

TRENDSJOURNAL

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

THE COVID WAR



DESTRUCTION OF HUMANITY



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TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



U.S. MARKETS OVERVIEW

Ready for the “Biden Bounce,” which will push equity markets higher and rapidly boost economic growth?

According to the mainstream media and their “experts,” it’s coming soon.

Pick up any newspaper. Tune into any broadcast media. Search the news online. Read the headlines. It’s all about the COVID Vaccination Campaign.

The storyline is the same: Not enough, need more, once enough people get the shot, the global economy will rebound.

Then there’s the marketing campaign.

From Anheuser-Bush saying it won't pump Budweiser beer on Super Bowl Sunday, the first time in 38 years, and instead, it will redirect the money to promote the COVID Jab... to one story after another about all the companies, big and small, pushing their employees to get the vax shot in the arm.

What's going on? How can the markets keep going up as the world economies go down?

Read Gregory Mannarino's new article, "[ENTER THE NEW PARADIGM](#)," on why equities are going up, what will bring them down... and what it means to investors.

Today, on the "uplifting" news that some 90 million people are expected to enter extreme poverty this year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) raised its forecast for global economic growth... with the hedge that there is still "extraordinary uncertainty" about the outlook.

And what will bring about a sunny recovery?

Guess!

That's right. A shot in the arm. "Much now depends on the outcome of this race between a mutating virus and vaccines to end the pandemic," declared IMF chief economist Gita Gopinath.

Pushing for governments to make sure the COVID vaccinations are available globally, she said, "The new virus strains have made abundantly clear that the pandemic is not over until it's over everywhere."

And, of course, what also will salvage crashing economies, according to the IMF, will be the "New Paradigm," i.e., building higher mountains of debt with cheap money... or, as Ms. Gopinath brightly colors it, "The ability of policies to provide effective support until that happens."

The IMF projects global growth at 5.5 percent for 2021, up from a 3.5 percent decline in 2020, the worst peacetime contraction since the Great Depression. With high vaccination hopes, the agency projects a 4.2 percent growth in 2022.

The IMF expects U.S. growth of 5.1 percent for 2021; Europe up 4.2 percent; the U.K up 4.5 percent... and China, the big winner, up 8.1 percent.

Overall, they estimate the COVID War will cost the global economy \$22 trillion over 2020-2025 relative to pre-war projected levels.

TRENDPOST: Throughout the year, as they frequently do, the IMF, along with other agencies, adjust their forecasts. As we have forecast, yes, there will be a strong economic bounce-back following the mass vaccinations and re-opening of locked-down economies.

But what has been lost is lost. With projections for \$22 trillion to disappear in the next four years, the implications on economies, industries, businesses, and individuals will prove catastrophic.

Overall, the Bigs will get bigger; the rich, richer; and the middle class and small businesses smaller.

As for the equity markets, how can they keep going up with the world's economies going down?

It's a gambler's casino. Facts and data don't count; making money does. It's a money junkie's game and, as addicts do, they will rob, steal, and lie to keep on getting high.

When will they crash?

We forecast a market correction is coming. The fake enthusiasm of Joe Biden becoming the new champion in The Presidential Reality Show® will rapidly dissipate as winter sets in and economies decline.

What will reverse a downward market spike?

With Janet Yellen, the former head of the U.S. Federal Reserve, now the nation's Treasury Secretary, open spigots of cheap money flowing into the stock markets to artificially prop them up... as they have done repeatedly since the 1987 market crash.

GOLD AND SILVER. We maintain our forecast for gold to spike above \$2,100 an ounce and silver to pass \$50 per ounce in 2021. More cheap money pumped into the system will lower the value of the U.S. dollar, which, in turn, will push higher the demand for precious metals.

Of course, this trend can be temporarily disrupted should Banksters such as JPMorgan Chase, which was fined \$900 million last year for rigging precious metals markets, keep rigging them to drive the prices down.

Indeed, it is not in the Banksters' best interests for investors to abandon gambling casinos, i.e., Wall Street, and put their money in safe-haven assets from which they cannot generate profit.

OIL. Oil prices remained in their mid-\$50 per barrel range as reports from tanker tracker Petro-Logistics said there is 85 percent compliance among the OPEC+ countries to curb output.

Despite the sagging economy and decline in global demand, prices also held steady on news of an explosion in Saudi Arabia's capital Riyadh today.

Reuters reported that a small plume of smoke rose above the capital and Saudi-owned Al Arabiya TV cited local reports of an explosion. Videos circulated on social media purporting to show a missile being intercepted over Riyadh.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been warning, should military tensions escalate in the Middle East, Brent Crude may well spike above \$80 bbl, which, in*

turn, will crash equity markets, push precious metals higher, and rapidly push economies deeper into the “Greatest Depression.”

BITCOIN. Hovering in the \$32,000 range, bitcoin is down \$4,000 since last week. With pressure building from central banks to regulate it, the downside risk remains.

Indeed, as we reported, European Central Bank head Christine Lagarde has called for international bitcoin regulation earlier this month saying bitcoin is “a highly speculative asset, which has conducted some funny business and some interesting and totally reprehensible money laundering activity.”

Citing unspecified investigations in alleging the currency's illegal uses, she said, “There has to be regulation. This has to be applied and agreed upon at a global level because if there is an escape, that escape will be used.”

Considering the central bank pressure, there is a strong downside risk. Thus, we maintain our 5 January forecast for bitcoin: “The downward breakout point will be hit should prices fall below \$25,000 per coin.”

On the upside, should bitcoin again break past \$41,000 into the \$42,000 per coin range, we forecast it will spike above \$50,000 per coin.

UNEMPLOYMENT REFUSES TO BUDGE



During the week of 15 January, 961,000 people filed new claims for state unemployment benefits, a number virtually unchanged from the previous week's roster of 965,000.

For the same week in 2019, there were 282,000 claims filed.

This follows December's 140,000 net loss, the first net monthly loss since last April.

The persistence of layoffs and furloughs emphasizes the economy's weakness as a budding recovery grapples with a resurgent virus and a vaccine campaign that only recently began in earnest.

"The labor market started 2021 with very little momentum," Greg Daco, Oxford Economics' chief U.S. economist, told *The New York Times*. "If anything, there has been a deterioration."

Job losses mounted in recent weeks as governments have renewed or tightened shutdowns to cope with the unrelenting COVID spread. Restaurants and bars shed another batch of jobs; the high level of persistent job losses could spread to other sectors as fewer employees earn paychecks to spend, analysts warn.

The economic pain will persist for some months; however, the accelerating vaccination campaign brings an end into view, Carl Tannenbaum, chief economist at Chicago's Northern Trust, commented to *The Times*.

"There is no better economic stimulus than a successful vaccine rollout," he said. "It will reduce" people's sense of risk in interacting with others and "provide a basis on which different types of businesses can reopen more durably."

TREND FORECAST: *As winter sets in, unemployment will rise. Wall Street's belief in a timeline by which a vaccine campaign will reset the economy to strong growth is far from certain. In surveys, more than 40 percent of Americans have signaled a reluctance, or outright refusal, to be vaccinated.*

Thus, with "experts" saying that 60 to 90 percent of the population needs to be vaccinated before the COVID virus can be curbed, the Streets' equation that mass vaccinations = growth will lag for months.

We maintain our forecast for an economic bounce-back this spring and summer followed by contraction into the “Greatest Depression.”

STOCKS RISE ON YELLIN’S CALL FOR STIMULUS SPENDING



Stock markets climbed after Janet Yellin, President Biden’s nominee for Treasury Secretary, argued forcefully for increased stimulus spending in her 19 January confirmation hearing in the U.S. Senate.

The U.S. risks a longer, harsher recession unless lawmakers “act big” to strengthen the recovery, Yellin said.

The nation’s economic rebound is slowing, according to indicators that include weaker consumer spending and rising unemployment.

Yellin’s comments and several major banks’ strong fourth-quarter earnings reports set markets rising again after retreating the previous week.

The Dow touched an all-time high of 31,188 the day after Yellin’s hearing and closed the week just shy of 31,000. The NASDAQ index ended the week with a record close above 13,530.

The S&P 500 is up more than 13 percent since 3 November, its best performance from an election day to an inauguration since Herbert Hoover took the White House in 1928, the *Wall Street Journal* noted on 20 January; the markets’ rise is also their best during that span after a Democrat won the presidency.

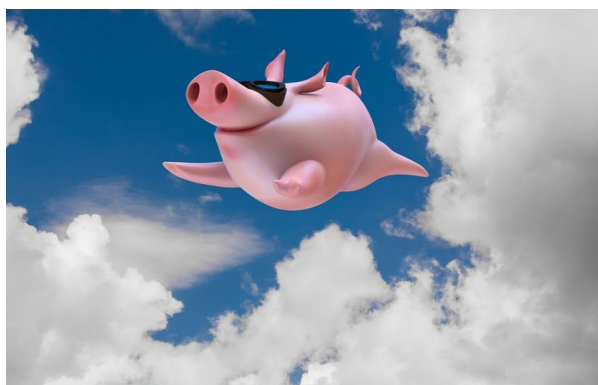
The markets also have been buoyed by the arrival of COVID vaccines and Biden's aggressive plan to distribute them... which, as noted in this **Trends Journal**, is at the same rate as the Trump administrations. (See our article, ["JOE 'C'MON, MAN!' BIDEN PROMISES VACCINATION RAMP UP."](#))

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that Joe Biden will be America's next Herbert Hoover.*

As did Hoover, Biden will preside over a major market crash and father in the "Greatest Depression" when the U.S. Federal Reserve's cheap money and low interest rates can no longer cover up disastrous economic fundamentals.

Thus, the "Biden Bounce" to the economy will be short-lived.

IGNORING TRADITION, EQUITIES & BOND YIELDS BOTH RISING



The S&P 500 is trading in record-territory range, which is above 3,800, as investors are emboldened by strong quarterly earnings reports among banks, President Biden's \$1.9-trillion stimulus spending plan, and hopes of great progress in distributing

COVID vaccines.

The same sunny outlook has raised yields on 10-year U.S., treasury bonds from 0.9 percent at the end of December to 1.1 percent last week.

Rising bond rates can make stocks, which are inherently more risky, less attractive, but they continue to climb relentlessly.

Tech stocks have been particularly sensitive to rising interest rates in the past but currently remain among Wall Street's best performers.

The bond market's unusual behavior "is all about inflation expectations rising well above pre-outbreak levels," *Wall Street Journal* economics reporter Jon Sindreau explained in the paper's 23 January edition.

"The market is now convinced that, even if the Fed eventually raises rates, it will do so by less" than the rate of inflation, "keeping financial conditions very loose," he contended.

The economic crisis has kept inflation in check, but analysts expect it to rise sharply later in the year as vaccines are widely taken and the U.S. economy shows signs of a steady recovery.

Normally, the Fed would raise rates pre-emptively to tamp down inflation before it flares up. Last year, however, Fed officials announced they would allow inflation to range above their 2-percent target, at least for brief periods, before adjusting rates.

When inflation is speeding up, stocks tend to outperform bonds, whose fixed interest rates make bonds less valuable as inflation robs money of its value.

If the Fed keeps interest rates below the rate of inflation, bonds' value will be protected, Sindreau said.

When prices inflate, energy companies, miners, and retailers tend to benefit; tech stocks, utility firms, and other businesses seen as "bond proxies" don't perform as well.

Still, shares of tech and telecom companies can outperform the stock market even as bond yields rise "as long as 'real' yields remain subdued," Sindreau noted, citing market data back to 2004.

Usually, bank shares and stocks of other companies that tend to ride the crests and valleys of economic cycles perform well in an economic recovery.

These cyclical stocks, however, “may struggle more than previously thought if inflation-adjusted yields stay low,” he said.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast for Dragflation: the economy will sink into the “Greatest Depression” but prices of goods, services, and commodities will rise.*

Prices will not rise because of supply and demand, since, as with oil, for example, there will be more supply than demand. Prices will rise because the value of currencies will decline as central banks devalue them by printing trillions to “stimulate” sagging economies. Thus, the cheaper the currency, the more it costs to buy products.

Gold and silver will continue as the most precious metal safe-haven assets. We maintain our forecast of new rounds of artificial central bank monetary stimulus and massive amounts of government fiscal stimulus that will artificially prop up equity markets and economies.

FARM BELT RECOVERS AS CROP PRICES SOAR



Prices for corn, soy, and wheat have risen to six-year highs on strong exports to China, following a summer in which 40 percent of the U.S. was in drought, reducing yields.

China has launched a major initiative to boost its domestic pork production; it also is seeking to fulfill its promise to the Trump administration to increase its imports of U.S. commodity crops.

Note: It is long forgotten that just two years ago, in 2019, Chinese pork production was devastated by the Swine Flu when some 440 million pigs (half

the pigs in China, which amounts to some 50 percent of the world's pig population) either died of African Swine Fever or were killed to kill the virus.

Also, food processors are rushing to secure adequate supplies of grains and oilseeds to meet growing consumer demand in anticipation of lockdowns easing.

The cost of grains to feed beef, pork, and poultry – the main cost of raising animals for slaughter – could rise 27 percent this year, economist Will Sawyer at farm lender CoBank, reported in a comment quoted by the Wall Street Journal.

TREND FORECAST: *The lofty prices are not only raising farm incomes but also bringing relief to other rural businesses, from equipment dealers to grain brokers.*

The gains for rural economies are working their way through the food chain and eventually will appear in higher food prices for consumers. Thus, we maintain our forecast for Dragflation.

HOME SALES SOAR TO 14-YEAR HIGH IN 2020



Last year, more homes sold in the U.S. than in any year since 2006.

The sales spurt during the year's second half, was, as we had forecast when the COVID War was launched last year, fueled by record-low interest rates,

office workers sent home to work, and families seeking more spacious, less expensive “safer” digs away from urban centers.

In the week ending 21 January, interest on a 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage was 2.77 percent, compared to 3.6 percent a year earlier, Freddie Mac reported.

While low-wage workers have suffered during the shutdown, those able to continue working found themselves with the means and opportunity to make changes.

Sales of existing homes edged up 0.7 percent from November through December and totaled 5.64 million homes last year, a 5.6-percent boost from 2019's level and the largest number since 2006, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) reported. The number of December sales was 22 percent more than a year earlier, the association noted.

TREND FORECAST: *The Trends Journal was the first magazine in the world to forecast the Panic of '08. We took out the domain name in 2007. The key element of the crash was the housing bubble. Once it burst, it ignited the Great Recession. The current buying frenzy, however, is less risky. There are fewer homes for sale now, lending requirements are more stringent, and borrowing money is cheap.*

There were 1.07 million U.S. homes for sale at the end of last year, 23 percent fewer than the same time the year before. That yielded a 1.9-month inventory of homes on the market, a record low, the NAR noted.

The scarcity has pushed the median price of a single-family home to \$340,000 at the end of 2020, another record.

HALF OF U.S. HOTEL ROOMS WILL REMAIN EMPTY IN 2021



Although 56 percent of Americans expect to travel for pleasure this year, according to a January survey by the

American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), hotel occupancy will remain at or below 50 percent through 2021, the association predicted.

Business travel, the source of profit for most hotels, remains 85 percent lower than before the pandemic but will begin to return in April and gradually increase during the second half of this year, the AHLA reported in its “State of the Hotel Industry 2021,” released 21 January.

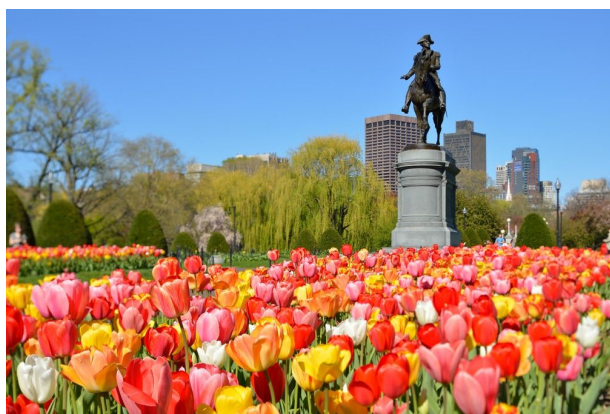
Business travel will not return to pre-pandemic levels “at least until 2023 or 2024,” the AHLA said in a statement accompanying the report.

Pleasure travel will return earliest, with more than half of individuals surveyed planning leisure travel this year. About 48 percent of people surveyed linked their plans for pleasure travel with the availability of COVID vaccines, the AHLA found.

The industry expects to restore 200,000 jobs this year, but jobs in lodging will remain about 500,000 fewer than before the pandemic when the industry employed 2.3 million people. The industry's unemployment rate will be 18.9 percent in 2021, the AHLA says.

“COVID-19 has wiped out ten years of hotel job growth,” Chip Rogers, AHLA’s CEO, said in the statement.

BOSTON MAY LIFT RESTRICTIONS AS ECONOMY SUFFERS



Compared to 2019, Boston’s weekday restaurant reservations are 78 percent fewer, foot traffic in stores is down by half, and hotel occupancy rates are 18.2 percent, according to data reported by the *Boston Globe* from a variety of sources.

The city's Planning and Development office shows that:

- people spend less than half as much time at workplaces than in pre-pandemic days;
- commuting has been reduced by 56 percent;
- out-of-town visitors are 40 percent fewer;
- unemployment among city residents has almost doubled to about 25,000;
- consumer spending in the Boston area has risen 2.1 percent this month, a quarter of the 8.4-percent average gain seen by the rest of the state.

As a result, Boston may loosen its restrictions on businesses and social mobility Wednesday. The city's shutdown has been more drastic than those in other areas of Massachusetts, closing museums, gyms, and most other places where people would come into contact.

The city is mulling easing its lockdown after governor Charlie Baker announced on 21 January he will end the state's stay-at-home mandate and allow restaurants to re-open at a 25-percent capacity.

Mayor Marty Walsh (now Joe Biden's nominee for Labor Secretary) has not been shy about keeping tighter controls in place in Boston than Baker has statewide; he may well leave the city locked down.

"Boston has to recover on the public health side before it can truly recover on the economic side," Marty Martinez, Boston's health director, told the Globe. "We cannot do one versus the other."

TREND FORECAST: By coincidence or by design, strong Democratic states, such as California; New York; and Michigan, and cities including Boston; Chicago; Baltimore; and Washington, D.C. are now lifting strict lockdown rules and starting to open up.

However, in North and Midwest states where winter weather keeps people indoors at the best of times, re-opening in the cold months will do little to boost tourism, hospitality, restaurant, entertainment, and other related sectors.

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



EUROPEAN BANKS: SMALL BUSINESS BUST CAN BRING THEM DOWN

Europe's banks hold more than €2 trillion in loans – about 40 percent of their loan portfolios – to small businesses, which increasingly are at risk of failure as the COVID pandemic continues to ravage the continent and governments keep economies locked up.

The banks have few resources to offset weak loans. They already struggle to be solvent as Europe's interest rates hover near, at, or below zero, as they have for months.

With a new wave of business failures and loan defaults rising, banks' survival is threatened, with the weakest pleading for government help to keep them from going bust.

Bad loans to Eurozone businesses could soar to €1.4 trillion if the region's economy continues to shrink more than expected, Andrea Enria, chief bank supervisor at the European Central Bank, warned in a comment quoted by the *Wall Street Journal* on 21 January.

Banks' oversize dependence on loans to small businesses rises out of the nature of Europe's economy: 99.8 percent of the continent's companies have fewer than 250 workers and account for two-thirds of Europe's jobs.

The companies are too small to lure investors, so they depend instead on bank loans, which provide about 80 percent of small-business financing across Europe, according to credit insurer Euler Hermes.

More than a quarter of banks' private-sector loans in Greece, Italy, and Portugal are to mom-and-pop operations, Moody's Analytics estimates.

As many as 25 percent of Europe's businesses could face cash crunches and ultimate insolvency unless new government aid arrives, Euler Hermes said in a comment quoted by the *Journal* on 21 January.

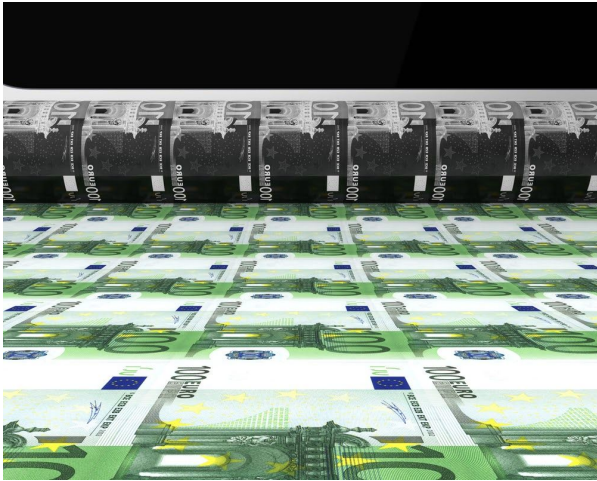
Small businesses' struggles have not splashed back on banks yet because of an array of government rescue programs, including loan guarantees. However, such programs only postpone an inevitable reckoning.

