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TRENDSJOURNAL

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

21st Century:
**CHINA'S
CENTURY**





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CHINA'S CENTURY

Welcome to this week's Trends Journal: "21st CENTURY: CHINA'S

CENTURY." Anthony Freda's cover says it all, and it's one of our Top Trends for 2021: "China 2021."

As we have been forecasting, the 20th century was the American century, the 21st will be China's.

From heavy industry to hi-tech, beyond the U.S. and Europe, delivering to China all the manufacturing and production they never had until they brought them into the World Trade Organization... the business of China is business, while the business of America and its NATO allies is war.

From geopolitics to economics, we have been providing the facts, trends, and data to support our "China 2021" forecast. Can it be changed? Not under the current systems of Western government and the breed of politicians in charge.

But, it can change if the human spirit of nations rises to the higher meaning of life rather than being transfixed with power, money, and the selfish bottom line.

What can change the future? A Renaissance... a time when true art again finds its place in the human spirit. The future is in your hands.

Gerald Celente, Publisher

FEEDBACK

UNLEASH FREEDOM

"If this country lived up to its potential by unleashing freedom and truly free markets on the people, there would be no need to worry about competition from abroad.

Instead the tyrants in the government, sociopaths in the corporate executive suites, and fascists in the banking system are all giddy about slamming that iron boot on the necks of Mr. and Mrs. Middle Class.

The fat cats in DC and on Wall Street are partying while the working class struggles to survive.

P Sacco

AN UNNATURAL WORLD AHEAD?

Globalists may view people as property to be inventoried and herded about like steers on the range. Contact tracing as an ear tag in a steer on the summer range, prior to going to the feedlot for slaughter?

C Bradley

PHILLY CHEESE

The Philly sports station pumps vaccination all day long – I'm sure a lot of people buy into it, but also think a lot of people must think they are full of crap.

I wonder how many people will drop dead from the vaccine?

Wow_1

TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



U.S. MARKET UPDATE

BANKSTERS IN CHARGE. MARKETS KEEP RISING. It was this time a year ago that the COVID War was launched. Fear and hysteria spread across the globe.

In the U.S., schools and Silicon Valley were the first to shut down. Remote learning and work-at-home became the new normal... trends that greatly enriched the high-tech industry.

As the lockdowns accelerated, equity markets plunged, that is, until the U.S. Federal Reserve in early March pumped in an unprecedented \$1.5 trillion in loans to Wall Street gamblers.

That wasn't enough. Equities continued to plunge.

On 23 March of last year, the Dow Jones Industrial Average continued its sell-off, erasing three years of gains. It was on pace to clinch its worst calendar month since 1931.

The S&P 500 dropped 2.9 percent, down more than 30 percent from a record close set on 19 February.

The Street needed more cheap money, and the Senate was blamed for not agreeing on the size of the bailout bill.

What a Difference a Day Makes

The next day, the Dow surged over 2,000 points from its three-year low, on news that Washington would dump \$2.5 trillion into the economy to artificially prop it up.

Disconnected from the reality of Main Street, which was just beginning to be locked down and would destroy millions of lives and livelihoods, the U.S. government's stimulus schemes and the Federal Reserve vowing to purchase Treasury and Mortgage-backed Securities (MBS) to help pump up plunging stocks and keep mega banks and trading houses from crashing did the job.

Equity markets have been on a tear since then, despite unemployment numbers soaring and the GDP plunging.

Rigged Game

The U.S. Federal Reserve, as aptly noted by *Wall Street on Parade*, "has just become a brand new national legislative body. It will, without any oversight in Congress, decide what corporation and business to save and which to let fail." They note that "Wall Street's mega banks and trading houses will, once again have trillions of dollars of toxic securities removed from their balance sheets, including plunging stock through the Fed's Primary Dealer Credit Facility."

Moreover, the Fed announced last March that they removed any limit to the amount of treasury bonds they will buy to flood the economy with money during and after the coronavirus crisis.

As we have noted, the Fed secretly pumped in over \$29 trillion to the Wall Street Gang during the Great Recession, and it will again, behind the scenes, inject more money into banks, hedge funds, and trading houses to artificially prop them up.

Again, the desperate economic conditions across Main Street have nothing to do with the gambler addicts of Wall Street. The Fed also said back then that it will buy corporate bonds for the first time in history.

The Fed took another extraordinary step to intervene last March by adding \$1.1 trillion into the commercial paper market. Commercial paper is a promissory note, usually for no more than nine months, which a business uses to fund day-to-day operations such as payroll. While the Fed can't lend directly to businesses, it juiced its Commercial Paper Funding Facility, through which the Federal Reserve Bank will purchase 90-day debt from companies.

It worked perfectly. Again, despite the disastrous economic fundamentals, equities keep rising.

New World Order

The Dow is up some 5 percent this month, the S&P 500 5.8 percent, and the NASDAQ spiked 7.4 percent.

As for the S&P 500, it has scored ten record closes since the start of the new year.

Prices floated higher on the accelerating vaccination campaign, strong corporate earnings reports, the growing certainty of President Biden's \$1.9-trillion flood of stimulus spending, and the U.S. Federal Reserve's renewed promise of low interest rates and bond market support far into the future.

Bubble?

The S&P is trading at 22.42 times its 12-month projected earnings, well above its 12-month average of 17.95.

Again, this love of gambling in equities continues to accelerate despite the hard data of the unprecedented destruction of numerous sectors of the real economy.

As we keep noting, tourism, trade shows, conventions, entertainment, hospitality, fairs, holiday celebrations, restaurants, airlines, brick and mortar retail, malls... dead and dying. Hundreds of millions out of work, 90 million deep in poverty, according to the IMF.

Millions abandoning big cities, working from home as commercial real estate, rental, and condo markets tank in many nations around the world. “For Rent” signs string the streets from Fifth Avenue to Champs-Élysées. Day after day, week after week, the data pointing to economic decline gets worse, yet stock markets around the world keep rising.

Today’s word on The Street from *CNBC* is “The only reason to be bearish is there’s no reason to be bearish, Bank of America says.”

“The only reason to be bearish is... there is no reason to be bearish,” Bank of America chief investment strategist Michael Hartnett told clients.

Their survey of 225 mutual fund, hedge fund, and pension fund managers with \$645 billion under management showed a majority of investors believe it will be a V-shaped recovery and that global growth is at an all-time high.

The gambler gang is betting that with more people vaccinated, their freedom to live life again will rebound, thus pushing up economic growth. And when all else fails, they are betting on more cheap stimulus money to be injected into the economy.

On the downside, according to the survey, market players are concerned about rising inflation, overplaying the tech stocks, long bitcoin trades, and shorting the dollar trades.

Only 13 percent of respondents said stocks are in a bubble.

Where are the markets heading, when will the bubble burst, when will the Ponzi scheme be over? Read Gregory Mannarino's new analysis and forecast, "[WORLD CENTRAL BANKS: RUNNING A MASSIVE PONZI SCHEME.](#)"

On the market front today, all three major averages hit record highs earlier in the day before pulling back. The NASDAQ fell 0.3 percent, the S&P 500 closed down 0.06 percent, while the Dow hit another record high, closing up 64.35 points.

The latest fear on The Street is that the higher interest rates rise, betting on the bubbling equity markets becomes less attractive. Indeed, for the first time since last February, the 10-year Treasury yield topped 1.25 percent, jumping 9 basis points to hit a one-year high of 1.30 percent.

GOLD/SILVER. With U.S. Treasury yields rising higher and the U.S. dollar index rebounding, investors pulled off non-yielding gold, which sunk some \$28, closing below the \$1,800 per ounce mark.

It was also reported today that BlackRock, the world's biggest asset manager, dumped some \$471 million worth Gold ETF Gold Shares (GLD) and bought \$29 million worth of iShares Silver Trust (SLV) in the fourth quarter of 2020.

A new gold game is being played, and it may continue to push down prices. While we maintain our forecast for gold prices to rise above \$2,100 and silver to spike above \$50 per ounce this year – it closed flat at \$27.30 an ounce. Bitcoin is the new game in town that may keep gold prices soft.

As trend forecasters who monitor the current events forming future trends, we make it 100 percent clear that no one can predict the future. There are too many

wild cards, be they man-made or made by nature. And who, a decade ago, would see a wild card future of a digital coin backed by nothing and printed on nothing, named bitcoin, to become the highest-priced single coin asset in the world?

Once the coin of the millennial generation when it came to life in 2009, now major Fortune 500 companies are playing the digital currency game.

Thus, the money flooding into bitcoin is pouring out of gold. However, we maintain our forecast that no matter how high bitcoin flies, there will be a sharp correction and gold will remain the most tangible safe-haven asset that will not be replaced by digital currencies.

BITCOIN. After hitting almost \$50,000 per coin today, as we go to press, bitcoin is down some, trading at \$48,684 per coin. While the upside is strong, we affirm our forecast that there will be a correction, especially since we have been reporting on growing central bank pressure to reign in the coin. Thus, we maintain our 5 January forecast for bitcoin: “The downward breakout point will be hit should prices fall below \$25,000 per coin.”

OIL. With a wild winter storm ripping through Texas, the biggest crude producing state in America, refineries, and wells across the state were shut down, pushing oil prices to their highest levels since January 2020.

We had forecast Brent Crude would trade in the \$50 per barrel range in 2021. But wild cards are being played that are driving up prices. As we have been reporting, prices spiked following the OPEC+ deal that cut oil supply and the high hopes that the massive stimulus plans across the globe and the mass vaccination program would push up demand. Yet, the reality on The Street that has not dropped prices are the sharp declines in air travel, cruise ships, tourism, daily commuting to work, rising unemployment, etc.

Another wild card played today that has pushed up oil prices are reports that Yemen's Houthis, fighting the Saudi's who invaded their country in March 2015,

are said to have struck airports in Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest oil exporter, with drones.

TRADING VOLUMES REACH “FRENZIED” PACE



Over the 20 trading days ending 11 February, an average of 15.8 billion shares was traded on U.S. equity markets, *Bloomberg* reported.

The number came close to the 20-day average of 16.1 billion shares reached last 25 March as the economy was crashing, panicked investors were dumping their portfolios, and opportunists were scooping up bargains.

A key difference between then and now is the markets' sense of volatility, measured by the Cboe Volatility Index (VIX), which rates volatility – a proxy for investors' sense of uncertainty – from zero to 100.

Last March, the index soared past 80 amid the crashing economy; on 12 February, the VIX ended below 20.

That suggests “the jump in trading activity is one more sign of exuberance in the stock market,” *Bloomberg* noted.

Another indicator: bull call options reached a record volume, signaling investors' confidence in the markets' future.

Chris Weston, research chief at Pepperstone Group, called the level of speculation “frenzied” in a comment to *Bloomberg* and attributed trading volume to the market's influx of retail, or individual, investors.

The S&P 500 index has gained more than 4 percent this year and reached another all-time on 11 February.

TREND FORECAST: Yes, this is a market bubble, and yes, there will be a strong economic rebound this spring, summer, and autumn. But the devastation the lockdowns have wracked across continents will not be repaired or replaced. An array of existing businesses will bounce back, others will decline, and few new ones will be created.

And, with pent-up demand from a lock-downed society, when restrictions are lifted, there will be a go-out-and-spend splurge that will ignite economies.

However, what has been lost will take years to recover. We forecast that the high-rising equity markets will begin their crash as interest rates rise higher, inflation spikes, and the debt bubble inflated by nations across the globe bursts.

While it is difficult to precisely forecast when those events will transpire in tandem, we estimate before the end of this year.

JUNK BOND YIELDS FALL TO RECORD LOWS



Yields on U.S. junk-rated bonds have fallen below 3 percent, making it cheap and easy for companies tilting toward insolvency to borrow money.

Centene Corporation, a health insurance company, sold a \$2.2-billion bond last week at an interest rate of 2.5 percent, saving it an estimated \$40 million a year in interest payments.

Last month, homebuilder MDC Holdings landed the same rate and term on a \$350-million bond sale.

Also last month, T-Mobile sold a \$1-billion, five-year bond at 2.25 percent, a record-low rate for a recently low-rated company.

“A 3-percent yield is just ludicrous,” Tom Krasner, cofounder of Concise Capital Management, commented to the *Financial Times*. “We never would have imagined buying things at a 3-percent yield in our entire career.”

According to the *FT*, some observers have expressed worry that record low junk-bond yields fail to compensate junk-bond investors for the extra risk they face if the economy takes longer to recover than hoped. That would hobble corporate earnings and could squeeze corporations facing hefty bond payments.

At the moment, “Everyone has the same [sunny] view and there is so much money chasing this rally,” Philipson noted. “There is such a reach for yield.”

TRENDPOST: *Across the globe, it's the same pitch. The more vaccines injected in the arms of people, the longer the Feds keep interest rates low, the more cheap money they pump into the markets, and the longer they continue to buy up bonds... the lower the risk of buy junk-bonds from high-risk companies.*

Again, we forecast there will be a sharp economic bounce back, but it will not expand across the economic spectrum. Thus, those companies deep in junk-bond debt will decelerate, especially as interest rates rise and their business prospects for recovery decline.

NEW UNEMPLOYMENT CLAIMS HIGHER THAN EXPECTED



New claims for unemployment benefits totaled 793,000 during the week of 8 February, only slightly less than the previous week's 812,000.

The new figure topped the estimate of 760,000 from economists surveyed by Dow Jones.

New weekly claims for jobless benefits have topped 700,000 every week for 11 months.

Continuing claims dropped by 145,000 to 4.54 million.

The number of people receiving unemployment payments of any kind rose by more than 10 percent to 20.44 million due to a spurt of claims in two programs supporting workers unqualified to receive employer-funded benefits and those whose benefits have otherwise expired.

California alone registered more than a million new filings for emergency unemployment payments.

Although the economy has restored about 12.5 million jobs since the economy shut down last March, roughly ten million people are still without work.

TREND FORECAST: *Just as we had forecast, as the winter set in, unemployment numbers would rise. And, as the weather warms up and governments un-lock economies, unemployment numbers will fall. However, as reported by the Congressional Budget Office, the jobs lost will not be recovered until sometime in 2024. Therefore, while old jobs will come back, new ones won't be created, which will in turn suppress economic growth.*

POWELL WARNS OF DANGERS FOR LABOR MARKET



“We are still very far from a strong labor market whose benefits are broadly shared,” Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, said in a 10 February speech to the Economic Club of New York.

Powell pledged a “patiently accommodative” monetary policy for as long as needed, even as the jobs market grows stronger, and the Fed will leave interest rates untouched even if inflation briefly exceeds the Fed’s target cap of 2 percent.

However, “achieving and sustaining maximum employment will require more than supportive monetary policy,” he added, indicating the Fed has a limited role to play in reviving the jobs market.

Returning to full employment “will require a society-wide commitment, with contributions across government and the private sector,” Powell said.

The U.S. economy is still about ten million jobs smaller than a year ago, he noted, “a greater shortfall than the worst of the Great Recession’s aftermath. Nearly five million people say the pandemic prevented them from looking for work in January.”

In the early days of the economic shutdown, workers were furloughed temporarily. Yet, “as some sectors of the economy have continued to struggle, permanent job loss has increased,” as has long-term unemployment, defined as being jobless for at least 26 weeks.

Although January’s official unemployment rate was 6.3 percent, the figure does not reflect the labor market’s dire reality, Powell declared.

“The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that many unemployed individuals have been misclassified as employed,” Powell said. “Correcting this miscalculation and counting those who have left the workforce since last February... would boost the unemployment rate close to 10 percent in January.”

The rate may be double that – about 20 percent – for the 25 percent of U.S. workers earning the least, according to figures released by Fed governor Lael Brainard, a rate near that at the depths of the Great Depression.

“The published unemployment rates during COVID have dramatically understated the deterioration in the labor market,” Powell said. The pandemic and global shutdown have “led to the largest 12-month decline in labor force participation since at least 1948.”

Labor force participation dropped during and after the Great Recession but began to grow again in 2015, according to the *World Socialist Web Site*.

Powell has championed the call for more federal stimulus spending to strengthen businesses and create and sustain jobs.

Returning to a robust labor market will “not be easy,” Powell warned, in part because “the longer-run potential growth rate of the economy appears to be lower than it once was,” which can “lead to worse economic outcomes, particularly for the most economically vulnerable Americans.”

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. economy contracted 3.5 percent in 2020. Most Fed officials expect the nation’s labor market will not begin to approach 2019’s employment levels until at least 2023. As we reported, the Congressional Budget Office projects they will not return until sometime during 2024.*

Again, the bottom line is the Federal Reserve will continue to keep interest rates low despite inflation rising to prevent a major market crash and a worsening unemployment crisis. This in turn will push the dollar lower and push precious metals and cryptocurrency prices higher.

BUDGET DEFICIT SETS RECORD



The U.S. budget deficit totaled a record \$738 billion during the first four months of the federal government's current fiscal year, an 89-percent rise against the same period a year earlier, the U.S. Treasury Department reported.

Revenues reached \$1.2 trillion for the period, also a record, while expenses soared 23 percent to a never-before-seen four-month total of \$1.9 trillion.

For the 12 months ending 31 January, the deficit was \$3.47 trillion, about 16.2 percent of GDP. In contrast, the deficit during the Great Recession peaked at 9.8 percent of GDP, according to the U.S. Treasury Department.

Revenue for the 12 months was 2.8 percent lower than the previous year.

The record budget gap was created by federal stimulus spending to keep the economy functioning during 2020's lingering global economic shutdown and its aftermath.

Treasury secretary Janet Yellin and Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve, are among officials calling for additional deficit spending to bolster a still-feeble economy, saying that the danger of spending too little outweighs that of spending too much.

TREND FORECAST: *What we are witnessing is unprecedented in peace-time history. Never before have nations sunk so deep in debt to artificially pump up markets.*

What does it mean? What's next? Read all about it in Gregory Mannarino's new article, "[WORLD CENTRAL BANKS: RUNNING A MASSIVE PONZI SCHEME.](#)"

TRENDPOST: As we continue to note, there is no relationship between Wall Street and Main Street. As equities hit new highs and the rich get richer, the sentiment among the average Joe and Jane is dismal. The University of Michigan's consumer sentiment index slipped from 79 in January to 76.2 in February, the university reported, compared to 101 in February 2020.

The outlook was mostly glum among households earning less than \$75,000. The survey's rating was the lowest since August when there were glimmering hopes for an economic revival.

TRUCKING COMPANIES DECIMATED BY LOCKDOWNS



In 2020, 3,140 U.S. trucking businesses shut down, 185 percent more than in 2019, according to Broughton Capital.

More than half of the failures took place in the year's second quarter when the economy cratered as politicians locked down states' economies in the face of the COVID pandemic. A record number of the closures occurred in May, Broughton reported.

The impact was hardest on small fleets. The average trucking business failing last year was 40 percent smaller than in 2019, Broughton's data shows.

