$360 billion from foreign investors by 1 July. Billions more have flowed into the country’s bank and government bonds since then.

Central banks in the U.S. and Europe poured trillions of dollars’ worth of stimulus into their economies, setting bond prices high, which keeps yields low – currently near or, in some cases below, zero.

In contrast, China used little stimulus, allowing it to offer higher yields as its economy recovers faster than those in the West.

The world was “absolutely starved” for bonds offering positive yields, said Hayden Briscoe at UBS Asset Management, adding the Chinese bonds are a “standout asset,” even considering the risk of currency fluctuations.

TREND FORECAST: *With the yuan steadily rising against the dollar, there is no more political talk that China is devaluing its currency so they can increase exports.*

As global trade continues to slow, the \$40 trillion indebted Chinese nation will sink deeper in debt. The deeper it falls, so, too, will its currency, which will in turn push up demand for precious metals.

HONG KONG'S WEALTHY SEND GOLD ABROAD. Since China passed a new law restricting the rights of Hong Kong residents to govern themselves and express political dissent, the city's wealthy have shipped about 10 percent of their physical gold to storage bunkers in Singapore, Switzerland, and other safe havens, according to Joshua Rotbart, a Hong Kong gold broker.

"Many [gold owners] now see Hong Kong as riskier than other jurisdictions," he added.

The trend began in 2019, when protracted street protests roiled Hong Kong's economy and cast doubt over its political independence.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *The Chinese government forbids gold to be exported from the mainland. Gold owners in Hong Kong worry that stricture will be extended to Hong Kong and some fear that an increasingly authoritarian China could eventually move to confiscate private gold holdings.*

CAR SALES SURGE IN CHINA. China's car dealers sold 1.6 million vehicles in July, a 7.7-percent surge from a year earlier and the best monthly percentage gain in more than two years, the China Passenger Car Association reported.

Car factory shipments to dealers climbed 10.4 percent during the second quarter, but retail sales sank 3.4 percent during April, May, and June.

July sales were helped by government incentives – including a new program to boost sales of selected electric cars – and dealers' rock-bottom markdowns to get the glut of cars off their lots.

Last month, electric car sales in China shot up 19.3 percent, year on year, to 98,000 vehicles; Tesla's sales fell 26 percent from June as government incentives targeted Chinese-owned makers.

However, the oversupply remains: manufacturers boosted their shipments to dealers by 16.4 percent in July, compared to a year before.

"Dealers are facing increasing intense pressure to cut prices in the second half [of 2020] in order to meet their yearly targets," the China Automobile Dealers Association said last week after surveying their members.

July's figures indicate that sales in the second half are likely to rise 4 percent above those of last year, leaving China's auto industry with a 10-percent dip in sales compared to all of 2019.

TREND FORECAST: *U.S. and European car makers take hope from China's July sales figures that the second half of this year will bring a stronger rebound to the global auto industry than previously had been expected.*

They were in a downward slump, however, throughout 2019, and we forecast the upswing will be moderate as the global economy continues to weaken and unemployment rises.

CHINA'S RETAIL SALES SLOW IN JULY. China's retail sales fell 1.1 percent from a year earlier, dashing economists' expectations for a second consecutive month that sales would equal the previous year's now that stores and restaurants are reopening.

The dip was an improvement on June's 1.8 percent drop but still continued China's decline in retail sales every month this year, signaling an underlying weakness in the nation's economic recovery.

China's GDP expanded a robust 3.2 percent in the second quarter, beating expectations and buoying hopes for a swift recovery.

But now, with GDP not sustaining its earlier momentum, China's rebound may have spent its early energy in a spurt and now will make slower, less steady progress, analysts warned.

"When you don't allow cinemas to open, and tell people you should avoid restaurants, you should expect that those parts are going to necessarily lag," said Michael Spencer, head of Asia-Pacific research in Deutsche Bank's Hong Kong office. "Demand couldn't recover because people were told to be careful."

China's unemployment rate remained steady in July at 5.7 percent. The jobs outlook for young workers worsened, the government said, without offering specifics or data. In June, unemployment among college graduates climbed to 19.3 percent.

TREND FORECAST: *July's figures show that China's economic recovery is relatively weak. We forecast, at best, moderate growth rate increases.*

JAPAN'S ECONOMY SHRINKS AT RECORD PACE. Japan's economy contracted at a record annual rate of 27.8 percent in 2020's second quarter, new government data revealed.

The plunge was slightly worse than economists' median forecast of 27.2 percent.

Consumer spending, which makes up more than half the nation's GDP, dropped 8.2 percent below this year's first quarter. Japan's stay-home mandate sharply reduced spending on restaurants, travel, and general retail shopping, government officials said.

Exports of goods and services, including spending by foreign tourists, slid 18.5 percent.

SINGAPORE'S SECOND QUARTER WORSE THAN THOUGHT. Singapore's economy crashed 43.9 percent in the second quarter of this year compared to the first, the government reported.

Originally, the contraction had been reported as 41.2 percent, but that was before June's data was incorporated into the calculation.

The contraction was 13.2 percent greater than that a year before and slightly more than the 12.6 percent reported earlier.

Much of Singapore's economy was shut down on 7 April and began to reopen in early June.

The shutdown paralyzed the construction industry, which saw second-quarter activity drop 59.3 percent, as reported by Singapore's Ministry of Trade and Industry. Hotel and restaurant trade dove 41.4 percent, transportation and storage 39.2 percent.

The ministry has revised its forecast for 2020, now saying Singapore's economy will contract by 5 to 7 percent this year, not the 4 to 7 percent predicted last spring.

TREND FORECAST: *With much of the globe in the early stages of the "Greatest Depression"... and still locked down, the economic future is evidenced in the dire data that provides no "Hope and Change You Can Believe In."*

Yes, there will be economic upticks, but the long-term trend remains sharply down.

RUSSIA AND CHINA ALLYING AGAINST THE DOLLAR. In 2020's first quarter, 46 percent of trade transactions between Russia and China were settled in dollars, the first time the proportion has fallen below 50 percent, according to data from Russia's Central Bank and Federal Customs Service.

The euro was used to settle a record 30 percent of the transactions and the two countries used their own currencies in 24 percent of the deals.

In 2015, about 90 percent of the two countries' transactions were settled in dollars. After the U.S.'s condemnation of Russia's invasion of Crimea and the outbreak of the U.S.-China trade war, however, the proportion began to slip and Russia and China both looked for alternatives to the dollar to conduct cross-border trade.

In 2014, China and Russia formally agreed to give each other direct access to their currencies without having to buy rubles or renminbi on the world's open market.

"Only recently did the Chinese state and major economic entities begin to feel that they might end up in a similar situation as our Russian counterparts: being the target of the sanctions and potentially even getting shut out" of the international banking communications network, said researcher Zhang Xin at the East China Normal University.

That, in part, prompted a 2019 deal between the two countries to dump the dollar and use their own currencies in trade. The agreement also called for the nations to create alternative payment mechanisms to the international banking communications system, which is seen as being dominated by the U.S.

"The collaboration between Russia and China in the financial sphere tells us that they are finally finding the parameters for a new alliance with each other," said Alexey Maslov, Director of the Institute of Far Eastern Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences. "Many expected this would be a military alliance or a trading alliance, but now the alliance is moving more in the banking and financial direction, and that is what can guarantee independence for both countries."

The “de-dollarization” of China-Russia trade is reaching a “breakthrough moment” that could open the door to broad range of agreements and alliance between the two powers, Maslov said.

TREND FORECAST: Trends are born, they grow, reach old age and die. The war against the dollar has begun and more trade will be done with other currencies.

With the global economy on a sharp downturn, the dollar, while shrinking in demand, will still be the World’s #1 reserve currency since other nations will also be facing economic peril.

BIG LUXURY BRANDS OUTPERFORM THE SMALL



Dior, Gucci, Hermès, Louis Vuitton, and other marquee luxury brands have outperformed their smaller counterparts as the world’s economic shutdown began to ease.

LVMH, which owns Dior, Luis Vuitton, Moët champagne, and Hennessy cognac reported a loss of 27 percent in revenue during the worst of the shutdown; Kering SA, which owns Gucci, lost 30 percent.

But customers flocked back to those brands when lockdowns eased, especially in China, and the companies report sales at or above pre-pandemic levels.

In contrast, Ferrigamo’s revenue dove 60 percent in the second quarter and Tod’s, which will announce results 8 September, could book an €80-million loss, according to analysts at Equita, an investment bank.

LVMH's revenue was buoyed by Dior's and Louis Vuitton's well-developed e-commerce operations. Kering saw strong sales among its Balenciaga and Bottega Veneta brands.