"We have set up an SOS line and are getting calls from people who don't know how to go on," Giuseppe Palmisano, president of an Italian small-business association, told the *Journal*. "People cry on the phone. I fear some are thinking of suicide."

TREND FORECAST: With new, strict lockdown laws spreading across much of Europe, the financial and mental devastation of the COVID will unfortunately increase. The ECB will continue to pump in cheap money to keep failing nations afloat, thus pushing down the euro which has risen against the dollar despite dire economic conditions and negative interest rate policy.

Once again, the more cheap money being injected into failing systems to artificially prop them up, the higher precious metals and select cryptocurrencies will rise. But again, rest assured, the Banksters will do what they can to push down their values to keep national currencies from diving.

EUROPEAN CENTRAL BANK RECOMMITS TO CONTINUE STIMULUS



The European Central Bank (ECB) promised on 21 January to keep buying bonds and maintain interest rates at or below zero after bank president Christine Lagarde noted that the Eurozone's economy shrank again in 2020's final quarter and the outlook for the current quarter remains cloudy.

After acknowledging that business investment and consumer spending remain weak, she cited signs of hope, including the trade deal between Britain and Europe, a friendlier U.S. administration, and the beginning of a regional COVID vaccine campaign, which “allows for greater confidence in a resolution of the health crisis” although “it will take time before widespread immunity is achieved,” Lagarde said.

And now, with a new series of lockdowns across the continent, she cautioned that “Further adverse developments related to the pandemic cannot be ruled out

After its meeting, the bank's governing council said the program that pays commercial banks to make loans to businesses will remain in place and the bank's bond purchases will continue at least through March 2022, the *New York Times* reported.

The council restated its pledge to buy €1.85 trillion in bonds to force interest rates to remain where they are. The ECB's current benchmark rate is -0.5 percent.

The bank may adjust interest rates up or down as conditions change, Lagarde said in her statement but stressed that the bank's chief responsibility is to see that borrowing costs remain affordable.

“I wish I was cautiously optimistic,” Lagarde said. “The situation is really hard to predict.”

TREND FORECAST: *The central bank will not adjust interest rates up. They are already negative 0.5 percent, so how low negative can they go?*

As for “The situation is hard to predict”... no it's not. Millions of businesses will go bust, hundreds of millions of people will permanently lose jobs, the Bigs will get bigger, social unrest and crime will increase... and eventually European nations will exit the euro and reinstate national currencies.

ASIA PILES UP DOLLAR-DENOMINATED DEBT



In the first two weeks of this year, Asian governments and corporations issued \$45 billion in dollar-denominated bonds, according to financial services company Dealogic.

The amount is three-quarters of the total of such debt Asia took on in all of January 2020.

Governments claim they are using the new debt to cover costs of caring for COVID patients during the pandemic and repairing damage from the global

economic shutdown; corporations are taking on debt to buy competitors and other firms weakened by the crisis.

Among the month's biggest deals so far, South Korean chipmaker SK Hynix issued a \$2.5-billion bond to help it buy Intel's NAND division, which makes solid-state computer memory devices.

It was the biggest bond ever issued by a non-financial business in the country's history and drew five times more offers for purchase than it could accommodate.

The Indonesian government sold \$4 billion in bonds; a portion of the money will fund a COVID vaccine campaign.

Even Singapore Airlines, now operating a fraction of its pre-pandemic schedule and struggling to survive, was able to raise \$500 million in dollar debt.

The borrowing isn't slowing; Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba is planning to issue \$8 billion in dollar bonds later this month, the Times reported on 19 January.

TREND FORECAST: *More dollar-denominated debt pours more bucks over the world, inflating the dollar bubble as the dollar weakens in value.*

With the U.S. Federal Reserve indicating it will keep interest rates near zero for the next two years, the world will remain awash with cheap dollars, thus juicing the dollar-borrowing binge.

Should economic conditions rapidly deteriorate in the U.S. and/or the equity markets tank, we forecast the Fed will drive interest rates into negative territory. However, when the U.S. markets and economy do tank, so, too, will the rest of the world. And those piling up dollar debt will go bust, unable to pay what they have borrowed.

SPECULATORS BET: DOLLAR GOING DOWN



Although the dollar has risen one percent this month against an array of foreign currencies, speculators have taken more short positions by 12 January – bets that the dollar will continue falling in value, as it did through the last half of 2020 – than at any time since March 2018, the *Financial Times* reported last week.

Those bets now total more than \$10 billion, the *Times* noted, even though the dollar has gained against the euro, climbing from \$1.23 to \$1.20 earlier this month.

Beyond speculators, negative views of the dollar's future among asset managers are now stronger than at any time since 2010, the *Times* found.

“Fundamentals still point to a weaker dollar in the medium term,” Vasileios Gkionakis, currency strategist at Swiss private bank Lombard Odier, told the *Times*.

The dollar lost 7 percent last year against major foreign currencies as Congress and the U.S. Federal Reserve flooded the world with dollars and cut interest rates to almost zero.

TREND FORECAST: Betting the dollar down will continue as more cheap money is pumped into the system by the U.S. government and the Federal Reserve. Thus, the dollar's value will be weighed down, pushing investment toward Asian countries such as China, where interest rates are higher and the economy has largely recovered from the crisis and will steadily grow.

EUROPE'S BANKS PROP UP COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE



Across Europe, office buildings are deserted, malls are empty, and Main Street shops are shuttered, but major landlords are not in crisis: the continent's central banks are buying bonds backed by commercial real estate loans, the *Financial Times* reported last week.

The share price of Unibail Rodamco Westfield – an investment trust owning exhibit halls, hotels, shopping centers, and other commercial properties – has plunged by half since the pandemic began; but the European Central Bank (ECB) bought more of the trust's bonds on 8 January.

Thanks to that assurance of support, the bonds carry a 1.67-percent interest rate, a full point lower than a year ago, denoting a lessened risk.

As well as corporate bonds, the ECB is also propping up commercial landlords through its purchase of covered bonds, similar to U.S. securities that bundle a variety of loans together.

As this year began, the ECB held more than €290 billion in covered bonds, then bought another €214 billion in the first week of this month.

Europe's commercial real estate is a sector expected to be hit especially hard this year as the economic recovery staggers, according to a survey released by the European Banking Authority, an agency of the European Union.

More than 60 percent of office workers now expect to work from home permanently, Barclays estimates, which it says will slash demand for office space by 20 percent across the region.

In late November, Arcadia Group, a retail conglomerate and major presence in British shopping malls through various brands, went bankrupt.

“There are more bankruptcies expected and demand for physical retail space is likely to decline further,” Vincent Fokke, real estate chief for Dutch pension fund APG, said in a comment quoted by the *Wall Street Journal* on 21 January.

Banks’ relentless bond-buying “is definitely supportive for the mortgage markets in Europe,” Agustin Martin, head of European credit research at financial services firm BBVA, told the *Journal*, “but it’s very disconnected from real market conditions.”

TRENDPOST: We note this for two reasons. The outright sham of central banks buying up private debt and secondly, how they bail out the Bigs while the small businesses and individuals go under.

Moreover, when the Big borrowers go bust, the taxpayers will be left holding the Banksters' bill.

ONE IN SIX CANADIAN BUSINESSES MAY CLOSE PERMANENTLY



About 181,000 Canadian businesses, or about one in every six, are seriously considering permanently closing, according to a mid-January survey by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB).

That many closures could erase about 2.4 million jobs or about 20 percent of Canada's private-sector jobs, the CFIB said in a statement announcing the survey's result.

The figure represents the CFIB's mid-case scenario; in the worst case, the country could lose 222,117 businesses or 21 percent of the total, the association said.

The province of Manitoba could see 15 to 18 percent of its businesses vanish, ranging from 5,601 to 6,654 individual enterprises, and taking 40,000 to more than 121,000 jobs with them.

At least 16 percent of Manitoba's business are considering scaling back operations or declaring bankruptcy, the survey found.

In the province's hospitality industry, 34 percent of businesses are mulling shrinking or going bankrupt, including 28 percent in arts and entertainment, 25 percent in transportation, and retail 15 percent.

"The beginning of 2021 feels more like the fifth quarter of 2020 than a new year," Laura Jones, CFIB's executive vice-president, said in the statement.

More than 58,000 businesses across the country had already disappeared before this month's survey, CFIB noted.

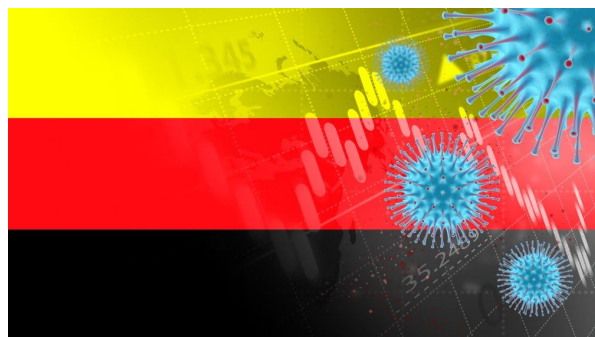
"Each week that passes without improvement pushes more business owners to make that final decision," Simon Gaudreault, CFIB's research director, said in the statement. "The more businesses that disappear, the harder it will be for the economy to recover."

Montreal's economy reflects the national trend, with 5,601 businesses, or about 15 percent, ready to throw in the towel.

TREND FORECAST: *With winter setting in, lockdown restrictions increased, and, as we have reported in this and other **Trends Journals**, with COVID Cop*

enforcement escalating, yet more businesses will go under, never to return. What is missing in all of the mainstream media reporting is that what is lost is lost. Small businesses that go bust will not instantly necessitate when the lockdown orders are repealed and nations are vaccinated.

LOCKDOWNS STALL GERMAN ECONOMY



Germany has extended its broad economic lockdown through mid-February, which will cause the nation's economy to “stagnate” in 2021's first quarter, according to an analysis by the ifo Institute, a German thinktank.

The economy can grow as much as 3 percent in the second quarter but only if the shutdown is lifted by 1 March “at the latest,” the institute warned in a statement announcing its forecast.

If the lockdowns ease by then, “economic output will pick up in the second quarter by about the same amount,” Timo Wollmershäuser, ifo's chief forecaster, said in the statement. “The slump will therefore be followed by a rapid recovery; the more severe the slump, the stronger the recovery. This is what we saw last year.”

The current stagnation has not touched the manufacturing sector or its suppliers, he noted, predicting continued growth in those industries this quarter.

The outlook through March for education, health, and public services – which make up about 19 percent of Germany's economy – is less sunny but likely not as bad as the second quarter of 2020, when economic output shrank by 8 percent, Wollmershäuser said.

A key reason for the slide in 2020 was the closure of day-care centers, he pointed out. Currently, about half of child-care centers are open, allowing more people to work, which should prevent as sharp a drop this quarter in vulnerable sectors.

TREND FORECAST: As we have been reporting, riots and protests against the draconian lockdown rules are spreading across Europe and in some nations, such as Italy, restaurants, for example, are ignoring the orders and opening up for business.

These are just a few of the headlines this week from DW:

- *Netherlands: Another night of riots over coronavirus curfew*
- *Rioting Dutch youths torch COVID testing center*
- *In Poland, the hospitality and tourism industries are also resisting a continued lockdown. Operators of more than a hundred hotels, restaurants and bars, and leisure facilities announced last week that they intended to reopen.*
- *The Netherlands has been especially hit by recent riots over measures imposed to stem the spread of the pandemic. There has been great resentment over a nighttime curfew that has been in force since last weekend, the first nationwide curfew since World War II.*
- *In Denmark, several hundred people demonstrated against the current lockdown measures in Copenhagen on Saturday evening, chanting "Freedom for Denmark, we've had enough!" After police broke up the gathering, violence broke out in some places and protesters threw bottles at the officers.*
- *The Czech Republic has seen several large demonstrations against coronavirus restrictions, like this one in Prague in mid-January. Most participants weren't wearing face masks, in violation of official regulations.*

We note these escalating protests to again illustrate the foundation that is being built for new anti-establishment populist parties, the mental and economic hardship that is ripping through societies, and the toll it is taking on human lives... that politicians do not feel or understand since they suck off the public tit and have guaranteed income, benefits, etc.

INVESTORS POUR \$360 BILLION INTO EMERGING MARKETS



Since March, investors have funneled more than \$360 billion into the economies of 63 developing nations, including nearly \$180 in 2020's fourth quarter and more than \$17 billion during the first three weeks of this month, according to data from the Institute of International Finance

reported by the *Financial Times* on 23 January.

Investors yanked \$90 billion from these markets when the global economic shutdown crashed their economies. Since then, low interest rates and stagnant economies in most countries have sent these same investors back to developing economies in search of higher returns, even if they face a higher risk.

Emerging economies rely heavily on commodities and natural resources; investors expect the resurgence of China's manufacturing sector and infrastructure spending by the Biden administration to push prices of those goods significantly higher this year. Many investors see these countries' markets as undervalued.

Equity markets in these countries have averaged a 9-percent gain so far this year, while the world's developed economies collectively have managed only 2.7 percent, according to MSCI's emerging market and world indexes.

A record 62 percent of fund managers have more money in emerging markets than their standard models recommend, according to a January Bank of America survey of fund managers collectively managing \$500 billion.

Two-thirds of survey respondents predicted that emerging economies will be the top-performing investment category in 2021.

Artificially low interest rates and western central banks' rescue loans to developing nations have buoyed the markets and drawn in more money than these countries typically have had to oversee, analysts note.

"Interest rates have been low for a very long time and we have no previous experience of that," Philip Turner, a former executive with the Bank for International Settlements, said in a comment quoted by the *Times*. "There's a lot of interest rate risk in the world and we've never had a stress test. It's very difficult to know what will happen when conditions change."

However, "the hunt for yield is most certainly on and will last a long time," he said.

TRENDPOST: *Bond markets in developing economies have been weak this year due to rising yield rates on U.S. Treasury securities, which will moderate returns on fixed income in emerging markets.*

PRICE OF NICKEL SOARS ON EV HYPE



The price of nickel reached \$18,410 a ton last week on the London Metal Exchange, a 70-percent climb since March.

The rise has been driven by forecasts of dramatic growth in electric vehicle sales to be fostered by public and policymakers' interest in zero-emissions technologies, analysts say. EV batteries increasingly are using larger proportions of nickel because batteries with high nickel content store more energy and extend EVs' range between charges.

The buzz around EVs' future also has recently elevated prices for lithium and copper.

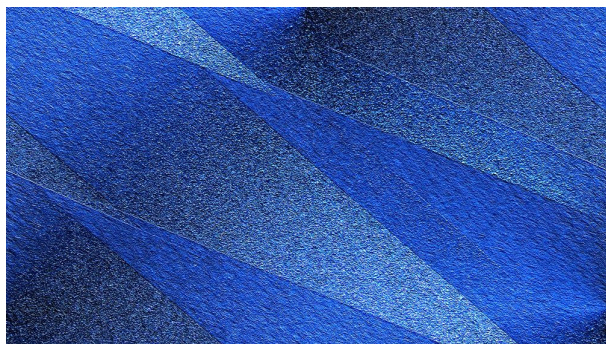
Although most nickel is used to make stainless steel and only 8 percent to make batteries, power cells' market share could rise to 32 percent by 2040, consulting firm CRU has predicted.

Even such a rosy outlook fails to justify a 70-percent gain in the last 10 months, analysts point out.

"The rally has nothing to do with fundamentals; it is EV hype," declared analyst Andrew Mitchell at Wood McKenzie in a comment to the *Financial Times*. "If one looks at the supply-demand balance last year, there was a significant surplus and we expect surpluses this year and next."

Those surpluses will be driven by new nickel mining and refining operations getting underway in Africa, Canada, Indonesia, and the U.S., the *Times* reported, including a new Chinese technology being used in Indonesian projects to separate nickel and cobalt that will "transform the use of nickel for batteries," analysts at China's GF Securities said in a research note.

COBALT PRICE JUMPS AS SUPPLIES TIGHTEN



Supplies of cobalt, a key element of the positive terminals in lithium batteries as well as other electronic components, have tightened in recent months due to logistical disruptions in South Africa, where an economic shutdown froze

economic activity earlier in 2020.

At the same time, demand for the blue metal is rising as the world craves more batteries, more electronic devices, and more electric cars.

A cobalt shortage already is hampering the auto production industry's recovery, the *Wall Street Journal* reported last week.

The spot price of cobalt has climbed about 20 percent since 31 December to \$38,520 a ton on 21 January, the *Journal* noted.

Most of the world's cobalt is mined in the Democratic Republic of Congo, then shipped overland to South Africa's port of Durban. From there, more than 40 percent of it goes to China for initial processing before being sent to battery makers.

With almost all of the world's cobalt supply chain flowing through just three countries, inventories remain at the mercy of logistical or political disruption or manipulation.

"It's very easy for countries like China to dominate the cobalt market because it only needs to be in control of a limited number of mines" to skew the market, Julia Kinnard, a professor of economic geology at the University of Witwatersrand, commented to the *Journal*.

In a sign of cobalt's key place in China's industrial strategy, foreign minister Yang Li visited Congo earlier this month to announce additional aid to the struggling African country.

Investments in Congo by more than 80 Chinese companies have created at least 50,000 jobs there, the Congolese government has reported.

China is hoarding about 5,000 tons of cobalt for its industries to use this year, according to research by Roskill, a consulting firm.

Worried about China's possible market dominance, manufacturers in other countries are searching for new supplies and developing ways to reclaim cobalt from used products.

Researchers also are making progress in creating cobalt-free power cells. (See "New Supercapacitor Could Replace Batteries," *Trends Journal*, 12 January 2021.)

GOING DOWN, GOING BUST, GOING OUT

CARNIVAL STOCK PRICE DOWN 60 PERCENT. Share prices of the world's largest cruise line fell 2.5 percent last week after the company announced it would suspend all U.S. cruises through April and Australian departures until at least mid-May.

Carnival also canceled planned outings in Europe for its Carnival Legend ship, which were scheduled from May through October, and bumped back to 29 May the launch of its Mardi Gras vessel from Port Canaveral in Florida.

Operators had hoped the appearance of COVID vaccines would encourage travelers to book new voyages but the virus's persistence has dashed those hopes, the *Financial Times* reported.

“The pandemic has had a devastating effect on the industry, with many large outbreaks taking place on ships in the early stages of the crisis,” the *Times* noted. “Demand for cruise holidays has since collapsed.”

With no revenue, Carnival is shelling out \$650 million a month to maintain its ships, operate the company, and pay interest, including on \$10 billion in new funding raised since the pandemic began and money gleaned from U.S. and European junk-bond markets in November.

The company also sold several of its older ships for scrap last year.

FRANCESCA'S HOLDINGS CORP. TO BE SOLD. The retailer of women's clothing will sell itself out of bankruptcy to a pair of buyers who will close at least 275 of the chain's 551 stores, the company said in a statement announcing court approval of the plan.

About 140 stores were closed before Francesca's filed for bankruptcy in December.

The new owners are private equity firm TerraMar Capital and Tiger Capital Group, an appraisal and liquidation firm that also is among Francesca's creditors.

The sale is for \$18 million in cash and a promissory note for \$1.25 million. The new owners also are taking on about \$7.75 million in the company's debts.

GODIVA SHUTS ITS NORTH AMERICAN BRICK-AND-MORTAR LOCATIONS. After announcing in 2019 that it would open 2,000 cafés worldwide by 2025, the Turkish-owned chocolatier will depart all 128 of its brick-and-mortar stores in North America by April.

The company opened the first such café in Manhattan in April 2019 and operates shops in Belgium, China, Japan, and the Middle East. Stores in other regions will remain open, Godiva CEO Nurtac Afridi said in a statement announcing the closures.

In North America, Godiva chocolates will still be available through department, drug, and grocery stores as well as online, Afridi said.

INSTACART CUTS 1,900 JOBS. The California-based grocery pick-up and delivery service will dispense with 1,900 workers who roam grocery aisles picking out customers' orders.

The jobs are being lost because many grocers now use their employees to fill orders but still use Instacart's technology.

Also, the company is reducing in-store order-pickers as it moves to have the same person both pick out a customer's groceries and deliver them instead of splitting the tasks between two people.

TREND FORECAST: *As the vaccine recedes, and fears of public contact with it, grocery-shopping services will see their customer bases shrink but not disappear. People able to afford it have gotten used to the convenience of having others do that task for them.*

TOP TRENDS 2021: THE RISE OF CHINA



As we have forecast, the 20th century was the American century – the 21st century will be the Chinese century. The business of China is business; the business of America is war.

While America spent countless trillions waging and losing endless wars and enriching its military-industrial complex, China has spent its trillions advancing the nation's businesses and building its 21st-century infrastructure. The following overview of the current economic trends further paints the ups and downs of China's economic future.

CHINA BECOMES TOP DESTINATION FOR FOREIGN INVESTMENT. For the first time, China surpassed the U.S. in 2020 as the world's first choice for new direct foreign investment, according to data released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on 24 January.