About 97 percent of U.S. trucking firms operate 20 or fewer trucks; 91 percent have six or fewer, the American Trucking Associations reported.

Smaller fleets lack the scale to negotiate lower prices on everything from spare parts to employee health insurance. They also depend more on the spot market, where shipments are booked without notice and prices are volatile.

The average charge for a spot-market shipment dove 12 percent in April 2020 from March to \$1.64 a mile and bottomed at \$1.60 in May, the Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association said.

“The trucks were all there but what they had to move was cut by half,” association president Todd Spencer told the *Wall Street Journal*.

TREND FORECAST: We note this report to not only emphasize the devastating effects the COVID War lockdowns have inflicted upon the lives and livelihoods of millions but also to identify the growing trend of the Big’s getting bigger while small businesses go down and out.

Indeed, what will be lost by those who have been devastated by politicians’ decisions to lock down economies will be taken over by larger firms, thus forming more oligopolies and monopolies across the economic spectrum.

COMPANIES DELAY RECALLING OFFICE WORKERS



Disappointed with the speed of the vaccine rollout, companies across America have canceled plans to recall employees to their offices this spring.

Many businesses have rescheduled the returns for September or later or are refusing to set any date at all for regrouping.

Qurate Retail has pushed back a May return date until September for workers in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and other cities; TechnologyAdvisors had set 1 February as its workers’ date to re-office, rescheduled the date to August, and now says it will wait until fall and then let employees choose whether to continue to work at home.

Fidelity Investments and United Parcel Service have told workers the companies are monitoring the nation's progress in curbing the virus and will call employees back "when it is safe," according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Eighty to 85 percent of the population should be vaccinated before Buoy Health in Massachusetts calls back-office workers, physician and CEO Andrew Le said to the *Journal*.

Le expects that to happen by fall "but that might be the optimistic CEO mindset," he said.

Working at home has boosted productivity for many employees but stifled the creativity born of collaboration, executives told the *Journal*, and workers increasingly show signs of burnout.

Forty-four percent of workers do not know their companies' plans to re-open offices, up from 37 percent in September, a survey of 2,200 office workers by the Conference Board has found.

Other polls have shown that workers still worry about prolonged in-person contact that offices enforce.

The highest office occupancy rates now are in cities where large school districts have brought students back to classrooms, such as Austin, Dallas, and Houston, a city where offices are seeing about 35 percent occupancy, data from card-swipe company Kastle Systems shows.

Austin's HealthCare2U has brought back half its office staff, which still allows social distancing at desks and in conference rooms, CEO Andrew Bonner noted.

In contrast, in New York City, where students are in classrooms only part-time, about 15 percent of workers are at their desks.

TREND FORECAST: What has been lost is lost. As we have been forecasting, major cities such as New York, Chicago, San Francisco, etc., will not recover for

years. Never before have people left major cities in such large numbers to escape the virus, rising crime, and sky-high living costs and moved to suburbs, ex-burbs, and other cities.

The trend to move to sunbelt, low tax, and less government-regulated cities will both rebound and grow as living conditions in the once thriving, but now hard locked-down metropolises continue to deteriorate. Along with crime, taxes will rise, and it will be a long road down before these once-thriving hot spots that were rich with tourists, commercial businesses, entertainment, and high-quality return to life.

SALESFORCE.COM TO PERMANENTLY SHRINK ITS OFFICE SPACE



Software company Salesforce.com will expect at least 65 percent of its 54,000 employees to be in its corporate offices only one to three days a week after the COVID pandemic recedes, up from 40 percent now, the company has announced.

As a result, it will permanently abandon an unspecified amount of office space in cities around the U.S.

Remaining office space will be used largely for meetings and collaborations, so the company is revamping its layouts to feature “café-style” seating and open-air conference areas with social distancing, along with some private nooks for individuals, Brent Heyer, Salesforce’s Chief People Officer, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

An unspecified number of workers will be entirely remote, he noted.

The company will eliminate the “sea of desks” common to pre-pandemic workspaces, Heyer said.

“We’re not going back to the way things were,” he added. “I don’t believe we’ll keep every space in every city we’re in.”

That includes San Francisco, where Salesforce is the largest single employer, the *Journal* reported and occupies Salesforce Tower, the city's tallest building.

Salesforce also has offices in Chicago, Indianapolis, and New York, among other cities.

Salesforce is among the largest companies to detail its projected office-space needs in a post-pandemic world.

Tech companies have led the shift to home-based workforces.

Twitter has said it will give all employees the option of working from home and Facebook has announced plans to transition more employees to home-based work.

In contrast, Amazon has added office space in six U.S. cities and announced a lease on new space in Boston in January to house its expanded workforce there.

TREND FORECAST: *The facts are the reality of the numbers. Once again, we reaffirm our forecast that as more people work at home, many once-thriving commercial business hubs that depended on office workers, commuters, and business travel will decline, as will real estate values.*

TRENDPOST: *Exemplifying the desperation facing landlords of tenants fleeing major cities, in January, Manhattan landlords offered new tenants an average of 2.3 months free rent to entice them to sign leases, the heftiest incentive in at least ten years, according to a report by analysis firm Miller Samuel and brokerage Douglas Elliman.*

While that helped boost January's new lease signings 58 percent year on year, empty flats listed for rent numbered 12,447, about triple the number open last January.

With the incentives' value deducted, the average rent for a two-bedroom Manhattan apartment fell to \$2,812, 19 percent lower than that for January 2020.

BIDEN KEEPS TRUMP TARIFFS ON EUROPEAN FOODS



The Biden administration will keep existing tariffs in place for now on some European wines, cheeses, and other foods, despite complaints by food-industry trade groups that the levies are raising costs for restaurants and consumers.

The 25-percent tariffs were imposed on \$7.5 billion worth of Europe's goods in late 2019 by the Trump administration to pressure Europe in a 17-years-long dispute over subsidies for commercial aircraft makers Airbus and Boeing.

Europe retaliated by slapping tariffs on U.S. nuts, tobacco, and whiskey worth \$4.5 billion, after which Trump broadened his tariff to include all French and German wines.

The Biden administration is “considering the action” as part of its broader review of Trump-era trade policies, the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative wrote in a regulatory filing.

“These tariffs are impacting one of the most vulnerable sections of the economy at the worst point in generations,” Ben Aneff, president of the U.S. Wine Trade Alliance, said in a comment quoted by the *Wall Street Journal*.

TRENDPOST: We note this tariff report to illustrate the hypocrisy of not only the Presstitute media, which hardly reported on this, but also the business media and the general public that had attacked former President Trump for imposing the tariffs.

They loudly complained that his trade policies were endangering both trade and equity markets... but now remain nearly silent as they are being re-imposed by President Biden.

Again, we are political atheists and do not take sides. We identify, analyze, and forecast the current events forming future trends for what they are and not for what we want them to be.

We also maintain our forecast that considering those who now occupy the White House, the Biden administration is essentially Obama 2.0. Thus, to forecast the future of what policies Washington will impose and the direction it will lead the nation, is to look back to the past to see what the Obama administration had done.

TRENDPOST: Keeping the Obama spirit alive and thriving in the White House, Gary Gensler, former chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission from 2009 to 2014, was nominated by President Biden to head the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

A blue-blooded member of the D.C. swamp during the Clinton Administration, Gensler served as Under Secretary of the Treasury for Domestic Finance (1999–2001) and assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Financial Markets (1997–1999).

While he struck out serving as CFO for Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign, the former Goldman Sachs executive has a reported net worth of between \$41 and \$119 million, according to his financial disclosure forms filed with the Office of Government Ethics.

PRIVATE EQUITY FIRM IN TALKS TO BUY ANOTHER HOSPITAL CHAIN



Nashville-based LifePoint Health, a company with 80 rural hospitals and owned by private equity firm Apollo Asset Management, is negotiating to buy Ardent Health Services, which operates 30 hospitals in six states.

The deal would create a \$10-billion hospital chain.

Ardent operates acute-care hospitals in growing urban and suburban areas, mostly in Oklahoma and Texas.

Equity Group Investments bought a majority share of Ardent in 2015 for \$475 million from Ventas, a real estate trust. Equity Group then added more hospitals to Ardent and has since more than doubled its annual revenue to \$4.4 billion, according to Ardent's website.

Apollo bought LifePoint in 2018 for about \$5.6 billion, merged it with RCCH Healthcare Partners, and continued buying other Nashville-area health services.

The current potential sale, valuing Ardent at about \$2 billion, would enable LifePoint to expand into larger markets and gain purchasing power with suppliers. It also would streamline the management of the two companies into one administrative center.

Private equity firms have been expanding their holdings in health care in recent years, buying clinics and hospitals to profit from an aging population's rising spending on medical care.

The purchases often have been laden with debt and have prompted ire from regulators and politicians who have accused companies of prioritizing profit over quality care for patients.

TREND FORECAST: As the late, great comedian George Carlin said, “It’s one big club, and you ain’t in it.” We note this merger deal to again emphasize how the Big’s continue to get bigger as small businesses are either put out of business by them or gobbled up.

We have also detailed that there is a burgeoning “Youth Revolution” spreading across the continents. Among the critical elements of this movement is a rebellion against the one percent: Class Warfare. New political parties will be formed as the young, having a dire future and with nothing left to lose, will be losing it... especially as the “Greatest Depression” drives them deeper into despair.

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



EUROPEAN UNION'S RECOVERY OUTLOOK IMPROVES

Europe's economy will grow 3.8 percent this year and next, the European Commission has predicted.

The figure for 2021 is lower than the commission's previous forecast, due to ongoing COVID lockdowns as well as a slower-than-expected vaccination campaign.

However, the 3.8-percent growth projection for 2022 is higher than the commission's earlier expectation.

Spain's and France's economies will rebound most sharply, gaining 5.6 and 5.5 percent respectively. The Netherlands will grow slowest at 1.8 percent, but its plunge last year was far less deep than most other countries in the region.

If the forecast is accurate, Europe's economy will regain its pre-pandemic output levels by the middle of 2022, a year earlier than the commission had previously foreseen.

“As increasing numbers [of people] are vaccinated, an easing of containment measures should allow a strengthening rebound over the spring and summer,” EC economics commissioner Paulo Gentiloni said in a statement announcing the revised outlook.

The new forecast is based on the goal of vaccinating 70 percent of Europe's population by summer, a task Gentiloni confessed with be “quite challenging.”

INVESTORS FLOOD STOCK MARKETS WITH CASH



During the week of 8 February, investors plowed a record \$58 billion into stock funds around the world, including \$36.3 billion in U.S. funds and \$13.1 billion into a global bond fund, the *Financial Times* reported.

Investors drained \$10.6 billion from their cash accounts in making the purchases, the *Times* said.

Tech-focused funds rode the crest of the money wave, gathering \$5.4 billion during the week ending 10 February.

About 63 percent of assets under management by Bank of America's private bank has been allocated to stocks, a record proportion, the bank reported.

Investors are giddy about the prospects that worldwide vaccine distribution will spark a global economic recovery, led by President Biden's \$1.9-trillion

spending program that could hoist the world's largest economy back to economic growth.

“Expectations for the upcoming U.S. stimulus are high,” James Reid, a Deutsche Bank strategist told the *Times*.

Those expectations were reinforced last week when U.S. treasury secretary Janet Yellin told a G7 meeting of finance ministers and central bank officers that “the time to go big is now.”

Another \$1.9 trillion in cheap money piled on December's \$900 billion stimulus is stirring concerns about inflation among some observers.

However, a greater concern among many is equities' detachment from economic fundamentals.

TRENDPOST: As with the U.S. markets, it's a global gambler's game. With price-earnings ratios at the 2000 tech-bubble highs, what keeps juicing the markets are the forecasts for non-stop cheap flows of money by central banks and governments to artificially prop up markets, negative interest rates, and unending quantitative easing, i.e., buying up corporate bonds, junk or otherwise.

COMMODITY PRICE SPIKE



Expecting an economic recovery to boost demand for everything from concrete to rare earth minerals, investors are bidding up prices ahead of an anticipated bull market in commodities.

Investment managers are telling clients to buy in, with some seeing the chance of a new “supercycle,” a repeat of the early

2000s when China's rapid industrialization sent prices for oil and metals to record highs.

"It's easy, and largely accurate" to frame the commodity outlook as a "V-shaped vaccine trade" driven by pent-up demand coupled to government stimulus spending around the world, said a recent Goldman Sachs research note quoted by the *Financial Times*.

"What is key, however, is that this recovery in commodity prices will actually be the beginning of a much longer structural bull market for commodities," the note added.

Commodities have been unfavored by investors for years and largely abandoned when the global economy froze a year ago. Investors' views changed last spring when China reopened its industries to supply goods to countries whose economies were still shut down.

Over the last 12 months, soybean prices are up 50 percent and copper's cost has risen 40 percent. Benchmark Brent crude oil's price has climbed back to its pre-pandemic level of around \$60 a barrel.

A collection of 27 commodities routinely monitored by Summerhaven Investment Management shows prices up for all 27 during the six months ending in mid-January.

"We've looked back 50 years and we've never seen this basket of commodities all go up at once," managing partner Kurt Nelson commented to the *Times*.

"Since 2010, we have seen equity markets rally, a strong dollar, interest rates trend lower, and inflation expectations decline," Eliot Geller, partner at CoreCommodity Management, noted to the *Times*.

"Today, we have the threat of rising inflation, a weaker dollar, and interest rates that are already zero or negative," he said.

TREND FORECAST: As we have long forecast, the bull run markets have been driven by unprecedented stimulus spending by governments that have in turn ballooned the debt bubble, thus, the fears that the fast-rising markets juiced by cheap money will spike inflation. Therefore, fund managers have been buying commodities, which are inflation hedges because the price of commodities rises in tandem with inflation.

And with most commodities priced in dollars; with the dollar's value shrinking... and expected to keep declining, commodities have become cheaper.

Also, as inflation spikes, so, too, will dollar-based precious metals.

TRENDPOST: Helping to push inflation higher, China's producer price index rose 0.3 percent in January, the first month in the past 11 that the cost of manufactured goods has risen.

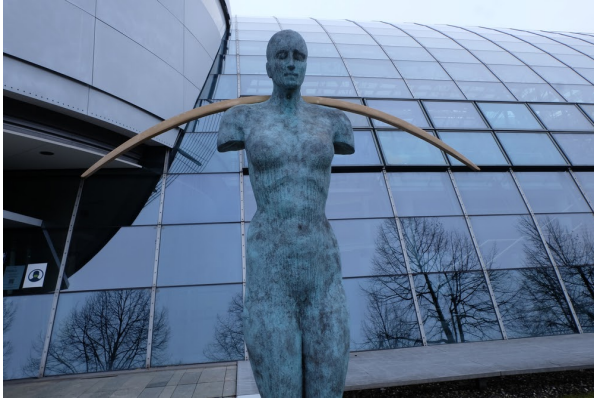
The rise is due to a 1-percent bump in domestic demand, fueled by the country's construction boom, the National Bureau of Statistics reported. However, China's consumer price index remained negative at -0.3 percent for the month as households remain cautious about spending.

Inflation in the price of consumer goods, excluding food and energy, turned negative for the first time in more than ten years.

As reported in the Financial Times, consumer prices are likely to rise in the coming months, analysts at Capital Economics predicted in a recent research report, adding that the consumer price index is likely to reach 2 percent by July.

While they forecast China's central bank "will tighten policy this year," we disagree. We forecast Beijing will do what it must to keep its economy roaring as it re-ignites its "Belt and Road" initiative, which has slowed down during the global lockdowns.

BUNDESBANK SEES INFLATION AHEAD



Germany's central bank sees prices in the country rising more than 3 percent this year and will raise interest rates "if the price outlook requires it," bank president Jens Weidmann said in an interview with the *Augsburger Allgemeine* newspaper last week.

Monetary policy will remain "very expansionary" to cope with the economic shutdown's aftermath, he added, but "when inflation rates rise in the euro area, we will discuss the fundamental direction of monetary policy," he said.

Inflation surged in Germany in January from -0.7 percent to 1.6 percent, due to singular events such as restoration of the country's full value-added tax and a change in the formula for calculating inflation.

The 3-percent rise this year will be temporary and due to one-off events, not a broad, long-term rise in consumer prices, Weidmann noted, but "the inflation rate will not remain as low as last year over the long term."

Weidmann also called on Germany to restore strict controls on deficit spending next year and stated that Europe's nations must slash their inflated debt load once the COVID virus is under control.

TREND FORECAST: Again, while Germany contends inflation surges due to a singular event, as per the data provided in this and previous ***Trends Journals***, we forecast Dragflation: declining economies and rising prices. Moreover, as central banks continue to pump more money into failing systems and governments go deeper into debt to generate economic growth, so, too, will the value of currencies decline. Thus, the lower the value of the currency, the more it costs to buy products, hence "Dragflation."

BRITAIN'S 2020 CONTRACTION WORST IN 300 YEARS



The U.K.'s economy shrank 9.9 percent in 2020, according to the kingdom's Office of National Statistics. The Bank of England said it was the nation's worst performance in more than 300 years, beating the 9.7-percent contraction in 1921 following World War I.

It also was the worst 2020 record among the Group of Seven advanced industrial nations.

France's GDP contracted by 8.3 percent last year, Germany's by 5 percent, and Italy's by 8.8 percent.

The U.S. economy puckered by 3.5 percent in 2020.

Britain's economy was especially hard-hit during last year's second quarter when the government imposed a draconian lockdown to halt COVID's spread, closing theaters, bars, and restaurants among other public gathering spots, and left the lock in place longer than many other countries.

Brits spend a larger share of their disposable income at public meeting places than residents of other nations across Europe, making the lockdown particularly damaging to its GDP.

That helped drive down output by the economy's arts and entertainment sector by two-thirds in December, year over year.

However, the British economy expanded by 4 percent in 2020's final quarter, boosted by government stimulus and a bump in business investment.

The British economy will rebound sharply during the second half of this year, aided by government spending to keep workers employed, the Bank of England has predicted.

The British economy dove 13 percent in 1709 during an especially cold winter known as the Great Frost.

TRENDPOST: *Again, by the facts, the numbers are devastating, and the toll it has taken on millions of lives and livelihoods is incalculable.*

Yet, again, there will be a bounce back, and it will be sold by the government and the business media as a monumental economic boom. However, it will be short-lived, as jobs lost will take years to return and many years before new ones are created.

Also, changing work-at-home trends will hit London and other large cities hard as commuting declines and spending habits continue to change, pushing down retail, restaurants, travel, and hospitality sectors harder.

BRITAIN NO LONGER “EUROPE’S WALL ST.” AFTER BREXIT



An average of €9.2 billion in stocks was traded in Amsterdam's equities markets last month, a fourfold increase since December, the month before Britain left the European Union.

The average daily value of London's trades was €8.6 billion during the same period.

Brexit cost London financial houses the right to handle transactions for European clients, leading many companies to move staff and offices to Dublin, Frankfurt, Paris, and other European centers.