TREND FORECAST: *Smaller luxury brands that are losing sales will become ripe takeover targets for bigger conglomerates such as Kering and LVMH. However, while the Bigs grow bigger, so will their debt load. And since a masked, locked down society is less fashion conscious, plus our forecast of the "Greatest Depression," the big brands will grow weaker.*

GOING DOWN, GOING BUST, GOING OUT



Each week we highlight how the COVID War waged by politicians has destroyed market sectors and devastated business. Here are some of the latest companies that have taken an economic hit.

CISCO SYSTEMS MAKES CUTS. The network equipment company will cut more than \$1 billion in costs over the next several quarters and offer early retirement to workers after posting a 9-percent drop in second-quarter sales and its first annual revenue decline since 2017.

The company also will refocus its research and development to emphasize security and cloud computing.

STEIN MART GOES BUST. The 112-year-old chain selling clothing and linens filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy on 5 August.

The company will close “a significant portion, if not all” of its more than 250 stores, located in California, Texas, and the U.S. southeast and is considering selling its website and intellectual property.

Stein Mart disclosed in a June regulatory filing that there were substantial doubts about its ability to continue.

The company employs about 8,000 people.

RIDE-HAILING COMPANIES IN THE BREAKDOWN LANE. Lyft gave 8.7 million rides in the second quarter, compared to 21.2 million during the first three months of this year. Revenue for the period sank to \$339.3 million from \$867.3 million in 2019’s second quarter.

Lyft also reported July’s rides rose 78 percent from their April trough but revenues for the month still were 54 percent below those a year previous. It also posted revenue growth in its bicycle-sharing division.

Uber reported a 75-percent drop in the number of rides in the second quarter, compared to the same period in 2019, and a 72-percent slide from this year’s first quarter.

Uber’s losses were buffered by its food delivery operations.

Lyft began delivering groceries and medical supplies during the most recent quarter to add revenue streams.

Both companies were dealt an additional blow on 10 August when a California judge ruled the state’s law governing gig workers requires the ride services to classify their drivers as employees instead of independent contractors.

The companies are expected to appeal.

CO-WORKING SPACES NO LONGER WORK. Knotel, WeWork, and other companies renting shared office space to start-ups and gig workers are closing down locations around the world as contractors lose work, young companies lose investors, and everyone seeks ways to cut costs.

IWG, with more flexible office locations than any other company in the industry, reported closing 32 locations around the world during the first half of this year

due to the economic shutdown. It will close another 100 before 2021, it said, with the two rounds of closures shutting down about 4 percent of its total space.

The company creates a separate business entity for each of its locations and has ended several leases by putting individual entities into bankruptcy in Columbus, Chapel Hill, Chicago, Columbus, OH, and Ft. Lauderdale.

Knotel's revenue fell 20 percent in the second quarter. The company has bought out some of its leases and will shut down about 20 percent of its spaces.

Before the pandemic struck, WeWork was struggling to end leases and shut down a number of its locales around the world.

Property owners are suing Knotel, WeWork, and other flexible-office companies for back rent and other lease violations.

About 20 percent, or 25 million square feet, of the U.S.'s 4,500 shared office spaces will close or be taken over by other owners this year, according to estimates by real estate brokerage JLL.

Industry executives see future hope as companies send executives to work at home; home workers will need an occasional refuge to meet or concentrate, they say.

TREND FORECAST: *This business sector was already in a downdraft before government lockdowns. With more people going out of work and with more people working at home, the WeWork's of the world will shrink in size, go deeper in debt...and many will go bankrupt.*

RENT THE RUNWAY CLOSURES ALL RETAIL STORES. The fashion rental service laid off its retail employees and closed all five physical stores in March and now will not reopen them, the company said.

The stores were in Chicago; Los Angeles; NYC; San Francisco; and Washington, D.C.

The closures were accelerated by the shutdown but were planned before the pandemic struck, said CEO Anushka Salinas. She described the shutdowns as "part of the evolution of our overall business strategy."

The company is a subscription service that customers use to borrow fancy clothes for special events or work. Since the shutdown, Rent the Runway has shifted its inventory to feature more casual attire.

Most customers visiting the five stores were there only to return the clothes they had borrowed online. The company is mulling the possibility of adding drop boxes for returned clothing at locations closer to customers' homes.

TAK ROOM CLOSSES. Chef Thomas Keller is closing his TAK Room restaurant, one to the key attractions of Manhattan's Hudson Yards, a \$25-billion culinary West Side destination complex.

In permanently closing his restaurant and Bouchon Bakery, Keller said the economic shutdown "has done irreparable damage to our business and profession."

Because now-vanished tourists were the main customers at Hudson Yards, "we could not find an economic path to continue operating," he said.

The fact that Keller, one of America's most celebrated chefs, had to close "shows... that no one is invincible," noted New York restaurant consultant Arlene Spiegel.

CARLSBERG BEER BLUES. Carlsberg, the world's third-largest brewer, said operating profits will fall 10 to 15 percent this year, after sliding 8.9 percent in the first half.

The company forecasts operating profits will dive 17 percent during the second half.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS *by Gregory Mannarino*

FINANCIAL FRANKENSTEIN 2020



Allow me to define the current global financial situation: ***It's a monster that, at one point, will swallow the Earth.***

Fact: never in the history of the financial markets have greater distortions existed than today – nothing even comes close.

We are living in a distorted reality. Massive malinvestment has run rampant for over a decade. A time of reckoning will occur. The only question is, “When?”

Today, the biggest financial monster of all exists in the debt market. The debt market bubble is, unquestionably, the mother bubble of them all. This debt market bubble has inflated an epic stock market bubble.

Many people do not understand that asset prices, like stocks, derive value from what is occurring in the debt market. One should think of the stock market as a derivative of the debt market. Bond yields dictate stock market price action, period.

For example, artificially suppressed rates create a mechanism by which cash moves directly into the stock market, thus inflating a bubble. The subsequent

stock market bubble goes on to become hyper-inflated as euphoria and a fear of missing out (FOMO) then grips the market and stocks inflate even further.

Today's stock market, because of the debt market bubble, FOMO, and euphoria (a.k.a. "irrational exuberance," a phrase coined in the '90s, during the dot-com bubble, by then-Fed Reserve Board chairman Alan Greenspan), is in an epic bubble.

FOMO and irrational exuberance cause stock prices to inflate further, and there is no way to determine when these forces will stop driving the market even higher. Still, the main driving force behind all of it is artificially suppressed rates.

What we can be certain of is this: the global stock markets, none more so than the U.S. market, are in a "Maximum Distortion" phase. The Maximum Distortion phase can exist for a long period of time, but the longer the phase lasts, the more profound the next phase will be: Total Meltdown.

Market forces are enormous, and they feed off themselves. For example, the current Maximum Distortion phase is being driven by artificially suppressed rates and has created FOMO and irrational exuberance. The next phase will be driven by Fear – fear of losing – and then **everyone will run for the door.**

When the stock market begins its next phase, Total Meltdown, waves of selling will happen all at once. Why? The reason markets rise as "on an escalator" and "drop like an elevator" is simple: no one wants to be the last person out the door.

In the 2011 movie *Margin Call*, there is a now famous quote: "Be First, Be Smarter, or Cheat." It's always easier to be first!

Moreover, the first investors out the door always outperform, by order of magnitude, the last ones. This is yet another self-feeding mechanism: **selling in the market creates more selling...** and then, simultaneously, everyone is running for the door.

In a market meltdown scenario, often there are no buyers. That's right – no buyers! People are trying to sell shares, and no one is buying. When this happens, the last people "out the door" often must sell at staggering losses, and for those trading on a margin, that is borrowed funds and they may end up losing multiples more than their current investment.

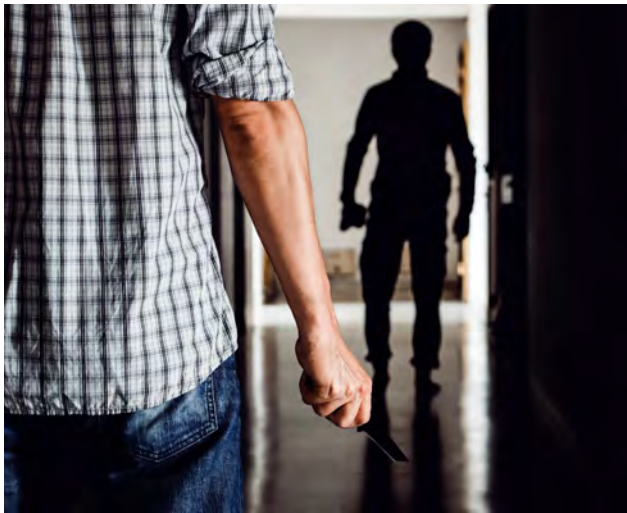
As a **Trends Journal** subscriber, we want you to be the first ones out the door, either before or at the onset of the Market Meltdown. Stay tuned to my column

here and at my blog, TradersChoice.net, for the latest “insider” market information.

by Gregory Mannarino

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM *by Bradley J. Steiner*

STRATEGIES FOR “RELATIVELY” SAFE DAILY LIVING



I was deliberate in including the word “relatively” in the title of this article because surviving chaotic, dangerous times is never a cake walk. And, as the trend lines are showing, there is real danger ahead.