New investments from out of the country rose 4 percent in China last year. In contrast, foreign direct investors pared back their U.S. investments by 49 percent in 2020.

Investments from abroad dropped 71 percent across the European Union. Germany's share of foreign funds slid 61 percent. Britain and Italy, both of which were hit especially hard by the virus, drew no foreign investment last year at all, the U.N. figures showed.

In comparison, East Asia drew a third of all foreign investment last year, its largest share on record. India saw a 13% increase, driven largely by rising demand for digital services.

China contained the COVID epidemic swiftly, then jump-started its manufacturing economy to export an increased wave of products around the globe as the rest of the world kept its economy largely shut under the threat of the virus.

As a result, China gained market share in more places and more industries than ever before.

Its appeal as an investment is not losing its luster.

Walmart has announced it will sink \$460 billion into projects in Wuhan, the Chinese city where the virus began, over five years. Starbucks will put \$150 million into a roasting plant and "innovation park" in the city of Kunshan.

Tesla is adding a research center and expanding its plant in Shanghai, where the Disney Co. is building onto its Shanghai Disneyland Park.

Foreign investment in the U.S. crested at \$472 billion in 2016; foreign investment in China that year was \$134 billion. Investments in the U.S. have declined each year since.

Overseas investors' cooling interest in the U.S. is a natural result of the U.S.'s open economy, which is more sensitive to the pressures of world events, Daniel Rosen, co-founder of the research firm Rhodium Group, said in a comment quoted by the *Wall Street Journal*.

In contrast, China's government exerts more control over the nation's economy and internal investment capital and can direct moves to take advantage of surprises such as the world economic lockdown.

"There is no reason to be concerned about the outlook" for foreign direct investment "in the United States providing that the U.S. is sticking with its basic open-market competitive system," Rosen added.

CHINA LAGS ON TRADE COMMITMENT. Almost a year after China agreed to import an additional \$200 billion a year of U.S. products, it has bought only 58 percent of the amounts it promised, although purchases have accelerated recently in some categories, according to an analysis by the Peterson Institute for International Economics and reported by the *New York Times*.

China has bought 64 percent of the farm products it agreed to, 60 percent of factory-made goods, and only 39 percent of energy products, Peterson's data shows.

They note that the Biden administration must now decide whether to give China more time to make good on its commitment as its consumer economy begins to recover from the pandemic.

Biden could leave Trump-era tariffs in place on \$360 billion worth of Chinese goods entering the U.S. as a lever to pressure China to raise its imports, even though the tariffs raise prices for American businesses and consumers.

During her confirmation hearing as Treasury Secretary, Janet Yellin stated that Biden plans no immediate changes to China policy but will “consult with allies to galvanize collective pressure” on China regarding government subsidies for its export industries and theft of intellectual property.

RENMINBI WILL BE STRONGER THIS YEAR, ANALYSTS PREDICT. China’s renminbi currency, now at a 30-year high against the dollar, will gain another 2 percent against the buck this year, rising to Rmb6.4 to the dollar, according to a median forecast among economists polled by Bloomberg.

The renminbi’s rise “has not reached an end,” Becky Liu, chief China macro-economic strategist at Standard Chartered, commented to the *Financial Times*. She expects the renminbi to reach 6.3 to the dollar during this year’s first half.

The dollar has weakened against a range of other currencies, in part, because of continued low interest rates and the U.S. Federal Reserve’s policy of spreading dollars liberally among other countries to help them weather the economic damage wrought by the global shutdown.

In contrast, China shut its economy quickly, reined in the COVID epidemic, then focused government aid on manufacturing and export industries to help revive the economy quickly as the rest of the world’s productivity collapsed.

“The strength in the renminbi you’re seeing now is a reflection of dollar weakness,” Michelle Lam, China economist at Société Générale, told the *Times*.

That weakness, and the near-zero U.S. interest rates that have contributed to it, account in part for the \$130 billion in foreign capital that now resides in

China. While the U.S. Federal Reserve's official interest rate languished near zero for much of last year, China's markets were offering 3 percent or more.

The tide of capital will continue moving toward China this year, according to Goldman Sachs analyst Danny Suwanapruti, who sees another \$5 to \$10 billion a month in foreign funds arriving in China this year, accelerating to as much as \$15 billion a month in October when Chinese government bonds will be included in FTSE's world bond index.

The renminbi will reach 6.2 to the dollar this year, Goldman Sachs has forecast.

The renminbi's continued power depends, in part, on the Chinese government, which still sets a daily range for the renminbi to gain value or retreat against the dollar within a 2-percent range.

TREND FORECAST: *With the renminbi having its best run against the dollar during 2020's last six months, the U.S. will not be able to use its standard argument that China's exports are going up because the value of its currency is going down and it makes their products cheaper to buy.*

The Wall Street bet that with Joe Biden replacing Donald Trump, he will act less confrontational and volatile trade policies is correct. Biden was a major champion of bringing China into the World Trade Organization under Bill Clinton's presidency.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS by Gregory Mannarino



IN THE MANY articles I've written for the **Trends Journal** runs a common theme:

The current system is completely dependent on the acquisition of exponential debt.

“Exponential” because just to *maintain* the current environment, debt must be increased exponentially. If, for example, the rate that debt is being created remained static, the current economic environment would immediately deteriorate. Without exponential debt, the entire global financial system would melt down in a matter of not days, but **hours**.

The development and implementation of the current debt-based system enforced by the Federal Reserve in America – and the same for every other nation governed by a central bank – is to function on ever-increasing debt, which must be introduced into the system in perpetuity. In other words, if

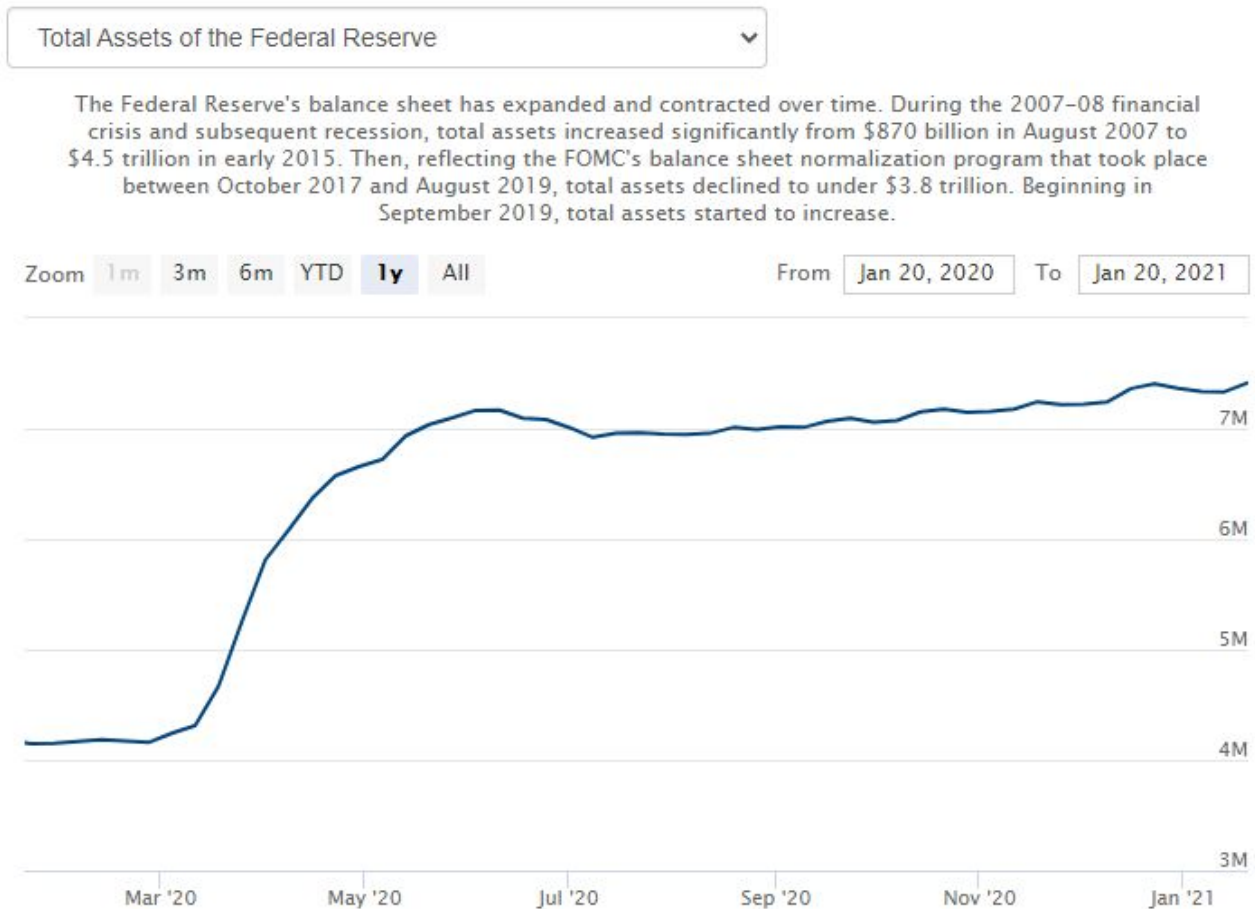
the Federal Reserve were prevented from issuing a single dollar more debt, *just a single dollar*, the entire system would collapse.

Enter the New Paradigm

The magnitude of debt that now must be introduced into the system, due to the deliberate shutdown of the global economy, has to, by design, explode. Moreover, every manner of excuse will be created by world leaders to sell the public on the idea that “now is not the time to worry about debt” and “some action must be done to save the economy.”

Adding more massive debt onto the back of an already debt-saturated nation and debt-overburdened populace is the same as trying to save a drowning man by pouring more water on him!

Below is a chart from the Federal Reserve's website, which shows that in 2020, the Federal Reserve's balance sheet nearly doubled... IN ONE YEAR.



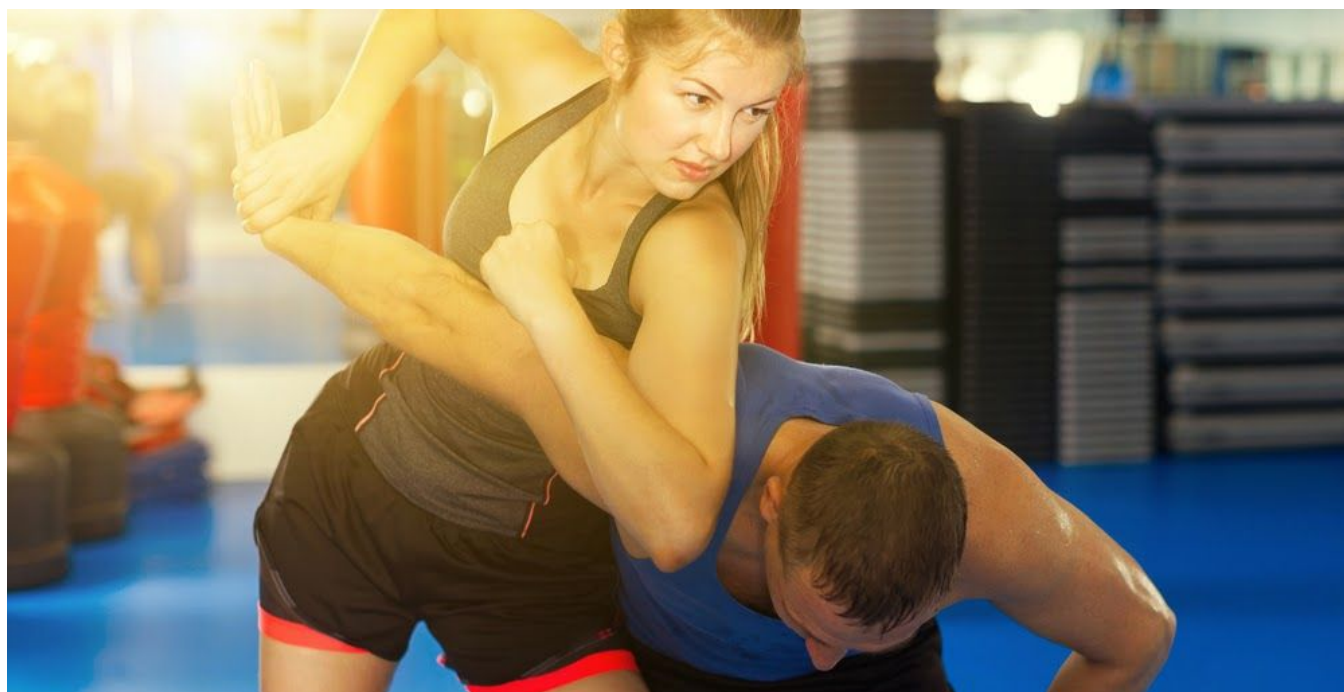
The Federal Reserve has fulfilled its destiny of becoming the buyer and lender of last resort, and it is in the process of a worldwide takeover. Today, the Fed is involved in what is called “Dollar Swaps” with other central banks around the world, effectively “dollarizing the world.”

This “dollarizing scheme” is creating more dollar dependency, even beyond that of the petrodollar system, which is the backbone of the dollar being the world reserve currency.

MARKET FORECAST: 2021 will be the year of a global debt expansion cycle the likes of which has never been seen before... which will propel and consolidate enormous power in the hands of very few: the central banks.

by Gregory Mannarino, [TradersChoice.net](https://www.TradersChoice.net)

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM by Bradley J. Steiner



In Memoriam:

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our beloved friend, Bradley J. Steiner. May his soul rest in peace.

In his legacy, we are fighting the “Brad Steiner fight” – the good fight. The fight for each person to be the person they want to be and to protect themselves when their lives are being viciously threatened by enemies of Freedom, Peace, and Justice.

DON'T PROCRASTINATE WITH READINESS TRAINING

Once a catastrophic event occurs, preparation is impossible. And procrastination, when it comes to getting prepared to meet any catastrophic event, is foolish, indeed.

Self-defense ability, with and without weapons, has – purely for commercial and egotistical reasons – been made to appear much more complicated and

difficult to acquire than it actually is. I am not saying becoming an expert in combative skills is easy or that it can be done in a relatively short time. What I am saying is acquiring some seriously dangerous and reliably efficient unarmed combat skills and becoming deadly with a handgun, knife, and stick to a degree that enables self-defense actions to be undertaken successfully, is a lot simpler and less time-consuming than the popular media would have you believe.

To be able to take care of an attacker in close combat, when all you have are your hands and feet, you need to master a handful of skills. You do not need to become a black belt in anything. And proficiency with modern, hand-held weapons (pistol, knife, stick, etc.) does not require that you enter competitive matches, study for years, or become another Wyatt Earp. You certainly do need to study and practice... but the time it takes to become sufficiently proficient with, for example, a handgun, may be measured in hours, not years.

I have many marvelously proficient black belts in my System. These men have trained long and hard – for years, in fact – to reach their level of expertise and development. However, over the 50-plus years I have been teaching professionally, I've had the pleasure of working with hundreds of men and women who, although not interested in becoming black belts, were interested in becoming adept in self-defense. These people achieved their objective within a year of training, easily; and most had acquired the necessary ability to protect themselves within three to six months.

The [DVD Home Study Course](#) I offer will provide anyone who puts an earnest, disciplined effort into learning its contents with much more than he will ever need for real-world self-defense.

The truth is I pull no punches. I make no concessions to the popular myth that competition produces combat skills or self-defense demands the ability to perform like the late Bruce Lee. Self-defense is simple. I tell the truth. I make no apologies for the need for ferocity, ruthlessness, viciousness, and merciless cruelty and the all-out application of strength, speed, and accurate

movement coupled with the all-important element of surprise. No tricks. No magic. No B.S. No false claims, outrageous promises, or absurd guarantees. Just the real deal... as has been taught and used successfully in wartime by people whose only concern was for using that which works.

So... if hesitating to finally get off your duff and train (either with a competent professional instructor or via DVDs such as those I offer) is due to your feeling the undertaking will be daunting or you just don't want to spend the many years required, wake up!

Within a few months of serious, hard practice and the cultivation of the right mindset, you can become a very dangerous, formidable threat to any street manure. Certainly, you might get bitten by the bug and want to make ongoing training and the acquisition of an expert level of kill your goal, but you do not need to do so. Mastery sufficient to enable you to defend yourself quite adequately can be yours... and no "belts" are needed to prove it.

Times are getting more and more threatening for people who, like yourself, simply wish to live a normal life, take care of your loved ones, and enjoy the civilized pleasures of urban living. Get the training you need NOW – before an emergency strikes – and enjoy the self-confidence and skill that leaves you with peace of mind and real, solid ability.

Here's what you need:

- The establishment of a proper combat mindset. Mental conditioning is vital, as it is the engine that drives the technical machinery.
- Master six to eight reliable hand blows of unarmed combat. Also, develop the basic front and side kicks to low targets. Perfect those blows, individually. Then, cultivate applying them in rapid, smooth combinations – following up in a blizzard of action and overwhelming any adversary with them. When using individual blows or combinations, master the body's vital points and always go after them.

- Study very carefully how attacks occur. Develop a flexible and versatile two dozen or so counterattacking combination actions against these attack forms. Using simple, basic skills, those 24 techniques will offer endless variations and permutations, enabling you to adapt and adjust to whatever happens.
- Acquire good security and avoidance habits. It is a feral world out there. Conducting yourself so you make certain to avoid all of the trouble you can while being able to see whatever trouble you can see before it strikes, and avoiding it, is wise.
- Embrace weapons. Firearms are the great “equalizers,” and only a damn fool denies their value for decent people who might need to defend themselves. Learn how to use a knife (you can become as skilled as a WWII British Commando or American Marine Raider of that era, in less than five hours of training!). Make yourself dangerous with a simple walking stick (this takes about three hours of hard training), and pit a few hours into developing the ability to use anything at hand as a weapon against an assailant.

Professionals (who, by the way, are not necessarily black belts or “champions” in competition) can provide you with all you need within about 18 to 20 hours of intensive teaching. You will need to work for a continued while on practicing and thoroughly instilling what you’ve been taught; but if you do this correctly, you will be a very capable and dangerous threat to any street punk who attacks you.

I hope I have motivated you to get started on a program of readiness training. Waiting serves no purpose; it only makes it less likely that you will possess the confidence and physical skills you may one day need. So, do not procrastinate any further. Get going now!

Following this “Survivalism” column every week will certainly keep you mentally “in the groove” as well as provide you valuable insights, tips, and

knowledge of simple techniques and tactics, all of which may one day save your life or the lives of those dear to you.

Add to your following this column a regular, serious, no-nonsense regimen of training in viable skills – unarmed and with weapons – to ensure you not only know what to do but so you possess the ability to do it.

Like my friend Gerald Celente and the goldmine of information he provides, I, too, am committed to giving you the best possible instruction for your and your family's survival and prosperity in these difficult, sometimes even frightening times.

Best of luck to you as you take advantage of the TRENDS JOURNAL offerings!

by Bradley J. Steiner

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By **Joe Doran**

LOSING “FACE”, FACEBOOK TO PAY MILLIONS OF USERS OVER BIOMETRIC DATA BREACH

A US District Court judged Facebook to be responsible for a data breach detrimentally affecting millions of its social media platform users, and ordered the tech giant via settlement to pay up.

In his ruling, Federal Judge James Donato said “This is money that’s coming directly out of Facebook’s own pocket. The violations here did not extract a penny from the pockets of the victims. But this is real money that Facebook is paying to compensate them for the tangible privacy harms that they suffered.”

As a result of the ruling settlement, Facebook will be required to offer payouts of \$350 dollars to Facebook users in Illinois who were affected. During the litigation, Facebook tried to limit its financial hit to no more than \$550 million, but Donato rejected that amount, and increased it to \$650

million. If the case had reached trial, some analysts predicted that the tech giant, helmed by Mark Zuckerberg, might have been on the hook for much more, totaling billions of dollars.

The case against Facebook involved about 7 million users in Illinois. Facebook stored templates of their faces along with other data, in violation of the state's Biometric Information Privacy Act, one of the strictest laws of its kind in the nation, which restricts using tech such as facial recognition.

TREND FORECAST: *The battle between Hi-Tech and the people has begun. Across the globe, as witnessed in Australia where Google and Facebook are fighting against legislation that would force them to enter into negotiations with news media companies for payment for content, to calls in America to break up the monopoly.*

As we have long forecast, there is strong public demand and high profit opportunities for alternative social media sites. The investors with the cash and know how will reap great rewards. And, just as broadcast media giants have lost major audience share to new competitors over the past several years, so too with alternative social media serving the desires of varied audiences.

COVID AND BIG BROTHER RENDEZVOUS IN VENICE



“Venice is watching tourists' every move.” CNN reported the disturbing fact on 13 January. The news network admired the efforts because Venice is swamped with millions of tourists and in a “post-Covid world”, authorities could hardly be faulted for doing their utmost to proactively monitor tourists to protect the safety of the citizens.