Also, the European Union has forbidden the continent's financial houses from trading in London because the E.U. does not recognize London's supervision of stock trades as equal to its own.

As a result, when Britain left the E.U. at the end of last year, about €6.5 billion worth of daily financial transactions stayed on the continent, cutting London's business by half.

The change will smarten up competing markets, said Anish Puarr, who analyzes market structures for Rosenblatt Securities, in a comment to the *Financial Times*.

“Fund managers will be more concerned with the availability of liquidity and the costs of placing a trade rather than whether an order is executed in London or Amsterdam,” he said.

In a competitive move, London exchanges lifted restrictions on trading Swiss stocks, which are still banned from European Union exchanges.

In a sign of Amsterdam's growing heft, the U.S. Intercontinental Exchange plans to move \$1 billion in daily carbon emissions trades from London to Amsterdam; Cboe Europe will establish a derivatives trading operation in the Netherlands this spring, the exchange said.

Last July, Britain commanded 40 percent of Europe's market in the euro-denominated derivatives known as swaps.

In January, the U.K.'s share was 10 percent.

European Union markets now handle 25 percent of the swaps, with many deals being routed through the U.S.

Because Britain and the E.U. remain locked in their argument over which entity's standards will govern the deals, trades are routed through U.S. firms, whose standards are accepted by both sides.

The derivatives are a widely-used hedge against shifts in interest rates and currency values.

"As the market adapts to a post-Brexit environment, equivalence [of standards between the two] will be less of a priority than it once was," Enrico Bruni, head of the swaps desk for Europe at Tradeweb, said to the *Financial Times*.

The fragmented trading paths now in place "could become more of a reality in the future," he added.

Beginning in 2022, the E.U. will require all derivatives priced in euros to be traded inside the E.U., ending London's trade in that market.

U.K. TRADE WITH EUROPE TANGLED IN BUREAUCRACY



As they struggle to trade goods with European businesses, British companies find themselves lost in a maze of unfamiliar regulations, expensive customs delays, and paperwork jumbles.

No longer part of the European Union, Britain is suddenly a foreign country to Europe and must comply with the same procedures other nations are subject to.

The snafus add to the woes of an economy that contracted almost 10 percent in 2020, the worst performance in more than 300 years, according to the U.K.'s National Statistics Office (see related story).

Auto parts typically criss-cross the English Channel several times for specialized processing; now shippers have to list the origins of their shipments.

Pre-Brexit, Britain had sold half of its exports in the E.U. Now those exports have shrunk by two-thirds, with producers of meat, fish, and dairy products suffering catastrophic losses, *The New York Times* reported.

Cheesemaker Lye Cross reports that a transaction requiring seven steps before Brexit now takes 39 and will cost the company an additional £125,000 a year – about \$173,000 – to comply.

Fashion Enter, with two U.K. factories, placed an order for German thread. Instead of receiving the shipment in the usual five days, it came after three weeks with an added £44 charge for handling the paperwork.

Before Brexit, a truck laden with 25,000 liters of cream could leave Wales at night and be in France by morning; now the trek takes five days, Philip Langslow, director of County Milk Products, complained to the *Times*.

The dairy has to alert export authorities 24 hours before the truck leaves the dairy and report the truck's weight, something the dairy is unable to specify until the truck is loaded. If the truck's actual weight differs from that on the advance paperwork, the shipment may be disallowed, Langslow said.

Transport companies are so leery of the new complexities of crossing from Britain into Europe that many now refuse to carry those shipments, according to the *Times*.

Since Brexit, about two-thirds of small and medium-size manufacturers in Britain have seen costs rise on imported materials and components, a survey by the South West Manufacturing Advisory Service found.

Europe and the U.K. are still negotiating a slate of trade rules, meaning that the current morass across the borders is likely to continue indefinitely.

TREND FORECAST: A bright future of a post-Brexit U.K. continues to dim. With many of its trading partners slipping into the “Greatest Depression,” the E.U. exit could not have happened at a worse time. The reality of extensive bureaucracy mandates and product restrictions at a time of deep recessionary pressures will continue to shrink the U.K.’s Gross Domestic Product in the years to come.

HONG KONG TO REMAIN FINANCIAL HUB, BLACKROCK SAYS



Despite the political upset, Hong Kong will remain a key power center that will play a central role in opening China's economy more widely to the world, Rachel Lord, investment company Blackrock's new chief of Asia-Pacific operations, said in comments quoted by the *Financial Times*.

Beijing imposed austere political restrictions on Hong Kong last year, sparking prolonged street protests and raising questions about the city-state's hospitality for foreign businesses.

“Infrastructure is very hard to move,” she noted. “It’s less about politics and more about the way the ecosystem is set up. I don’t see any sign that Hong Kong loses its pre-eminence.”

Lord will oversee Blackrock’s expansion into China from her base in Hong Kong, the company has told staff.

JPMorgan Chase and UBS are among other banks planning to become players in China’s growing economy of savers and investors.

Chinese investments in the country's mutual funds grew 48 percent in 2020 to \$3.1 trillion; UBS has predicted that China will be the second-largest market for asset management companies this decade, trailing only the U.S.

Blackrock's business outside the U.S. now accounts for about 7 percent of the company's revenues; it has set a goal to raise the proportion to 50 percent, based largely on its expansion across China.

This year, Blackrock expects the Chinese government to approve its proposal to operate a fund business in the country and for a wealth management company in partnership with Temasek, a fund owned by the government of Singapore, and the China Construction Bank.

TREND FORECAST: As the cover of this week's ***Trends Journal*** clearly illustrates, the 21st century is the Chinese century. Regardless of what the communist nation does, how they do it, and to whomever they do it to – as with the complete takeover of Hong Kong – the business of Big Business is business. Human rights, social problems, environmental issues, government policies, etc., while they may talk a good game on the importance of such matters, all that matters, as evidenced by Blackrock, is the bottom line.

COCA-COLA POSTS NEGATIVE FOURTH QUARTER



Coca-Cola reported shrinkage in both revenue and profits for 2020's fourth quarter, with a global sales volume of 3 percent year over year.

Sales lost at shuttered eateries and bars outweighed gains in sales from consumers drinking sodas at home, the company said.

The company has weathered the pandemic by shedding more than 200 minor brands and announced in December that it would trim 2,200 employees from its 86,000-strong global workforce.

In a statement reporting financial results, Coke also acknowledged that it faces a potential \$12-billion charge by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, which alleges that the company attributed too much of its profit to foreign operations instead of to its U.S. business, where profits are taxed at a higher rate.

TREND FORECAST: With more of the world addicted to junk food and junk drinks, while there will be ups and downs in the sector, the Coca-Cola future will perk up again as economies open up and the hospitality and restaurant sectors spring back.

L'OREAL PARROTS TRENDS JOURNAL'S "ROARING 2021"



The world's largest cosmetics manufacturer is predicting "a fiesta of make-up and fragrances" once the COVID pandemic subsides, similar to the exuberance of the 1920s that followed World War I, CEO Jean-Paul Agon said in comments quoted by the *Financial*

Times.

“Putting on lipstick” – pointless when everyone is wearing masks – “will be a symbol of returning to life,” he added.

The owner of Maybelline and other global brands announced a fourth-quarter rise in e-commerce and sales in China, softening losses booked earlier in the year as the pandemic raged.

Sales rose 4.8 percent for the period to €7.9 billion, beating analysts' expectation of a 3-percent expansion.

L'Oreal saw its Chinese sales rise 27 percent last year, making Asia – no longer Europe – the company's second-largest market behind the U.S.

For 2020, L’Oreal’s net profit dropped 5 percent to €3.8 billion, a loss limited by cuts to marketing and product development as well as general costs.

During 2020, the cosmetics industry shifted its concentration from facial make-up to skincare and general wellness, as contacts among people were drastically curtailed and customers bunkered at home.

TREND FORECAST: Yes, as we had forecast, when the lockdowns are lifted, it will be party time for the young and the restless. This will be a once-in-a-lifetime unique break out that will provide rewarding opportunities for OnTrendpreneurs® to fulfill the needs and desires of a generation that wants to forget the past and live life to the fullest. The **Trends Journal** is identifying the new looks, sounds, and styles that will launch the Roaring 2021s and beyond.

GOING DOWN, GOING BUST, GOING OUT

MGM REVENUE TANKS IN FOURTH QUARTER. The casino operator reported a 53-percent drop in revenue for the period, collecting \$1.5 billion, less than half of the \$3.2 billion it gained during the same period a year earlier.

Revenues fell 66 percent in Las Vegas and 58 percent in Macao, the Chinese gambling mecca, the company said.

The loss sent MGM to a \$364-million operating loss for the period, compared to \$3 billion in operating income in 2019’s final three months.

As conventions disappeared from Las Vegas, leaving hotel rooms empty mid-week, the company closed its Mandalay Bay, the Mirage, and ParkMGM hotels on the Strip from Tuesday through Thursday.

In Las Vegas, hotels and casinos have operated at a 25-percent capacity cap. However, stronger performances at MGM’s regional gambling dens in Maryland,

Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, and Ohio have buoyed revenues, the company said.

Revenues in those regional properties were down only 34 percent for the period, MGM noted.

For all of 2020, MGM posted a 60-percent plunge in net revenue, from \$12.9 billion in 2019 to \$5.2 billion last year, leaving it with a 12-month loss of \$1 billion. Income for 2019 was \$2 billion.

BetMGM, the company's online betting venture, has a 17-percent share of the U.S. market for digital wagering, including a third of the market in Colorado and Tennessee, MGM reported.

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN'S REVENUE KO'D. Madison Square Garden Holdings Inc., which owns not only its namesake venue but also Radio City Music Hall and other live entertainment sites, saw fourth-quarter revenue plunge 94 percent to \$23.1 million in 2020's final quarter, compared to \$394.1 million in profits a year earlier, handing stockholders a loss of \$124.9 million for the period.

New York's event sites are scheduled to reopen on 23 February under limited capacity.

EXPEDIA REVENUE DECLINES FOURTH QUARTER IN A ROW. The travel booking website reported collecting \$920 million in revenue during 2020's fourth quarter, 67 percent less than a year earlier and the fourth straight quarter of decline.

Analysts were expecting \$1.1 billion, according to *Bloomberg*.

Gross sales also slid 67 percent to \$7.6 billion year on year.

Despite a global vaccination campaign, “rising [COVID] cases across the globe and rolling shutdowns of various travel markets made an impact,” Expedia CEO commented in a statement accompanying the report.

Those difficulties may continue.

The first half of 2021 “is going to be tougher than we previously expected, given the scale of rising case counts globally,” Deutsche Bank analysts wrote in a recent note to investors.

Before 2020, Expedia’s sales had grown each year for the previous eight.

PAL AIRLINES SAYS BUH-BYE TO 2,700 EMPLOYEES. The Philippines’ oldest and largest airline will lay off almost 40 percent of its 7,000 workers in an attempt to survive the damage wrought by the pandemic and world economic crash.

PAL reported losing US\$600 million during the first nine months of 2020 after losing \$160 million during the same period in 2019.

The Philippine government grounded all flights last March under a harsh national lockdown order, then allowed the carrier to resume 4 percent of its flights on a weekly schedule with a fraction of its employees returning to work.

PAL reports it has resumed 30 percent of its pre-pandemic schedule.

The Philippine government has offered financial help to the airline but only if private sources provide most of the aid.

The global airline industry lost US\$118.5 billion in 2020, according to the International Air Transport Association, and will lose \$38.7 billion this year, it said.

The airline industry will not recover to pre-pandemic levels of sales and operations until at least 2024, analysts and industry executives have predicted.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY STILL MIRED IN PANDEMIC. As other economic sectors begin to rebound from the COVID pandemic and global shutdown, the travel industry, which produces an estimated 10 percent of the world's GDP, has not yet started to recover.

Australia and New Zealand have maintained their bans on foreign visitors; other countries that reopened their borders in late summer and fall shut them again as the COVID virus resurged through Europe, the U.S., and South America as the year progressed.

The Biden administration is mulling requiring negative COVID tests to board airplanes for domestic flights, transportation secretary Pete Buttigieg has revealed.

People arriving in Britain must now quarantine at their own expense for ten days; Canada has imposed a similar rule as well as ending flights to Mexico and the Caribbean through April.

The U.K.'s stricture is "essentially a border closure that will inevitably delay the country's recovery and hurt the U.K.'s supply chains," Heathrow airport CEO John Holland-Kaye said in a statement earlier this month quoted by *CNN Business*.

Heathrow's passenger traffic last month was 89 percent lower than it was a year earlier, the airport reported.

Travel to Hong Kong, which hosted 65.1 million visitors in 2018, shrank by more than 93 percent in 2020, the *South China Morning Post* reported, with 88 travel agencies laying staff or merging to stay in business.

"Cross-border and international travel are not expected to resume before the end of this year," Alice Chan Cheung Lok-ye, director of Hong Kong's Travel Industry Council, told the newspaper. "Financial help from the government is still key."

Some of the city-state's travel agencies have opened sidelines to bring income; some conduct virtual tours while others sell everything from home appliances to pineapple cakes online.

"The world is more locked down today than at virtually any point in the past 12 months," Alexandre de Juniac, CEO of the International Air Transport Association, said in an early February statement, and airlines will continue to need government aid to survive.

Thousands of companies and as many as 330 million workers depend on airlines to bring customers to their hotels, restaurants, taxi services, and attractions, the World Travel and Tourism Council has said.

As many as half of those workers are now out of a job, the council estimates.

"We don't see a clear exit strategy," Gloria Guevara, council CEO, told CNN. "It's easy to close borders but not that easy to open them."

COMMERZBANK SLASHES PAYROLL, BRANCHES. Commerzbank, the second largest bank in Germany by assets, has unveiled its new "Strategy 2024" to turn around a financial slide that included a €3.3-billion loss in 2020's fourth quarter.

Beginning in 2024, costs are to be slashed by €1.4 billion. The bank will reduce its number of branches from 790 to 450, a 43-percent reduction; another 200 branches shut during the pandemic will not reopen.

Commerzbank also will close its equities trading and research department.

One in four overseas employees will be dropped and one in three workers in Germany will be fired. The bank's current workforce is about 49,000.

The drastic measures are designed to boost the banks' return on equity to 7 percent per year.

Commerzbank also will pay more attention to customers with “a clear connection to Germany” and expand its work in private banking and wealth management to attract and keep rich customers.

The strategy is the brainchild of Manfred Knof, who became Commerzbank’s CEO at the beginning of this year.

Germany’s government owns 15.6 percent of the bank, the remnant of a 25-percent stake it bought in 2008 to help the bank survive the Great Recession. Commerzbank funds and insures about 30 percent of the nation’s imports and exports and is seen as essential to Germany’s foreign trade.

Government representatives approved the plan, as did workers' councils – a form of a labor union – although the workers' groups complained about the short timeline for the 10,000 workers affected to find other jobs.

“Everyone knows something must be done” to salvage the bank, “even something very drastic,” Olaf Scholz, Germany’s finance minister, responded in a comment quoted by the *World Socialist Web Site*.

The mass layoff should be carried out in the "tradition of social partnership," Scholz added and urged a "closing of ranks" between workers, the bank, and the government.

HEINEKEN WILL CUT 8,000 WORKERS UNDER NEW PLAN. The world’s second-largest brewing company will fire about 10 percent of its workers as part of a plan to save €2 billion over two years after reporting a net €204-million loss in 2020, compared to a 2019 profit of €2.2 billion.

The loss of trade in bars and restaurants helped drive down revenues by 17 percent year on year to €23.8 billion. Beer sales alone fell 8.1 percent.

The firings will lop 20 percent from payroll costs in the company’s home office.

“The world is changing, the industry is changing, and we need to change,” new CEO Dolf van den Brink said in a statement revealing the plan, which he said is about “future-proofing” the company.

Under the plan, the brewer will emphasize no- and low-alcohol drinks and flavored hard seltzers, a growing product line it rolled out later than many competitors.

Heineken also will trim product lines by as much as a third in some European markets and end marginally effective advertising, van den Brink announced.

The company sees a “slow recovery” ahead for itself in Europe, with different markets recovering at uneven paces well into 2022.

Only 30 percent of Europe’s bars and restaurants were open in January, van den Brink noted.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



WORLD CENTRAL BANKS: RUNNING A MASSIVE PONZI SCHEME

by *Gregory Mannarino*, TradersChoice.net

We are in the midst of the largest debt creation cycle in history. In fact, in the past 12 months, the current debt expansion cycle, with regard to world central bank balance sheets, has surpassed the last CENTURY of central bank debt creation combined. So, what is behind this?

First, one must understand the current economic model. The “standard” model, the basis for which modern economic models and henceforth their economies are based, is 100% dependent on the creation of more debt. In other words, the current economic models run by central banks DEMAND that every second of every day, more debt is created exponentially to function.

The process of expanding debt creation by central banks, by design, is perpetual. Therefore, it cannot ever stop. If a central bank stopped issuing more

debt, even for one second, the entire debt-based system would immediately collapse.

Central banks have one, and *only* one product: debt. Every dollar, every euro, etc., created by a central bank is a unit of debt. Moreover, these “notes” they issue belong to the issuing central bank plus interest, which they create out of thin air... the definition of central bank debt issuance is a Ponzi scheme.

A Ponzi scheme is a fraudulent investment enterprise that relies solely on the introduction of new capital being put into the fraud, in an ever-expanding mechanism, giving the scam an illusion of generated truth. But, the real truth is it's all just a con. The problem with every Ponzi scheme is they eventually run out of money.

Today, we are witnessing a phenomenon: a debt expansion/debt issuance scheme that has gone literally parabolic.

Why is this? The answer is simple.

We understand that central bank debt issuance is perpetual and ever-expanding, which means that to maintain the current environment, more debt must be created in ever-expanding amounts.

We also understand that the central bank debt issuance system is a Ponzi scheme, and all Ponzi's eventually fail. Because every Ponzi requires more capital/debt to be introduced into the system, today, central banks, none more so than the Federal Reserve, must create epic sums of cash to prevent the Ponzi from imploding.

The current central bank debt-based Ponzi is only functioning because the Federal Reserve is creating parabolic debt. The Fed is printing parabolic debt to push off the eventual collapse of the debt-based system, which is known as a “credit freeze.”

A credit freeze relating to the economy occurs when the central bank Ponzi implodes, and all transactions stop. No cash available is in the financial system, personal bank account balances go to 0.00, ATMs do not work, businesses cannot lend to each other, and debit and credit cards do not work.

A credit freeze is a total collapse of the debt-based Ponzi. A credit freeze is a crisis of the debt/currency, and the sole reason why central banks worldwide are now issuing parabolic debt is to push off, for as long as possible, the end of their Ponzi scheme.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM



INTERACTING WITH THE POLICE

by *Bradley J. Steiner*

A growing potential problem for “normal” citizens is, unfortunately, the prospect of dealing with police officers. As has been made evident by countless news reports, you do not have to be a criminal or do anything objectively wrong to be arrested and charged for having committed a “crime.” On the other hand, if you are a rioting, violent, psychopathic swine who loots, burns, vandalizes, and even kills... well, you’re cool. No problem with you.