There is risk for all of us, and this applies not only for the urban survivor, but also for the person who, when the balloon goes up, is able to skedaddle to a “retreat” somewhere in God’s country.

A roving band of armed looters who come upon a well-hidden retreat instantly can make a very insecure place out of that which quite possibly was, only hours before, a seeming paradise.

You can’t be guaranteed everything will be as you hope it will, regardless of how long and hard you’ve worked to make it so. My wish is this fact makes you careful and cautious, and that it prompts your tenacity to reach a peak; all of this so by facing the harsh realities of survival in an urban setting, you are able to best prepare for those realities.

And, as we see it in the headlines, violence and crime in those settings is on the rise. The challenge, however, is far from being hopeless or futile. Those who insist that only those with a bug-out bag crammed with weapons, survival supplies, and other gear, who are ready to hightail it to the hills will be able to survive are dead wrong.

Long-term urban survival, even under some of the worst conditions, is a possibility – so take heart, and without demanding that perfect answers be found, satisfy yourself with the realistic solutions I intend to provide for you.

There are two main ways to protect yourself from being robbed:

1. become a “hard” target,
2. make yourself appear to be an “uninteresting” target.

For Hard” Targets: For those I would term to be hard targets, be equipped with unarmed and armed combat skills. Hard targets always carry a gun (perhaps even a knife as well), and move about in a state of alertness and preparedness to react instantly to aggression. They are mentally conditioned for combat, acquire the warrior’s mindset and combat spirit. They are ready, willing, and able to meet force with greater, overwhelming force of their own... and be willing to employ that force fullbore, with not a tremor of hesitation, until any who threaten your life and welfare no longer have the capacity or the will to be a further threat.

If possible, travel about with similarly skilled, armed, and equipped individuals who you can trust and who trust you, and with whom you have taken an oath to defend each other with the full, organized capacity of your group, no matter what.

Appear to be an “Uninteresting” Target: The other way, is to be so uninteresting and apparently without anything to plunder or pirate – i.e. without even middle class means – that anyone looking to victimize someone to rob, passes you over as hardly carrying enough money for coffee and a sandwich.

The way you dress suggests that you are one of those who is just getting by (no jewelry, expensive watch, or conspicuously expensive clothing).

To be “uninteresting,” if you drive then drive a vehicle that is superbly maintained inside, but that appears on the outside to be worth very little.

Never allude, when speaking with anyone but intimates and your dearest, most trusted friends, to any wealth, supplies, weapons, utilitarian goods, medicines, good clothing for severe winter weather conditions, survival foods, etc. that you and your family possess. Speak as little as possible to people you do not know, but always be exceedingly polite and considerate when and if you do speak. Commiserate with others.

The “uninteresting” don’t argue or offer opinions; just complain in kind with them, or simply listen to their complaints, and agree with them about how awful their hardships are.

One excellent idea for the “uninteresting” is to purchase a durable bicycle. It should be rugged, not beautiful. Use it whenever feasible. People who use an old bicycle to get around are normally not affluent). And whenever you’re out and about, and it is possible to do so, you want to project the appearance of a “fellow sufferer” to those around you who will be (trust me!) angry, resentful, and dangerously envious and jealous of anyone who has it better than they do.

Count on people who, under good conditions might have some semblance of civility and regard for the person and property of others, becoming potential predators when they cannot make ends meet, are frustrated, tired, hungry, out of work, possibly unable to make the rent payment, and who have just had their unemployment payments run out becoming a genuine threat – to you and to your family. YES – I mean it. YES – it can “really happen here” (wherever “here” is, for you). The history of the world does not encourage confidence in our species. I love how Gerald Celente puts it: “When people lose everything, and have nothing left to lose, they lose it!” They sure do. (Or should I say, after observing events as they transpire: They sure will?)

Now... which of those two strategies is the one I want you to adopt, because it is the most effective and successful?

SURPRISE! You need both!

1. You want to be physically, tactically, technically, and mentally prepared. While doing every reasonable thing to avoid trouble or even mild conflict with others, you absolutely must be ready to deal with outright extreme violence from dangerous, possibly desperate individuals when the whistle blows, and your city becomes a truly hazardous place.

You and your family must possess the means of self-defense just in

case. Without combat skills and weapons, and extreme situational awareness and cautions, all you can do is cope so long as no one takes an aggressive step against you. You will be at the mercy of the first gutter-monkey who decides that he can improve his condition by preying upon you if you lack the ability to resist and prevail against serious violent intervention.

2. You want to become super-aware of keeping a low profile and being what we spoke of in a previous article, a “gray man”. Difficult times, when many are suffering hardship, is not the time to flaunt your comfortable situation, wealth, security and well-being, and a reasonably good quality of life, amidst a population of people, most of whom are not doing too well, to say the least.

Your total readiness to deal with any threat in a competent, decisive, and effective way does not mean that you want the opportunity to exercise such potential! However, it must be there in reserve, while at the same time you employ every available means to live healthfully, quietly, anonymously, safely, and successfully. Only the most stupid regard urban survival as little more than becoming “the toughest kid on the block”.

Wisdom, experience, and history dictates that the most successful survivors during hard, even brutal times, are those whom no one cares to bother or challenge. The uninteresting person... the guy who “also has it tough”... the fellow who nevertheless always manages a friendly word and a smile, and who “understands”, is not a likely target of looting and predation, and resentful violence. It is only to be prepared for unfortunate eventualities, should they come to him and to his family, that prompts his rigorous preparations to meet and defeat it, never any eagerness to “throw down”.

And of course, before you engage a weapon or attack, engage your heart, your soul and your brain.

by Bradley J. Steiner

2020 COVID-19 TREND REPORT

NEW ZEALAND: “FREAK-OUT” TIME



Last Tuesday evening, New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declared she was again locking down Auckland, the nation’s largest city.

The cause of the drastic measure: Four family members tested positive for COVID-19. This was the first locally transmitted case of the virus in 102 days. Yet, now Auckland residents are being ordered to stay at home as those businesses deemed “non-essential” were forced to close for at least three days.

The handful of new infections led the country’s Director-General of Health, Dr. Ashley Bloomfield, to state, “We’ve been saying for some weeks it was inevitable that New Zealand would get another case of community transmission. This is a tricky virus.”

It should be noted that Auckland is a city of over 1.66 million and, as of last Saturday, an additional seven cases were reported, which brings the total of recent cases to 37. Prime Minister Ardern reacted by extending the city-wide lockdown for an additional 12 days.

As of last weekend, 22 had died from the virus in the entire country of over 4.8 million people or 0.0005 percent.

Despite locking down the country’s capitol, the Prime Minister assured New Zealanders the pandemic is “being dealt with in an urgent but calm and methodical way.”

On Friday, after announcing the Auckland lockdown would be extended 12 more days, she further advised New Zealanders, “Act as if you have COVID, and as if the people around you have COVID.”

Prime Minister Ardern, who is running for re-election and is leading in the polls, announced yesterday she was postponing New Zealand’s general election until 17 October.

TRENDPOST: *To highlight what a major “freak-out” this second lockdown of New Zealand’s major city is, here is data showing thus far, COVID-19 is less deadly than the typical flu each year:*

“Research by University of Otago, Wellington, professor Michael Baker and Dr. Trang Khieu has found that... more than 200,000 New Zealanders contract the flu each year. Of these, it’s estimated that 400–500 people will die either directly or indirectly from its effects.” Compare this to the 22 deaths so far from COVID-19.”

The New York Times continued its trend of hyperbolic, anxiety-ridden language to describe the coronavirus.

In Friday’s article about the new lockdown in New Zealand, the self-proclaimed paper of record’s headline was: “New Zealand Beat the Virus Once. Can It Do It Again?”