Venice reportedly developed a sophisticated comprehensive “tourist” tracking system, headquartered on the island of Tronchetto. Besides the usual control tower style center where banks of flat screens monitor camera feeds from around the city there are also sophisticated tracking tools that can drill down to virtually every tourist everywhere and anywhere they happen to be--though it’s unlikely they are unaware of just how much their every move is open to scrutiny.

Marco Bettini, co-director general of Venis, the multimedia and tech company that built the Smart Control Room, waxed enthusiastically about its capabilities. “This is the brain of the city. “We know in real time how many people are in each part [of the city], and which countries they're from.”

The new system not only records what's going on; analyzing the traffic and whether a waterbus is late and, if so, by how many minutes. The system also allows looking back, in a “time machine” fashion, to events and tourist whereabouts, from any time in the past, at least since the whole apparatus has been in operation.

TREND FORECAST: *The use of invasive technology to monitor every action taken by citizens will continue to rapidly accelerate. From fighting foreign terrorists to the new war on domestic terrorism in a country near you, politicians will enforce government control measures to stop resistance of any measures that stifle their powers of overseeing and ruling the general public.*

CES 2021: LOST IN VR



CES, the most influential tech event in the world, gathered virtually from January 11 to 14th, 2021. Produced by the Consumer Technology Association (CTA), the event has been a proving ground for breakthrough

technologies and global innovators, and this year was no different.

Tech companies continue to come up with more realistic immersive technology to seduce people into the lucrative world of Virtual Reality, and several cutting edge VR technologies were featured at CES 2021.

Among the promises of VR is the ability to simulate reality in ways that have applications for teaching in a wide array of fields, from science to sports to military training, etc. But many of the expensive devices and platforms of VR have led to a generation only becoming more hooked into entertainment and gaming that is distinctly and perhaps dangerously removed from real life and actual human experience.

Nextmind showcased a mind-control (ie. neural input) “Nextmind Band”, designed to work with Oculus Headset and various VR platforms. The small disc shaped-device allows a user to control VR by using their thoughts and focus, instead of a physical input controller.

Scott Stein, a technology reviewer who tried the Nextmind Band described the experience as rough, but mesmerizing. “All of NextMind's experiences involve looking at large, subtly flashing areas of your screen, which can be ‘clicked’ by focusing. Or staring. It was hard to tell how to make something activate, and I found myself trying to open my eyes more, or breathe, or concentrate. Eventually, sooner or later, the thing I was looking at would click.”

Stein found that the device really could ascertain which of a field of five or so on-screen flashing ‘buttons’ he was looking at. He emphasized that the connection between him and the successful clicks was indeed happening neurally, and not via eye-tracking, since the Nextmind Band was resting on the back of his head as an added part of an Oculus headset.

Another tech startup, bHaptics debuted what they are calling the next generation in Haptic suits, which are wearable suits with technology for simulating physical and tactile experiences during VR gaming and

simulations. The TactSuitX40 and TacSuit x16 sport different price points, but both promise to take everything from VR and PC gaming to music and movie-watching to another level.

Built into the suits are “vibrotactile” elements, which according to the company, supply “powerful, yet sophisticated haptic feedback in sync with content, using tactile motors that are evenly distributed throughout the haptic vest.”

Popular Oculus Quest titles, as well as SteamVR and VR FPS games, including Pavlov and Onward, have native support for the new TactSuits.

TREND FORECAST: *As we wrote back in March 2015, “Virtual reality is becoming reality – and it’s coming soon to an educational institution near you.” We noted that “In higher education circles, the long-held belief that digital learning has significant limitations will fade,” when technology advanced to higher levels.*

Indeed in his book, Trends 2000 (Warner Books, 1997) Gerald Celente wrote “Interactive, online learning will revolutionize education,” and “the growth of the home ed and InteractiveU trend will accelerate rapidly once tele-videophony or other comparable become available and affordable.”

Among the latest advancements of the “multimedia-interface technologies” is virtual reality. Trends are born, they grow, mature, reach old age and die. Online-ed is in the early growing stages that provides lucrative opportunities for OnTrendpreneurs® who are ahead of the curve and on top of the trend.

QUANTUM COMMUNICATION TESTED SUCCESSFULLY VIA DRONES

The cat and mouse game of governments and corporations spying on and accruing digital dossiers on every citizen, and Americans fighting for constitutional freedoms and their rights of privacy in communications, might play out next on a quantum battlefield.

For the first time, an experiment using drones successfully tested the concept of quantum communication, which could offer a virtually unhackable form of transmission.

Detailed in a January issue of *Physics*, the magazine of the American Physics Society, the experiment involved a system where two drones were used to generate and relay entangled photon pairs to each other and ground stations.

The reason why Quantum communication might be the answer to fully secure message sharing, lies in the nature of quantum physics. Users exchanging encrypted messages using “entangled” photons, would be relying on pairs of particles with a unique quantum-mechanical relationship. According to *Physics*, “For every pair, one photon would be sent to each of the users, who would be alerted to any eavesdropping by a loss of entanglement between the photons.”

One method already used experimentally for quantum communication involves fiber optics. But this method is problematic, a large fraction of the photons scatter before reaching their destination. Atmospheric transmission is more reliable, and was demonstrated using a Chinese satellite in 2018. But satellites are expensive and can not easily adapt to changing demands on the ground. That’s where the use of small drones has conceptually proven itself to be a breakthrough.

In a new age of hyper-technology, communication, and disruption of it, continues to be a fast evolving matter on legal and political fronts. Before the inauguration this past week, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) issued a warning against using radio services to “facilitate criminal acts.” It claimed its unprecedented bulletin to the general public was due to reports that some people were utilizing radio services as an alternative to social media sites in order to communicate and coordinate activities.

The irony of the FCC issuing such a statement, while having nothing to say about a US President, significant social influencers aligned with him, as well as countless everyday Americans being purged from monopolistic social media platforms, was not lost on many.

Still, the FCC statement illustrated the willingness of at least some Americans to find ways around technocratic manipulations. The pursuit and promise of quantum communication such as the “drone network” experiment might be analogous to the rise of digital currencies, which are similarly resistant to manipulation.

TREND FORECAST: *In America, the so-called Land of the Free, government agencies have been, continue to and will ramp up spying on all its population. Last month the American Civil Liberties Union filed a lawsuit demanding information about the FBI’s Electronic Device Analysis Unit (EDAU) — a forensic unit that the ACLU believes has been breaking into iPhone’s encryption systems.*

The statement issued by the ACLU said, “The FBI is secretly breaking the encryption that secures our cell phones and laptops from identity thieves, hackers, and abusive governments ... and it refuses to even acknowledge that it has information about these efforts.”

And last week, the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency told congressional investigators that it has the technology to monitor the location of mobile devices in the US and has accessed information without a warrant.

The Wall Street Journal reported that these government agencies can buy access to the information from commercial brokers, without obtaining a warrant from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. The data is usually obtained from smartphone GPS locations.

Senator Ron Wyden brought up the issue during a hearing with Avril Haines, President Biden’s pick to head national intelligence. The Democrat said the abuses within the program “take your breath away” and is “really a dodge on all the legal protections Americans have.”

And now with the Biden Administration pushing for domestic terrorism bill that essentially criminalizes the First Amendment, government spying on its people will be accelerated.

TRENDS ON THE COVID WARFRONT



COVID LOCKDOWNS DEADLIER THAN THE VIRUS

Go back to last year when the COVID War broke out. As we have noted in detail, Big Tech was the first to close down their offices, telling employees they could work from home.

It worked perfectly for them. As the world went remote, the tech-heavy NASDAQ spiked 43.6 percent.

For the rest of society, schools and “non-essential” businesses closed down, office occupancy rates plummeted to a percentage rate in the teens, millions fled large cities for suburbs and ex-burbs, tens of millions became unemployed, and millions of businesses closed down and/or went bust.

Were the lockdowns worth it?

Not according to a study published last month by the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), titled, “The Long-Term Impact of the COVID-19 Unemployment Shock on Life Expectancy and Mortality Rates.”

The research by two economists from Johns Hopkins and Duke University and a medical researcher from Harvard Medical School concludes the recession caused by lockdown policies may cause deaths that “far exceed those immediately related to the acute COVID-19 critical illness.” The researchers concluded, “The recession caused by the pandemic can jeopardize population health for the next two decades.”

To date, this is the first study that analyzes the devastating long-term lockdown effects.

As the 6 January article in *Fortune* magazine reviewing the study notes, “In March and April [the first two months of lockdowns in the U.S.], the unemployment rate jumped from nearly the lowest in 50 years to the highest since the current measurement system began in 1948.”

Hit Hard

The study found that those suffering the most from the lockdown recession are women and minorities:

“Importantly, COVID-19 related job losses disproportionately affect women, particularly of Hispanic heritage; African Americans; foreign-born individuals; less-educated adults and individuals age 16-24. In fact, the unemployment rate underestimates the extent of the economic contraction as many potential workers have abandoned the workforce (especially women).”

Culling decades on unemployment, lifespan, and fatality rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the CDC, the study concluded the fatality effect of the 2020 lockdown “staggering”: “Over the next 20 years, 1.37 million

more people will die than would have died without the unemployment shock the pandemic caused.”

The article reporting on this study makes clear that “in coming decades, we will never know exactly whose lives have been shortened by the economic distress the pandemic caused. But that suffering will be just as real and shouldn’t be forgotten or ignored.”

TREND FORECAST: *The word on the Street being sold by the media and politicians and believed by the majority of the population is that with the vaccine rush-out underway, businesses and “life” will bounce back in late spring/early summer.*

Yes, it will, to some extent. But what has been lost is lost and will not be recovered as the “Greatest Depression” worsens. As long-term economic conditions decline, COVID War fatality rates will continue to rise.

LOCKDOWN LUNACY CREATING “MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC”



As we reported when the COVID War began last year, Sweden was heavily criticized for not locking down its economy and refusing to impose mandatory mask-wearing and other restrictive measures. It counted on its citizens to voluntarily make intelligent

adjustments to deal with the coronavirus.

While the mainstream media continues to attack Sweden for not locking down by comparing its death rate to neighboring Nordic countries, ignored is the fact that Sweden’s COVID death rate is lower than most European nations which severely locked down.

And, never is it mentioned that over 90 percent of those who died of the virus in Sweden were over 70 years of age, with the majority from elder care homes.

And NEVER do they compare it to the locked-down United States. For example, being that the Swedes are in better shape than Americans, who have twice the percentage of obese citizens, the COVID death rate in Michigan, which has a bit smaller population than Sweden, has 5,000 more virus fatalities.

Losing It

Conversely, a study from Denmark, which openly criticized Sweden for not locking down, reveals the catastrophic effect the country's lockdown has had on mental health.

Conducted by Soren Dinesen Ostergaard, professor of Clinical Medicine at Aarhus University Hospital-Psychiatry, the survey, taken between November and December, found that 27 percent of Danish women and 23 percent of men are experiencing noticeable increases in depression due to the isolation of the lockdown:

“The psychological well-being of both men and women declined when Denmark closed down during the first wave of the coronavirus pandemic in the spring of 2020 – with women being hit the hardest. But during the second wave, it is the other way around in terms of gender: the psychological well-being of men and women is generally low, but it has fallen most in men.”

Professor Ostergaard said,

“The gender difference in our results is interesting, but we cannot determine the underlying mechanisms based on the data at hand. Perhaps it has to do with uncertainties related to employment. The job

market has been negatively affected by the pandemic, especially the private sector, which occupies more men than women.”

Anna Mia Ekstrom, who holds a Clinical Professorship in Global Infectious Disease Epidemiology at Sweden’s Department of Global Public Health, offered this analysis last fall:

“Hard lockdowns are unsustainable over sort of any extended period of time in a free society. So, unless you find sort of an acceptable level of restrictions and recommendations that people can understand and support, I don’t think you can sustain a lockdown.”

Beyond Denmark

The economic and psychological devastation caused by the lockdowns extends throughout much of Europe. As CNN reported on 5 January, “A number of European nations have kicked off 2021 in familiar fashion, locking down residents and struggling to curb COVID-19 cases.” Those countries include the U.K., France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Poland, Austria, and Greece.

Bloomberg News published this headline on 12 January: “Double-Dip Recession Beckons in Europe as Lockdowns Drag On.” The article reports, “Analysts at banks... are downgrading forecasts to account for lockdowns – in some places tougher than ever.”

The CEO of Adecco, the largest staffing firm in the world located in Switzerland, recently asserted,

“Wave of lockdowns across Europe should prompt managers to spend more time considering their employees’ mental health. Especially with the second wave of lockdowns coming in, we need more emotionally intelligent leaders, because we see that many people are suffering.”

On 12 January, after a third lockdown was announced by the U.K. government, Paul Farmer, CEO of one of the country's leading non-profit mental health organizations stated, "It's no understatement to say that the nation is facing a mental health pandemic."

Emma Thomas, CEO of Young Minds, the U.K.'s leading charity dedicated to the mental health of young people, revealed on 13 January,

"Many have lost access to mental health support during the first lockdown, while others chose not to look for help at a time when the NHS was under so much pressure...Young people tell us that they've struggled to cope with the changes and loss of coping mechanisms brought on by the pandemic, with many experiencing social isolation, anxiety, and fears around their future."

TRENDPOST: *In just a few weeks, it will be one year since the COVID War began. Unprecedented in world history, much of the global economy was locked down. The socioeconomic, geopolitical, and psychological implications will be devastating. Sadly, this headline from The Hill exemplifies the deadly results of the draconian lockdowns:*

Las Vegas-area district moves to partially reopen schools amid surge in student suicides

*For several months, the **Trends Journal** has been reporting on the extensive mental health issues caused by lockdowns. (See our articles, "[COVID LOCKDOWN: MENTAL ILLNESS BLUES](#)," "[MENTALLY ILL POLITICIANS CREATING MENTAL ILLNESS](#)," and "[U.K. DOCS WARN: LOCKDOWNS MORE HARMFUL THAN COVID](#).")*

JUNK FOOD VS. COVID-19: THE WINNER IS?



Go to Yahoo. Turn on the TV. Pick up any newspaper. Read the headlines and you'll see daily doses of selling COVID Fear and Hysteria.

On 14 January, *The New York Times*, as it has been doing since the coronavirus first became the #1 story of the past year, published the dramatic headline:

400,000 More U.S. Deaths than Normal Since COVID-19 Struck

This number, 400,000, makes for an important comparison. Supposing that many Americans truly died from the virus (as we have detailed, people who died of other chronic diseases but had tested positive for the virus are listed as COVID victims), the same number of Americans are dying every year from eating a junk food diet advertised incessantly on mainstream media.

This was confirmed in a study conducted by the University of Washington's Institute for Health Metrics, titled, "Unhealthy Eating Linked to 400,000 US Deaths Per Year."

Add to this junk food's link to heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes, among the major comorbidities responsible for the vast majority of COVID-19 deaths in the United States. Where is *The New York Times* (or, for that matter, any of mainstream media) when it comes to publishing emotionally-charged headlines about the dangers of junk food?

Indeed, as reported by Woodruff Lab, the vast majority of adults in America are overweight or obese, and more than half will suffer from diabetes or pre-diabetic conditions, according to Northwestern Medicine researchers at the American Heart Association (AHA).

They note 72 percent of men and 63 percent of women are overweight or obese and 62 percent of men and 43 percent of women have dysglycemia (either diabetes or pre-diabetes). Again, people suffering from these conditions are major COVID victims.

They also note that less than five percent of Americans currently are considered to have ideal cardiovascular health.

Media Profits from Junk Food

The same mainstream media pumping out continuous headlines about COVID surges and fatalities profit handsomely from billion-dollar junk food advertising campaigns. (A 2019 report released by the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at the University of Connecticut stated, “\$8.8 billion of advertising was spent on sugar-infused sodas, fast food, candy, and unhealthy snacks.”)

Even worse, the Rudd Center notes, “Food companies target children, teens, and communities of color with marketing for their least healthy products.”

These corporate junk food advertisers are selling products that are a major reason over 34 million suffer from diabetes, with another 80 million with pre-diabetes, which the CDC states greatly increases the risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

How the U.S. Government Supports Junk Food Culture

In August 2016, a report was published by the Institute for Integrative Nutrition, which showed the link between billion-dollar government subsidies and the food crops processed into unhealthy junk foods. The research showed:

- “The majority of government subsidies go towards commodity crops – corn, soybeans, wheat, rice, sorghum, milk, and meat – which are most often processed into foods we know are linked to obesity.

- These foods constitute the largest source of calories in the American diet, including breads, sugary drinks, pizza, pasta, ice cream, and grain-based desserts like cookies, doughnuts, and granola bars.
- From 1995–2010, the federal government spent \$170 billion to finance the production of these foods.”

U.K. Junksters

It's not just Americans who are dying from the junk food/COVID crisis.

The *British Medical Journal* published the article, “Food Industry Shares the Blame for Severity of COVID-19,” which reported on research conducted at the Queen Mary University of London. Researchers say COVID has “made tackling the obesity pandemic even more urgent,” and they call on food industries around the world to “immediately stop promoting, and governments to force reformulation of, unhealthy foods and drinks.”

The article also confirmed that similar to the U.S., about 65–70 percent of the U.K. population is excessively overweight.

TRENDPOST: *Given the massive amounts of junk food consumed in the U.S. and the U.K., it's no mystery why both nations suffer among the highest death rates from COVID-19 in the world... no matter how severely the governments impose lockdowns.*

Instead of destroying millions of businesses and hundreds of millions of lives and creating unprecedented mental health issues due to isolation, there should be a lockdown on government subsidies... i.e, politicians stealing taxpayer money and giving it to junk-food bandits who pay them off with “campaign contributions.”

In the world's mainstream media, vaccinations are the only lifesaver to the virus. Never is heard an encouraging word for people to get into shape, eat healthily, and build stronger immune systems.

WHO ADMITS: COVID TESTS FLAWED



What a surprise. We have been reporting on the inaccuracies of PCR tests for months.

But, now it's legit. The World Health Organization (WHO) admits their

COVID test is flawed.

On 20 January 2021, the same day as Joe Biden's inauguration, the WHO published warnings on its website that the PCR test, the so-called "gold standard" for determining COVID-19 infectious levels, has been misused.

The warning states:

"WHO reminds IVD users that disease prevalence alters the predictive value of test results; as disease prevalence decreases, the risk of false positive increases. This means that the probability that a person who has a positive result (SARS-CoV-2 detected) is truly infected with SARS-CoV-2 decreases as prevalence decreases, irrespective of the claimed specificity."

Note the important phrase "the risk of false positive increases."

The WHO also confirmed that the PCR test is only relevant when considered as one of many factors for determining whether someone is infectious with COVID-19:

"Most PCR assays are indicated as an aid for diagnoses; therefore, health care providers must consider any result in combination with timing of sampling, specimen type, assay specifics, clinical

observations, patient history, confirmed status of any contacts, and epidemiological information.”

Getting more specific and revealing why so many medical professionals have criticized the test as falsely labeling people as “infectious,” the warning adds:

“Where test results do not correspond with the clinical presentation, a new specimen should be taken and retested using the same or different NAT technology.”

Beginning to own up the substantial problems with the testing, at the end of December, the following appeared on the organization’s website:

“In some circumstances, the distinction between background noise and actual presence of the target virus is difficult to ascertain. Users of RT-PCR reagents should read the IFU carefully to determine if manual adjustment of the PCR positivity threshold is necessary to account for any background noise which may lead to a specimen with a high cycle threshold (Ct) value result being interpreted as a positive result.”

TRENDPOST: Tune into the mainstream news. Day after day, it is a constant barrage of “COVID Cases.”

The inaccuracy of the cases is never mentioned. And it doesn’t matter how few. This is Sunday’s headline story in Halifax Today:

Nova Scotia reports 1 new case of COVID-19 Sunday

What class of imbecilic Presstitutes would run a headline like this?

Why are they doing it? There are 971,395 people in Nova Scotia.

“1 new case” out of nearly a million people... AND the tests are flawed!

Rather than chastising the Presstitutes – the media whores who are being paid to sell fear and hysteria by their corporate pimps – the general public buys it.

And despite the exposed flaws in the PCR test that have been reported for many months, across the globe, it is being used to rationalize lockdowns, which are destroying millions of businesses and tens of millions of lives, keeping people isolated from normal interactions, causing severe mental health issues, etc.

TRENDPOST: The **Trends Journal** has been reporting and documenting for months the flaws of PCR tests. Here are links to several of our articles:

[COVID GOLD TEST PROVES TO BE “WORTHLESS”](#)

[PRIMARY COVID-19 TEST: “ERRORS AND FLAWS”](#)

[LEGAL RULING IN PORTUGAL: PCR TEST FOR COVID IS FLAWED](#)

[FLAWED COVID TEST RESPONSIBLE FOR “MASS HYSTERIA”](#)

PCR TEST PROBLEMS: DÉJÀ VU ALL OVER AGAIN



The PCR test, also known as “molecular testing,” was chosen as the “gold standard” by the CDC despite it being proven completely unreliable when used before the coronavirus ever showed up.