Now I must emphasize, ALL police are not to be dismissed as thugs who serve an evil cause. There are many law enforcement officers who, like members of Oath Keepers, definitely stand with private citizens and their rights. Unfortunately, we are in the throes of nothing less than a revolution against our Republic, and too many who ought to be our uniformed protectors have become our uniformed controllers.

Here's the big question for today: How can you interact with the police, and, while doing so, minimize your chances of finding yourself in trouble with "the system?"

My #1 rule of self-defense – i.e., avoidance – applies here. Do everything you can to avoid any contact with law enforcement. Calling the police should only be done when you are truly confronting a dangerous threat. Never mind domestic spats. Never mind noisy neighbors. Never mind minor damage done to a fence by kids. Never mind your out-of-control teenage son.

In today's climate, when the police are called, there is a good chance that matters will escalate, and – if they started off being minor – they very well may become major. Unnecessary arrests, fights, and even shootings might erupt. AVOID all of that. And a corollary of this is: Get along with your neighbors! Give them no reason to call the police about any problems with you, and do everything possible to maintain a friendly attitude between yourself and them, so that no conflicts arise necessitating your need for official intervention.

If you are stopped by the police while out walking or while in your vehicle, COOPERATE. Never mind that you didn't do anything. Forget about playing lawyer. Just relax and cooperate with them. If you are calm, courteous, soft-spoken, very passive physically, and politely cooperative, it is almost a certainty that no trouble will erupt.

Following the excellent advice of the very distinguished Defense Attorney in Arizona, Marc Victor, I will pass on his message of what to do if by any chance you are ever arrested. Mr. Victor says: "Say nothing to the police." Do not waste time and energy and possibly supply the police with anything they might use against you at a later date. Do your talking to a lawyer! By remaining silent and explaining that you wish to consult with legal counsel, you are within the law, and doing this cannot be held against you.

Above all, never be sarcastic, abrasive, defiant, aggressive, reluctant to do as you are told, etc. This antagonizes individuals who, at the moment, have complete charge over you. Not wise. Many arrests and serious criminal charges

need never have come about had the individual who had been stopped by the police simply followed the advice I just gave you.

Swallow your pride. Forget your ego. Remember what is important. Do you idiotically want to prolong and increase the seriousness of the consequences of a brief incident that could have been over and done with – and forgotten – in five or so minutes?

Police Officer: “Sir, may I see some form of personal identification?”

Idiot’s reply: *“I don’t have to identify myself to you. Can you articulate a probable cause for requesting to see my I.D.?”*

Survivor’s reply: *“Certainly Officer.” I recommend at this point you add: “My wallet with my driver’s license is in my pocket,” as you slowly remove it, open it, and hand your I.D. to the officer.*

If you happen to be dealing with a rogue officer, you have given him no reason whatsoever to zero in on you and turn your life into a nightmare. He is very unlikely to give you grief. If, more than likely, you’re being questioned by a typically decent officer, the encounter will end with a pleasant “Have a good day, sir” and that will be it, within a few minutes. If you get a traffic ticket, pay it or contest it in court; don’t argue with the cop!

Am I suggesting that we need to walk on eggshells when dealing with our police? You’re goddamn right I am! And if you refuse and instead insist on being some sort of a “hard-ass,” go right ahead. See for yourself where that kind of conduct will lead.

By the way, if you know any law enforcement officers, go ahead and ask them if following my advice is wise or foolish. Let them read it from these pages if you wish.

Not long ago, some “I know my rights, no-nonsense tough guy” defied police demands that he does not have large gatherings at his home. Such gatherings,

the officers advised, were now unlawful. Well... no one was going to tell him his rights! No sir! And, so, he was arrested, sentenced to serve one year in jail, and fined \$5,000. If that weren't enough, our hero now has a criminal record and is high on the "to be watched list" of law enforcement.

Had this gentleman simply said, "Sorry officers, I'll close this down right away, and I won't have any gatherings like this again," the police would have let it go and left, and he would be suffering only the inconvenience of being unable to have a large party at his home.

Question: *"But what about this man's rights?"*

Answer: *"What about them? Did they protect him? Did they matter? Were they even peripherally relevant to the officers, the judge who sentenced the man, or – let's be honest – to the man, himself?"*

The late Harry Browne wrote a marvelous book titled, *How I Found Freedom In An Unfree World*. I highly recommend it. Although I am not in total agreement with Browne's ideas, I see much good in his overall philosophy. One thing he emphasized: Your rights will not protect you. He is spot on.

Many times, I have said to people: "Every person now living or who has lived in any tyrannical, totalitarian state or under any dictatorial ruler, had/has the same rights that our Constitution was written to acknowledge and protect in America. The difference is that the rights of those unfortunate people are not recognized. Hence, their rights do them no good."

Please protect yourself and be sensible during these insane times. I pray that it will never come to any kind of literal civil war... and I hope your prayers will join mine.

In Memoriam: our beloved friend, Bradley J. Steiner, passed away on December 5, 2020.

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.

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.

TRENDS IN GETTING HEALTHY



EFFECTIVE WAYS TO KEEP YOUR RESPIRATORY SYSTEM HEALTHY

By *Dr. Gary Null and Richard Gale*

A hallmark of the COVID-19 is that it first infects the upper respiratory tract accompanied by shortness of breath and a chronic cough and frequently chills, fever, and fatigue. These are symptoms, however, similar but not limited to about 200 known respiratory viral infections, including other strains of coronavirus, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), adenovirus, rhinovirus, etc.

The conventional war chest for arming ourselves against viral respiratory infections is drugs, notably antibiotics and neuraminidase inhibitors, that questionably lessen the time and severity of symptoms. But we should not rely on pharmaceutical solutions only. There are also non-toxic remedies: supplements, medicinal botanicals, and common sense actions people can adopt to protect themselves. Even if infected with COVID or another respiratory virus, our immune system can be strengthened naturally to dramatically reduce the risks of serious complications.

The mainstream media and state and local health officials have been completely relying upon the CDC, the National Institutes of Allergies and Infectious Disease (NIAID), and the WHO for directions to inform or educate the public. What we do not hear is the clinical experiences and scientific advice from around the world. In China, Europe, Africa, and Asia, tens of thousands of physicians and medical professionals are using alternative modalities such as nutritional therapy, naturopathy, and Traditional Chinese Medicine to protect patients from respiratory infections alongside or complementary to conventional drugs.

None of these doctors and professionals are being asked for their consultation nor is the large body of scientific literature that supports their regimens being recommended. The question, therefore, is why has a contingent of people on the frontlines of prevention and complementary approaches to health been completely marginalized from the community of so-called "experts" who dominate the voices in the media?

Therefore, we want to share simple, natural ways to protect your lungs and respiratory system during this stressful period. These are not folk tales but based on research found in the National Library of Medicine and other professional medical sources.

Unfortunately, being cooped up indoors for long extended periods has health risks. Indoor air usually has higher concentrations of toxins than being outdoors. People who spend too much time indoors readily become Vitamin D deficient; this is especially true for people of color who have higher levels of skin melanin that blocks Vitamin D absorption. This vitamin is essential for immune protection to avoid contracting infections. It also disrupts our natural circadian rhythms thereby contributing to poor sleep patterns.

Sunlight not only increases our level of Vitamin D, but it also increases serotonin that can boost our moods. This finding was [confirmed by researchers](#) at the Baker Research Institute in Australia and published in *The Lancet*. Low serotonin, especially during winter months, has been associated with Seasonal Affective Disorder, which is [characterized](#) by depression, fatigue, and a lack of

concentration. And of course, these effects have been shown to adversely affect our immune system.

Therefore, making frequent efforts to get outdoors, while maintaining social distancing, not only raises our spirits but also helps clear our respiratory system from allergens and pollutants that accumulate indoors. [A series of studies](#) conducted by the University of Rochester found that being outdoors increased both physical and mental vitality. Getting a sufficient amount of outdoor exposure is one of the surest natural ways to cleanse our lungs. Other methods include steam therapy (inhaling water vapor) and exercise to clear airways and drain mucus from the bronchia.

There are also plenty of foods, herbs, and even supplements that can protect the lungs and keep the nasal and respiratory passages clear. Water is absolutely essential for maintaining healthy lungs. Dry lungs result in irritation that increases the risks for infection. Also, following the Mediterranean diet has been shown by Harvard epidemiologists to have protective effects for allergic respiratory diseases, largely due to the high intake of olive oil.

Potassium is a vital mineral for proper lung function. It is not uncommon for people who are [potassium deficient](#) to experience sporadic breathing problems. Therefore, including potassium-rich foods in daily meals, such as avocados, dark leafy greens, tomatoes, beets, bananas, and oranges, can raise and sustain healthy potassium levels.

Several studies have shown that apples can improve lung function. [A study](#) by St. George's Hospital Medical School in London followed over 2,500 individuals between the ages of 45 and 59. Among the various vitamins and foods consumed, Vitamin E and apples were the most effective for slowing the decline in lung function. For people with a history of asthma, apples, which are rich in flavonoids, are [inversely linked](#) with asthma, decreased bronchial hypersensitivity, and positively improved general pulmonary health.

[Celery contains](#) two important antioxidants – apigenin and luteolin – that are associated with reducing inflammation associated with our nasal passages and

lungs. It is particularly beneficial for those who have allergies that hinder respiration. Of course, it is important to know whether or not you have a rare allergy to celery itself.

Nitric oxide (NO) is a signaling molecule that strengthens our immune system's response to an invasion. One of the [best sources](#) to increase NO levels, in addition to improving endothelial cell function by decreasing oxidative stress, are red beets. Most of our respiratory passageways – from our nasal cavity to our bronchi – are lined with epithelium cells. Our lungs, on the other hand, are lined with a simple squamous epithelium or “goblet cells.” Beets are one important food that protects these cells to maintain the health of our entire respiratory system. Beets have also been [shown by researchers](#) at Southern Methodist University to help prevent common cold symptoms, especially during periods of increased psychological stress.

Other natural NO sources include dark greens, dark chocolate, citrus fruits, nuts, and seeds. The amino acid L-arginine and Vitamin C increases NO activity.

Green tea and quercetin can promote healthy lungs due to their antioxidant properties. Both act as natural antihistamines that reduce respiratory irritation and inflammation. A study of 1,000 adults conducted by the medical school at Kyung Hee University in South Korea found that participants who drank two cups of green tea per day had better respiratory function than those who didn't drink any. Japanese Matcha tea has been investigated thoroughly and is [a more powerful antioxidant](#) than regular green teas.

One can conclude that having a daily juice compromised of fresh apples, celery, beets, and garlic (which contains the powerful antimicrobial biomolecule allicin that [kills human lung pathogenic bacteria](#)) can have an enormous impact on cleansing and protecting our lungs. Matcha tea can be purchased as powders and also added to your daily juice.

It is our opinion that following these guidelines along with getting sufficient outdoor exposure, exercise, reducing sources of toxicity in the home and proper ventilation, and drinking green tea and supplementing with quercetin, Vitamins C

and D, and other foods rich in antioxidants is a very simple and effective way of sustaining maximal lung health to keep us healthy through the pandemic.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY



By *Joe Doran*

THE FACEBOOK-APPLE WAR HEATS UP

“Inflict pain.” That’s the word from Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg, talking about rival Apple in a war waged around end-user privacy. Reports suggest Facebook is planning an antitrust legal suit over Apple’s iOS privacy features.

According to its claims, Apple “abused its power in the smartphone market by forcing app developers to abide by App Store rules that Apple’s own apps don’t have to follow.”

Apple made changes in iOS 14, including an App Tracking Transparency feature, which allows users to control how apps track their data. The two companies have previously sparred over Facebook being scraped for data by Cambridge Analytica.

Apple said at the time that its protocols on user privacy would never have allowed such a scandal to occur.

Zuckerberg apparently fears what he sees as a rising challenge stemming from the way Apple will “interfere” with how Facebook operates its apps. He warned as much in a session with company insiders. Meanwhile, Senator Mike Lee, who sits on the Senate’s antitrust subcommittee, commented on the rivalry, saying he would prefer not to impose “regulation that just ends up protecting incumbents and entrenching monopolies.”

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE



While the pandemic has severely impacted travel, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has used the downtime to ramp up biometric spying technology at 76 airports around the country.

Those efforts are detailed in a recently released the “CBP Trade and Travel Report.” The report details measures by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection to increase surveillance using technologies including facial recognition. “Despite the overall decrease in travel, biometric processing increased dramatically. CBP biometrically processed more than 23 million travelers using biometric facial comparison technology at entry, exit, and Preclearance locations.”

The COVID pandemic has opened the door to a “Trusted Traveler” database that ups the ante on intrusive anti-privacy data scraping using various forms of high-tech:

“CBP has embarked on transformative initiatives to expand air and sea traveler technologies, grow trusted traveler programs, implement biometrics, automate forms collection, and eliminate duplicative processes.

In FY2020, CBP enrolled 376,000 new members into one of the four Trusted Traveler programs: Global Entry, NEXUS, SENTRI or FAST. More than 9.6 million members enjoyed the benefits of expedited processing as a Trusted Traveler in FY2020.”

The report also talked about an initiative euphemistically titled “Simplified Arrival.” The process uses facial recognition technology to identify travelers and retrieve “records.” The CBP spin is that the new system merely streamlines a cumbersome process of document scans and fingerprint captures, etc. It is not only being used stateside but also at international airports.

“Simplified Arrival is the first step in re-envisioning how travelers arrive in the United States. In two years, the CBP’s Global Entry Facial Comparison program has expanded to 20 international airports in the U.S. To address the growing volume of Global Entry travelers, CBP launched a Global Entry facial comparison pilot program at Orlando International Airport on June 21, 2018. Facial comparison technology has reduced the processing time at Global Entry kiosks by almost 90 percent, and was expanded to 19 additional airports during FY2020.”

How does facial scanning work in a COVID world of masks? It turns out, better than you might think. Homeland Security recently said that Feds can ID airline passengers wearing masks with 77 to 96 percent accuracy.

NORWAY’S TOP BANK WENT DIGITAL BEFORE THE REST



Norway’s biggest bank took an early initiative in digitizing services that are now paying off, as rivals fall behind. Stig B Fiksdal DNB, Norway’s biggest bank, underwent an overhaul of its business model, and also focused on cost control.

Among other things, it developed technology for simple mobile payments and loan decisions and closed 70 percent of its physical branch locations. According to bank CEO Kjerstin Braathen.

“Customer interactions have gone up as the number of branches has gone down. We have doubled revenues, and kept costs fairly stable—and the only reason this could happen is the transition to digital.”

DNB’s strategy has resulted in levels of profitability per employee that are more than 80 percent higher than rivals. DNB has also found success via the implementation of innovations including the Vipps app, which it rolled out in 2015 to allow Norwegians to send small sums to each other via mobile phone and to buy items from merchants. The bank has survived the pandemic better than many of its Euro competitors. It will reportedly pay a dividend for both 2019 and 2020.

Braathen says they will continue to be on the digital forefront:

“The benchmark today is not what other banks can offer; this whole transition happens with other companies entering the financial value chain and competing for our services. The benchmark is more the Googles and Apples of this world and that type of user experience.”

BLOCKCHAIN IS FAST BECOMING A STANDARD TECHNOLOGY



Blockchain isn’t just for cryptocurrencies, and more industries are developing ways to use the technology. Data validation, ID protection, payments, supply chain management, land registry are just some of the areas where blockchain is being utilized.

IBM and Hyperledger currently offer onboarding and validation via blockchain, though their solutions are geared for large international enterprises and are cost-prohibitive for average businesses. But other products like Aikon's ORE ID offer tools and solutions that many java developers can use to integrate blockchain onboarding for businesses.

What is Blockchain?

Investopedia lays out the key aspects of blockchain, which, at its core, is a kind of database:

- Blockchains store data in blocks that are then chained together. As new data comes in it is entered into a fresh block. Once the block is filled with data it is chained onto the previous block, which makes the data chained together in chronological order.
- Different types of information can be stored on a blockchain.
- Blockchain can be used in a decentralized way so that no single person or group has control – rather, all users collectively retain control.
- Decentralized blockchains are immutable, which means that the data entered is irreversible. As an example, for bitcoin, this means that transactions are permanently recorded and viewable to anyone.

2019 marked the year that companies began to get serious about understanding and trying to leverage the advantages of blockchain technology. The global demand for blockchain engineers saw a 517 percent increase that year, according to the Hired recruitment portal. Huge investments are being made, across various types of industries, including tech companies, media, telecom, energy, and manufacturing.

CRYPTO SANITY



This past week saw big moves and major news in the crypto markets. More and more people, corporate powers, financial institutions, and even governments appear to be seeing the writing on the wall. Decentralized digital currencies that are resistant to

manipulation are quickly becoming a mainstream reality.

ESCAPE FROM BITCOIN? NOT LIKELY FOR WALL STREET

BANKS. In the classic sci-fi thriller from the 80s, Kurt Russell finally made it out of a hellhole prison of NYC. It's 2021, and big banks based on Wall Street are staring at bitcoin and other digital currencies they don't control. And some are beginning to say that there will be no escaping the reality of blockchain currencies.

"The demand isn't there yet, but I'm sure it will be at some point," JPMorgan co-president Daniel Pinto was just one of the movers who seemed closer to accepting the ascendancy of bitcoin. The so-called "original" crypto was trading at around \$29,000 on 1 January. This past week it flirted with the \$50,000 mark.

The enthusiasm for digital currencies is forcing the banking industry to pay attention. As investors go all in, it's becoming a fear game.

Corporations, tech, and financial giants that don't get aboard may find themselves left behind.

Perhaps that's why Goldman Sachs recently hosted a private forum on digital currencies that featured the CEO-founder of crypto firm Galaxy Digital, Mike Novogratz. According to CNBC, there's growing pressure from within Wall Street banks to accept bitcoin as a legitimate asset class.

While banks have focused on blockchain technologies, they have been reluctant to enter the crypto market. Part of the reason is that they are the most regulated institutions among financial firms, due to the huge importance they play in the functioning of the economy. A move by any of the nation's largest banks to embrace bitcoin would be taken as a pivotal moment for digital currencies that decentralized, i.e., not confined to any government or particular institutional or individual actors.

In 2017, when bitcoin experienced a relatively short-lived boom, some banks including Goldman Sachs considered getting into crypto investments. Others were skeptical, including JPMorgan CEO Jamie Dimon, who opined that bitcoin was a fraud destined for disaster.