“Beat the virus?” In addition to the constant use of war-like language, as reported above, New Zealand has had a total of 22 deaths from the coronavirus. Compare this to confirmation by the Environmental Health Indicators New Zealand that air pollution from human-produced particle matter is responsible for the premature deaths of over 1,000 citizens every year.

TRENDPOST: *Again, and again, the media hyperbole emphasizes “COVID cases” while virtually ignoring the fact that particularly among younger people who contract the virus, they display mild symptoms, if any.*

Moreover, for people under 50, according to a Lancet Infectious Diseases study, well under 0.02 percent are likely to die. And, for those “50 to 59, 60 to 69, 70, 79, and above 80 years of age, the estimated infection fatality rates (IFR) are 0.6 percent, 1.9 percent, 54.3 percent and 7.8 percent respectively.”

As we have consistently reported since the outbreak of the COVID Hysteria, some 50 percent of virus deaths among western nations have been from people

in elder care homes with the majority of the rest suffering from health conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, Type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

Thus, while it makes no scientific or fiscal sense to lock down the vast majority of the population, it does make sense to provide extra protection for the most vulnerable listed above.

LOCKED DOWN & MORE LOCKING DOWN



Mainstream media and politicians continue to focus on rising cases while ignoring the fact that deaths and case rates are dropping overall across the globe, both deaths and case rates are much lower than when the virus first hit... and the recovery rate of the virus is around 99.5 percent.

Despite harsh lockdowns in Italy, Spain, France, and the U.K., they are still struggling to fully reopen.

On Friday, the Spanish government ordered the closure of nightclubs, banned drinking in outdoor public areas, and outlawed smoking all to stop the virus. It is also reported they are planning to re-lock down the entire nation beginning 18 September.

Among the new restrictions, apart from essential business, border crossing with France, Portugal, and Italy will be closed, as will flights of non-essential travelers from Europe.

On Sunday, some 3,000 people took to the streets of Madrid to protest the mandatory use of face masks and the new rounds of restrictions imposed by the

government. Chanting “Freedom,” protestors held up signs that read, “Masks Kill,” “What Kills is 5G,” and “We’re Not Afraid.”

On Friday, Germany declared nearly all of Spain a coronavirus risk region and warned that people traveling to and returning from those regions face a coronavirus test or two weeks of compulsory quarantine.

Europe, which is already suffering from a lack of tourists, had another setback this past Thursday, when the U.K. government announced arrivals from France, the Netherlands, and Malta would be quarantined after 3:00 a.m. on Saturday.

There were some 160,000 Britons on holiday in France, as well as 300,000 French citizens who live in the U.K. on holiday there who had to hurry back after hearing the announcement or else they would be quarantined.

Italy, which set the stage for COVID Panic when it locked down in early March, ordered discos and clubs to shut down, made it compulsory to wear a mask between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. in areas near bars and pubs, and re-imposed restrictions that will last into September.

The government had kept clubs open despite mounting criticism they attracted large crowds, that social distancing was not being respected, and masks were not being worn.

As of Sunday, people returning from Italy after traveling from Croatia, Greece, Malta, and Spain must be tested for the virus.

TRENDPOST: As we have reported, the average age of virus victims in Italy is over 80 years old. The rationale, as expressed by Italy’s Health Minister Roberto Speranza, that young people should mask up and not party because “if they infect their parents and their grandparents, they risk creating real damage,” ignores the reality of who dies from the virus and why.

Moreover, Italy, not recovered from the Panic of ’08 and falling deep into economic crisis, will, because of the harsh lockdowns that began on 9 March, suffer “real damage” as tourism, which accounts for some 12 percent of its GDP, is destroyed, and its nation’s hospitality and restaurant sectors are devastated.

This formula, to varying degrees, will mirror other nations across the globe whose tourism and hospitality sectors have been shattered.

Moreover, these nations will become divided as new political parties challenge the establishments now in control.

TRENDPOST: While parts of Europe and other nations are re-imposing lockdown orders because virus cases are rising, once again, as we have been reporting, Sweden, which was, and still is, the target of media, political, and “expert health official” harsh criticism for not locking down the country has emerged as the great European success story.

In early August, there were no new virus deaths and no spikes in infections. And Swedish citizens are not going through the startup/stop/startup/stop again freak-outs experienced in so many countries which shut down their economies and can't figure out how to reopen them.

Also ignored by the “must wear mask” dictators are the facts that the Nordic nations do not have mask-wearing mandates and there have not been spikes in virus cases or deaths.

MORE MELBOURNE MADNESS



As reported in the **Trends Journal** last week, the once-bustling city of Melbourne was locked down because the state of Victoria had 735 new coronavirus cases.

To date, in a country of some 6.3 million people, 334 have died of the virus or 0.0053 percent of the population.

Nationally, 421 people in a country of 25.5 million or 0.0016 percent of the population reportedly have died of COVID-19.

Yet, while the political leaders saw fit to lock down the entire city, last week, it was revealed they have been totally neglectful in protecting those most

vulnerable to COVID-19: the elderly in nursing homes with pre-existing health issues.

This 10 August headline in the area's newspaper *The New Daily* made it clear: "No plan for COVID in aged-care homes – shocking royal commission evidence."

The data has been clear for months that between 40 and 50 percent of the people worldwide dying from COVID live in elder care facilities.

The Australian government is now being accused of "catastrophic failure" after the country's Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety revealed a complete lack of planning to deal with COVID in nursing homes by the federal government under Prime Minister Scott Morrison.

Also, on 10 August, it was reported the federal government's aged care regulator waited five days before informing health authorities of an outbreak at St. Basil's Home for the Aged in Melbourne, which recorded 20 deaths from the virus.

Julie Collins, a member of Australia's opposition Labor Party stated, "At almost every step of the growing outbreaks of COVID-19 in nursing homes, the Morrison Government has been behind the eight ball with tragic consequences. Why was the Government not better prepared for outbreaks that would impact our nation's most vulnerable?"

The Minister for Aged Care and health department officials have refused to publicly release a list of elder care facilities battling the virus in the state of Victoria because the homes were concerned with "reputational issues."

In response to the government's failure to protect elder care residents, Peter Rozen, senior counsel assisting the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety said, "The regulator did not have an appropriate aged care sector COVID-19 response plan. Given that it was widely understood that recipients of aged care services were a high-risk group, this seems surprising."

Australian Prime Minister Morrison blamed it on "a breakdown in that communication. And that's not good."

On Sunday, it was reported 25 people died of the virus in Victoria. Keeping with the trend, without discussing if they came from elder care homes or were suffering underlying medical conditions, Premier Daniel Andrews noted the deaths included "a man in his 60s, three men and four women in their 70s, four men and six women in their 80s, and three men and four women in their 90s."

TRENDPOST: *Again and again, it's the same story. Rather than protecting the most vulnerable groups, politicians instead lock down entire nations, states, and cities, throwing millions out of work, destroying businesses, causing untold depression from social isolation, pushing crime rates higher, and preventing a return to any semblance of normal life.*

MASK MADNESS CONTINUES



Many nations across the globe are continuing to mandate that people out in public must wear masks.

As we have long been reporting, there is no hard, scientific data that wearing masks effectively stops the spread of the coronavirus. We noted that the CDC; the WHO; and America's "most respected infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci had, before bowing to political pressure, recommended not wearing them.

Among the studies proving their ineffectiveness, the University of Ulsan College of Medicine in Seoul, South Korea, found both surgical and cotton masks are ineffective when it comes to blocking droplets of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that may be generated when somebody coughs or sneezes.

And, there have been [numerous health experts providing data that wearing masks can in fact can be unhealthy.](#)

Yet, the Mask Madness gains momentum.

In the U.S., Wisconsin's head of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Preston Cole, emailed his employees to "Wear your mask, even if you are home,

to participate in a virtual meeting that involves being seen – such as on Zoom or another video-conferencing platform. Set the safety example which shows you as a DNR public service employee care about the safety and health of others.”

Megan Sheridan, spokesperson for DNR, said this was trying to create “a very visual reminder to all that wearing a mask in a public setting helps prevent the spread of COVID-19.”

Ignoring contradictory “science” and “health experts,” Wisconsin Governor Evers said, “We’ve said all along that we’re going to let science and public health experts be our guide in responding to this pandemic.”

The brilliant “health” and “science”-minded Governor has exempted infants under age 2 and those who are “unconscious” from wearing a mask.

No Mask = Murder?

On 5 August, Nashville, Tennessee At-Large Council Member Sharon Hurt stated for anyone not wearing a mask in public, “If they pass the virus, then they are tried for murder or attempted murder.”

Nashville’s mayor, John Cooper, ordered the police to issue citations to any citizen not wearing a mask in public.