This fact was brought to bear in an article by George Michael, a London-based medical researcher and data analyst, who referenced a *New York Times* article dated 22 January 2007.

The Times article, titled, “Faith in Quick Test Leads to Epidemic that Wasn’t,” exposes how a New Hampshire community was freaked out back in 2007 by fears of a serious infectious disease epidemic that turned out to be unfounded. As the article states, “Now, as they look back on the episode, epidemiologists and infectious disease specialists say the problem was that they placed too much faith in a quick and highly sensitive molecular test that led them astray.”

The test that led them astray was the same PCR test that has shown to be highly flawed in accurately determining whether someone with COVID-19 is actually infectious.

Here’s what happened according to *The New York Times* article:

In January 2007, Dr. Kathryn Kirkland, infectious disease expert at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire, was concerned about several workers in her hospital coming down with coughs that couldn’t be controlled. Her fear was this could be the reappearance of whooping cough, a disease that could be fatal to children and older adults with frail immune systems.

To determine the potential of an epidemic, a molecular test that gave quick results was administered to some 1,000 hospital workers. Based on that test, 142 workers were told they appeared to be infectious with the disease and were ordered to stay home as a caution.

The New York Times wrote,

“Then, about eight months later, health care workers were dumbfounded to receive an e-mail message from the hospital administration informing them that the whole thing was a false alarm.”

The article continued, noting,

“Now, as they look back on the episode, epidemiologists and infectious disease specialists say the problem was that they placed too much faith in a quick and highly sensitive molecular test that led them astray.”

That molecular test was at the center of the false alarm?

The article confirms, “At Dartmouth the decision was to use a test, PCR (polymerase chain reaction). It is a molecular test that, until recently, was confined to molecular biology laboratories.”

Reacting to the false alarm created by the PCR test, Dr. Trish M. Perl, epidemiologist at Johns Hopkins and past president of the Society of Health Care Epidemiologists of America, stated this back then about the PCR test: “It’s a problem; we know it’s a problem. My guess is that what happened at Dartmouth is going to become more common.”

TRENDPOST: *As we have reported, the media continues to promote the spiking “cases” while not only failing to mention the inaccuracy of the tests but never a peep about the 99.8 percent recovery rate for those who get the virus.*

PCR TEST NEEDS ADJUSTMENT

Among those calling attention to problems with the PCR test is Dr. Anthony Fauci, who the media and politicians have ordained “America’s #1 infectious disease expert.”

Back in July, Dr. Fauci appeared on the podcast, “This Week in Virology,” where he stated the following about the higher levels of PCR results:

“What is now sort of evolving into a bit of a standard is that if you get a cycle threshold of 35 or more... the chances of it being replication-confident are minuscule.”

Note: Most medical authorities accept as “infectious” any threshold cycle up to 40 and sometimes slightly above that.

In the podcast, Fauci also stated,

“It’s very frustrating for the patients as well as for the physicians... somebody comes in, and they repeat their PCR, and it’s like a 37 cycle threshold, but you almost never can culture virus from a 37 threshold cycle... So, I think if somebody does come in with 37, 38, even 36, you got to say, you know, it’s just dead nucleotides, period.”

You can hear Dr. Fauci’s comments [here](#).

Kansas Response and Confusion at MIT



Responding to growing criticism of inaccurately calibrating relevant levels of COVID-19 infection, on 7 January, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KHEL), lowered the cycle threshold (Ct) from 42 cycles to 35.

But no across-the-board adjustments are being made, leading to confusion and amped-up anxiety of reported spikes in infectious transmissions.

A perfect example is the following email and response on 2 November at MIT Medical. On the [school's website](#), a student, clearly concerned about a PCR test result, sent this email:

“Last week, I tested positive during routine COVID Pass testing on campus and was told to self-isolate for 10 days. My family members have all tested negative, but they are also being asked to quarantine for 14 days. None of us have had any symptoms, and we’re all feeling

pretty frustrated at having to put our lives on hold like this. Isn't it possible that my test was a false positive? Can't I be retested?"

Note the obfuscation and lack of clarity in the official response:

"The PCR test used by MIT, like other PCR tests, is very unlikely to return a false positive. If the test comes back positive, we can be sure that it has correctly detected genetic material from the SARS-CoV-2 virus, the virus that causes COVID-19... But might PCR tests be too good at finding traces of the virus? That's a question which scientists are starting to investigate."

This comment was made over six months after the coronavirus first appeared in the state of Washington. Yet, as evidenced by the official response above, scientists are just "starting to investigate" the effectiveness of the PCR Test.

The additional official response to the anxious student gets even more confusing:

"But as we learn more, this binary way of viewing test results – positive/negative, infected/not infected – may change. After all, the amount of virus in a sample is directly correlated with the number of amplification cycles needed to detect it, a number known as its cycle threshold (Ct). A positive test that comes back positive in 20 cycles contains a greater amount of virus than one requiring 40 cycles. Right now, we just call both results 'positive.'"

The response then quotes the school's associate medical director:

"There is some evidence that Ct values may be useful in predicting patients' infectiousness and prognosis, but we're not yet at the point where it makes sense for us to include that information in our decision-making process at MIT. For one thing, Ct values are not absolute. Different machines can produce different Ct values for the

same sample, and the same machine can give different Ct values for different samples from the same person.”

The response concludes,

“While it may be useful to know if an individual’s Ct value is on the high or low end of the scale, based on our current knowledge, it would not change quarantine or self-isolation recommendations.”

TRENDPOST: *As exemplified above, despite the completely inconclusive value of the PCR test, it remains the “gold standard” for confirming the anxiety-producing reports of infection used to justify the destruction of economies around the world.*

As Dr. Michael Mina, a leading epidemiologist at the Harvard School of Public Health, described the PCR test, “The threshold is so high that it detects people with the live virus as well as those with a few genetic fragments left over from a past infection that no longer poses a risk. It’s like finding a hair in a room after a person left it.”

ANTIPARASITIC COULD REDUCE CHANCE OF COVID DEATHS UP TO 75%



IVERMECTIN

Ivermectin, an off-patent antiparasitic drug, has shown promise in the treatment of patients with moderate to severe cases of COVID-19, and in some studies have reduced the chance of death by 75 percent, according to a report last week in the *Financial Times*.

The report said the drug is usually used in the treatment of parasitic infections.

“It’s a generic drug used all over the world,” Andrew Hill, one of the researchers at the University of Liverpool, told the paper. “It costs \$0.12 to make the drug substance. The drug costs \$3 in India, \$960 in the US.”

Harold told the paper the drug seems to make people less infectious when they come down with the virus. He told the paper that vaccination is “central to the response to the pandemic. But this might help reduce infection rates by making people less infectious and it might reduce death rates by treating the viral infection.”

Researchers admit that more studies need to be conducted, and they published their findings in *EClinicalMedicine*, a clinical journal published by *The Lancet*. The antiparasitic drug reportedly reduces the replication of the virus inside humans.

“Although our study is small and it is too early to draw conclusions, the trends observed in viral loads, symptom duration, and antibody levels are encouraging and warrant further exploration in larger clinical trials with a higher diversity of patients,” said Carlos Chaccour, Research Professor at Barcelona Institute for Global Health (ISGlobal).

TREND FORECAST: Alternatives to fighting the coronavirus are barely reported in the mainstream media and most often readily dismissed.

As we have pointed out since the COVID War began, rarely, if ever, has the media, politicians, and the anointed “health experts” recommended that people eat healthily, build their immune systems, and consider natural healing remedies.

MERKEL EXTENDS CORONAVIRUS LOCKDOWNS



German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced last Tuesday the extension of the country's coronavirus lockdown. "Now is the time to take preventative measures against the threat of this virus," she said.

The mandate has been in effect since December and calls on school closures, limiting household interactions, a ban on drinking alcohol in public, and all nonessential shops and services to be closed. All those on public transportation are required to wear face masks with advanced respirators.

Bavaria requires all those on public transportation and inside shops to wear FFP2 masks, which provide an extra layer of protection. These masks not only prevent the person wearing them from getting other people sick, but they also act as a preventative tool for the wearer.

Merkel made the announcement after a meeting with premiers from the countries of 16 states. The lockdown was to expire at the end of January but will now end on Valentine's Day, *DW.com* reported. The report said that infections have decreased in the country over the past few days but there is a lingering concern the new variant could add to an increase in infections.

"If countries should decide to take different paths... you have to be ready to say then, we'll have to reintroduce border controls. We don't want that, we want to find an agreement with our partners, but we can't have that (infections) just coming because other countries aren't taking another path," she said.

Repeat Offenders

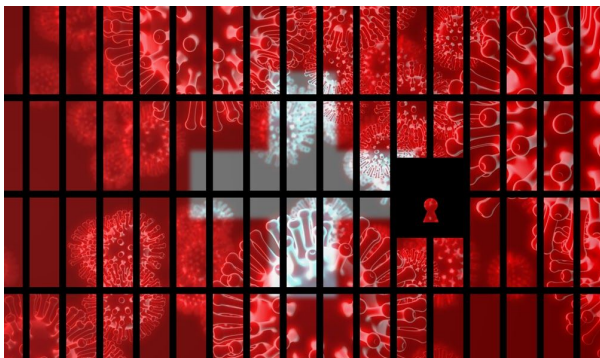
Some German states are considering ways to deal with those in the country who continue to disregard coronavirus guidelines. One of the solutions will be to send them to detention centers.

“Pandemic control lives or dies with public acceptance. This would suffer if noncompliance remained without consequences,” Sönke Schulz, a regional leader in Schleswig-Holstein, told a local paper.

TRENDPOST: Ignored by the mainstream media and politicians is the fact that the coronavirus is a dangerous disease for the elderly and those with comorbidities. About 89 percent of those who died from the virus in Germany were over 70 and 96 percent were over 60.

As we have noted, governments should be taking measures to protect those most vulnerable to the virus and stop destroying entire economies, destroying businesses, ruining lives, and crushing the livelihood of the young to fight mostly an “old person’s virus.”

SWITZERLAND REFERENDUM TO CHALLENGE COVID LOCKDOWNS



A petition in Switzerland surpassed the number of signatures required to trigger a referendum on stopping Bern’s COVID-19 restrictions, which hopes to limit future lockdowns that can be mandated by the government.

Friends of the Constitution, the group spearheading the initiative, have criticized the country’s approach in dealing with the virus outbreak. Christopher Pfluger, a spokesman from the group, told the *Wall Street*

Journal the group is concerned about individual liberties and the economic fallout from lockdown mandates.

The report pointed out an opinion poll that showed 55 percent of respondents were concerned about their liberties being impacted by lockdown measures. In December, officials in the country demanded all bars and restaurants close until the end of February.

Euronews.com reported the group insists the lockdowns implemented have been “disproportionate” and “demonstrably ineffective.” Aside from the economic issues, some of the 86,000 who signed the petition expressed concern the government could put in place a “compulsory system with poorly tested vaccines.”

The referendum could take place as soon as June.

“People and companies who have been pushed to the brink by the irresponsible dictates of the Federal Council must be helped,” the group said in a statement, according to EuroNews.

TRENDPOST: As Gerald Celente wrote in the summer 2011 ***Trends Journal***, “*Direct Democracy: It’s the Game Changer.*”

Celente wrote, “I’ve come to the conclusion that the only solution is to take that control from the handful of ‘them’ – the power possessors and power brokers – and put the power into the hands of the people. But how?”

Back in 2011, he proposed the “Celente Solution of Direct Democracy”: a potentially globe-changing movement that would replace today’s “representative democracy.”

As clear by their deeds and actions, politicians are representative of their interests and to those special interests that give them money.

Celente said, “Positive change will not and cannot occur until power is taken away from the power-obsessed.”

The “Direct Democracy” solution he proposes “... will not only transfer power to the public (for better or for worse!), it will make ‘we the people’ fully responsible for creating the future.

“The choice is stark. Either we take action to create our destiny or others will continue to create it for us. And, judging by past performance, we’re not going to like what they create.”

As the anti-establishment trend intensifies and citizens lose faith in political parties and systems, they will seek the Direct Democracy option that puts the future in their hands.

DUTCH OFFICIALS: LOCK IT DOWN



The Netherlands announced last week it aims to put into place a curfew from 9:00 PM to 4:30 AM due to virus infection fears, reports said.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte blamed the curfew on the new variants that have emerged. *Euronews* reported some lawmakers in the country lashed out at the new restriction and said the Dutch leader was making the public “bleed for his own failure” in dealing with the virus.

Tunahan Kuzu, a member of the Think party, said the curfew essentially turns the country into a “police state.”

Riots broke out over the weekend in the Dutch cities of Amsterdam and Eindhoven. Law enforcement used water cannons to break up the crowd, according to the *Associated Press*. The report said the confrontations

between police and protesters were the most violent since the beginning of the outbreak.

More than 100 people were arrested in Amsterdam and 55 in Eindhoven. Reports indicated vehicles were burned and several businesses in Eindhoven were looted. The AP reported that a day prior, “youths” broke into a COVID testing facility in the town of Urk and set it on fire.

On Monday, Rutte said, “This has nothing to do with protests, this is criminal violence and we will treat it as such.”

The *Australian Associated Press* reported the curfew is the first in the country since World War II. The report said only people with urgent needs to be outside their homes will be allowed outside or face a fine. The mandate is supposed to stay in place until 9 February, the report said.

The country has a population of about 17 million, and more than 13,000 have died from the virus. *Reuters* reported that bars and restaurants in the country have been closed since October and schools since December.

TOP 10 TREND OF 2021: “Roaring 2021.”

Can't go to college, can't get a job, can't move out of your parent's house, can't pay off your debts, can't buy a new car... can't, can't, can't. The American Dream, or the dream of any youngster around the world, has become a COVID nightmare. As we have forecast, there will be strong anti-lockdown, go-out-and-play, speakeasy, Roaring '21 movements launched by 18-to 29-year-olds who view COVID as an “old person's disease.”

According to the scientific data, the recovery rate among 1- to-20-year-olds is 99.997 percent and, on average, the virus recovery rate is 99.7 percent. Those aged 65 and over suffering from pre-existing chronic health conditions are most vulnerable to die from the virus.

EU COUNTRIES: NO TRAVEL = NO VIRUS?



With concern over new coronavirus variants, governments across the European Union announced last week new travel restrictions in hopes to limit the increase of new cases.

Belgium Prime Minister Alexander De Croo announced his country would ban all nonessential travel until at least 1 March. He said, “When people travel, the virus travels with them.”

Besides the ban, those traveling from Britain, South Africa, and South America will have to quarantine for ten days to prevent new variants to enter the country, the *Associated Press* reported. Belgium, a country of 11.46 million, has recorded nearly 700,000 cases and 20,620 deaths, according to the report.

France announced it will require all travelers to test negative for the virus within 72 hours of boarding a plane. *France 24* reported that the country of 67.06 million had a death toll of 72,877 as of last Sunday. Prime Minister Jean Castex said at least one million people in his country have received the coronavirus vaccine.

Oliver Véran, the French health minister, said another lockdown could be announced if the 6:00 PM curfew proves to be ineffective, *The Guardian* reported, citing a local newspaper.

Véran said in a “best-case scenario, we will manage to diminish the pressure of the epidemic. If not, we will not wait for the month of March before acting. If the variants start to spread everywhere, we will take extra measures. And that’s called confinement... We will close down.”

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa said last week he has banned flights to and from the U.K. due to virus mutation that has been recorded there. *Euronews* reported there have been calls in the country to delay its presidential elections, but they carried on, and its president, Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, won a second term with 61 percent of the vote.

Johns Hopkins University, which has been monitoring the outbreak, reported Portugal has experienced the highest infection rate per 100,000 in the world.

TREND FORECAST: *The Trends Journal has predicted the rise of populist candidates due to economy-killing coronavirus lockdowns. Portugal watched André Ventura, a right-wing populist, pull in 12 percent of the country's vote to come in third place. The AP reported, "Such a showing for Ventura would have been unthinkable until recently and will send a shudder through Portuguese politics."*

BIDEN BACKS WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, CASE NUMBERS DROP



In timing that seemed quintessentially “quid-pro Joe,” the WHO suddenly updated its vaccine test guidelines just as the new American president signed an executive order to rejoin the organization that former president Donald Trump abandoned.

The WHO's new directives advised laboratories that a positive PCR test will no longer be considered by itself enough to determine a case of COVID. The new criteria are that an asymptomatic person who tests positive via a PCR test would require additional testing to qualify as a case: “Where test results do not correspond with the clinical presentation, a new specimen should be taken and retested using the same or different [test].”

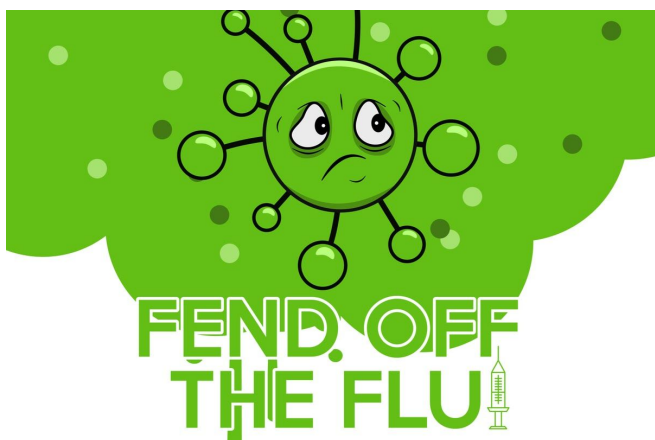
They now advise that PCR tests, which have been used across the U.S. and elsewhere to detect coronavirus infections, are only to be considered an “aid for diagnosis” as opposed to proof of infection:

“Health care providers must consider any result in combination with timing of sampling, specimen type, assay specifics, clinical observations, patient history, confirmed status of any contacts, and epidemiological information.”

TRENDPOST: *The former president had removed the U.S. from association with and funding of the WHO due in part to the organization’s vouching for China’s narrative concerning the virus’s origin and outbreak in that country, which Trump disagreed with. The WHO’s new changes will reduce the tally of “cases” mainstream media obsessively cites and politicians have used to shut down states and to disparage the efforts of the Trump administration to fight the virus.*

Indeed, yesterday, California, the first state in America to lock down, announced plans to lift the stay-at-home order for all counties because COVID-19 cases are, according to the new WHO protocol, spreading at a slower rate across the state.

“PUZZLING PHENOMENON”: FLU GONE



As the Wall Street Journal headline declared last Friday:

This Season, Flu is All but Wiped Out

January normally is a time when the common flu wreaks havoc on populations around the globe. The WHO estimates between 500 million and

one billion get infected every year, which causes three to five million serious cases.

The WHO estimates approximately 300,000 to 650,000 people have died of the flu each year before the arrival of COVID-19 (to date, about 100 million worldwide have been infected with COVID-19 with just over two million deaths).

So far this year, the flu is virtually absent compared to previous years. In Japan, for example, there were some 1,000 infections in the second week of this month compared to 800,000 last year. In the U.K., according to the *Wall Street Journal* article, in the first week of January, no cases were reported at all.

In the U.S., as an example, Dr. Marie-Louise Landry, director of the Yale Clinical Virology Laboratory, reported, “By this time in December last year, we had diagnosed over 100 flu cases in our laboratory. This year we have had none.”

The same phenomenon is reported in southern hemisphere countries. In Australia, *The Guardian* reports that “fewer than 40 Australians have died from influenza this year, compared to more than 950 last year,” and “there haven’t been any deaths for the past three to four months.”

Norio Sugaya, a pediatrician with the WHO, admitted, “This is an extremely puzzling phenomenon. We’re in a historic, unbelievable situation.”

The WHO has attempted to eliminate the “puzzle” by claiming it’s because of COVID mandates such as mask-wearing and restricting public gatherings. But another theory is that the coronavirus has boosted people’s immune systems against other viruses such as the flu.

The WSJ article advocated that “to keep the flu from returning stronger than ever, doctors said people will have to stick to some of the habits they have

learned from COVID-19, including frequent hand sanitizing and mask-wearing.”

But the article goes further than reporting hand-washing and mask-wearing. It quotes a virologist at Tokyo University who recommends that to prevent viral infections in the future, airlines need to require proof of vaccinations for both COVID-19 and the flu.

TRENDPOST: *As we have reported since the outbreak of the COVID War, hospitals had been reporting that people were killed by the virus if they tested positive but were, in fact, dying from different diseases or circumstances. Therefore, the flu, rather than miraculously disappearing, has been the actual cause of death, but because someone tested positive for the virus, “COVID-19” is what was listed.*

TRENDS IN THE VACCINE ROLLOUT



ISRAEL: #1 IN VACCINATIONS, #1 IN PROBLEMS?

We must be careful in what we write and how we write it, regardless of facts and figures. As we have been reporting, social media giants and the mainstream news will banish, ban, and ridicule anyone questioning the effectiveness and safety of the Big Pharma Drug Dealers' vaccinations... denouncing them as conspiracy theorists and anti-vaxxers.

Fact

Major cracks in claims of COVID vaccine efficacy appeared this week in Israel, which has administered more vaccines so far than any other nation.