LOOK WHO'S MINTING DIGITAL CURRENCY NOW (OR IN THE NEAR FUTURE). Central banks have turned from spurning digital currencies to implementing plans and strategies to “mint” them. As many as one out of five of the world's central banks might be issuing their own digital currencies within the next three years, according to a survey by the Bank for International Settlements, a central bank umbrella group.

With the use of physical money declining, and looking at the threats that digital currencies are posing to their money-printing powers, central banks have no choice but to take notice. From the famously anonymously created bitcoin, to “Diem,” the latest attempt by Facebook to get into the digital currency space, pressures on the traditional gatekeepers of “stores of value” are increasing.

Some central banks are reportedly looking at ways “digital cash” could be used to sustain the controversial policy of negative interest rates. In general, digital currencies being developed can be expected to work in a similar way that transactions are currently conducted, via payment apps and downstream financial institutions. But unlike digital currencies including bitcoin, central bank currencies will be controlled by governmental powers.

A fresh BIS survey of 65 central banks reported that over 85 percent were

assessing digital currencies or even testing designs. It's considered likely that banks from developing economies are more likely to be early issuers. The Bahamas became the first country to launch a so-called CBDC (Central Bank Digital Currency), named the Sand Dollar, this past October.

The biggest tester in the world, however, is China, which spread an initial 1.5 million offering of its digital yuan currency during the recent Lunar New Year. It could be seen as a primarily symbolic action at this point. But before that, this past August, they expanded a trial of a digital renminbi to internal regions composing 400 million people, more than the entire population of the U.S. Over the last several years China has used Mobile pay, mostly through the Alibaba-affiliated Alipay app and Tencent's WeChat Pay, to replace cash as the predominant form of consumer payment in that country.

Meanwhile, a digital euro is in the works, according to ECB President Christine Lagarde. And U.S. Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell has said it is continuing to carry out efforts to create a digital dollar.

TALKING DOWN CRYPTO STILL A THING. As decentralized cryptocurrencies, blockchain innovators, and governments via central banks vie with each other in the current craze, there remain naysayers. This past week, Tim Lane of the Bank of Canada called the crypto boom a “speculative mania.”

Canadian investors who, up to now, have focused on gold and silver are jumping into the crypto markets, along with the rest of the world. But in a speech on payments innovation, Lane pointed out flaws of the most popular cryptocurrency, bitcoin, saying that costly verification methods and “unstable” purchasing power (due to the volatility of the price of bitcoin) made it a poor choice for payments. “The recent spike in their prices looks less like a trend and more like a speculative mania – an atmosphere in which one high-profile tweet is enough to trigger a sudden jump in price.”

Nonetheless, Lane admitted that the BoC is accelerating its efforts to implement a digital currency. And he said that Stablecoins – whose value is pegged to

some external asset – have offered more stability than other cryptocurrencies. But predictably, he advocated that central banks should issue them, as opposed to non-government-controlled decentralized alternatives.

PAYPAL CEO DOWNPLAYS CRYPTO INVESTING. PayPal CFO John Rainey claimed the company won't be following in Tesla's footsteps with any multi-billion-dollar purchases of bitcoin or other cryptocurrencies. "We're not going to invest corporate cash, probably, in sort of financial assets like that, but we want to capitalize on this growth opportunity that's in front of us," said Rainey during an interview on *CNBC's "Mad Money."*

PayPal has recently said it intends to focus more on returning cash to shareholders and in making new acquisitions than in buying crypto. But it has also acknowledged that digital currencies, in one form or another, are quickly becoming the new reality.

Since October, the company has allowed users to buy, hold, and sell some major cryptocurrencies including bitcoin, ethereum, and litecoin. And users can also shop with the digital coins in PayPal's retail network. Venmo, the mobile wallet under PayPal's umbrella, will likely offer those same services very soon.

AMAZON FLOATS CRYPTO SOUTH OF THE BORDER. Emerging markets appear to be the target group for Amazon's latest moves into developing its digital currencies. Recent social media posts and other info suggest that the company is intending to launch a new payments system initiative called "Digital and Emerging Payments" (DEP).

"We are looking for a leader to help us launch a new payment product stating with Mexico as our initial launch country," Amazon revealed. "This product will enable customers to convert their cash into digital currency using which customers can enjoy online services including shopping for goods and/or services like Prime Video."

Noticeably absent from the company's plans are bitcoin, ethereum, and other uncontrollable public cryptos. Though Mexico appears to be a "prime" target for its digital offerings, it's clear their DEP project will more broadly focus on emerging markets the world over.

Some industry observers say it's unlikely Amazon will delve far into the current cryptocurrency market to integrate into payments.

According to Ripple's David Schwartz, the barriers would be considerable:

"Imagine if you had one currency that you were paid in, one currency that you had to pay taxes in, one currency that you used to pay your rent, one currency that you used to buy groceries, and so on. That would be a confusing mess. Not only would you incur lots of pointless fees converting between currencies, but you wouldn't know what fraction of your salary you needed to pay your rent because the currencies could change value relative to each other."

A DIGITAL EURO DOESN'T YET EXIST, BUT LIMITS ON HOLDING IT ALREADY BEING DISCUSSED. The rush to digital currencies might create bank runs that would disrupt the economies of Europe, according to Fabio Panetta of the European Central Bank (ECB) executive board. He suggested the solution might be to limit Euro-area residents' holdings of a future digital currency to 3,000 euros.

"We could allow stocks of digital euros only up to a certain limit, or use interest to make them unattractive above this amount," he said in an interview with the magazine. "The limit could be around 3,000 euros. That would be far more than most people's cash needs today," Panetta said in an interview with Germany's *Spiegel*.

The ECB is at the forefront, along with China, in efforts to introduce a digital currency that it controls for use among its citizens. But the implementation of a "digital euro" may still be four or five years away, according to the Frankfurt-based institution. "Trying out the digital euro in different cities would probably be a wise move," said Panetta. A commercial trial would likely follow

the example of China, which has allowed citizens of Shenzhen to test a digital yuan at various commercial establishments including Walmart and gas stations.

SPECIAL REPORT: GAMESTOP



By *Joe Doran*

“REDDIT RALLY” HEARINGS IN CONGRESS LIKELY TO PROTECT WALL ST.

Congress is set to hold “Reddit Rally” hearings on 18 February, concerning the GameStop stock saga. The question is, will politicians go after big financial players with well-greased political connections or aim to make an example of the “little guy” retail traders on the WallStreetBets Reddit board who drove up stocks in early January?

There’s been a lot of talk about who was manipulating who and what, in a quadrangle of big hedge funds shorting stocks, other big players betting the other way, hordes of small investors banding together to drive up favored stocks, and apps like Robinhood that suddenly stopped stock buys. But it’s a fact that Reddit traders bought GameStop and other stocks like AMC in large enough quantities to move the markets. And it now seems that those individual players have the least political power in the upcoming political intervention.

Hedge funds like Citadel have a stake in making sure their game of using proxies to talk down companies after taking out short positions against them in the markets, gets back to “normal.” Citadel lost billions when their shorts GameStop, a brick-and-mortar gaming outlet, went sour. Young traders using “free trade” apps like Robinhood snapped up GameStop in a rage against the Wall Street machine, and the stock climbed from \$15 to almost \$400 at one point.

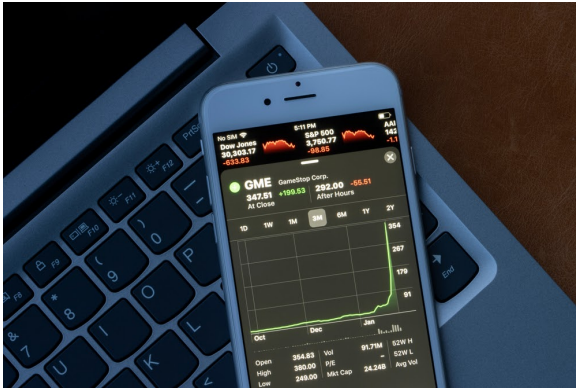
Citadel billionaire trader Ken Griffin will testify at the hearings in the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives. But he’s likely to be a friendly witness, detailing how his huge hedge fund was unfairly or even “illegally” targeted by Reddit traders. Citadel has a friend in Treasury Secretary Janet Yellin, who took over \$800,000 in

speaking fees from the hedge fund in 2019 and 2020.

Citadel also is connected financially with the Robinhood app that halted buys on GameStop and other stocks, throwing a fatal block on the Reddit ralliers. As it turns out, Robinhood gets paid by Citadel to funnel trades through Citadel Securities, another arm of the company. David Portnoy of Barstool Sports was a prominent critic who accused Robinhood of shutting down buys to protect Citadel and other Wall Street giants from losing money in the battle with small investors.

But there are signals that Citadel and Robinhood won’t be targets of the political probing. Instead, small-time Reddit traders and YouTube influencers may take the fall. According to reports, Federal investigators have subpoenaed information from the trading app Robinhood in a criminal probe to see how traders may have conspired in a “pump and dump” scheme. The House hearings are likely to take their cue from the Feds, as well as the SEC and Janet Yellin.

“NO FEE” TRADING APPS CHANGING THE FINANCIAL LANDSCAPE



Commission-fee trading on phone apps is transforming the stock industry, according to analysts. But they claim the new paradigm is creating trading frenzies and risk-taking that may net negatives.

U.S. retail traders have shown their appetite, with rolling net inflows over the past 22 days into equities reaching \$32bn, compared to \$3bn two years ago, according to VandaTrack data. “Low commission rates, enormous liquidity provided by the Federal Reserve, an army of quarantined people sitting at home, many on a pile of savings augmented by fiscal-stimulus checks – it all adds up to an extraordinary situation,” said Joseph Amato of the equities firm Neuberger Berman.

Options trading, which is riskier than average stock trades, has also seen a big uptick in the past year, as traders have found it easier to participate.

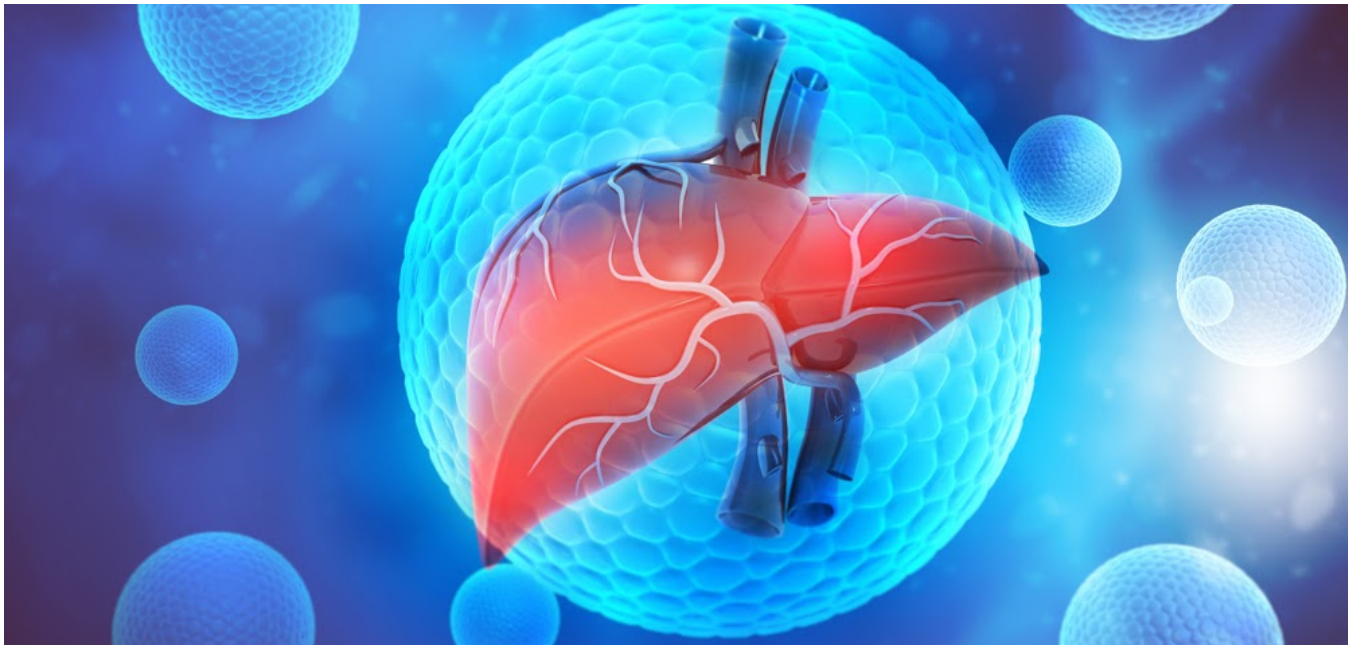
Patrick Krizan, a senior economist at Allianz, noted, “These platforms now give retail investors the possibility to do leveraged trades and access to options markets which before were limited to funds or institutional investors.”

In the wake of Robinhood's "free trade" app model, based on getting back-end revenue from large Wall Street firms for trading action, instead of end-users, other brokerages have followed suit. Charles Schwab, TD Ameritrade, ETrade, and Interactive Brokers have all moved to free trading.

Opening digital accounts are easy for practically anyone. No one was really worried about it, though, until this past January, when Reddit traders mounted stock buys that put major Wall Street stock-shorting hedge funds into the hole for billions.

Now everyone is sounding the alarm about how the system is incentivizing small retail traders in negative ways. “Investors have more time, and increased disposable income, which creates the ‘free money’ effect,” said one analyst. “People think, what have I got to lose? It’s very easy now to invest your money, but it’s also very easy to lose it.”

TRENDS ON THE COVID WARFRONT



MORE LOCKDOWNS = RISE IN ALCOHOLIC LIVER DISEASE

One year ago, we had noted that just as politicians start wars with no exit strategies (i.e., Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, etc.), so, too, with the COVID War. And we warned that the economic, social, and personal toll the lockdowns would take on citizens would be more deadly than the coronavirus.

Week after week, we have provided hard data of the devastation the COVID War has inflicted on hundreds of millions of lives and livelihoods.

Indeed, from chronic depression to spikes in suicide, from hunger concerns to the financial and emotional stress of closing down businesses, unemployment, etc., it's clear that the effects of prolonged lockdowns have, by the numbers, caused more negative health issues than the virus itself.

The latest example is a report in the *Los Angeles Times* published on 8 February of hospitals and doctors across America voicing concerns over “dramatic

increases in alcohol-related admissions for critical diseases such as hepatitis and liver failure.”

The cause? “Leading liver disease specialists and psychiatrists believe the isolation, unemployment, and hopelessness associated with COVID-19 are driving the explosion in cases.”

Dr. Haripriya Maddur, a liver specialist at Northwestern Medicine, said that before COVID, most of her patients “were doing just fine,” but due to the stress from the shutdown of the economy and the isolation of stay-at-home impositions, “all of the sudden they were in the hospital again.”

A Large Health Issue Made Even Worse

While alcoholism has been on the rise in the U.S. for some time, with some 15 million Americans diagnosed with alcohol-related liver disease, since 1 March, when COVID was reported to be spreading across the U.S., ensuing lockdowns led to dramatic increases. According to the report, “Specialists at hospitals affiliated with the University of Michigan, Northwestern University, Harvard University, and Mount Sinai Health System in New York City said rates of admissions for alcoholic liver disease have leapt by up to 50% since March.”

Not only has the number of liver disease cases increased, but the average age of those afflicted with the disease is decreasing. The trend since last March of Americans under 40 years old showing up with jaundice and abdominal extension, both common symptoms of the liver disease, is “truly dramatic,” according to liver specialist Dr. Raymond Chung, president of the American Association for the Study of Liver Disease.

Dr. Maddur at Northwestern Medical also voiced concern for the new increases in adults under 40 with severe liver damage from alcohol: “They have mouths to feed and bills to pay, but no job, so they turn to booze as the last coping mechanism remaining.”

The *L.A. Times* article reports one out of every 20 patients with alcohol-related liver failure “die before leaving the hospital.”

Also, the disease makes people more susceptible to COVID. A study published on 4 May in the journal *Gastroenterology* found patients with liver disease die from COVID at rates three times higher than normal.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been reporting, the lockdowns have sucked the joy out of lives, especially for young people who have higher energy to live life on the edge. For them, being unable to “grow up” by being forced to stay home and not allowed to go to bars, clubs, concerts, enjoy college life, play sports, date... and out of work, the mental toll will spread beyond their personal lives, negatively affecting relationships with family, friends, and loved ones.*

As we also have been reporting, beyond the increase in alcohol consumption, drug abuse is increasing, and suicide rates are climbing. Additionally, by being less active and staying indoors, young (and old) are eating more junk/highly-processed foods, which is affecting their physical and mental health.

When the lockdowns are lifted, the “Whole Health/Natural Healing” trend we had forecast will be an OnTrendpreneur® megatrend, as young and old evolve into a New Age 2.0 mindset to get into the best health they can... spiritually, emotionally, and physically. We estimate this market sector to attract some 20 percent of the population who will search for a higher meaning in life as they try to rebound from having been in the trenches fighting the COVID War.

DEMENTIA-COVID CONNECTION



As we reported last year, according to the CDC’s National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), about 94 percent of people who die from COVID-19 have specific comorbidities such as pneumonia, type 2

diabetes, obesity, respiratory ailments, high blood pressure, and are over 70 with weak immune systems.

Last September, Dr. Maja Artandi, medical director of the Stanford CROWN Clinic for COVID-19 patients, told *Reuters* that the CDC's numbers "are really not a big surprise," as "patients who have a comorbidity such as diabetes, hypertension or obesity have a higher risk of getting seriously ill and dying from COVID-19."

Barely a word is mentioned in the mainstream media that 81.23 percent of the COVID deaths are people aged 65 years and older, yet schools are locked down, and many colleges are still stuck in remote learning.

It's All in the Mind

A study by the Alzheimer's Association last Tuesday shows that those who have dementia, a disease that damages memory, thinking, and behavior, are considerably more at risk of not only getting COVID but also of dying from it.

As reported by *The New York Times*, the significant risks of those with dementia, "could not be entirely explained by characteristics common to people with dementia that are known risk factors for COVID-19: old age, living in a nursing home, and having conditions such as obesity, asthma, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease. After researchers adjusted for those factors, Americans with dementia were still twice as likely to have gotten COVID-19 as of late last summer."

The study also revealed that African Americans who have dementia were even more at risk – they are almost three times more susceptible to the coronavirus than whites with dementia. The lead researchers of the study, who looked at over 60 million health records of Americans between February and August, remarked, "This study highlights the need to protect patients with dementia, especially those who are Black."

Specifically, researchers confirmed that COVID patients with dementia “were 2.6 times as likely to have been hospitalized during the first six months of the pandemic as those without dementia. They were 4.4 times as likely to die.”

Dr. Kenneth Langa, a professor of medicine at the University of Michigan, pointed out that for those who have dementia, “There is the cognitive impairment and the fact that they are more socially at risk.” He added it was important to know that as extensive as the study was, there is no way to get access to the many dementia sufferers who are more isolated than the normal population and, in many cases, less likely to seek medical attention. This undoubtedly means the study is “an underestimate of the greater COVID-19 infection risk for those with dementia.”