It should be noted the city’s health department reported Nashville had seen a decline in COVID-19 cases.

As of last Thursday, there were 221 deaths in the greater Nashville area out of a population of 692,587 or 0.032 percent.

Identifying the Mask-less

As we’ve been reporting in the **Trends Journal**, Major League Baseball (MLB) has been struggling to keep its shortened season alive.

About 20 players opted out from the beginning citing fear of contracting the virus and spreading it to their families. Some 30 other players have contracted the virus and are in quarantine.

All fans have been banned from stadiums, eliminating a major source of income. Those watching on TV see cardboard cutouts of people in the stands and hear piped-in crowd noises to try to give some atmosphere.

It has been reported that MLB, trying to come up with safe ways to let fans back into stadiums, has entered into conversations with Airspace Systems Inc., a California company developing remote cameras, to help detect individuals in crowds who are not wearing masks or are wearing them improperly.

The company has been in negotiations with airports and the U.S. Army as well. Its technology would allow organizations and security officials to monitor large facilities for violators of mask and social distancing protocols without the need to train additional staff.

So far, Airspace Systems Inc. claims early experimental success at identifying proper mask use with an accuracy of over 80 percent.

The company dismissed concerns about privacy violation, citing the software automatically pixelates faces making them unrecognizable. Founder and CEO Jaz Banga stated its customers are looking at ways to encourage compliance in non-threatening ways. One example he cited would be to have someone dressed as a nurse go around offering free masks.

TRENDPOST: *We have, over the months, provided scientific facts that the face masks worn by the general population are useless. Rather than stopping the virus from spreading or from someone catching it, they have instilled a false sense of security among a society gripped in COVID Fear.*

As reported in Infection Control Today (ICT), Lisa Brosseau, a nationally recognized expert on infectious diseases who taught for many years at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said,

“What we’re seeing is a lot of magical thinking. A lot of wishful thinking. Cloth masks are wishful thinking.”

“First of all, for healthcare and community, but also do they work as source control? Or do they work as personal protective equipment? Or both? And at the end of the day, cloth masks in my opinion don’t work in any form.”

Biden: Make Masks Mandatory

Last Thursday, Presidential candidate and former VP Joe Biden announced his support for a national mask mandate. Appearing with his vice-presidential running mate Senator Kamala Harris, they both were wearing matching black masks. They only took off the masks when speaking to the press.

Mr. Biden said, “Every single American should be wearing a mask when they’re outside for the next three months, at a minimum...Every governor should mandate mandatory mask-wearing... The estimates are we will save over 40,000 lives in the next three months if that is done.”

TRENDPOST: *We researched the article the vice president referred to above claiming 40,000 lives would be saved if people wore masks in public. What we found was this disclaimer at the top of the article:*

“This article is a preprint and has not been peer-reviewed. It reports new medical research that has yet to be evaluated and so should not be used to guide clinical practice.”

The brief disclaimer linked to a more detailed one that explains:

“Typically, a journal will only publish an article once the editors are satisfied that the authors have addressed referees’ concerns and that the data presented support the conclusions drawn in the paper.

Readers should therefore be aware that articles have not been finalized by authors, might contain errors, and report information that has not yet been accepted or endorsed in any way by the scientific or medical community.

We also urge journalists and other individuals who report on medical research to the general public to consider this when discussing work that appears on medRxiv preprints and emphasize it has yet to be evaluated by the medical community and the information presented may be erroneous.”

Following his mask-wearing proclamations, Mr. Biden’s recently announced running mate, Senator Kamala Harris, commented, “That’s what real leadership looks like.”

TREND FORECAST: *The longer mask-wearing orders are imposed, the deeper economies will fall.*

The general population is clenched in fear. Afraid to go out, and when they do, they are masked up and hand sanitized, worried the coronavirus will get them.

Walking down empty streets, driving in cars with windows rolled up, the invisible, evil virus lurks in their minds.

From pre-school to graduate school to the world of business, as long as society is masked up, social experiences will evaporate along with all the businesses and services that support them.

No weddings, no birthday parties, no sports, no concerts, no social experiences... no goods, no services, no jobs, no income allowed in the New ABnormal.

FEAR OF CASH



Our trend “From Dirty Cash to Digital Trash” has been embraced to the COVID-minded public who fear the virus can be lurking any place and on anything.

An August survey conducted by Rapyd, a global payment network, shows more than half of all Americans are fearful of catching the coronavirus from touching paper money and coins.

Even more said they would use “touchless” forms of payment in the future.

Highlights from the survey include:

- 54 percent of consumers surveyed are concerned about handling paper money/coins as a result of COVID.
- 60 percent plan on using digital/touchless payments instead of cash/coins in the future because of COVID.
- 32 percent want to see paper money/coins phased out in the future because of COVID.
- 45 percent would like to see pennies phased out/eliminated.
- 30.5 percent want to see all coins phased out.
- 81 percent have heard about the US coin shortage.

Asia still leads the way in phone-based digital transactions, but the U.S. is catching up. According to Rapyd CEO Arik Shtilman, it will take time to replace the ubiquitous “point-of-sale” systems requiring credit/debit cards with computerized units that allow purely digital transactions.

He pointed out the coronavirus will likely be the impetus of governments across the globe to greatly reduce the number of bills and coins currently in circulation.

In the U.S., however, the U.S. mint has resumed full production of “dirty cash” after slowing production down in the spring, generating over \$7 billion more coins by the end of this year compared to last.

Here Comes the Digital Wallet

Digital Wallets, also known as e-Wallets, allow two or more parties to make financial transactions electronically by bartering digital currency for products and services.

Southeast Asia is leading the way. According to the Boston Consulting Group, close to 50 percent of all commercial bank customers in the region are already using digital wallets. That percentage is expected to grow, especially with the concerns about the coronavirus, with estimates up to 84 percent will employ this digital money exchange over the next five years.

Juniper Research estimates this year alone could see a doubling of digital wallet activity worldwide with Apple Pay having over 200 million users and both Google Pay and Samsung to have over 100 million each.

TREND FORECAST: *The world will go digital. It is especially the way of younger generations who have been born into the Digital World. It is their new normal.*

As the world grows poorer and tax revenues decline, by having a digital track of record of who spent money on what, governments will grab every tax dollar they can.

TREND FORECAST: *Just as easily as the masses obediently followed the orders of their masters and marched off to the COVID War, so, too, when nations introduce digital currencies, they will readily accept them.*

The trend toward digital trash is also a factor driving up gold and silver prices, as investors seek hard currency safe-haven assets.

The going-digital trend will also prove bullish for cryptocurrencies, particularly for younger generations who live in a digital world and are fearful of an economic future of worthless money.

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.*

For what the digital future looks like and what to expect, please see Gregory Mannarino's article, "[THE ENGINEERED EXTINCTION OF THE USD](#)" and Joseph Maxwell's article "[FROM DIRTY CASH TO DIGITAL TRASH](#)."

TRENDPOST: *Despite no scientific evidence – and the fact that for centuries people have been handling money and have not died from it despite virus and flu outbreaks of much greater proportions than COVID-19 – under the new ABnormal, many businesses and consumers have been living under newfound anxiety that touching bills and coins increases their chance of catching COVID.*

Thus, more and more businesses will ban cash transactions.

This unproven fear affects many vulnerable members of society including the elderly who are uncomfortable with technology, people with no credit, and tips for workers in service industries.

According to LendEDU, the common assumption that bills and coins, since they go through physical contact with so many different people, would be riskier in this pandemic is in fact wrong.

Using a “germ score,” the study revealed the average score for credit and debit cards was 285 compared to an average score of 160 for dollar bills and 136 for various coins.

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.

COVID WAR: GOING CRAZY



The media is fond of using war metaphors and martial, drum-beating language to describe the fight to stop the spread COVID-19 terror. But little attention has been paid to the adverse effects psychologically, particularly to children, as a result of the hard lockdowns still being imposed around the world.

A study of these adverse effects was published on 12 May in the journal *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry & Mental Health* by four researchers in child psychiatry and neurology from universities in Germany, Austria, and Italy.

The authors concluded:

“Isolation, contact restrictions and economic shutdown impose a complete change to the psychosocial environment in affected countries. These measures have the potential to threaten the mental health of children and adolescents significantly.

Anxiety, lack of peer contact, and reduced opportunities for stress regulation are main concerns. Another main threat is an increased risk for parental mental illness, domestic violence, and child maltreatment. Especially for children and adolescents with special needs or disadvantages, such as disabilities, trauma experiences, already existing mental health problems, migrant background and low socioeconomic status, this may be a particularly challenging time.”