According to the news organization *Haaretz*, a significant number of people who received the initial dose of the Pfizer vaccine subsequently contracted the virus. The suggestion isn't that the vaccine somehow infected recipients with the virus, rather, the positive cases point to a lack of efficacy of the

vaccine, especially in the period between the first and second dose, which must be given apart.

The Israeli Health Ministry reported that 5,348 out of 100,000 who were given the first dose of the vaccine were later found to be infected with COVID. That represents an infection rate of 5.4 percent of those vaccinated. Also, it doesn't account for which portion of the total were exposed to the virus after receiving their vaccination. Another group of 67,000 recipients later tested at an 8.3 percent COVID-positive rate in the interim period following their first vaccine dose.

The 5.4 percent failure rate after the initial dose of the vaccine is far higher than the Pfizer pharmaceutical company reported in data from its trials. A joint committee on vaccines and immunization (JCVI) had previously promised that a single dose would prevent 89 percent of recipients from getting coronavirus symptoms.

In a radio interview following the news, Israeli vaccine czar Nachman Ash said a single dose appeared “less effective than we had thought,” and lower than Pfizer had advertised.

Some especially disconcerting news emerged about the timeline surrounding the vaccinations and consequent COVID infections. Following vaccination, it takes time for antibodies to build up. But Israeli health officials found that a significant number of people tested positive for COVID between the 15th and 21st day following their first-dose vaccination.

That's a timeframe when the “experts” had believed partial immunity would supply more protection. Specifically, of the 20,000 people tested, 1,410 tested positive, which equates to a 7.2 percent failure in efficacy for someone as much as 21 days out after receiving the vaccine.

U.K. TO REVIEW VACCINE EFFICACY AFTER ISRAEL REPORTS



The U.K. will “look carefully” at claims that the Pfizer vaccine fails to protect as well as expected following research into the first 200,000 people given the jab in Israel, Britain’s chief scientific advisor Sir Patrick Vallance said.

At the same time, Vallance sought to tamp down concern over the Israeli data, telling *Sky News*,

“What we know from clinical studies... is that if you take everything from day zero to day 28, then the overall figure is something like 50 percent protection.

But of course you don’t expect any protection in the first days because your immune system hasn’t had a chance to build up and some people may have been infected before they had the vaccine. If you take it from day 10 up to day 21 and beyond, it looks much more like the 89 percent figure the JCVI gave.”

Vallance’s assertions were belied by the Israeli numbers and timeline, in a shifting landscape of purported protection rates and timelines for antibody buildups.

Some U.K. health experts moved the goalpost even further following the disappointing Israeli data. They claimed the value of the vaccine might turn out to be not in its ability to prevent people from getting COVID, but in somehow reducing serious cases leading to hospitalization and deaths.

Finally, the infamously slow U.K. health system of managed (i.e. rationed) care has come under fire during the virus vaccine rollout for making people

wait up to 12 weeks for a second dose, which is longer than the drug companies advise for the booster shot.

Vaccine Quick Stats

Worldwide, more than 54.4 million doses of COVID vaccines have been administered as of 21 January, including 17.2 million doses in the U.S. Daily vaccine inoculation rates have ramped up to an average of 2.76 million doses.

States leading the way per capita in vaccinations include:

- North Dakota
- South Dakota
- West Virginia
- Alaska
- New Mexico

States reporting the lowest per capita vaccination rates include:

- California
- Nevada
- Missouri
- Alabama
- South Carolina

California scores among the lowest for distribution of vaccines on hand. So far, they've distributed just 37 percent of vaccine doses available. By comparison, Texas, another large state, has distributed 57 percent of available vaccines, and New York has dispensed 56 percent.

According to official sources, most shots thus far have been administered through hospitals and other institutional healthcare settings. It is projected that the pattern will evolve to include more doses doled out from pharmacies and health clinics, where other vaccines such as flu shots have more traditionally been given. Some states are reportedly looking to utilize sports

stadiums and theme parks as mass vaccination centers, though lack of demand for the vaccine may indicate such measures are part of a publicity push to vaccinate as opposed to a response to actual capacity needs.

Beginning on 12 January, the U.S. government advocated that all persons over the age of 65 receive a COVID vaccination. Health officials also recommended anyone over 16 with certain medical conditions receive the vax.

Globally, Israel continues to lead in vaccinations, despite recent problems reported with vaccine efficacy there. The U.S. and U.K. are among world leaders, while China, though having begun distribution of an experimental vaccine mid-way through 2020, has vaccinated only an average of one person in a hundred.

According to the VAERS reporting system, a joint database of the CDC and the FDA compiling adverse reactions, there have been at least 55 deaths in the U.S. to date attributed to the COVID vaccine.

In one case, a 66-year-old senior home resident in Colorado felt sleepy after receiving the Moderna vaccine and went to bed. He was observed the following morning “in bed lying still, pale, eyes half open and foam coming from mouth and unresponsive,” according to a VAERS report. “He was not breathing and with no pulse.”

Black Out

As far as a comprehensive list of adverse reactions to the COVID vaccine, the mainstream media has not been breathlessly reporting on the latest numbers and incidents.

A Google search for “total adverse vaccine reactions” turns up a just few recent stories and a handful of articles from early January, including one by NBC, which tended to frame reactions as statistically insignificant by

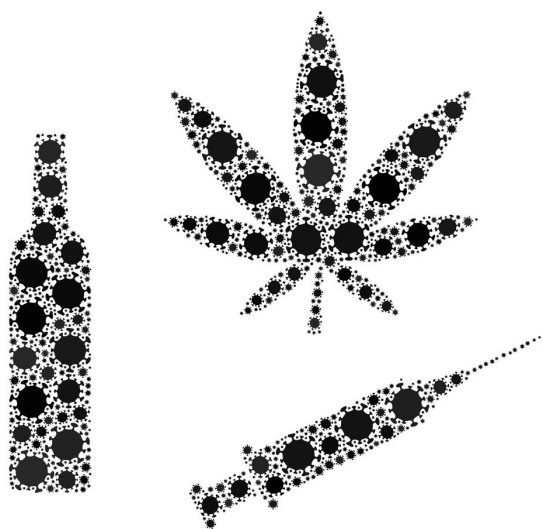
focusing on just one kind of reaction (i.e. allergic reactions) instead of the wide array of reactions being reported.

Meanwhile, the WHO homepage for vaccine reaction rates information sheets, which is part of its Global Vaccine Safety Initiative (GVSI), currently has no specific report or data regarding the COVID vaccines.

TRENDPOST: *Despite the negative vaccine report blackout, information is slowly coming out. For example, a 20 January article on the Healthline website reported that health officials in California paused vaccinations from a “single lot” of the Moderna vaccine following severe allergic reactions experienced by six people in San Diego. The people all required medical attention after receiving shots, the California Department of Public Health acknowledged.*

The lot in question contained a total of 1,272,200 doses, most of which were shipped across the country, according to a Moderna statement, which claimed that thousands of those doses had already been administered.

MICHIGAN DISPENSARY GOES ONE TOKE OVER THE LINE IN VAX DRIVE



First, the COVID vaccine had to be “chill” (at a storage temp of -60°C for the Pfizer version); now potential vaccine takers can “chill” after taking the shot by getting high on free weed.

The Greenhouse of Walled Lake, a marijuana dispensary in Michigan, set up a “Pot for Shots” promotion. They said they intended to encourage people to

voluntarily take the COVID vaccine.

Owner Jerry Millen said,

“Our goal is to raise awareness of the importance of getting the COVID-19 vaccination as we as a community battle this horrible pandemic... ‘Pot for Shots’ is our way of showing our commitment in assisting and helping the community get back to normalcy. We support the safe and responsible use of cannabis and hope this is the beginning of the end of this insidious pandemic.”

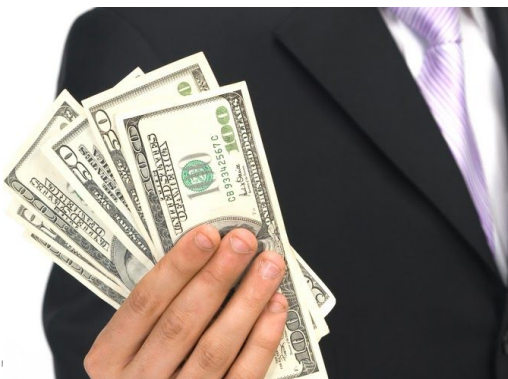
Millen promised that anyone presenting written proof they received a COVID-19 vaccine would earn a free pre-rolled joint. He took care to note the offer was free and no purchase was necessary, though sober minds might wonder whether another possible benefit for the dispensary could be the potential for attracting new customers.

The “Pot for Shots” stunt comes as state officials in Michigan and elsewhere are growing more worried that people aren’t clamoring for the COVID vaccine in the numbers they had hoped for.

A recent survey by the Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research revealed more than half of Americans indicated they might not get the vaccine, including about a quarter who said they definitely would not.

TRENDPOST: *As we have reported, governments and the media around the world are promoting the need to get the COVID jab. In America, the private sector pledged \$50 million on their “Get the jab” ad campaign, which is being marketed in the form of public service announcements.*

THE AMERICAN WAY: GET THE JAB, GET A CHECK



The same politicians who invented what are “essential” and “non-essential” businesses and what, where, and how the economy must be locked down to fight the COVID War

are now offering taxpayer's money to people who want the COVID vaccination.

Instead of offering stimulus checks for persons who have been barred from working in their customary jobs or have seen their small businesses shut down and destroyed by not being favored as “essential,” Steve Stivers, a congressman from Ohio, is proposing to reward vaccine-takers.

“I hope the administration will look at that option because we actually buy something with our \$1,400 – and that's herd immunity,” Stivers said in an interview with *Yahoo Finance*.

While giving happy talk to concern about debt, he was enthusiastic about his jab incentive:

“It should be debt for the right things. The quickest thing we need to do if we really want to help the American people, is get this economy turned back on – get people back to work, get kids back in school, get ourselves some herd immunity, get the vaccine distributed as quick as we can and get the uptake rate up. That's why I'd be willing to accept a \$1,400 stimulus check if people are willing to take the vaccine.”

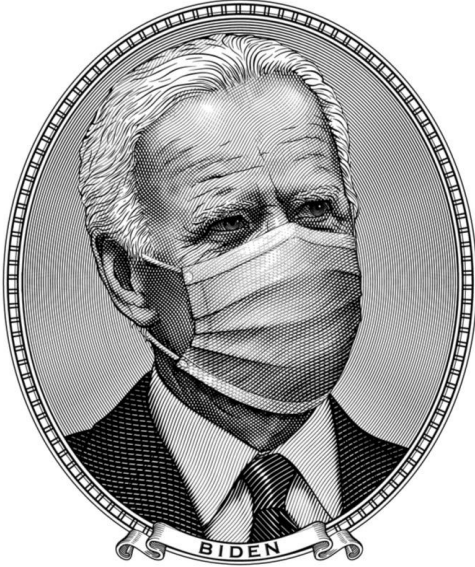
TRENDPOST: *The congressman failed to mention that virtually nothing is stopping locked-down areas of the country from immediately opening safely as we have detailed in this and previous issues of the **Trend Journal**.*

For example, locked-down New York State, with a population of 19.5 million – where NYC restaurants are prohibited to have indoor dining, has registered 42,568 virus-related deaths compared to opened-up Florida, with a population of 21.5 million and 25,446 reported deaths. While the media keeps pumping up the fear factors, these deaths are now over 12 months. And, in the unhealthy, obese U.S., some 90 percent of all virus deaths are people over 65 years old.

He also didn't address the culpability of politicians in flouting laws and rights of citizens to institute lockdown regimes that have utterly failed to slow the spread

of COVID while precipitating an economic calamity that will affect the nation and world for years to come.

JOE “C’MON MAN!” BIDEN PROMISES VAX RAMP UP



A reporter who questioned whether President Biden’s promise to ramp up vaccinations to 100 million was a big deal was met with ridicule at a Biden press conference on 22 January. The reporter pointed out that former President Trump had ramped up vaccine distribution to meet a similar goal.

“When I announced it, you all said it’s not possible. Come on, gimme a break man!” President Biden irately objected.

Later, Press Secretary Jen Psaki tried to spin things to suggest the Biden administration was greatly revamping and accelerating the vaccine program that Trump initiated and achieved in “Operation Warp Speed.” She claimed the Trump administration had reached about 500,000 vaccinations per day.

“What we are proposing is to double that to about one million shots per day. We have outlined this goal and objective in coordination and consultation with our health and medical experts.”

What Psaki failed to acknowledge was that the former administration was on a trajectory to boost the number of shots closer to the one million number, with shots per day jumping over 800,000 in the last five days before the inauguration. News sources pointed out that if that daily number kept up, total vaccinations would reach about 97 million in the 100 days since vaccinations began on 21 December.

TRENDPOST: *Like vax, hate vax, love Trump, or hate Trump, we include this article to illustrate media bias and political banter. To date, Trump's projections compare closely to Biden's 100-million goal, yet Biden attacked Trump for not vaccinating fast enough while promoting that in his first "100 days we can change the course of the disease and change life in America for the better."*

RUSSIA: WE'RE #1 VAX CHAMPS!



It appears the Russians may be at it again with a vaccine equivalent of the Sputnik, outpacing American vaccines with a stunning 100-percent efficacy rate. According to their consumer watchdog, Rospotrebnadzor, these are the results of an early-stage trial of the

country's second registered vaccine candidate, labeled EpiVacCorona.

“The effectiveness of the vaccine is made up of its immunological effectiveness and preventative effectiveness,” the TASS news agency reported, citing Rospotrebnadzor. “According to results of the first and second phases of clinical trials, the immunological effectiveness of the EpiVacCorona vaccine is 100%.”

The state trials register stated that Phase I and II studies tested the safety, side effects, and immunogenicity of the potential vaccine in 100 people aged 18-60. A larger Phase III trial likely will involve thousands of participants and a placebo group as a comparison.

Reuters, which covered the news, explained that the early-stage results should be met with caution. Testing in those cases is typically based on blood readings showing an immune response in subjects who have not been exposed to the virus. Larger, late-stage trials are based on actual infections suffered by participants in their normal lives.

TRENDPOST: Depending on who's or WHO's data to believe, to date, there have been some 70,000 virus victims in Russia, with a population of 146 million or 0.048 percent of the population. This compares to the U.S. with 332 million and 431,000 COVID deaths or 0.13 percent of the population.

We note these numbers not only to illustrate the comparison, but also to illustrate how small the percentage of deaths is per the general population, yet, complete societies have been locked down.

TIME FRAME FOR COVID VAX IMMUNITY “UNKNOWN”



In an interview with independent journalist Sharyl Attkisson, virologist Dr. John Dye said experts have no clear idea how long the COVID vaccine will protect recipients. He stressed it was almost certain that “booster shots” would be required.

Dr. Dye, Chief of Viral Immunology at the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases, sat down with Attkisson to answer questions regarding the vaccine. Some have welcomed the vaccine as a way to return to “normalcy,” while others are rejecting it as a huge unknown and a step down a path that will destroy longstanding freedoms and rights perhaps forever.

“Scientists don’t know how long the vaccines confer immunity. For most individuals, it could be a matter of six months to a year, or perhaps as many as five years,” said Dye.

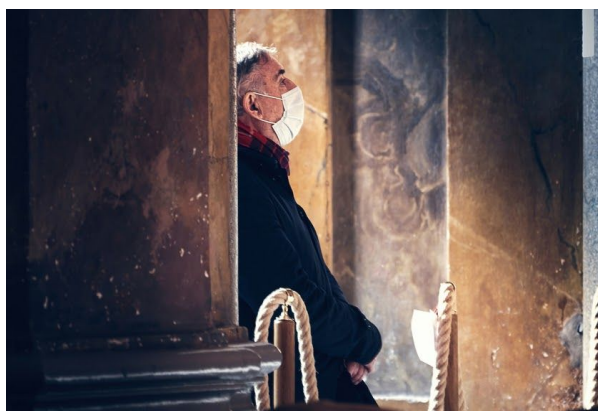
Attkisson asked many pertinent questions, including how long the vaccines were expected to confer immunity, how fast immunity would develop after vaccination, what differences were there between an mRNA vaccine and

more traditional vaccines, and whether the current vaccines work on variants already present around the world or on different, future strains.

During the interview, Nye defended the speed of bringing a novel vaccine technology to the masses. He asserted that processes that normally occur sequentially due to money constraints were being conducted “in parallel” thanks to a huge infusion of money and manpower to speed up the timetable. What otherwise might take five to ten years for a ready-for-the-public vaccine was achieved in under a year.

Dye acknowledged that more data is coming in from wide implementation efforts, and efficacy rates of the COVID vaccines originally reported in test trials will be updated and may well end up lower than those trials indicated.

CATHOLICS PUSH BACK ON VACCINE “PAGEANT”



In a show of “unity” that dismayed many Catholic faithful, both Pope Francis and Pope Emeritus Benedict reportedly received COVID vaccinations. The Pope had previously exhorted all Catholics to accept vaccination as an act of moral duty. Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, an

often vocal opponent of the current pope’s stewardship of the church, castigated the move. Archbishop Vigano said,

“It is disconcerting that, after unscrupulously demolishing no small number of Catholic truths in the name of dialogue with heretics and idolaters, the one dogma which Bergoglio is not ready to renounce is that of obligatory vaccination... If it is possible to set aside revealed truth in the name of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, it is likewise not licit to question the dogmas of COVID, the revelation

made by the media about the pandemic, and the salvific sacrament of the vaccine.”

Many Christians, composing different denominations, have shown their unity in rejecting the virus vaccine, which they claim was developed in part via the use of material from aborted unborn children. While researchers say the COVID vaccines do not contain aborted fetal cells, according to Dr. James Lawler, an infectious diseases expert, Pfizer and Moderna did perform confirmation tests (to ensure the vaccines work) using fetal cell lines. However, as reported by Nebraska Medicine, he states that current fetal cell lines are thousands of generations removed from the original fetal tissue.

A statement issued by Archbishop Vigano made scathing objections to the Pope’s latest action and not just on religious grounds. He cited an array of reasons why no person of the Catholic faith, nor anyone should feel obligated to bow to the vax:

“The fact that the vaccine does not give any guarantee of efficacy but rather can induce serious side effects; the fact that in some cases it has been produced starting from cells taken from aborted fetuses, and therefore is absolutely irreconcilable with Catholic morality; the fact that treatment with hyper-immune plasma or with alternative protocols are being boycotted despite the evidence of their efficacy – all of this means little to the new ‘expert’ who, on the basis of absolutely zero medical competency, is now recommending the vaccine to the faithful while using his sovereign authority to require the citizens of the Vatican to submit to questionable treatment in the name of an unspecified ‘ethical duty.’

The bleak Paul VI Audience Hall has been emblematically chosen as the temple in which to celebrate this new sanitary rite, officiated by ministers of the COVID religion in order to assure, certainly not the salvation of souls, but rather the illusory promise of health for the body.”

In a withering summation, Vigano pointed out that while the Pope has proved invariably happy to greet abortionists and criminals, he has been loath to “contaminate himself” by aligning with “anti-vaxxers.”

TREND FORECAST: *As we have long forecast, there will be strong anti-vax, anti-tax, anti-immigration movements and political parties building across continents that will unite races, creeds, and colors under a banner of common causes.*

SOUTH AFRICAN COVID: CAN VACCINE KILL IT?



The CDC is currently tracking multiple SARS-CoV-2 variants that are circulating globally. Each day, the mainstream media keeps pumping out news that the new strain is deadlier than the original.

“Experts” contend the new variant of the SARS-CoV-2 virus that can cause COVID-19, which has been traced to South Africa, may not be fully responsive to the vaccines currently being rolled out.

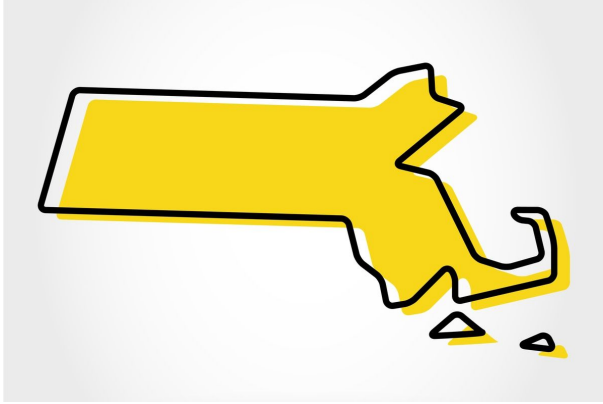
Dr. John Bell, a lead professor on the development of AstraZeneca’s experimental COVID-19 vaccine, said the new variant worried him more than another new strain detected recently in the U.K.

U.K. Health Secretary Matt Hancock added, “I’m incredibly worried about the South African variant... This is a very, very significant problem... even more of a problem than the U.K. new variant.”

The South African variant appears to interfere with the effectiveness of currently available treatments, something which goes beyond even the efficacy of vaccines. There’s concern that current therapies used for patients

who have the virus, including the use of antibody drugs, may not be effective against the variant.