A disturbing part of the unfolding data showing the vulnerability of those with dementia to COVID-19 was brought up in a 10 February *Newsweek* article on the subject. The article included the following statement from Dr. Avindra Nath, clinical director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), on the link between COVID and dementia:

“The realization that there’s a neurological effect has been really recent. I’ve been trying to beat that drum for quite some time. Patients have been complaining about it for months, but the scientists were not doing anything about it.”

TRENDPOST: Again, barely a word is mentioned by the media and politicians who promote draconian lockdown rules that lack a scintilla of scientific data (such as it’s OK to eat in a restaurant sitting at a table without a mask on, but patrons must wear one when standing up, etc.) are the age of those dying from the virus and the comorbidity factors.

In America, according to statista.com, 81.23 percent of COVID deaths are people aged 65 years and older, yet schools are locked down and many colleges are still stuck in remote learning.

TRENDPOST: As to why Blacks with dementia are dying at a higher rate, also absent in The New York Times article is, “Why”?

As we have documented week after week in the **Trends Journal**, since the COVID War began last March, and again noted in this issue, COVID-19 has been a significant danger to a limited group of people: those over 65 years old and those with major pre-existing health issues such as high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, and chronic heart and lung disease.

Since African-Americans suffer from these ailments at a higher rate than others, it follows that they are dying at disproportionate rates. Here is proof in the data:

- According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Black adults are 60 percent more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to have been diagnosed with diabetes by a physician; non-Hispanic blacks were 3.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with end-stage renal disease compared to non-Hispanic whites; blacks were twice as likely as non-Hispanic whites to die from diabetes.
- According to the European Association for the Study of Diabetes, one in ten diabetic patients with COVID-19 died within a week of being hospitalized. The study also found that the majority of the patients had type 2 diabetes and were suffering cardiovascular diseases.
- According to the CDC, almost 80 percent of intensive-care patients and 70 percent of hospitalized COVID-19 patients had one or more of these serious chronic health conditions.
- Certain states show higher rates of deaths among blacks than others. In Georgia, almost half of all COVID-19 deaths are among Blacks despite representing only 32 percent of the overall population.
- According to Kaiser Health News, while African Americans represent nearly 14 percent of Michigan’s population, they represent 24 percent of the deaths from coronavirus.

TRENDPOST: *In the 2 June **Trends Journal**, we wrote how in cities such as Detroit, MI, where polluting industries surround poorer neighborhoods and people are not in good health, deaths from COVID spike higher.*

And, as noted in our 12 May issue, while Italy suffered the largest percentage of deaths in Europe from COVID-19, it is barely mentioned that about half of all deaths from the virus took place in the Lombardy region, whose capital is Milan, which has high levels of air pollutants.

In further supporting the factuality that the virus attacks the weak, it was reported yesterday that in Poland, more than 10 percent of COVID-19 cases have occurred at coal mines.

Aaron Bernstein, professor at the Harvard Chan School of Public Health and one of the research leaders, stated, “People who have been living in places that are more polluted... are more likely to die from coronavirus.”

LONG LOCKDOWNS = MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS



Day in and day out, the mainstream media report on COVID cases and death numbers, sending out frightening messages for the masses to cower under. But barely is there mention of the physical and mental destruction of humanity that has resulted from the draconian lockdown

orders imposed by politicians.

The website “Sermo” was created by physicians to provide medical doctors worldwide with an open forum for feedback and opinions. It is currently accessed by doctors in 150 countries. Its twice-weekly polls on physicians’

issues have been the subject of articles in *Forbes*, *The Washington Post*, *Time* magazine, and many other news sources.

According to a survey published on Sermo on 26 January, 86 percent of over 3,000 doctors from more than 20 countries voiced concerns that mental health disorders from continued lockdown policies, particularly depression and severe anxiety, will continue getting worse even after the strength of the coronavirus declines.

Two out of every three doctors responding to the survey “are unsure whether the U.S. and world will return to normal following the vaccine rollout.”

Almost 80 percent of the doctors “are concerned about the long-term impact to the world economy.”

An article published on 10 February by the World Socialist website, after citing the Sermo survey results, lists additional data showing the alarming mental health issues caused by the lockdowns:

- A December 2020 report by the CDC shows 42 percent reporting depression or anxiety. This marks an 11-percent increase from the year before.
- Results of a 7 December Gallup Poll titled, “Americans’ Mental Health Ratings Sink to New Low” concluded that “Americans’ latest assessment of their mental health is worse than it has been at any point in the last two decades (even worse than after 9/11 or the 2008 economic meltdown).”
- A *New York Times* article on 9 December titled, “The Hidden ‘Fourth Wave’ of the Pandemic” notes that “America hasn’t begun to face this year’s mental health crisis.” The article stated, “It’s dark, we’re stuck inside, and we’re isolated from friends and family. Politics is fevered, the economy continues to struggle, and the coronavirus rages on. Many of us may be at a breaking point.”

- “Of the 3,800 members of Body Politic, an online community for long-term COVID-19 survivors, 85 percent experience some kind of cognitive dysfunction, and 81 percent report neurological symptoms.”

The WSWS article noted that when the coronavirus outbreak hit, “Increasing uncertainty, financial instability and the loss of social connections have led to a staggering decline in mental health. In the U.K., for example, reports of depression and severe anxiety among young people aged 5-16 increased by 50 percent.”

Hitting the Young Hard

As reported in yesterday’s *New York Times*, “In the United States, a quarter of 18- to 24-year-olds said they had seriously considered suicide.” A French survey found that 10 percent of 70,000 students had thought of committing suicide, and over 25 percent suffered depression. In Italy, the *Times* article noted that hospitalizations of young Italians who harmed themselves or attempted suicide increased 30 percent.

TREND FORECAST: *While the young are getting hit hard mentally and financially, we maintain our forecast that their loss of income, enjoyment, job opportunities, and outlook for a dire future will spark the “Youth Revolution,” one of our Top 10 Trends for 2021. Again, as we have been reporting, one of the key elements that will spark their uprising against the establishment is income inequality... “Off With Their Heads, 2.0.”*

TREND FORECAST: *As the spirits of the young decline, on-trend marketers and those in the entertainment business that create new looks, sounds, and styles that are new and uplifting will reap great rewards.*

What are they? What do the youth want to see, touch, feel, and hear? The Trends Research Institute is compiling a list of “must-haves” that will be key elements of the Roaring 2021s and beyond.

CANADA: LOCKDOWN INCREASES EATING DISORDERS



Among the rise in the suffering caused by the continued isolation and stress of lockdowns, Canada can now add another. According to a report on *Halifax Today*:

“At Eating Disorders Nova Scotia, the organization was running a monthly workshop one year ago. Once the pandemic hit, that workshop increased to every single week... eating disorders are triggered by stress, anxiety, and depression. Moreover, the disruption of routines, social isolation and disconnection from support on top of diet culture are likely all contributing to the rise.”

In a 7 February interview, Shaleen Jones, the executive director of Eating Disorders Nova Scotia, stated, “We know that restriction really increases your risk for developing an eating disorder, and when we’re immersed in a culture that praises restriction and then we throw in a pandemic on top of it, it really does create the perfect storm.”

Ms. Jones revealed that this serious health issue getting worse in every province across the country, noting the number of citizens reaching out for help with eating disorders has doubled since the lockdowns were imposed.

The eating disorders include:

- Anorexia Nervosa
- Bulimia Nervosa
- Avoidant and Restrictive Food Intake Disorder
- Binge Eating Disorder
- Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorders (atypical presentations of the above eating disorders)
- Other eating disorders including pica and rumination disorder

- Compulsive exercising or anorexia athletica
- Nocturnal sleep-related eating disorder

TRENDPOST: *This news out of Nova Scotia is yet another example of the lockdown restrictions proving to be worse than the coronavirus itself. The rise in eating disorders and other mental health illnesses suffered by Nova Scotians comes even though since last February, in a province of some 940,000, just 65 people have died from the coronavirus or 0.007 percent of the population.*

Not mentioned by the Presstitutes, some 80 percent of Canada's COVID deaths are from nursing homes.

Yet, these facts are ignored by the media, and as with nations, states, and cities around the world, there is very little public dissent. On the contrary, the vast majority of citizens support and obey nonsensical lockdown mandates, rarely question the lack of scientific data to validate draconian orders... and march in line to get vaccinated.

A Global Issue

The rise in eating disorders from isolation and anxiety is a problem in many countries. On 26 August, *Scientific American* published the article, "COVID-19-Era Isolation Is Making Dangerous Eating Disorders Worse."

The article noted the huge suffering caused by lockdown anxieties when interviewing a woman in Melbourne, Australia:

"When mandatory COVID-19 lockdowns began in Australia in March, Rosey's anxiety went into overdrive. 'I'm single, I live alone, my family lives in another state, and I'm not able to see friends,' she says, adding that her need for control—something she has now lost in almost every area of her life—has played a major role in the resurgence of symptoms: 'To have everything I knew and had control over, including how I managed my illness, ripped away has been one of the hardest things.'"

Also revealed in the article:

“More than one-third of the 1,021 participants (511 in the U.S. and 510 in the Netherlands) said their eating disorder had worsened—and they attributed this change to issues such as a lack of structure, a triggering environment, the absence of social support, and an inability to obtain foods that fit their meal plans.”

TREND FORECAST: *As we have reported in our economic sections of the Trends Journal, the profits of the processed-food giants are spiking higher, as more people stay at home and eat more of their low-quality foodstuffs.*

As we continue to forecast, when the COVID War ends, the “Roaring 2021s” will have people rushing out to let loose and have fun. Thus, there will be major OnTrendpreneur® opportunities to get the unhealthy and overweight back in shape, so they can latch on to higher, uplifting grace and style that will sweep across nations.

JAPANESE WOMEN SUICIDES SPIKE AS COVID WAR RAGES



Officials in Japan announced last week that the suicide rate among women in the country jumped 15 percent in 2020, and specialists believe the coronavirus outbreak played a role in the increase.

“There’s no question that the coronavirus is related to this,” Michiko Ueda, a professor at Waseda University, told the *Financial Times*. “What’s particularly concerning is that the largest increase is among women, which is not common in Japan.

The *FT* reported that the suicide rate among men remained essentially static, but 6,976 women committed suicide in 2020 compared to 6,091 in 2019.

Takanori Hirano, a sociologist in the country, told the paper that the stress during the pandemic could be playing a role as well as the risk of workers losing their jobs. *Reuters* reported that Tokyo's economy suffered its worst postwar recession in the early part of 2020, and the country's state of emergency in January "inflicted further pain on consumption."

"There are a lot of single, unmarried women who don't have a secure economic foundation," Hirano said. "They are the vulnerable ones—the late-30s, early-40s generation—and there are a lot of structural factors that can't be changed overnight."

TRENDPOST: *The WHO issued a statement on 14 May that a massive mental illness crisis will likely result from "the isolation, the fear, the uncertainty, the economic turmoil" from the extended lockdowns.*

The dramatic effects of the coronavirus outbreak have had a dramatic effect on mental health across the world. USA Today reported last week that children in the U.S. "may never recover the ground they have lost in attaining critical educational milestones."

Suicides in the U.S. are also on the rise and make for the second-leading cause of mortality of those aged 10-24. The paper reported that the Disaster Distress Helpline reported a more than 1,000 percent increase in calls from 2019 to 2020.

Researchers at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology – who conducted the study in Japan – wrote in the journal Nature Human Behavior, "Unlike normal economic circumstances, this pandemic disproportionately affects the psychological health of children, adolescents, and females (especially housewives)."

The report pointed to a jump in domestic violence and diseases' impact on industries that have a high percentage of female workers, according to Reuters. Taro Kono, the country's administrative and regulatory reform minister, told the news agency, "People worry about COVID-19, but a lot of

people have also committed suicide because they have lost their jobs, they have lost their income, and couldn't see the hope. We need to strike the balance between managing COVID-19 and managing the economy."

TREND FORECAST: *As we have forecast since the launching of the COVID War in February, there would be devastating social and economic fallout from the locking down of nations, states, and cities. As Gerald Celente has often said, "When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it."*

Sadly, they lose in many ways: The loss of self-confidence. The loss of education. The loss of jobs. The loss of businesses. The loss of joy and satisfaction. The loss of dreams, aspirations, and achievement.

Absent a massive movement to raise the human spirit to much higher levels, socioeconomic conditions will continue to deteriorate and suicides, drug overdoses, crime, and violence will escalate.

We at The Trends Research Institute are doing our best to help inspire and motivate a movement to counter the globalists' "Great Reset" launched by the World Economic Forum with a "Greater Good/Rise to Your Highest Levels" movement for We The People.

N.Y. GOVERNOR CUOMO: LIAR-IN-CHIEF, PART 1



virus.

As we have been reporting since New York State's Governor Andrew Cuomo launched the COVID War, his 25 March 2020 order forcing COVID-ill patients out of hospitals and into nursing homes is responsible for the deaths of thousands of elder-care patients who subsequently died of the

The New York Department of Health failed to release the precise number of nursing home residents who died of COVID-19 inside hospitals, according to a state Supreme Court justice.

Justice Kimberly A. O'Connor said the state broke the law over its "continued failure" to respond to a Freedom of Information Law request filed in August by the Empire Center for Public Policy. The think tank was seeking information on the nursing home deaths in the state.

According to the *Albany Times Union*, Justice O'Connor said,

"[The Department of Health's] continued failure to provide petitioner or response, given the straightforward nature of the request, how the data is collected and maintained, and the fact that some of the requested data has already been made publicly available without personally identifying information goes against FOIL's broad standard for open and transparent government and is a violation of the statute."

She demanded the state hand over the data within five business days. The think tank called the decision a "great victory" but predicted the Cuomo administration will continue to drag its feet and withhold the data.

The ruling was handed down just before New York Attorney General Letitia James' damning report showing the state undercounted its nursing home deaths by 50 percent. The state announced 8,711 deaths in nursing homes before James' report, but then it increased the number to 12,743 as of late last month. It is now estimated that over 15,000 eldercare patients died of the virus.

Killer Cuomo: "Who Cares?"

In response to the ruling, Cuomo said, "Look, whether a person died in a hospital or died in a nursing home, people died."

Cuomo did not admit his administration cooked the numbers by refusing to release the data, adding,

“If you look at New York State, we have a lower percentage of deaths in nursing homes than other states. A third of all deaths in this nation are from nursing homes. New York State, we’re... about 28 percent, but we’re below the national average in number of deaths in nursing homes. But who cares—33, 28, died in a hospital, died in a nursing home—they died.”

In fact, with the new numbers recently released, “about a third of all deaths” from the virus in New York State were from nursing homes.

N.Y. GOVERNOR CUOMO: LIAR-IN-CHIEF, PART 2



New York Governor Andrew Cuomo faced a political firestorm last week when it was revealed that a top aide admitted to fellow Democrats that the administration essentially hid data on nursing-home deaths amid the COVID outbreak to prevent former President Trump from

politicizing the unfavorable numbers.

The *New York Post* said it obtained a recording of the meeting that included Melissa DeRosa, an aide for the governor.

“We froze. We were in a position where we weren’t sure if what we were going to give to the Department of Justice or what we give to you guys and what we start saying was going to be used against us and we weren’t sure if there was going to be an investigation,” she said, according to the report.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that the meeting occurred around the same time Trump was attacking Cuomo’s response to the virus on Twitter. De Rosa’s comments were seized by Cuomo’s critics.

Representative Tom Reed called for an immediate probe into Cuomo's response to the outbreak. He told *Fox News* it's a good time for President Biden to make good on his promise to use the Justice Department in an "honorable way."

"We're going to make sure the Justice Department does just that. And we're going to use those tools of justice to make sure those fifteen thousand souls that died are going to be heard from and justice will be done."

TRENDPOST: According to *Fox News*, a search of transcripts found that the words "nursing homes" and "Andrew Cuomo" were not uttered once on Thursday night during the primetime hours of 8 to 11 PM on CNN or MSNBC.

Andrew Cuomo had been considered a rising star in the Democratic Party, and his public rebukes of Trump were widely embraced by the mainstream media. He was christened with an Emmy Award for being the perfect TV personality of selling lies, bullshit, and arrogance – a top-priority, mainstream media staple – for his daily COVID War briefings.

Indeed, right out of central casting, Bruce Paisner, CEO of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, said that Cuomo's 111 briefings were a hit because he somehow managed to create "television shows with characters, plot lines, and stories of success and failure."

As we reported, Cuomo also got a book deal from Crown Publishing Group, but he refuses to reveal how much the book company paid him... to write in his spare time while playing his role as Governor of New York State. Some three years ago, he got \$738,000 from HarperCollins for his memoir, which sold only 3,200 copies, according to Buffalo News.

AVERAGE AGE OF COVID DEATH VS. AVERAGE AGE OF DEATH



What is the average age of death from COVID-19? It turns out that it tracks with the average age of death, period. In America, that's about 78 years old.

According to an October 2020 article in the *Daily Mail*:

“The average age of people who died from Covid-19 in England and Wales since the pandemic began is 82.4, the *Daily Mail* can reveal. That figure—computed from Office of National Statistics data by experts at Oxford University—is significantly higher than the average age reached by people recorded as dying from all other causes, which is 81.5.”

TRENDPOST: As we have continually noted, the average age of virus victims is barely reported. It's certainly not one of the more reported statistics surrounding COVID-19, which has seen the media harp endlessly on “cases,” “deaths,” and politically useful “outbreaks” in disfavored regions and states.

The fact that the virus is primarily a danger only to people who are at an age where, statistically, they will be dying from some other cause, if not COVID, seems worthy of reporting more widely to the general public.

Yet, again, that the elderly, often with pre-existing chronic conditions, are dying and that this is an “old person’s disease” in the eyes and minds of younger generations will be among the sparks that ignite the “Youth Revolution,” one of our Top Trends for 2021.

BACTERIAL PNEUMONIA & COVID: WHAT THE CDC SAYS



New CDC numbers suggest that pneumonia is the number one co-factor contributing to COVID-19 lethality. The implications are important since pneumonia cases that are bacteria-based normally outnumber viral cases by as

much as four to one. Bacterial pneumonia is treated with antibiotics, which is exactly what physician “outsiders,” such as New York’s Dr. Vladimir Zelenko, have been advocating to combat COVID.

According to the CDC’s latest data, in nearly half of COVID-19 deaths, pneumonia was present:

- 375,323 total deaths from COVID in 2020
- 175,523 deaths from simultaneous pneumonia and COVID
- 3,344,726 deaths from all causes

The above numbers, updated on 11 February 2021, are from the [CDC’s website](#).

Previous CDC data has indicated that well under 10 percent of COVID deaths have resulted from the presence of the virus in absence of other serious health conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, obesity, and maladies such as cancer. But the new data on the presence of pneumonia is just as eye-opening. It suggests that combating COVID-19 with antibiotics, along the lines of what many front-line physicians were suggesting, was valid.