Among the issues cited:

“In most countries, children have not been allowed to use regular playgrounds, social group activities are prohibited and sports clubs are closed. Social relations have been strongly limited to closest family members. In several countries, contact to peers has been prohibited or severely limited.

This can have a negative impact on children and adolescents given the importance of peer contact for well-being. Many countries have experienced a lock-down of schools. As pointed out by a recent review, school closures may not have a major impact on reducing infections and preventing deaths.

Hence, possible negative consequences such as loss of education time, restricted access to peers and loss of daily structure need to be taken into account when estimating the advantages and disadvantages of this particular measure.”

TREND FORECAST: *This is just the beginning of mental breakdowns not only among children, but also in people of all ages in every country fighting the COVID War. From teenagers, young adults, and middle agers to senior citizens, within just three months, the entire social structure has been dissembled and rebuilt with draconian government rules. Hiding behind masks, socially distanced, no parties, weddings, visits to elder care homes or funeral homes, governments’ New ABnormal rules have destroyed the natural human spirit.*

U.S. SCHOOL UPDATE: CONFUSION REIGNS



In June, the American Academy of Pediatrics recommended “having students physically back in school.”

Yet, as the school season begins, the debate rages on whether to reopen schools or have students learn online at home.

A handful of states such as Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee recently allowed students to attend classes, but after a number of students and teachers tested positive, some of those districts ordered doors closed and the resumption of remote learning.

In Georgia, an elementary school principal sent a letter, which read in part, “Dear Parents, I am writing this letter in order to communicate that a student in 2nd grade has tested positive for COVID-19.”

Yes, you read that correctly: one child tested positive.

Yet, research shows young children are highly unlikely to be affected by the virus or spread it... and the letter of Fear was sent to all parents of children attending the school.

According to the *New York Times*, over a dozen other Georgia elementary school principals sent out similar letters to parents shortly thereafter. Over 1,000 students and staff in the district, north of Atlanta, have been forced into quarantine. Last Tuesday, a high school shut down until the end of the month, with another following the same strategy the next day.

A foreign language teacher in Georgia said, “This is exactly what we expected to happen.” She quit her job fearing for safety issues when classes do start up and put her high school daughter back into the district’s remote learning program.

In Arizona, a Phoenix-area school district canceled its plan to reopen classrooms next week as a large group of teachers staged what they called a “sick out” to protest having to teach in person given the continued spread of the virus.

The district’s superintendent, Gregory A. Wyman, wrote to parents, “We have received a high volume of staff absences citing health and safety concerns.” He added the district “cannot yet confirm when in-person instruction may resume.”

Pressure from teachers’ unions that don’t want to return to classrooms this fall is building around the country. Many state and local officials are bowing under the pressure.

Lily Eskelsen García, President of the National Education Association, threw gas on the fire last Thursday by claiming schools could become “the germ factory,” “super spreader,” and “the source of the new surge in your community.”

TRENDPOST: Yes, the President of the National Education Association, ignorant of the facts, taking charge and spreading fear of the COVID War.

The same “Education” Association that had us little children hiding under our desks in air-raid drills during the Cold War to prevent us from dying if an atom bomb landed in town... as if it would make one bit of difference.

The same “Education” Association that had us, when we were too big to get under the desks, go out in the hallways during air-raid drills and stand against the wall with our hands clamped behind our heads.

“If you see a flash, don’t look at it,” the “Education” Association ignorantly warned, since, if we saw a flash, we’d be dust before we could blink our eyes.

The same “Education” Association that is too uneducated to read and understand the clear, hard data confirming children are not “super spreaders.”

A study from Germany’s University Hospital Dresden and the Faculty of Medicine Carl Gustav Carus showed that after taking 2,045 blood samples collected from students and teachers across 13 secondary schools, there were low virus infection rates, and there was no evidence of them spreading the virus.

Dr. Reinhard Berner, the leader of the study and Head of Pediatric Medicine at the University Hospital Dresden, commented directly on the “spreader” issue: “It’s exactly the opposite. Children act more as a brake on infection. Not every infection that reaches them is passed on.”

The Debate Rages On

In Florida, the state’s teachers’ union sued to prevent schools from opening at the scheduled reopening time of the end of this month.

In California, the United Teachers Los Angeles issued a long list of demands regarding the reopening of schools.

New York City’s school district, the largest in the nation with over one million public school students, was set to reopen in less than a month. But last Wednesday, both the principals’ and teachers’ unions demanded Mayor Bill de Blasio delay the reopening by several weeks and impose a slow, phased-in return.

The mayor already has recommended what he termed “blended learning” of part-time classroom, part-time remote learning. For most students, the in-person classes would occur only one to three days a week.

In New Jersey, Governor Phil Murphy reversed his decision to open classrooms. Now he has mandated schools only can offer remote instruction. Pressure came from the state’s two largest school systems in the cities of Jersey City and Elizabeth, letting the state know they wanted to see plans that would keep students home and studying online.

They were joined by the New Jersey Association of School Administrators, the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, and the New Jersey Education Association who all called on the governor to order a statewide ban on in-person classroom learning.

The governor, after succumbing to the pressure and reversing his original decision, said last Wednesday, “In every twist and turn in the road we’ve been willing to listen and to accommodate.”

The furious debate over whether or not to reopen classrooms has generated another trend: according to a Harris poll taken in July, about two-thirds of parents nationwide are now more inclined to homeschool their children.

And, according to a just-released poll for the *Financial Times*, “Nearly two-thirds of Americans fear it will be unsafe to send children back to school this year.”

TREND FORECAST: As forecast in the *Trends Journal* at beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak when schools across the globe were shut down, it signaled the onset of a 21st century online learning system, which, back in 1996, Gerald Celente had forecast as “Interactive U” in his book “Trends 2000.”

“Interactive U” has just been born. The new education system that will replace the current one, which was invented by the Prussians at the onset of the Industrial Revolution, will offer great investment rewards for OnTrendpreneurs® who create the new learning systems and continue to update them.

COVID KILLS COLLEGE FOOTBALL



Nothing is more “American” than Big Ten College football. The annual highlight of this popular midwest football conference is the Ohio State-Michigan contest every November, often referred to as “The Game.” Michigan has won 11 national titles; Ohio State has won eight. Their annual rivalry, which began in 1897, has been a sports highlight for the past 50 years. Both college stadiums seat over 100,000.

“The Game,” along with all the other big stadium, full capacity, high TV-rated Big Ten football contests this fall, have been cancelled due to the coronavirus.

Joining the Big Ten in cancelling the entire 2020 season is another premier athletic conference, the Pac-12, including UCLA, U.S.C., Stanford, Oregon, and Washington.

Dr. Doug Aukeman, Senior Associate Athletic Director for Sports Medicine at Oregon State, added there was a concern about “some emerging data about some health risks that affect athletes and, specifically, cardiac side effects of potential COVID infections. We don't know enough about it, so we became more concerned about that.”

The cardiac issue mentioned refers to a report of 12 college athletes with myocarditis (an inflammation in the middle layer of the heart) cited as a complication from COVID-19. It should be noted those 12 cases are among more than 480,000 National College Athletic Association athletes across the country or 0.0025 percent.

The morning before the anticipated announcement by the Big Ten and Pac-12, President Trump remarked, “These football players are very young, strong people, and physically, I mean they’re physically in extraordinary shape” and said cancelling the season “would be a tragic mistake.”

The economic impact not only will be felt by the colleges themselves, but by all of the ancillary businesses that count on these football games in order to have successful years.

Economic Implosion

According to Kantar, a data consulting company, college football generated about \$3 billion over the past two years with most of it coming from power conferences like the Big Ten and the Pac-12. Major media outlets stand to lose over \$1 billion in ad revenues.

But the real “personal” impact the cancellations will cause is that countless numbers of small businesses in towns and cities normally filled with enthusiastic fans will be empty.

Mike Arthur, Senior VP at Veritone, a leading sports marketing company, responded to the cancellations: “When we talk about the economic impact, you take it all the way down to – pick the college town, understand the impact of sales tax revenue and then just take it straight up from there.”

TREND FORECAST: As we had forecast in February and March when universities began closing down, many college towns will become ghost towns... Rust Belt 2.0 cities.

In addition, manufacturers of college sports gear along with sports-related retail clothing will suffer sharp declines in sales.

On the media front, billions will be lost in advertising revenue. Adding it all up, it is just one more death blow from the coronavirus that's not only sinking economies, businesses, and workers deeper into financial despair, it's sucking the joy out of the lives of both athletes and fans.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *Again, it makes little scientific sense to end sports in fear the virus will devastate and kill young people. According to Dr. Scott Atlas, Senior Fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution and the former Chief of Neuroradiology at Stanford University Medical Center, "Young adults and children in normal health have almost no risk of any serious illness from COVID-19."*

YOUNG & BLACK: A COVID RISK?