MASSACHUSETTS: NO FORCED FLU VAX



This past August, we reported that the King of Massachusetts, Governor Charlie Baker, decreed the flu vaccine was required for all MA school students of Slavelandia enrolled in child care, pre-school, K-12, and post-secondary institutions. Governor Baker declared

that getting the flu shot would help lessen the risk of getting the coronavirus.

While his actions involved forced flu vaccinations and not COVID, the precedent is relevant.

A Massachusetts mother acting on behalf of her graduate student daughter helped turn back a push by state authorities to force the flu vaccine on anyone under 30 attending schools in the state.

The state's Department of Health issued no press release on their change, and it was barely reported by America's Presstitutes. They did, however, send a notice to school nurses that read:

“The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is removing the requirement for flu vaccination for attendance in childcare/preschool, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education. Preliminary data show that this has been a mild flu season to date, presumably as people have received their seasonal flu vaccine and have been adhering to mask-wearing and social distancing due to COVID-19. Given the intensive Commonwealth-wide efforts regarding COVID-19 vaccination, DPH wants to alleviate the burden to obtain flu

vaccination and focus on continuing our COVID-19 vaccination efforts.”

The cowards did not admit defeat, instead, they spun the tale as though *they* had decided it would be best to not get the flu shot.

The lawsuit, filed in December 2020 in Massachusetts Superior Court, was funded by the Informed Consent Action Network (ICAN).

“This rescission of the Massachusetts flu vaccine mandate is extremely welcome,” said Mary Holland, general counsel for Children’s Health Defense (CHD). CHD, with help from ICAN, filed the suit in support of the mother’s legal action on behalf of her graduate student daughter.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been forecasting, there will be growing anti-vax movements spreading across America and around the world. The push by governments for mandatory vaccinations will not stop with the coronavirus. Year after year, new infectious disease killers will be hyped by politicians and the media, which, in turn, will push for more forced vaccinations to stop it from spreading.*

BASEBALL LEGEND HANK AARON DIES TWO WEEKS AFTER GETTING VAX



Hank Aaron broke one of baseball’s all-time achievements: the home-run record of Babe Ruth. The Hall of Famer also holds the record for runs batted in and total bases.

After retiring, Hank was an avid civil rights advocate. But now, after dying in his sleep last Friday at age 86, just two weeks after a public relations photo

showing him getting the COVID-19 vaccine, Mr. Aaron is in the headlines for a very different reason.

As Saturday's headline in *Newsweek* read,

Health Professionals Hope Hank Aaron's Death Won't Deter People from Getting Vaccinated

Mr. Aaron was injected with the first dose of the vaccine developed by Moderna on 5 January along with civil rights activist Andrew Young and others to promote the safety of the vaccine and to convince people of color to take it.

Mr. Aaron said to reporters, "When you see Andy Young, myself, and some of the other civil rights leaders, it makes you feel good... if I can do something to help prolong someone's career, that's what I want to do."

Conspiracy Accusers

The *Newsweek* article quickly shifted from factual reporter to name-calling accuser:

"Following Aaron's death, a number of conspiracy theorists and anti-vaxxers shared the Braves legend's death as a warning about perceived dangers of the COVID vaccine. Children's Health Defense [a non-profit founded by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.], an organization that has shared other anti-vax propaganda, highlighted Aaron's vaccination and indicated that a cause of death was not shared."

But while accusing everyone who raises serious concerns about vaccinations as conspiracy theorists, *Newsweek* itself pointed out the following in an article published on 29 February 2019:

"Many vaccine skeptics are also mistrustful of the pharmaceutical company, believing Big Pharma is shilling unnecessary (and potentially

dangerous) vaccines just to make money. When pharmaceutical companies are sued for failing to report information about the safety of their drugs, it furthers that distrust.”

Is it irrational to distrust Big Pharma? (See our 19 January article, “[DRUG LORD: COVID IS “FOREVER.”](#)”)

Regarding health risks with the new COVID-19 vaccines, which are using never-before tested RNA gene methodology, see our previous articles:

[COVID-19 VACCINES: TRACKING ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS](#)

[COVID VACCINE: SCIENTISTS WARN “CAUTION”](#)

[VIROLOGIST WARNS ABOUT MAKING VACCINES COMPULSORY](#)

Joining *Newsweek* in going after Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. for warning against the potential harm of vaccines was the *Daily Beast* with this report last Friday:

“Anti-vaccine pseudoscience peddler Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. used baseball legend Hank Aaron’s death in a desperate attempt to fan hysteria over the coronavirus vaccine late Friday. Kennedy, whose fact-free work has been rebuked by his own family, tweeted Friday, ‘Hank Aaron’s tragic death is part of a wave of suspicious deaths among elderly closely following administration of COVID vaccines. He received the Moderna vaccine on Jan. 5 to inspire other Black Americans to get the vaccine.’”

TRENDPOST: *On 17 January, Kaiser Health News reported, “Black Americans are receiving COVID vaccinations at dramatically lower rates than white Americans in the first weeks of the chaotic rollout, according to a new study.”*

Their study found that “About 3% of Americans have received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine so far. But in 16 states that have released data by race,

white residents are being vaccinated at significantly higher rates than Black residents.”

Again, we continue to report on the depth and span of those opposing vaccinations and how the mainstream media, politicians, and Prostitutes attack anyone contradicting their beliefs/messages.

BRITISH COLUMBIA ROLLING OUT VAX FOR “EVERY CITIZEN”



Documents obtained by the **Trends Journal** show the province of British Columbia in Canada is launching a massive drive to vaccinate their entire population. The effort has many worried that voluntary encouragement by the government may flip to penalties, or even forced vaccinations if people decline to participate in the program.

One of the documents boasts of “BC’s Strategy to Roll-Out The Largest Immunization Program in the Province’s History” and outlines the program:

“We will be establishing clinics across 172 communities that make up BC. Clinics will be set up in March by health authorities in partnership with local communities, municipalities, businesses, and volunteers to make this a province-wide effort. There will be mobile sites as well and where necessary, home visits to support those who are unable to go to clinics.”

The government materials attempt to emphasize that the vaccines have been proven safe and effective, and the initiative is based on “scientific evidence.” Language in the documents does acknowledge the effort is voluntary, though it’s also clear that vaccines are being produced and aggressively recommended for every citizen over the age of 17:

“[The] Government of Canada has committed that every Canadian who wants to be vaccinated against COVID-19 will have access to a vaccine before the end of September 2021.”

Details about four phases of the rollout are explained, culminating with a promise that before the end of 2021, vaccines will have been made available to the entire population of 4,300,000 eligible for vaccination.

A concerned citizen who received the BC government documents and submitted them to the **Trends Journal** said he has tried to contact the Human Rights Commissioner for clarifications about the program to no avail. “The push is on in BC to vax everyone as identified in the ‘plans.’ Emails I sent to the BC Human Rights Commissioner over the last several weeks are going nowhere.”

The citizen, who wishes to remain anonymous, believes that BC will institute a vaccine card or “passport,” stripping people who decline the vax of basic human rights.

BIDEN CONTINUES VACCINE PUSH



President Joe Biden did not waste time last week to – once again – warn Americans that we are “entering what may well be the toughest and deadliest period of the virus” and vowed to increase vaccinations and increase the use of face masks during transportation.

The *Associated Press* reported that Dr. Anthony Fauci, who will remain in his same, top position during the Biden administration, confirmed the U.S. will rejoin the World Health Organization.

Some of the guidelines Biden put forward have already been in place, but the AP reported that the federal mandate leaves “little wiggle room for passengers tempted to argue about their rights.”

Biden has said he wants 100 million shots of the vaccine to be delivered within his first 100 days in office. Biden immediately signed executive actions that include increasing vaccination supplies, which will cost \$160 billion. He also wants any international travelers to show a negative COVID-19 test result before entering the U.S., CNN reported.

“Our national strategy is comprehensive, it’s based on science, not politics,” Biden said. “It’s based on truth, not denial, and it’s detailed.”

Dr. Christopher Murray of the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation in Seattle told the AP that the “100 million vaccines in 100 days” is not overly ambitious. He said in a normal flu season, the U.S. vaccinates about three million people every day.

“Given the number of people dying from COVID, we could and should do more – like what we’re able to do on seasonal flu,” he said.

TRENDPOST: As the ***Trends Journal*** has reported, the COVID vaccines were rushed through the “Emergency Use Authorization” exception provided by the FDA, and they have not yet proven to be safe in the long-term or even effective at preventing infection or spread.

TREND FORECAST: As we have forecast, there will be strong “Anti-Vax” movements in the United States and western nations as vaccination mandates are imposed on the general population. In the coming months and years, new freedom/populist/nationalist political parties will be formed in nations across the world to counter ruling establishments, which impose dictatorial rules and regulations in violation of Constitutions and the Bill of Rights.

UNITED AIRLINES CEO: JAB THE STAFF



The head of United Airlines said last week he wants the coronavirus vaccine mandatory among workers but admitted to inherent challenges in implementing the initiative.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Scott Kirby, the CEO, admitted that mandating the vaccine is controversial, but he said he thinks it's "the right thing to do." Kirby pushed for other companies to follow suit.

Airlines like Qantas have demanded all international travelers provide proof they have received a COVID vaccine before flying. Alan Joyce, the CEO, told *Nine News* last week the move will go into effect after the vaccine is widely available.

Airlines are beginning to roll out digital health passes for passengers that assure carriers they have been tested and are virus-free.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced its guidelines last month regarding mandating vaccines for employees. The *Journal's* takeaway was that the move would be legal if there are standards in place for employees who reject the virus vaccine on religious beliefs or health conditions.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS



ETHIOPIA AND SUDAN: TENSIONS RISING

Tensions are simmering between Ethiopia and Sudan over territory along their border, which threatens to engulf Addis Ababa, Ethiopia's capital, into another major conflict as it fights with the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF).

Deutsche Welle, the German paper, reported last week that the tension over the land goes back to when the border was drawn up with Britain in 1902 and 1907. Ethiopian farmers took to the land and, in 2008, a so-called "soft border" was agreed on.

William Davidson, a senior analyst for Ethiopia at International Crisis Group, told the newspaper that despite the farming, "there seemed to be an understanding that it didn't mean it was Ethiopian land."

These farmers have raised crops in the al-Faqsha region for decades.

But in 2018, when the TPLF conceded power, the relationship between the two countries took a turn for the worse. With Ethiopia's conflict in the Tigray region, the war is spreading into Sudan. Not only are tens of thousands of people fleeing into Sudan to escape the violence, but the war has also sparked fears in Khartoum, Sudan's capital, that an Ethiopian land grab is inevitable.

As we have been reporting since Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed launched the war against Tigray in November, he said it was because they had a vote in September, despite a countrywide voting ban due to the COVID outbreak.

As with former U.S. President Barack Obama who, after being awarded a Nobel Peace Prize, launched a troop surge in Afghanistan, started the Libyan war, and supported the war against the ruling Syrian government... Ahmed launched the Tigray war after being a recipient as well of the Nobel Peace Prize.

He accused the TPLF of attacking a military base. Tigray was considered a potential threat to his power because it makes up about 6 percent of the country's population of 110 million, and it has ruled Ethiopia for two decades.

Yibeltal Aemero, Ethiopia's ambassador to Sudan, told the paper that Khartoum is taking advantage of the conflict in Tigray.

"When the Ethiopian National Defense forces moved to the Tigray region on November 4, 2020, the Sudanese army took the advantage and entered deep inside Ethiopian territory, looted properties, burned camps, detained, attacked and killed the Ethiopians while displacing thousands," he told the paper.

Sudan reported a military aircraft from Ethiopia entered its airspace earlier this month, which was seen as a brazen act of defiance.

Al-Monitor, a website that covers news in the Middle East, reported Ahmed hinted in December that Egypt could be playing a role in stoking tensions. The website pointed to the Chinese-financed Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), which has created a “rising rivalry between Egypt and Ethiopia.” The website said Egypt considers “control of the Nile an existential issue.”

Ethiopia stands to control the downstream flow of the river. Sameh Shoukri, the Egyptian foreign minister, told the website the dam “could endanger the security and the very survival of an entire nation by imperiling its wellspring of sustenance.”

TREND FORECAST: *We have been warning that the conflict in Tigray will destabilize the Horn of Africa. The report about the growing tension between Ethiopia and Sudan comes while Eritrean forces are believed to have joined the fight to defeat forces in Tigray. (The Associated Press reported it is also believed that Somali soldiers were sent to Eritrea for training to join in the conflict.)*

We also forecast that more people affected by the conflict will seek refuge in European nations, which will, in turn, boost populist political party movements throughout the Eurozone.

Dominic Raab, the U.K. foreign secretary, said last week that the reputation of Addis Ababa is “being tarnished” by the conflict in Tigray, and he called on the prime minister to allow access to the region. Raab is scheduled to visit the country. Raab said he hopes to talk to Ahmed, but his main objective is to get humanitarian relief into the region.

Antony Blinken, Biden’s nominee for secretary of state, said last week there has been “a number of deeply, deeply concerning atrocities directed at the people of Tigray.”

Considering Mr. Blinken’s past support of Barack Obama’s wars when he served as deputy secretary of state and also Joe Biden’s record of supporting every war and regime change since he was elected into the Senate in 1973, we forecast strong U.S. military intervention in the region.

UGANDA'S ELECTION LOSER CLAIMS VOTER FRAUD



Bobbi Wine, the top opposition candidate in Uganda's presidential election, has been an outspoken critic of the country's election while under armed house arrest.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Wine called the 14 January election a “coup” and a “mockery of democracy.”

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni reportedly won the election by securing 58 percent of the vote in the country of 44.3 million. Wine secured 34 percent of the vote. *The Independent* newspaper reported that Wine said he can prove military personnel from the country stuffed ballot boxes and intimidated voters at polling stations.

“This has been the most fragile election in the history of Uganda,” Wine said.

Wine, a 38-year-old musician, had been challenging Museveni, who is 76 and has held office for 36 years.

Uganda has seen its worst unrest in years. Dozens were killed in protests that were seen by outside observers as a youth movement that turned its back on the entrenched political class. Currently, the country produces jobs for only about a tenth of the 700,000 young people who reach working age each year, *The Economist* reported.

The protests were sparked by one of Wine's earlier arrests for holding a rally amid the coronavirus outbreak. Anyone who was caught wearing red – the color of Wine's opposition party, called the “National Unity Platform” – was arrested.

The Associated Press reported that the international community has called on authorities in Kampala to free Wine from house arrest. The AP's report said authorities in the country assign a military escort whenever Wine leaves his home (on the outskirts of the capital) because he is considered a threat to public safety.

Museveni called the election "the most cheating-free" since 1962 when the country became independent from Britain.

TREND FORECAST: *We note this event to illustrate the tensions growing throughout this region of Africa and its greater implications, as domestic unrest swells into civil wars and civil wars expand into regional wars.*

Mr. Museveni, as with other politicians who refuse to let go of power, will do what he can to hold onto power. As with other "strongmen" around the world, they do not care about facing "international pressure," rather they do what they can to remain in power.

Museveni has benefited from an economy the World Bank said is among the few in sub-Saharan Africa that has managed to avoid recession during the COVID outbreak. (One reason for this is because Africa does not rely on tourism.)

"The Ugandan economy is estimated to have grown 2.9% in the FY 2020 which is a far better outcome than the -0.4% decline that the World Bank projected in its June 2020 estimates," the country's Independent newspaper reported. The Economist reported that in Museveni's 35 years at the helm, the country has averaged a 6 percent economic growth and the inflation rate has "rarely reached double figures."

ISRAEL TO BUILD MORE “SETTLEMENTS”



Last Tuesday, in violation of international law, the Israeli government approved 2,600 housing units in the West Bank and East Jerusalem during the final hours of Donald Trump’s presidency – a sign that Tel Aviv senses a new direction in U.S.

policy during President Biden’s administration.

The *Associated Press*, citing the anti-settlement/non-government organization “Peace Now,” reported about 800 of these homes are deep inside the West Bank. *Al Jazeera* reported the watchdog said it was a “mad scramble to promote as much settlement activity as possible until the last minutes before the change of the administration in Washington.”

“By doing so [Israeli Prime Minister] Netanyahu is signaling to the incoming president that he has no intention of giving the new chapter in US-Israel relations even one day of grace, nor serious thought to how to plausibly resolve our conflict with the Palestinians,” a statement said, according to the report.

A spokesman for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas said a statement that Israel’s settlement policy “and theft of Palestinian land – with the support and bias of the current US administration – will not bring security and stability.”

The *Al Jazeera* report said Trump broke with international norms in 2018 when he said the settlements would not be considered an affront on international law. The report pointed out that Antony Blinken, Biden’s nominee for secretary of state, has said the only way to ensure Israel’s future “as a Jewish, democratic state and to give the Palestinians a state to which they are entitled is through the so-called two-state solution.”

Earlier this month, Israel launched an air attack on Syria that killed dozens of Syrian soldiers and reduced a weapons depot and other sites to rubble. The *Jerusalem Post* reported that Tel Aviv carried out more than 1,000 airstrikes aimed at various targets within the past five years, but the ferocity of the recent assault in the eastern part of the country stands apart. It also occurred in the final weeks of the Trump presidency. Reports indicated the U.S. played a supportive role in the strikes.

TREND FORECAST: *We forecast Israel will escalate tensions with Syria, Iran, Lebanon, and Palestine. As Gerald Celente has long noted, “When all else fails, they take you to war.”*

In March, Israel will hold its fourth national election in less than two years. As we have reported, since November 2019, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been under the pressure of a criminal indictment on charges of fraud and bribery, and he has twice failed in previous elections to put together a winning coalition.

Since last summer, thousands of Israelis have taken to the streets, primarily in Jerusalem near Netanyahu’s residence, demanding he step down over corruption charges.

Netanyahu’s priority is to retain his position as prime minister since there is a legal loophole he can jump through that allows an indicted prime minister to remain in office. Once in office, he would introduce legislation to stop his trial from moving forward.

Should military exchanges escalate, Israel will focus on the war drums beating rather than worsening economic conditions and/or corruption charges.

TRENDPOST: *Israel took control of the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war.*

Israeli settlements are illegal under international law. They violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 that states, “The Occupying Power shall not

deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.”

The U.N. Security Council, the U.N. General Assembly, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Court of Justice, and the High Contracting Parties to the Convention have all affirmed the Fourth Geneva Convention applies, that this is occupied territory, and Israeli settlements there are illegal.

BLINKEN: KEEP U.S. EMBASSY IN JERUSALEM



Antony Blinken, President Biden’s nominee to lead the state department, said last week that the U.S. will keep its embassy in Israel located in Jerusalem, which he called the capital of Israel, AntiWar.com reported.

Blinken was asked by Texas Senator Ted Cruz during a confirmation hearing about the policy put into place during the Trump administration in May 2018. The Trump administration moved the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. The Palestinian Authority says that east Jerusalem has been illegally occupied since 1967, according to Al Jazeera.

The report said Palestinian leaders have yet to comment on Blinken’s remarks. Lama Khater, a journalist in the region, took to Twitter to post, “Everything is subject to change in the agendas of successive US administrations, except for absolute loyalty to Israel.”

TREND FORECAST: *In May 2018, in violation of international law, President Donald Trump moved the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and he proclaimed Israel has the right to take control of Syria’s Golan Heights, which Israel has occupied since the 1967 war.*

Thus, it appears from Blinken's latest statement that the Biden administration will continue to support Israel's decisions regardless of the illegality.

Moreover, should tensions escalate in the region, as we forecast, right or wrong, the Biden administration, as with past ones, will support Israel.

BIDEN RECOGNIZES VENEZUELA'S GUAIDÓ AS PRESIDENT



Fading fast and unable to gain momentum, Venezuelan opposition leader Juan Guaidó got a much-needed boost last week from President Biden after it was announced the U.S. will continue to recognize him as the country's rightful president, Reuters reported.

Guaidó has suffered a string of political losses since President Trump anointed him the president of Venezuela in 2019 when Nicholas Maduro was poised to be sworn in as President.

At the time, the Trump administration launched the propaganda campaign branding Maduro's victory as "heavily rigged," "fraudulent," "a sham," "a joke" and "a disgrace," and that Guaidó was the country's interim leader. Following Washington, 60 countries had recognized Guaidó as Venezuela's legitimate leader.

As we reported, the elections in the country were regarded as among those closely monitored and legitimate. Several international monitoring organizations observed the elections and affirmed their fairness.

Unable to gain traction and following failed attempts to gain military support to overthrow Maduro, Guaidó sunk low in opinion polls over the past year.

Now, the European Union, which once recognized Guaidó as President, recently dismissed him, referring to him in a letter as merely a “political actor” instead of the country’s interim president.

Despite the EU’s letter, the Trump administration continued to treat Guaidó and his National Assembly as “the only democratic representatives of the Venezuelan people as recognized by the international community.”

Regime Change 2021?