A study of 5,000 patients conducted from 2007 to 2014 by the Intermountain Medical Center (IMC) found bacterial pneumonia to be far more prevalent and consequential than viral pneumonia. The findings of that study, presented to the American Heart Association, confirmed that nearly 80 percent of the patients were diagnosed with bacterial pneumonia, compared to 21 percent with viral pneumonia.

And bacterial pneumonia was more deadly. Brent Muhlestein, MD, a cardiovascular researcher with the IMC, said,

“The likely underlying cause is that bacterial pneumonia causes greater inflammation of the arteries compared to viral pneumonia... The practical result of our study is that caregivers should be aware of the greater cardiovascular risks associated with respiratory infections like pneumonia, and especially bacterial pneumonia. If a patient has been diagnosed with bacterial pneumonia, treat it aggressively and watch them closely.”

TRENDPOST: Unfortunately, that protocol went out the window with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. Dr. Zelenko announced his findings relatively early in the pandemic, saying that hydroxychloroquine, a standard FDA drug, together with azithromycin and zinc were highly effective in combating COVID if administered in a timely fashion.

When then-President Trump reacted positively to that news, media hell broke loose. They sensationalized baseless assessments that hydroxychloroquine could be life-threatening. Additionally, America’s so-called leading infectious disease expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, threw cold water on the idea that anything but a new type of Big Pharma experimental vaccine would alleviate the health crisis.

Dr. Zelenko and many other frontline physicians were banned from social media, and hydroxychloroquine was famously put off the market by politicians for coronavirus use. Many have since questioned the political motivations behind discounting certain treatments and the drive for the holy grail of a completely new type of experimental mRNA vaccine to combat COVID. The new CDC numbers about pneumonia appear to open the door to many more questions.

NEW ZEALAND: THREE CASES = THREE-DAY LOCKDOWN



New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern held an urgent meeting with her cabinet on Sunday after three unexplained coronavirus cases emerged. She then ordered a three-day lockdown in Auckland.

“We have stamped out the virus before and we will do it again,” she said, according to *DW.com*. The report said the three people infected were identified as a couple and their daughter. According to *NPR*, the family lives in Auckland, and the mother works in the laundry room for international flights at LSG Sky Chefs.

The infections are the first recorded in the country of nearly five million since 24 January.

TRENDPOST: Since the COVID War began a year ago, the nation of nearly five million has registered just 25 virus deaths. That equals the grand total of 0.0005 percent of the population who have died from the virus. Over a year, that's 0.00004167 percent of COVID deaths per month.

Now, with just three cases – not deaths – the country will enforce an “Alert Level 2” lockdown, which is the second-highest level. Movie theaters and gyms will be forced to close, and a “border” will be set up around Auckland. Residents will need permission to exit the city.

Not a mention in the media of the question of where the scientific information is that provides essential data to impose a three-day lockdown.

Why not a two-day or six-day lockdown? Does the virus disappear exactly after three days?

Indeed, it is the same with politicians inventing curfew and restaurant times that vary around the world and have no scientific basis to support them.

Yet, be it New Zealand or New York, COVID Panic persists and governments impose draconian orders and seize more control over the people... and the majority of the population buys what it is sold and marches off to orders.

GERMANY: CASES UP, LOCKDOWN MORE



German Chancellor Angela Merkel announced last week that countrywide lockdown restrictions, which have been in place to fight the COVID War and were set to expire on 14 February, would extend until at least 7 March.

A report obtained by *Euronews.com* said the new guidelines will be in place until there are seven straight days of fewer than 35 new cases per 100,000. The report stated Berlin's peak was 198 new cases on 22 December. Last Wednesday, there were 68 cases per 100,000.

Merkel, like other leaders, said she is concerned about the variants, which appear to be more contagious and deadly. The country of 83 million recorded 62,969 deaths and 2.3 million total cases. The new U.K. variant made up six percent of Germany's new cases.

"It will get the upper hand. The old virus will go away. We are going to live with a new virus. And we cannot yet assess this new virus and its behavior," Ms. Merkel declared.

TRENDPOST: *We have reported extensively on the ever-changing, arbitrary lockdown laws that are imposed by politicians without a shred of scientific data to support them.*

Moreover, 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 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 and businesses, ruining lives, and crushing the livelihoods of the young to fight what is primarily an “old person’s disease.”

TRENDS IN THE VACCINE ROLLOUT



FDA: FAILING TO MONITOR VACCINE SAFETY

Despite the fact that the COVID-19 vaccines in circulation were rushed into use through the Emergency Use Authorization Act and are using a new type of mRNA encoding technology, *The New York Times* published an article on 12 February with the headline:

As Millions Get Shots, F.D.A. Struggles to Get Safety Monitoring System Running

At the time, some 35 million vaccinations had been administered in the U.S., yet the system set up to document ill effects and life-threatening reactions to the vaccines “won’t be capable of analyzing safety data for weeks or months, according to numerous federal health officials.”

The article points out, “For now, federal regulators are counting on a patchwork of existing programs that they acknowledge are inadequate because of small sample sizes, missing critical data or other problems.”

The FDA tracking system touted during the vaccine trials is called the Biologics Evaluation Safety Initiative (BEST), but it hasn’t even gone past its developmental stage. Dr. Ashish K. Jha, dean of Brown University School of Public Health, made his concerns clear: “We knew these vaccines were coming for at least several months before they got authorized, so we really should have had a well-developed system.”

The article quotes an official from the CDC who chose not to be identified: “It’s been a puzzle to me. The FDA talks about this in a way that is really unclear as to what is up and ready to go and what isn’t.”

The article goes on to state that because the COVID-19 vaccines are free, the normal database for adverse reactions, which would be reported through health insurance claims, isn’t available.

Dr. Daniel Salmon, director of the Institute for Vaccine Safety at Johns Hopkins University, pointed out, “The current safety surveillance system in the U.S. is dependent on health insurance claims data and electronic health records. If the vaccine data information doesn’t get into the safety system, then that safety system is unable to function.”

The FDA would not commit to when it would develop an accurate monitoring system to handle over 100 million medical records and have the ability to detect any safety issues. Indeed, the article points out that “critics say it is folly for the FDA to be launching a new system in the midst of a pandemic. And several CDC officials said the FDA was not giving them a real sense of when the complex system would begin to work.”

TRENDPOST: *As with the bureaucracies of the world, most are a “folly,” but they do as they wish, and the majority public believe what the government agencies promote. Indeed, the NYT article reported “turf wars and bureaucratic*

hurdles had slowed BEST's progress," and "federal regulators are counting on a patchwork of existing programs that they acknowledge are inadequate because of small sample sizes, missing critical data or other problems."

TRENDPOST: *The U.S. government sells the lie, and the media promotes it that the COVID vaccination is "free." The fact is that Washington paid Pfizer Inc. nearly \$2 billion for 100 million additional doses of its COVID-19 vaccine.*

Where did they get the \$2 billion? They took it from the pockets of We the People, i.e., taxpayers.

Moreover, the profits the drug lords are making from the vaccine that We the People paid them to develop and produce will make them billions.

*As noted in our 2 February **Trends Journal**, we quoted USA Today, which reported:*

"Governments have poured billions of dollars into helping drug companies develop vaccines and are spending billions extra to purchase doses. However, the particulars of these offers largely stay secret, with governments and public well-being organizations acquiescing to drug firm calls for secrecy."

On the making-money side of the drug deal, we quoted an article published in The Guardian on 10 November:

"The US drug maker Pfizer and the German biotech firm BioNTech stand to bring in nearly \$13 billion in global sales from their coronavirus vaccine next year, which will be evenly split between the two companies, according to analysts at the US investment bank Morgan Stanley."

TRENDPOST: *Washington signed contracts offering Big Pharma "liability shields" that protect the drug manufacturers in case their vaccines turn out to cause severe health consequences.*

The contracts also give drug companies favorable ownership rights through lucrative patents and provide language stating a commitment to keep the details secret.

ARE THE COVID VACCINES SAFE? “EVIDENCE IS LACKING”



From Wall Street to Washington, from Downing Street to Timbuktu, the word is that once some 70 to 85 percent of the world is jabbed with the COVID vaccine, the herd will be immunized and happy days will be here again.

How warped is the vaccine that was rushed out in “Operation Warp Speed”?

Only time will tell.

The new COVID-19 vaccines in circulation use a process called messenger RNA, referred to as “mRNA” vaccines. While the CDC claims these new types of vaccines are safe, a very different assessment has been made by the Penn Medicine Center for Evidence-based Practice, which is affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania.

Here is a comparison.

On the CDC’s site, under the heading “Understanding and Explaining mRNA COVID-19 Vaccines”:

- “Like all vaccines, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines have been rigorously tested for safety before being authorized for use in the United States.
- mRNA technology is new, but not unknown. They have been studied for more than a decade

- mRNA vaccines do not contain a live virus and do not carry a risk of causing disease in the vaccinated person.
- mRNA from the vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell and does not affect or interact with a person's DNA."
- A very different assessment is made by the Center for Evidence-based Practice at the University of Pennsylvania. In its December 2020 review, "Adverse Effects of Messenger RNA Vaccines," is this summary:
- "There are no specific guidelines for use of messenger RNA (mRNA) vaccines or contraindications to mRNA vaccines.
- No large trials of any mRNA vaccine have been completed yet.
- The only evidence on the safety of mRNA vaccines comes from small phase I and phase II trials of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines, with follow-up typically less than two months.
- Systemic adverse events such as fatigue, muscle aches, headache, and chills are common.
- Severe systemic adverse events were reported by 5 to 10 percent of trial subjects.
- Localized adverse events such as pain at the injection site are common.
- Both systemic and local adverse events usually are resolved within one or two days.
- The rate and severity of adverse events appear to be higher for the second dose of vaccine than for the first.

- Higher vaccine doses appear to increase the rate and severity of adverse events.
- Larger trials of SARS-CoV-2 vaccines are in progress, with results expected in mid-2021
- There is not sufficient evidence to support any conclusions on the comparative safety of different mRNA vaccines.
- Direct evidence on the comparative safety of mRNA vaccines and other vaccines is lacking.”

Note the last two bullet points: “There is not sufficient evidence” and no “direct evidence” to show these vaccines are safe.

This medical review also states:

“We found no guidelines regarding patient groups for whom mRNA vaccines should be avoided or other guidelines specific to mRNA vaccines... General guidance on COVID-19 vaccination has been issued by Public Health England... It is of low quality... and based on limited evidence. Because no clinical trials involving children have been reported yet, and children have less risk of serious illness or death from COVID-19, vaccination of children is not recommended.”

While the media and politicians keep pumping the COVID Jab, and nations such as the U.K. are even proposing that the unvaccinated will be barred from bars and restaurants, once again, both the efficacy of the vaccination and its possible dangers are ignored.

The study went on to note,

“Because of the urgent nature of the topic and the absence of high-level evidence, we proceeded to review and analyze results from primary studies of mRNA vaccines... All of the mRNA vaccine safety data published to date is from early-phase clinical trials. Some of the data comes from non-peer-reviewed and

unpublished manuscripts, as noted in the table. This data should be used with caution. The studies are all small: they lack sufficient power to detect and assess the probability of uncommon adverse events, so the absence of such events in these trials should not be taken as evidence these events may not happen when mRNA vaccines are used more widely. Phase III trials that may yield more information on these events are in progress... but their results should not be expected until mid-2021.”

TRENDPOST: Despite scientifically-backed analysis, such as the points raised above by the Penn Medicine Center for Evidence-based Practice about the lack of safety data surrounding the COVID-19 vaccines, the pressure continues to mount from government officials and their health “experts” that the only way to get back to “normal” is for Americans to get the shots.

At a 2 February event produced by the Washington Post called “Coronavirus Leadership During Crisis,” Dr. Anthony Fauci, now chief medical advisor to President Biden, stated, “If you have a degree of vaccine hesitancy, then you have another problem because if you’re striving to get 85% of the people vaccinated, and you only get 50% of them vaccinated, then all of a sudden the timetable goes out the window.”

And, yes, as we monitor, analyze, and forecast the current events forming future trends, “you have another problem” if you only listen to so-called “experts,” ignore hard data, and are incapable of thinking for yourself.

WARNING: VACCINE-RELATED DEATHS AMONG ELDERLY



Not only are the elderly the primary victims of coronavirus, but the vaccinations that are supposed to save them from the virus are also reportedly killing many of them.

The UK Medical Freedom Alliance is a group of “medical professionals, scientists, and lawyers who have found that the government’s response to COVID-19 is misguided and not based on the best available scientific evidence.”

On 5 February, the organization published a letter on its website it had sent to the U.K. Minister for COVID-19 Vaccine Deployment, Nadhi Zahawi, and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock, cc’ing Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

The subject: “Urgent warning re COVID-19 vaccine-related deaths in the elderly and Care Homes.”

Key highlights include:

- “We now call for an immediate and urgent audit of deaths that have occurred since the beginning of the Covid-19 vaccine rollout, to ascertain if Covid-19 vaccines (in general or any brand in particular) are leading to an increased number of deaths (Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 related), Covid-19 cases or increased risk of death in certain age groups or cohorts.
- The absence of any safety data regarding those who have already had Covid-19, and the possibility that prior immunity may lead to increased side-effects from the Covid-19 vaccines.
- Our particular concern is the impact of Covid-19 vaccines on the very elderly and those in care homes. ONS data shows that weekly care home deaths tripled in the two weeks between 8th and 22nd January 2021, at a time when there was a massive increase in the rate of vaccinations of home care residents.
- At the same time, the MHRA (Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency) CEO, Dr. June Raine, stated that COVID-19 vaccine adverse events reports were coming in ‘thick and fast’ but there is no transparency around these reports, unlike in the US. The US government

vaccine adverse event reporting system (VAERS) is open to the public and is already showing a high number of serious adverse events and deaths in the initial stages of the vaccine rollout, compared to previous vaccines, particularly in the elderly.

- Since the Covid-19 vaccine has been rolled out, there has been a steady stream of national and international media reports concerning Covid-19 outbreaks, hospitalizations, and deaths occurring in care homes around the world, within hours or days of vaccination.
- The Norwegian Medicines Regulators were quick to flag up a cluster of deaths occurring in care homes, linking 29 deaths to the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine. Norwegian officials listed fever, vomiting, and nausea as side effects which ‘may have led to the deaths of some frail patients,’ and led them to update their advice regarding administration of Covid-19 vaccines to the frailest.”

The letter raises concerns that since the U.K. became the first country to approve vaccinating the public at the beginning of December:

“It is therefore striking to see such a sharp uptick in deaths starting shortly after this, correlating to vaccination rate, just at the time when overall mortality from Covid-19 had started to fall, having been stable through November and December 2020.”

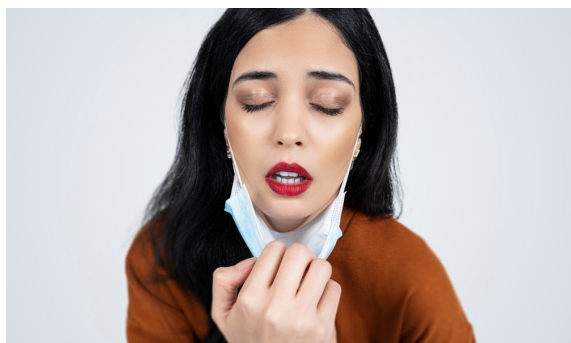
The letter concludes that given the legitimate concerns about the effect of the new COVID-19 vaccines on the elderly,

“We therefore demand an urgent audit and full investigation of all the deaths that have occurred since the vaccine rollout began on 8 December 2020, to be carried out by scientists that are independent to SAGE and the Government and overseen by an All-Party Committee. We would like to see the results published publicly, before any rollout of second vaccine doses to those who have received the first dose.”

TRENDPOST: As detailed in this **Trends Journal**, hard scientific data as to the negative effects of the COVID vaccine have not been established by government health agencies. Indeed, the “Operation Warp Speed” vaccination had been rushed to market, when, according to biomedicine consultant Jens-Peter Gregersen, DVM, “An average vaccine takes about 10-12 years to be developed.”

Yet, despite the lack of long-term data to prove its efficacy and dangers, the vast majority of the public will line up for the jab for three basic reasons: 1. They will be coerced/forced to by governments, education systems, and/or employers. 2. They fear dying of the virus. 3. Those who are not vaccinated will not be permitted to travel, attend functions, etc.

NEW CDC CLAIM: “TWO MASKS BETTER THAN ONE”



Since last spring, the **Trends Journal** has offered dozens of reports showing that, despite constant pressure from political leaders and their health “experts” to scare citizens into prolonged mask-wearing, masks have never been proven effective

with hard scientific data. Some notable examples:

- In addition to wildly differing estimates of deaths from coronavirus and inconsistent orders, bans, and restrictions from political leaders, the issue of whether or not wearing masks in public is effective for preventing the spread remains confused. (See our 7 April article, “[MASKS OR NO MASKS? THAT IS THE QUESTION](#)”)
- This past 21 May, before they became “wear your mask” advocates, the *New England Journal of Medicine* published this on their site: “We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection. Public health authorities define a significant

exposure to Covid-19 as face-to-face contact within 6 feet with a patient with symptomatic Covid-19 that is sustained for at least a few minutes (and some say more than 10 minutes or even 30 minutes). The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal. In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.’” (See our 3 November article, [“FACING THE TRUTH, PART II: MORE EVIDENCE MASKS ARE INEFFECTIVE”](#))

- A recent careful examination of the literature, in which 17 of the best studies were analyzed, concluded that “None of the studies established a conclusive relationship between mask/respirator use and protection against influenza infection. Keep in mind, no studies have been done to demonstrate that either a cloth mask or the N95 mask has any effect on transmission of the COVID-19 virus.” (See our 23 June article, [“WEAR MASKS, GET SICK”](#))
- On 31 August, Dr. Tegnell [Sweden’s leading epidemiologist] was quoted on the MedicalXpres website that there was a lack of scientific evidence to support mask-wearing: “There are at least three heavyweight reports – from the World Health Organization, the ECDC [EU health agency] and The Lancet report that the WHO cites – which all state the scientific evidence is weak.” (See our 29 September article, [“EUROPEAN HEALTH OFFICIALS AGREE: MASKS DON’T WORK”](#))

Yet, despite the lack of hard data, the call for mandatory mask-wearing continues unabated with President-elect Joe Biden announcing in December, “I think it’s critically important. I think it’s a patriotic responsibility to wear a mask.” Last Thursday, America’s Commander-in-Chief declared, without a shred of scientific data to back him up, that it was important for everyone to wear masks until at least 2022.

“You know that wearing this mask through the next year here can save lives—a significant number of lives. And so I apologize if you don’t hear me as clearly as

you, maybe you should,” said a masked up mumbling Biden at National Institutes of Health.