In America, week after week, the state of Florida receives the media spotlight for the recent spike in coronavirus cases, while New York's Governor Andrew Cuomo receives high praise from the Presstitutes for his skills in fighting the COVID War.

Ignored by them is that of a population of 19.5 million, some 33,000 New Yorkers died of the virus under his command compared to 9,500 in Florida, with a population of 21.5 million. Yet, the facts are ignored, and for the Junk Food/Junk News/Junk Brain public, they, too, praise Governor Cuomo and deride Florida's Governor DeSantis for failing to stop the virus from spreading.

Pumping up the “Florida Failure,” last Wednesday, the *New York Times* headline, under the subhead of “Florida Statistics,” blared, “Younger, Black and Increasingly at Risk.”

While the *Times* focused on the fact that in July, over 100 Floridians died who were between the ages of 25-44, implying the virus is dangerous to younger people, there was little mention many of them were clinically obese.

In the 12 August article, the writer starts with the death of Herman J. Castro, a 32-year-old manager of a McDonald’s in the central region of Florida. His condition before contracting the virus wasn’t mentioned, but the photo of him clearly depicts he was significantly overweight.

The *Times* article cited, “Through July, about 3,800 people in the United States in the 25-44 age group had died from coronavirus,” spreading the same line “health officials” have globally that “young people have been overly reckless in resuming social activities at parties and bars.”

Yet, much further into the article, it mentioned, “Many of the younger victims had diabetes or were obese highlighting the risks people with health problems face no matter their age.”

Even further buried in the article was the important fact that the deaths of younger people from the virus is a result of “long-existing social and health inequities between Black and white people. African-Americans were more likely to have co-morbidities, like diabetes or obesity, even at a young age, which could make them more vulnerable to the virus and put them at a higher risk of death.”

At the end of the article, sadly, and with all due respect to the loss of their loved ones, the writer quotes the mother of a young man who was 22 who died of the virus, who was 300 pounds, and notes his father, who was “a smoker, with diabetes and hypertension,” died two days later.

TRENDPOST: According to Dr. Scott Atlas, former Chief of Neuroradiology at Stanford University Medical Center, “If you do not already have an underlying chronic condition, your chances of dying are small, regardless of age.”

N.Y. NURSING HOME COVID DEATHS: CUOMO CAN'T COUNT



Over and over, again and again, as we have been reporting each week since the coronavirus hit Italy in late February, the vast majority of the people dying from the virus are those suffering from pre-existing chronic health conditions such as Type 2 diabetes, obesity, heart disease, lung and respiratory ailments... and people in elder care homes.

Previously, we had quoted Dr. Leora Horwitz of NYU Langone Medical Center who concluded, “Age is far and away the strongest risk factor for hospitalization.” And, as noted by Dr. Scott Atlas:

“In New York City, an epicenter of the pandemic with more than one-third of all U.S. deaths, the rate of death for people 18 to 45 years old is 0.01 percent, or 10 per 100,000 in the population.

On the other hand, people aged 75 and over have a death rate 80 times that. For people under 18 years old, the rate of death is zero per 100,000.

Of all fatal cases in New York state, two-thirds were in patients over 70 years of age; more than 95 percent were over 50 years of age; and about 90 percent of all fatal cases had an underlying illness. Of 6,570 confirmed COVID-19 deaths fully investigated for underlying conditions to date, 6,520, or 99.2 percent, had an underlying illness.

As for New York’s nursing home-related virus deaths, according to an *AP* report, “Unlike every other state with major outbreaks, New York only counts residents who died on nursing home property and not those who were transported to hospitals and died there.”

No Facts from Cuomo

To date, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has refused to reveal the real number, “leading to speculation that the state is manipulating the figures to make it appear it is doing better than other states and to make a tragic situation less dire.”

Under federal regulation, all states are required to report data on COVID-19 deaths every week regardless of whether the death actually occurred in the elder care facility or in a hospital. But this regulation came well after New York experienced its highest rates of death, and, according to federal data, only about 20 percent of New York’s elder care facilities reported resident fatalities during the period from the beginning of June through to the middle of July.

The probabilities are, therefore, that New York State has undercounted the number of deaths in elder care facilities by the thousands.

Also raising doubts about the lack of oversight in New York to protect residents in these facilities is the fact that according to state department research, some 21,000 nursing home beds have been empty this year, which the health department reported was 13,000 more than it had expected to find.

AP notes Governor Cuomo continues to claim success regarding COVID-19 deaths in nursing homes. On 10 August, he stated, “You look at where New York is as a percentage of nursing home deaths, it’s all the way at the bottom of the list.” Specifically, he cited that only 20 percent of his state’s deaths from the virus were in nursing homes compared 68 percent in Pennsylvania, 64 percent in Massachusetts, and 44 percent in New Jersey.

Last month, he chided reporters questioning him on the topic by telling them “Go talk to 34 other states first... Go talk to the Republican states now – Florida, Texas, Arizona – ask them what is happening in nursing homes. It’s all politics.”

The fact remains that New York is playing fast and loose with the data. *AP* officially has been denied nursing home data by the state health department. Dr. Michael Wasserman, President of the California Association of Long-Term Care Medicine, went on record to say not counting elder care residents who died in hospitals after being transported there was unethical. “From an epidemiological and scientific perspective, there is absolutely no reason not to count them.”

There remains Governor Cuomo's order on 25 March to send those in hospitals testing positive for COVID-19 to elder care facilities to make more room, which spiked outbreaks in those facilities and led to more deaths.

Whatever the political games being played, the fact remains that deaths in elder care facilities across the country account for a minimum of 44 percent of the total COVID-19 deaths. It ranges around 50 percent globally.

Beyond New York, as we have detailed in previous issues of the **Trends Journal**, the true number of nursing home deaths has been clearly underreported. (See our 2 June article "[NURSING HOME NEGLIGENCE](#)".)

"Everybody is doing it however they feel like doing it. We don't have very good data. It's just all over the place" said Toby Edelman from the Center for Medicare Advocacy, which represents the interests of nursing home residents whom *AP* quoted.

Dr. Michael Wasserman, President of the California Association of Long-term Care Medicine, told *AP* it was unethical for New York to not count those taken from nursing homes who died in hospitals: "From an epidemiological and scientific perspective, there is absolutely no reason not to count them."

TRENDPOST: *These facts regarding the Cuomo administration being accused of falsifying the number of nursing homes victims who died of the virus is virtually unreported in the mainstream media.*

Instead, he is lionized by the media and worshiped as a hero by the majority public for fighting the COVID War for which 33,000 died... three times more than #2 California, with a population of 40 million and 11,300 virus victims.

Indeed, in Governor Cuomo's address last night at the Democratic National Convention, he didn't mention the virus death rate yet bragged that New York "has gone from one of the highest infection rates to one of the lowest," and that "we climbed the impossible mountain, and right now we are on the other side."

His speech was lauded by the media. CNN (a.k.a. the Cartoon News Network), said, "The New York governor became one of the most recognizable figures in the country thanks to his daily coronavirus press conferences in the spring, as New York City fought the worst Covid-19 outbreak in the country," and "If Biden doesn't win or doesn't run for a second term... his speech was an effective

affirmation of his image as a gifted bureaucrat at a time when the country needs that.”

Again, ignored by CNN is New York’s virus death count. Instead, the morons applaud him with the oxymoron, “as a gifted bureaucrat at a time when the country needs that.”

PRESIDENTIAL REALITY SHOW

MORE WAFFLING, MORE WAR



The *Wall Street Journal*, along with many in the mainstream media, published an article showing that presidential candidate Joe Biden and his new running mate, Senator Kamala Harris, have different views on a number of policy issues.

On energy and climate, Ms. Harris has issued clear support of the Green New Deal while Mr. Biden says he backs the “goals” of the policy but would spend less money on it.

On health care, Ms. Harris has signed onto the Medicare for All Act of Senator Bernie Sanders, but then she backtracked saying she’d like to find a compromise position between single-payer and the current system. Mr. Biden is for expanding Obamacare with a public option but is against Medicare for All.

When it comes to trade, Ms. Harris has opposed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement and the Trans-Pacific Partnership due to environmental concerns. Mr. Biden backed them, citing his support for labor.

While Ms. Harris is behind the move toward guaranteed income for all Americans, Mr. Biden publicly has stated the government should provide more financial support for those in need but has been vague about exactly what the policy would be.