Antony Blinken, Biden’s nominee to head the state department, told the U.S. Senate last week that Biden will continue to pressure Maduro through sanctions.

“We need an effective policy that can restore Venezuela to democracy, starting with free and fair elections,” Blinken said.

TREND FORECAST: “Restore Venezuela to democracy” equals regime change.

Despite Guaidó’s failing efforts to mobilize support among Venezuelans, we continue to forecast that the United States will continue its efforts to overthrow the Maduro government and install Guaidó as president.

And, how duplicitous: “Free and fair elections”? Last week, at the swearing-in of its new president at the hall of its “democracy” in Washington, D.C., some 30,000 military troops locked it down. No visitors were allowed.

Why? It was in response to the 6 January protests when around a million people swarmed the city, and rioters stormed the Capitol building in protest of what they claimed were not “free and fair elections.”

ITALY'S CONTE PREVAILS IN CONFIDENCE VOTE, NOW RESIGNS



Last week, Giuseppe Conte, the Italian prime minister, managed to survive a confidence vote in the country's Senate, but he will have to work with a brittle government going forward. Failing to win an absolute majority, he won the vote by a 156-140 margin.

Conte appealed to the ministers and told them that a government collapse in the middle of a health emergency could be catastrophic for the country once again on lockdown and with its GDP down about 10 percent.

Italy, under Conte's rule, was the first nation outside of China to lock down last year. Italians have seen some of the toughest lockdown rules in the E.U., with citizens barred from traveling outside the region in which they live.

Now, however, there is pushback. Compliance in Italy is at an all-time low, and restaurants and bars continue to open despite the risk of hefty fines.

"We expected the government to be able to avoid further lockdowns," Umberto Carriera, a restaurant owner in the Italian town of Pesaro, told the *Wall Street Journal*. "But there was no real plan, and we haven't received enough financial help. And it's clear to us that the vaccine won't cover the bulk of the population before September."

Today, under mounting pressure, Prime Minister Conte resigned after one of his governing partners pulled out of the coalition. He will try, however, to form a new government. If he fails, Italy's president, Sergio Mattarella, could ask another candidate from a new administration. If that fails, fresh elections would be called.

TREND FORECAST: *There will be strong populist movements springing up throughout Europe and nations across the globe against established political parties that will be targeted for imposing strict lockdown rules, which have destroyed millions of businesses and hundreds of millions of lives.*

BIDEN PRESIDENCY = OBAMA 2021



George Carlin, America's late, great comedian, so accurately noted, "It's one big club, and you ain't in it."

With the election of Joe Biden as President of the United States, the Land of the Free and Home of the Brave, "Our Gang" is back in town.

The facts are in the faces and the numbers.

Making it clear which direction the nation is heading, Joe Biden's picks for top positions inside his White House have all held positions during the Obama administration.

It is not a new administration: it's "Obama 2021."

1. Antony Blinken. Blinken was selected to be Secretary of State. He served as Deputy Secretary of State during President Obama's second term in office. Blinken will head the department "with a group of former career diplomats and veterans of the Obama administration," according to the *Associated Press*. Biden said this group "embodies my core belief that America is strongest when it works with our allies." (Or, as we see it, considering that by their deeds you shall know them... more like "partners in crime.")

2. Salman Ahmed. Ahmad will be named Director of Policy Planning for the State Department. He served in the Obama National Security Council. An AP

report said that five of the 11 picks for the State Department are either people of color or LGBTQ.

3. Ron Klain. Klain will be Biden's Chief of Staff. He was a longtime aide to Biden during the Obama presidency and was the White House's Ebola Czar.

4. Xavier Becerra. Becerra is Biden's pick to lead Health and Human Services. Most recently, he served as California's attorney general and played a key role in passing ObamaCare.

5. John Kerry. Kerry was selected by Joe Biden to be his Climate Czar. He had succeeded Hillary Clinton in President Obama's White House as Secretary of State. Kerry declared, "We need to all move together because today very few are on a trajectory of the steep reductions needed to meet even current goals, let alone the targets we need to avert catastrophic damage."

6. Jen Psaki. Psaki is the new White House Press Secretary. She served as the head spokeswoman for the U.S. State Department during the Obama administration. She recently got into a heated back and forth with a reporter over some members of Biden's family deciding against wearing masks during post-inauguration celebrations. *Reuters* reported that Biden signed 15 executive actions on his first day and put in place a mask mandate for anyone on federal property. A *Fox News* reporter pointed out that members of Biden's family were not wearing masks on federal land.

Psaki said, "I think, Steve, he was celebrating an evening of a historic day in our country, and certainly he signed the mask mandate because it's a way to send a message to the American public about the importance of wearing masks, how it can save 10s of thousands of lives. We take a number of COVID precautions, as you know here, in terms of testing, social distancing, mask-wearing ourselves, as we do every single day. But I don't know that I have more for you on it than that."

TRENDPOST: *We have noted in previous issues of the Trends Journal the numerous examples of politicians and "health officials" who disregard the virus*

guidelines they put into place for We the Little People of Slavelandia. Again, “It’s one big club, and you ain’t in it.

7. Janet Yellen. Yellen was selected to be Secretary of Treasury. She served as the first woman to lead the Federal Reserve under President Obama and was criticized by Republicans for allegedly delaying rate hikes to give Hillary Clinton an edge in the 2016 election against then-candidate Donald Trump.

Former Representative Scott Garrett told Yellen at a hearing that “perception is reality... And the public perception is that the Fed’s independence is nothing more than a myth and the Fed has an unacceptable, cozy relationship with the Obama administration and with higher-ups in the Democratic party.”

8. Lloyd Austin. Austin was selected by Biden to be Secretary of Defense. Before this, he spent three years under President Obama in charge of U.S. military operations in the Middle East. Austin oversaw the U.S. backing of Saudi Arabia during the military campaign against Yemen, according to the *Huffington Post*. Austin also sits on several corporate boards including Raytheon Technologies, one of America’s largest military contractors.

Yemen, which is the region’s poorest country, has been fighting a disastrous war since 2015 that was launched from Washington, D.C. by Saudi Arabia. The war has killed more than 112,000 people and has brought on the worst humanitarian crisis on earth, according to the U.N.

9. Merrick Garland. Garland is Biden’s pick for Attorney General. He was nominated by President Obama to the U.S. Supreme Court in 2016 to fill the seat left vacant by Justice Antonin Scalia, who died earlier in the year. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Garland would not be approved by the Senate because it was an election year.

10. Tom Vilsack. Vilsack was Secretary of Agriculture under the Obama administration and Joe Biden put him back in the same job.

11. Neera Tanden. Tanden was selected by Biden to become Director of the Office of Management Budget. She was one of the designers of ObamaCare and has been the president of the Center of American Progress.

12. Isabel Guzman. Guzman, Biden's pick for Administrator of the Small Business Administration, was the former Deputy Chief of Staff at the U.S. Small Business Administration during the Obama administration.

13. Avril Haines. Haines was picked to become Director of National Intelligence. She was Deputy National Security Advisor in the Obama administration, which, according to Democracy Now!, authorized drone strikes to "carry out targeted extrajudicial assassinations."

John Kiriakou, the CIA whistleblower, told the show, "We know that Avril Haines, at the NSC, was in charge of determining whether it was legal or illegal to place people on [Former CIA Director] John Brennan's kill list. We know that in almost all cases that she said it was legal to put these names on the kill list, and people were subsequently killed by drone, including American citizens, like Anwar al-Awlaki and his son. They were American citizens who had never been charged with a crime. They had never faced their accusers in a court of law. There was no due process for them. She's never had to answer for that."

14. Linda Thomas-Greenfield. Thomas-Greenfield was selected to become U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. She served as President Obama's top diplomat who oversaw African affairs from 2013 to 2017.

15. Cecilia Rouse. Rouse was selected to serve as Chairwoman of the Council of Economic Advisors. She served as a Council of Economic Advisors member during the Obama administration. Rouse most recently served as Dean of the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs.

16. Alejandro Mayorkas. Mayorkas is Biden's pick to lead the Department of Homeland Security. He is a DHS veteran who also served as the department's Deputy Secretary during President Obama's second term.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Republican senators at a hearing last week raised questions about a past Inspector General report that accused Mayorkas of personally intervening “to benefit wealthy and politically connected foreign investors seeking EB-5 visas.” He was accused of having the “appearance of favoritism and special access” for some applicants, the report said.

17. Denis McDonough. McDonough is now Biden’s choice for Secretary of Veterans Affairs. He served as Obama’s deputy national security adviser and was the White House chief of staff during Obama’s second term

18. Jennifer Granholm. Granholm was selected to become Secretary of Energy. The former Michigan governor worked with the Obama administration during the challenges with the auto industry. *Politico* reported that her selection could help President Biden win over some blue-collar voters.

BIDEN’S INAUGURATION: AMERICA, LAND OF THE FREE?



Just weeks after the riots that rocked Capitol Hill, President Biden was sworn into office during an inauguration unlike any other in modern history – with a sparse crowd and some 30,000 military troops deployed throughout the city.

The media and political hysteria leading up to Inauguration Day was that pro-Trump extremists would overrun the Capitol and they would do what they could to stop Joe Biden from getting sworn in.

Federal authorities initially came out and said the rioters wanted to assassinate “elected officials” but backtracked and said there was no “direct evidence” to support those claims. The *Wall Street Journal* reported last week that Senator Rand Paul and other politicians called the security measures around the Capitol an overreaction and seemed to have turned the city into a “militarized zone.” The *Journal* reported the city was fortified with miles of security fencing.

“So, I think there was too little security, obviously, last week, and now we’re going to become a militarized zone,” Paul said on Fox News. “And they’re checking congressmen as they come in to see if they have a sharp pencil or sharp pen. So, it’s gotten ridiculous. And so, we’ll see what happens and whether it’s permanent. But most people who write about civil liberties say that in times of war, or in times of stress, or in times of crisis, you lose your civil liberties very quickly.”

TRENDPOST: *If an inauguration were held in a nation the U.S. targeted as an enemy, and its regime held a militarized lockdown of its capital to swear in a leader who nearly half the population said stole the election, Washington would use it as a reason to overthrow the “illegitimate” government... and the media would cheer them on.*

But, in America, where the Biden administration promises to clamp down on “domestic terrorism” (i.e., criminalizing descent), the newly-militarized Washington, D.C. has become the new normal.

TRUMP REFILLS SWAMP HE PROMISED TO EMPTY



One of President Trump's final moves in the White House was to turn back a rule he implemented that blocked former staffers from taking jobs at lobbying firms in Washington for five years after leaving their government jobs.

Trump at the time said the move would limit the revolving door in D.C., which includes staffers leaving office to take a high-earning job inside a lobbying firm on K-Street.

Noah Bookbinder, the executive director of the non-profit Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, told the *Journal*. "By rescinding his ethics order and letting his staffers immediately become lobbyists, the man who pledged to drain the swamp took a giant step to fill it."

TRENDPOST: *It is the Washington Way: Liars, Cowards, Freaks, and Fools who will do anything they can to get elected and do next to nothing they promised. The Journal noted that just before Bill Clinton left the White House, he, too, backtracked on his promise to drain the swamp by striking down a similar five-year ban for his aids and advisors.*

MORE "DUMP TRUMP"



Last week, we reported that New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said, "The city of New York will no longer have anything to do with The Trump Organization" and they were severing contracts.

We also noted that the PGA announced it had canceled its contract with the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, N.J., Deutsche Bank announced it would no longer do business with Trump's company, and Signature Bank said it would begin to close Trump's personal bank account. Also, Cushman & Wakefield, the real estate company, said they informed the Trump family they would no longer work with them in leasing properties.

New Week, New Dumps

Morgan Lewis & Bockius, the law firm that worked on Trump and his company's taxes while he was in office, announced last week it was "transitioning" its limited representation to other counsel, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

The report said the company has been dealing with New York Attorney General Letitia James' office in a civil rights probe into Trump's financial dealings. Her office is investigating if the Trump Organization intentionally misrepresented the value of its assets, according to NY1.

Seyfarth Shaw, another law firm, said it would no longer represent the Trump Organization on other matters, the report said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced earlier this month that the city would cut business ties with the Trump Organization after the riot at the Capitol.

TREND FORECAST: *Faced with mountains of debt, lawsuits, and now impeachment proceedings, Trump's potential to form a "Patriots Party" and run for office again will be greatly diminished. Thus, we do not forecast a new episode of The Donald starring in The Presidential Reality Show.®*

McCONNELL SELLS OUT TRUMP



Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said last week that the mob who rioted at the Capitol earlier this month was “fed lies” and “provoked by the president,” which was the latest example of the Kentucky Republican trying to distance himself from Donald Trump.

Mainstream media and the Democrat Party had widely blamed Trump for instigating the violent protest that breached the Capitol while a joint session of Congress was taking place to confirm the Electoral College vote for Joe Biden. The chaos led to five deaths. Two were not related to attacks or violence, but one was a Capitol police officer who was allegedly beaten by protestors. A woman protester was shot in the neck by police.

Eighty-two people were arrested. The FBI has released dozens of photos seeking the public’s help to identify some of the protesters.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported McConnell said he is still considering whether or not to convict Trump during another impeachment trial. *Politico*, citing three unnamed sources, reported McConnell proposed moving the impeachment trial back to February so Trump’s legal team can prepare.

“Senate Republicans are strongly united behind the principle that the institution of the Senate, the office of the presidency, and former President Trump himself all deserve a full and fair process that respects his rights and the serious factual, legal, and constitutional questions at stake,” McConnell said in a statement.

Senator Rand Paul told *Fox News*’ Sean Hannity last week that if the new policy is to impeach anyone who incites a violent act, Senator Bernie Sanders

should be impeached over the 2017 shooting of Representative Steve Scalise during a congressional baseball game. Scalise survived but was gravely wounded. Paul said,

“I was there at the ball field when he was shot... The guy was a rabid Bernie Sanders supporter. And you remember what Democrats were saying at the time? They were saying Republicans’ health care plan is you get sick and then you die. That sounds like an incitement. If you’re telling people that the Republican Party is going to kill you, why wouldn’t you then react violently and say we must kill them before they kill us?

Now, I don’t propose, I’m not serious about this. I don’t think Bernie Sanders should be impeached. But if you follow the logic that the president saying go fight for your country is somehow to be taken literally, even though he used the words peacefully, you’d have to examine Bernie Sanders’ language because one of his rabid supporters almost killed Steve Scalise.”

TREND FORECAST: *This is the beginning of the formation of a new political party to replace the failing Republican Party. McConnell, Graham, and Senator Mitt Romney represent the Old GOP guard. As we had noted in 2016, we identified Donald Trump as the most likely candidate to defeat Hillary Clinton since he was considered an outsider while the party candidates were considered un-motivating establishment members who lacked the “populist” appeal.*

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



BIDEN INSTITUTE HIDES NAMES OF DONORS

The University of Delaware's Biden Institute, a research and policy center founded "to influence, shape, and work to solve the most pressing domestic policy problems facing America," is refusing to name its donors, *Politico* has reported.

The institute, founded in 2017, aspires to embody the "honesty, integrity, compassion, and courage" that it says Joe Biden represents.

Donors to the institute's ongoing \$20-million fund-raising campaign could be "interested in currying favor with the Biden administration," *Politico* pointed out.

Antony Blinken, Biden's nominee to become Secretary of State, is facing questions about the sources of \$22 million in anonymous Chinese donations to the University of Pennsylvania's Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and

Global Engagement, where Blinken was a managing director and was paid \$80,000 during the first six months of 2018, according to Blinken's financial disclosure form.

The right-wing National Legal and Policy Center is demanding Blinken and the center "disclose the identity of \$22 million in anonymous Chinese donations since 2017, including a single, eye-popping donation of \$14.5 million."

The center claims that Chinese sources have given \$67 million to the University of Pennsylvania since 2018.

At least 28 people connected to nonprofits affiliated with Joe Biden have advised his transition or are joining his administration, Zerohedge.com reported.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: Blinken has worked with and for Biden and the Democratic Party for decades. Biden was a big pusher for China's inclusion in the World Trade Organization. A \$22-million donation is chump change compared to the trillions China has made since they were allowed into the WTO in 2001.

Indeed, as reported by Reuters, "Biden has backed free trade over his three decades in Congress," and "He supported the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and China's entry into the WTO in 2001.

THE ART OF TRENDS

"California Scheming" by Stephen Green



TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By **Ben Daviss**

“FATHER OF THE INTERNET” INVENTS NEW COMPETITOR

Tim Berners-Lee, who wrote the computer codes 30 years ago that made the Internet possible, has become disenchanted with his creation... so, he’s designing an alternative.

Unhappy about the hordes of personal data, as well as the power and control, amassed by giant corporations such as Amazon and Google, Berners-Lee has created Solid, which he calls a “mid-course correction” that will shape the Internet he originally envisioned – secure, decentralized, and collaborative.

In the re-envisioned, Solid version of the Internet, your personal data is stored in a secure “pod”; only you decide who can see it or use it. With your permission, a company can see your data to process a credit application or send you information about a product, for example, but that permission would extend only to that task.

To access anything in your pod, someone uses a unique authentication code assigned for that user and that task; no one can just plant cookies, sneak in, and rummage through your files. Companies are not able to store your personal information.

Data kept in pods are stored in a linked format, making it accessible and interoperable across currently incompatible applications and platforms and enabling smooth collaboration on documents and projects.

To create this alternative Internet, Berners-Lee and his collaborators have created Inrupt, a start-up designing open-source Solid software for early clients, which include Britain's National Health Service and the government of Flanders, the Dutch-speaking region of Belgium.

TRENDPOST: *Data sharing across incompatible platforms has become a focus among tech companies, and few would complain if the Internet did a better job of protecting privacy. Berners-Lee has the reputation and skills to draw both clients and talented developers to realize his alternative Internet, as well as individual customers seeking refuge from hackers, Big Tech, and other prying eyes.*

Solid has a solid chance of survival and success, although it's unlikely to replace the compromised Internet we live with now.

NEW TREATMENT WEARS OUT CANCER

Cancer can outwit the human immune system and resist treatments – including chemotherapy, which can wreak damage of its own on organs and tissues. Now a team of German and Swedish bioscientists is testing a way to kill cancer cells by denying them energy.

Until recently, cancer was thought to grow without needing mitochondria, the structures inside cells that produce adenosine triphosphate (ATP), the basic fuel that cells need to function. Oncologists now know that malignant

cells are as dependent on mitochondria as any other organism is. Interrupting cancer cells' ability to make ATP would let them "run out of gas" and die.

But past drugs targeting malignant cells' mitochondria also destroyed those same power generators in healthy cells. The European research team turned attention to mitochondria's DNA, which is controlled, in part, by a protein called POLRMT.

Cells growing rapidly, such as stem cells and cancer cells, are especially sensitive to the presence or absence of POLRMT; but cells already formed into bone, skin, or organs are much less so. Knowing that, the researchers concocted a biochemical compound that disrupts POLRMT. No POLRMT, no ATP from cancer cells' mitochondria; no ATP, no energy; no energy, no more cancer cells.

Tested in mice, the compound slashed cancer cells' growth rate while not creating serious side effects in the animals. The treatment can be continued long enough to be significantly effective against at least some kinds of cancer before starting to show damage to healthy cells, the scientists found.

TRENDPOST: *Cancer ultimately will be defeated not by radiation, surgery, and synthetic chemicals but by harnessing the body's arsenal of proteins, enzymes, and other compounds to restore health while minimizing side effects of treatment. Cancer researchers are devoting more resources to pursuing this course because results are showing its effectiveness.*

TEACHING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO TEACH ITSELF

Technologists and ethicists have long pondered the consequences of the moment when technological development is wrested from human control and taken over by technology itself, with computers writing their own programs and designing their own descendants.

Engineers at Cornell University have made it more interesting to think about that now.

The researchers gave an artificial intelligence program the task of pushing solid blocks to target locations in a two-dimensional maze that made it easy for the blocks to get stuck. Getting the blocks to the right place required a lot of planning.

The programmers compared it to rearranging large pieces of furniture in a small apartment: to get the big sofa from one corner of the room to the middle of the opposite wall, where are you going to put the entertainment center amid the other furniture so it's out of the way but still gives you enough room to maneuver the couch?

They gave the AI program simpler versions of the task to train on. The AI kept the attempts it solved but that were the hardest; that enabled it to build its skills as it tackled the next level of difficulty.

After the AI had mastered that challenge, the researchers then tested their training method on 225 problems that no AI had previously solved and found their new method solved the problems about a third of the time.

The Cornell team reports receiving “astounded messages” from AI researchers who have tried to train AI to solve these problems for years. Next, the researchers plan to turn their method loose on math proofs that have defied human efforts.

TRENDPOST: Behind the scenes, computers already are writing obituaries and short items for newspapers, solving staggeringly complex problems in seconds that humans would need years to sort out, and creating and testing new scientific hypotheses.

By 2030, these digitized skills and capacities will be integrated and will raise the power of computers beyond human comprehension. Our task will be not to

design better software and machines but to control and direct the massive power we have unleashed.