Ms. Harris was very vocal against the Trump administration's actions separating families at the U.S.-Mexican border. She was one of only a small group of Democrats to reject the billions of dollars Congress appropriated for a border wall in exchange for a path to citizenship for young immigrants.

But neither had anything to say about the record \$738 billion military budget that easily passed Congress last year; 377-48 in the House and 86-8 in the Senate. President Trump signed that bill last 20 December, a nice Christmas present to the military and a near-guarantee for continued American military involvement around the world. It included an estimated \$15 billion the "Space Force" program to accelerate American military presence above the earth.

Ms. Harris is on the record as "Not Voting" when the roll call for the defense budget was made.

In 2002, a year after the U.S. launched the Afghan War, then-Senator Joe Biden, as Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said of President George W. Bush who was selling the Iraq War, "At each pivotal moment he [Bush] has chosen a course of moderation and deliberation, and I believe he will continue to do so."

Rather than moderation, Biden was one of 77 senators to authorize the use of military force in Iraq. Yet, when running for the nomination, he tried to get away with saying he opposed President Bush on Iraq.

In 2001, Biden voted for the Patriot Act, which gave the federal government the power to spy on any American by monitoring phone and email communications, collecting bank and credit report records, and tracking activity on the Internet. The act did not require federal officials to destroy any information gained on American citizens even if they were found to be completely innocent.

While campaigning for the presidential nomination, Mr. Biden stated, "I'm the guy that – as has been pointed out repeatedly – that thought we should not be going into Afghanistan."

In fact, he was part of the unanimous vote backing the 2001 resolution authorizing the use of military force against any "nations, organization or persons" then-President George W. Bush decided was complicit in the 9/11 attack of that year.

TRENDPOST: We note this since at this stage of America, deeply falling into the “Greatest Depression” and running up a \$4 trillion deficit this year, there is no mention from the two ruling political parties to cut the military budget, which, along with intelligence agencies and Homeland Security, is over \$1 trillion.

As for the population as a whole, there is little interest among them to either end America’s decades-long foreign entanglements or cut the military budget.

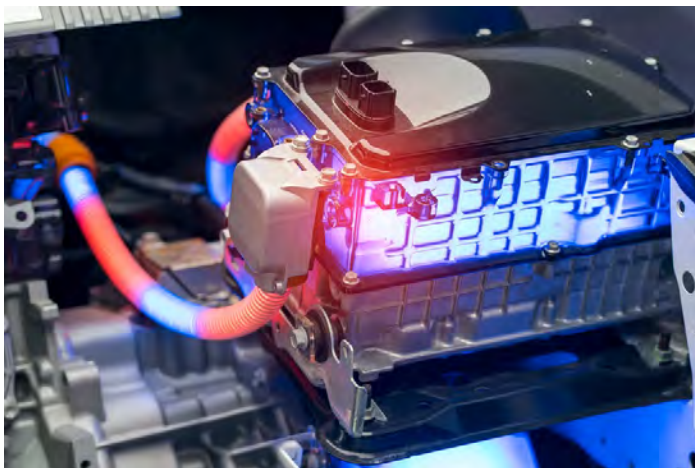
TRENDPOST: With COVID Hysteria sweeping the airwaves and the Democratic National Convention going virtual, mainstream America is tuning out The Presidential Reality Show.

Last night’s opening acts at the Convention drew only 5.7 million viewers, a drop off of 51 percent from four years ago.

With interest so low among the general public, if the Democrats are unable to generate voter enthusiasm, we stand by our forecast: “Trump 2020: By Default”... the fault of the Democrats for picking uninspiring candidates.

TRENDS IN HIGH-TECH SCIENCE

MILLION-MILE EV BATTERIES COMING SOON



by Bennett Daviss

If you’re a skilled and careful driver, your electric vehicle’s battery bank might go 300,000 or even 400,000 miles before you need to part with \$5,000 or more to replace it.

But now car companies and battery makers are about to keep that money in your bank account for another 600,000 miles or more.

General Motors says it's "almost there" in finalizing the design of a million-mile battery bank. Tesla is developing its own version. Contemporary Amperex Technology, a Chinese battery company, claims it's ready to produce an EV battery pack that can last 1.24 million miles.

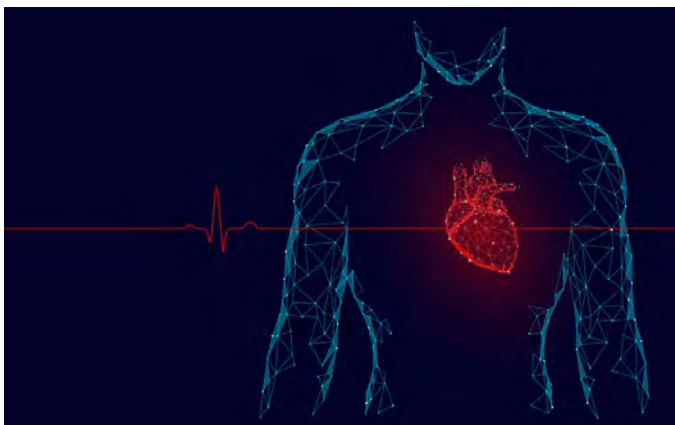
Of course, no one has yet driven these new batteries a million miles; the projected life expectancy is based on complex calculations that extrapolate from the batteries' shorter-term performance, combined with factors such as how much capacity is lost after a certain number of charge cycles.

Also, the number of miles a battery bank can take a vehicle can depend on whether the vehicle is used to supply power to the grid or a home when it's not on the road – a use common in visions of our future energy ecosystem.

The performance of any battery bank degrades with time, so some engineers have suggested a million-mile battery pack might change hands over the course of its life: it could spend its first 100,000 miles in a vehicle needing speed and power, then be transplanted to an urban taxi for its next 400,000 miles, and spend its golden years storing power made by solar panels or the utility grid.

TRENDPOST: Long-lived batteries, coupled with a recycling infrastructure to reclaim rare-earth metals and other battery components, will become commonplace within 20 years.

HELPING THE HEART REGENERATE ITSELF



by Bennett Daviss

Scientists have known for a decade that if a mouse's heart is damaged during the first seven days after its born, the heart will regenerate new tissue to replace the damaged portion.

Now researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center think they've found a way to help people regenerate heart tissue, no matter their age.

The team discovered that a trio of proteins work together to shut off the heart's ability to regenerate itself. By turning down or off the genetic switches that produce one or more of those proteins, the heart might be able to repair itself.

The first protein is called Meis1, which prevents heart cells from dividing to make new ones. When the scientists deleted the gene that makes Meis1 from a mouse's genome, the mouse's heart could make new cells beyond the first week of life. But it couldn't do so for long.

The second is Hoxb13, which carries Meis1 into a cell's nucleus.

The researchers erased the genes that make Meis1 and Hoxb13 from the genomes of mice, then induced heart attacks in those mice. The hearts of the affected mice returned quickly to a state similar to hearts of mice that aren't yet adults, a time when organs are still developing into a healthy, mature state.

The final protein is calcineurin, which regulates both Meis1 and Hoxb13. By canceling a mouse's ability to make this protein, the scientists extended even more the length of time that hearts could repair themselves.

TRENDPOST: Because calcineurin is involved in diseases such as diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis, there already are drugs on the market that use it as an ingredient. These drugs may soon be tested for their ability to also help heal hearts damaged by heart attacks, hypertension, and other cardiac ailments.

PAVING ROADS WITH TIRES



by Bennett Daviss

The rubber is hitting the road.

Engineers at Australia's RMIT University have developed a paving material made from ground-up tires and crumbled building materials.

The project stems from concerns about the billions of old tires trashed annually and the mountains of useless rubble left over from constructing and demolishing buildings.

Building waste can be crushed and reprocessed to make a material called recycled concrete aggregate (RCA). This can be blended with other building materials for specialized uses such as drainage or filtering, or to reduce the amount of mined and quarried materials needed to pave roads.

The researchers found RCA works nicely as a roadbed for asphalt topcoats. But when the engineers added "crumb rubber" from granulated tires, the combination of 0.5 percent old tires and 99.5 percent RCA was stronger as well as more flexible, meaning it can last longer without cracking or breaking apart than conventional materials.

The blended material is the first of this kind of combination to meet road engineering safety standards.

TRENDPOST: *Traditional roadbeds are made of rock and sand, costly to mine and impossible to replenish. The RMIT composite can replace those materials while also repurposing trash that otherwise might languish in landfills.*

This new material takes us further along the way toward a circular economy, in which trash from one process is feedstock for another