Double Up

And now, on 10 February, the CDC declared that “two masks are better than one.”

As reported by the *Associated Press*:

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday reported the results of a lab experiment that spaced two artificial heads 6 feet apart from each other and checked to see how many coronavirus-sized particles spewed by one were inhaled by the other. The researchers found that wearing one mask—surgical or cloth—blocked around 40 percent of the particles coming toward the head that was breathing in. When a cloth mask was worn on top of a surgical mask, about 80 percent were blocked.”

About Face!

Double up on masks? Back in 2009, the CDC reported that “information on the effectiveness of facemasks and respirators for decreasing the risk of influenza infection in community settings is extremely limited. Thus, it is difficult to assess their potential effectiveness in decreasing the risk of 2009 influenza A (H1N1) virus transmission in these settings.”

They went on to state, “In community and home settings, the use of facemasks and respirators generally are not recommended.”

TRENDPOST: *We’re not making this up. The facts are presented. And now the latest ‘brilliant’ CDC experiment was conducted using two artificial heads. One of the two masks used was a surgical mask... the AP article pointed out that “the study had many limitations: The researchers used one brand of a surgical mask*

and one kind of cloth mask, and it's not clear if results would be the same with every product.”

TRENDPOST: In addition to just a few of the dozens of articles published in the **Trends Journal** since last spring showing lack of hard scientific data supporting the wearing of masks, we haven't forgotten that just short of a year ago, the U.S. surgeon general tweeted: “Seriously people – STOP BUYING MASKS... They are NOT effective in preventing general public from catching #Coronavirus.”

As we reported in the **Trends Journal**, last March, at the onset of the COVID War, Dr. Anthony Fauci, designated by the media and politicians as America's top infectious disease expert, declared on the TV show 60 Minutes,

“There's no reason to be walking around with a mask. When you're in the middle of an outbreak, wearing a mask might make people feel a little bit better and it might even block a droplet, but it's not providing the perfect protection that people think that it is. And, often, there are unintended consequences—people keep fiddling with the mask and they keep touching their face.”

TRENDPOST: While the CDC found time to test artificial dummies wearing masks, they left out recent research showing long-term mask-wearing is causing significant skin problems. So much so there's now a new term: “Maskne,” referring to the acne many are suffering from the constant wearing of masks, which trap bacteria on the skin. In addition to acne, prolonged mask-wearing is causing an increase in bad breath, tooth decay, and gum inflammation.

TRENDPOST: On 12 February 2020, Dr. Nancy Messonnier, the director of the CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, took part in a press conference that focused on the emerging threat out of Wuhan, China. She noted that the health body noticed an increase in demand for N95 respirators and face masks but made it clear that the CDC “does not currently recommend the use of face masks for the general public.” She said,

“This virus is not spreading in the community. If you are sick or a patient under investigation and not hospitalized, CDC recommends wearing a face mask when around other people and before entering a health care provider’s office, but when you are alone, in your home, you do not need to wear a mask.”

In a 9 July report, The New England Journal of Medicine concluded:

“We know that wearing a mask outside health care facilities offers little, if any, protection from infection.... The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal. In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.”

TRENDPOST: *As we have long noted, “Dumb Enough to Believe Bush’s Wars, Dumb Enough to Believe the COVID War.” On 21 May, an article published in the New England Journal of Medicine by doctors and medical experts from Harvard Medical School; the Division of Infectious Diseases at Massachusetts General Hospital; Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute; and Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, MA, stated:*

“Public health authorities define a significant exposure to Covid-19 as face-to-face contact within 6 feet with a patient with symptomatic Covid-19 that is sustained for at least a few minutes (and some say more than 10 minutes or even 30 minutes). The chance of catching Covid-19 from a passing interaction in a public space is therefore minimal. In many cases, the desire for widespread masking is a reflexive reaction to anxiety over the pandemic.”

INSTAGRAM BOOTS RFK JR. FOR NOT BUYING THEIR VAX LINE



In America, the "Land of the Censored" where all those are banned from mainstream and social media who don't buy their line of thinking, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., nephew of the late U.S. President John F. Kennedy, had his Instagram account yanked last week by its parent company, Facebook, because he posted "misinformation" about the COVID-19 vaccines.

Mr. Kennedy, an environmental lawyer and chairman of Children's Health Defense, a not-for-profit anti-vaccine advocacy, was called out by *CNN* Presstitute Jake Tapper who labeled Mr. Kennedy a "menace" for calling Dr. Anthony Fauci a "very sinister guy who has turned" America over to "Big Pharma."

Kennedy's Instagram account had some 800,000 followers. The company said in a statement it "removed [the] account for repeatedly sharing debunked claims about the coronavirus or vaccines."

An *Associated Press* report said the account was removed after Facebook was contacted by the *Washington Post*. Facebook is owned by Mark Zuckerberg, and the *Post* is owned by Jeff Bezos.

Kennedy was banned after he posted a video called, "Planet Lockdown." Kennedy told his followers to not trust the mainstream media and "government health officials" who insist the vaccines are safe. He pointed to a woman who died after receiving a jab.

Also, Kennedy called out Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates and said the billionaire pushed the vaccine through his philanthropic foundation "to create a new feudalism on this planet."

He responded to Facebook's move by saying, "This kind of censorship is counterproductive if our objective is a safe and effective vaccine supply."

Only permitting their side to be heard and banning anyone who disagrees with their "authorities," the Facebook Gang pledged to "run the largest worldwide campaign" to promote "authoritative" information about the vaccination drive.

TRENDPOST: *The censorship of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. by Facebook was not unexpected.*

*In last week's **Trends Journal**, we wrote:*

Facebook announced yesterday it will dish out \$120 million in free advertising to health departments and non-government organizations that promote getting tested for COVID and getting vaccinated.

For those who dispute the efficacy of the tests and the safety of the vaccine, the world's largest social media network said they will censor and banish all who disagree with their beliefs.

The Facebook monopoly will also promote the "get vaccinated" campaign by providing details from local health departments that direct people where and when they should go to get vaccinated. The promote vax/ban anti-vax Facebook campaign will roll out globally in more than 50 languages, so everyone across the globe will get their message.

TRENDPOST: *Unlike the motto of the **Trends Journal**, "Think for Yourself," in Slavelandia, U.S.S.A, where media, banks, big businesses, and governments are monopolized and controlled by the "Bigs," only one point of view – theirs – is permitted.*

*Unlike the Presstitutes, the **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the hard science pros and cons of the COVID vaccination. As publisher Gerald Celente says, "The government and media want you to do what you are told, not*

question ‘authorities,’ shut up, bend over, and take the shot. Anyone who gets out of line will be canceled and/or shut out.”

A Pew Research Poll conducted late last year found that 40 percent of Americans are concerned about receiving the vaccine. The Harvard Medical School pointed out that mRNA vaccines were developed rapidly to stop the outbreak’s spread. The report pointed to the 23 deaths in Norway among elderly vaccine recipients and how those fatalities “raised understandable safety concerns.”

PREACH VACCINE VIRTUE! JESUS SAID?



To sell the vaccine program, many church leaders in the U.S. are seen as a potential asset in getting the message out about the COVID-19 vaccines to the public.

As we have been reporting, Black Americans have expressed concern about receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, with one-third of those polled saying they would refuse the jab.

On 10 February, the *Wall Street Journal* featured a story from a pastor in Boston at Pleasant Hill Missionary Baptist, Reverend Miniard Culpepper, who met with other pastors and came up with a plan to present information about the vaccines. He eventually got vaccinated with some other pastors publicly. Some in his congregation told the paper that seeing him receive his first dose was enough for them to sign up for the shot.

Martini Shaw, a pastor of Philadelphia’s St. Thomas, the oldest Black Episcopal church in the country, told the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, “The church has always been the focal point of where people have been able to come in terms of joyous times and celebratory times, but also in times of need.”

The “Sell Blacks” Trend

According to the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases survey released on 4 February:

“Only 49 percent of Black adults plan to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Among that group, only 19 percent plan to get vaccinated as soon as possible, while approximately 31 percent prefer to wait. Thirty percent of Black adults do not plan to get a COVID-19 vaccine, with an additional 20 percent unsure of whether they would get vaccinated.”

When the first vaccine was administered in the U.S. on 14 December, the front-page photo of *The New York Times*, blasted across the nation, was of an African-American nurse receiving an injection from a fellow African-American nurse. The recipient was widely quoted as saying she took the shot to encourage Blacks to get vaccinated because they are hesitant to do so and are suffering from COVID-19 in disproportional numbers.

According to the Office of Minority Health, a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services:

“African American women have the highest rates of obesity or being overweight compared to other groups in the United States. About 4 out of 5 African American women are overweight or obese... non-Hispanic blacks were 1.3 times more likely to be obese as compared to non-Hispanic whites.”

The same office reports, “African American adults are 60 percent more likely than non-Hispanic white adults to have been diagnosed with diabetes by a physician.”

Yet, absent from the daily doses of selling fear and hysteria and promoting vaccinations as the only way to win the COVID War, the mainstream media

rarely, if ever, report on vitamins, nutrition-related ways to build stronger immune systems, and natural healing protocols.

*Note: To help build your immune system and stay healthy, we've added a new column to the **Trends Journal**, "Trends in Getting Healthy" by Gary Null. (See this week's new article, "[EFFECTIVE WAYS TO KEEP YOUR RESPIRATORY SYSTEM HEALTHY.](#)")*

VACCINE FAST FACTS



In the U.S., at least 35,834,855 people have received one or more doses of the COVID vaccines. Pfizer vaccinations have been slightly more common than those from Moderna.

States leading the way in vaccinations include Alaska, North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Oklahoma, New Mexico, West Virginia, Connecticut, and Vermont. They all have 20,000 or more vaccinations per 100,000 in population.

The remainder of the country is at roughly the same, lower level of vaccinations, with an average of 15,000 or less per 100,000 in population.

Worldwide, America continues to lead, along with Israel, the UAE, and western Europe. South America has stepped up vaccinations, with Chile leading the way. China, Brazil, and Canada have vaccinated less of their populations so far. Other areas of the world, including the continents of Africa and Australia, have reported little data so far.

VAX DEATHS FROM CDC'S VAERS DOWNPLAYED



At least some non-mainstream news sites have reported deaths and adverse events from the CDC's VAERS (Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System) database. But outlets such as the *Associated Press* have stepped up to run interference. A

"fact-checking" article by the wire service

in the first week of February downplayed reporting on vaccine-related deaths, not by discounting the factual numbers but by crying "context":

Claim: Screenshots of the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System show people who have died after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine.

AP's assessment: Missing context. The VAERS system is an unverified reporting system that does not determine if a vaccine caused the events that are reported.

VAERS, a self-reporting system, is widely considered to be inadequate in tracking the actual scope of events. The CDC is working to devise and implement a more reliable way of tracking information.

Its weakness is considered to be in under-reporting, not falsely or over-reporting events. Despite this fact, the *AP* story sought to muddy the truth by vaguely claiming, "The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which run the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System, are quick to note the limitation of the data, which serve as an early signal to detect issues with any vaccines."

It's telling that a search on any internet browser that simply asks for "VAERS adverse event total" brings up scores of articles discounting "anti-vax misinformation" by mainstream news sources that never relate the current numbers from the database.

Those numbers are admittedly very poorly and confusingly presented by the system itself. But here are some of the data through 4 February:

- 653 deaths reported following COVID vaccinations
- 12,697 reported total adverse events
- 2,792 visits to emergency room doctors
- 208 permanent disabilities
- 1,382 hospitalizations

CBS TALKS UP U.K. EFFORT TO VACCINATE CHILDREN



There is little evidence that COVID-19 spreads in cases where people aren't experiencing symptoms such as a fever or cough. Recent studies have shown that children attending school have not led to any elevated risks of coronavirus outbreaks. Add to that young people are

nearly 100 percent immune from the malady and there would seem to be no reason to push an experimental vaccine on them.

As we have reported, according to the CDC, if a youngster does get the virus, the recovery rate is 99.997 percent. Considering those odds, why risk taking a vaccine?

Regardless, that's what *CBS* is busy promoting. In a story reporting on the U.K.'s drive to vaccinate those aged six to 17, *CBS* asserted the U.K. was taking a "key step toward ending the coronavirus pandemic" by vaccinating children in the country.

Meanwhile, the U.K.'s chief in charge of the trial vaccination program, Andrew Pollard, admitted at least some of the facts regarding the non-vulnerability of children to COVID:

“While most children are relatively unaffected by coronavirus and are unlikely to become unwell with the infection, it is important to establish the safety and immune response to the vaccine in children and young people as some children may benefit from vaccination. These new trials will extend our understanding of control of SARS-CoV2 to younger age groups.”

CBS touted the benefits of children of taking the vax that were unrelated to any direct medical efficacy of vaccination, quoting the strange rationale of one of the U.K. researchers, Rinn Song. “The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound negative impact on the education, social development, and emotional well-being of children and adolescents, beyond illness and rare severe disease presentations.”

AUSTRALIAN OFFICIAL: “NO NORMAL LIFE WITHOUT THE VAX”



Australia has been behind other nations in rolling out its COVID vaccinations. But they're gearing up to go big, and “vaccination certificates” that may be used to restrict rights and travel appear to be part of the plan.

Government services minister Stuart Robert revealed the certificate system was already functional via the country's “MyGov” website and Medicare phone app:

“You can go right now to your Medicare app, to myGov, and access your vaccination certificate right now. We will continue to build that certificate

out over the coming weeks to make it more easily accessible, but the capability is live now. We are ready now for the vaccine rollout.”

According to Roberts, not only will proof of vaccinations be required for travel, but the certificates might also be needed to do “normal” things citizens do, such as going to work and frequenting shops and restaurants.

“Australians need to have that record, especially, depending on state public health orders, but also when travelling and borders open up again,” he said. “The Attorney-General is working with unions and other interested parties looking at the issue as well, so there will be greater announcements made by states and territories in due course.”

TREND FORECAST: *Just as nations and states have enforced students to submit to a variety of vaccinations to attend schools, so, too, will there be government mandates to enforce mass vaccinations. While there will be a right for people to refuse them, those who resist will lose many of their rights to travel, attend school, events, restaurants, etc.*

However, the anti-vax backlash will rapidly build and become a key platform for populist movements.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS



PROTESTS IN MYANMAR KEEP RAGING

As we have been reporting in the **Trends Journal**, tens of thousands of protesters, ranging from students to government workers, have been taking to the streets in Myanmar (“Burma” is the name of this country that is recognized diplomatically by the U.S.) demanding the military release leader Aung San Suu Kyi and hand back power it seized in a coup earlier this month.

The protests continue, and it is reported that law enforcement in the country used rubber bullets and water cannons to disperse protesters gathered throughout Yangon, the country’s largest city.

Protesters raised three-finger salutes, which were embraced by protesters last year in Thailand as a symbol of resistance. The protesters carried placards that read, “Reject the military coup” and “Justice for Myanmar.”

President Biden called on the military in Myanmar to “relinquish the power it seized and demonstrate respect for the will of the people.”

Biden imposed sanctions on the country's military last Wednesday and signed an executive order targeting ten current and retired leaders.

"The people of Burma are making their voices heard, and the world is watching. Will be ready to impose additional measures, and we'll continue to work with our international partners to urge other nations to join us in these efforts," Biden said.

Putting a dollar sign on the sanctions, President Biden continued, "The U.S. government is taking steps to prevent the generals from improperly having access to the one billion dollars in Burmese government funds held in the United States."

As we had forecast in the **Trend Journal** last week:

The military will quash the protests, and U.S. and ally sanctions will have a minor impact on a nation that has strong economic and geopolitical bonds with neighboring China.

Already, they are stifling dissent, banning large gatherings, and having increased nighttime arrests. Those accused of spreading dissent online or "by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation" will be locked up.

Min Aung Hlaing, the military leader who has taken control of the country, blamed "unscrupulous persons" for the protests.

As reported yesterday by the *BBC*, Myanmar's military website said that people preventing the security forces from carrying out their duties could face 20 years in prison, while those found to stir up fear or unrest in public could be imprisoned for terms of three to seven years.

The military also warned journalists to not describe the military's takeover as a "coup."

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that military rule will continue in Myanmar and threats by the U.N., the United States, and other nations will achieve nothing in terms of bringing so-called “Democracy” to Myanmar.*

Furthermore, the harder outside countries pressure the Myanmar government – be they in sanctions or supporting rebel movements – the greater the ruling government will strengthen its ties with its Chinese neighbor.

While the media reports on the current brutal conditions being imposed on the nation by its military, long forgotten and never mentioned is how the nation was savagely colonized by the British for over 100 years (1824-1948).

INDIA GOVERNMENT VS. FARMERS: NO END IN SIGHT



Well into its third month, the farmers' protests in India continue.

Last week, Twitter found itself at odds with government officials who demanded that the social media platform block some

pro-farmer handles.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that Twitter conducted an investigation and found some of the accounts it had restricted in the country should be allowed. The Indian government, in turn, vowed legal action that could result in criminal charges against the company and its employees.

A top official from New Delhi's Ministry of Electronics held a virtual meeting with two executives from the U.S.-based company. The government later issued a statement that expressed “deep disappointment” on Twitter. The company said it partially complied with the order to remove more than 1,100 accounts India

claimed were being propped up by “Khalistan sympathizers” and its rival Pakistan.

Twitter said it restored some accounts “in a matter that we believe was consistent with Indian law,” according to *CNBC*.

The Protests

As we have been reporting since they began in November, India’s farmers have taken to the streets, non-stop, in protest of Prime Minister Modi’s new farm laws. They contend that the laws, conceived in September, strip them of earning potential and allow major conglomerates to crush their businesses.

The Modi administration disagrees with the protesters and their demands, insisting the new laws are urgent and allow farmers to increase earning potential.

Modi’s governing Bharatiya Janata Party cut off electricity and water near some of the camps, blocked internet access in some parts of the country, and erected barbed wire and planting spikes in the streets to keep the tractors from coming into New Delhi.

Lately, the protests have attracted attention from international celebrities such as singer Rihanna and the young Swedish environmental activist Greta Thunberg. Hundreds of thousands of farmers have been braving the country’s winter months since November and have been occupying roads leading into New Delhi.

TREND-TRACKING LESSON: *The success of the farmers’ protests is evidenced in their resolve to peacefully fight for their rights without backing down. As Gerald Celente continues to note, one of the most important elements of protests is to continue with them day after day, night after night, week after week, month after month... however long it takes to win the battle.*

Unlike India’s farmers, who work with their hands and are strong and hearty, today’s demonstrators in the Western world take to the streets one day, make a

big deal about it, and then they go home. For success to be achieved, the resolve to protest must continue until demands are satisfactorily met.

TREND FORECAST: *Considering the scope and depth of the farmers' protests, unless an agreement is made that satisfies farmers' demands, we forecast the ruling government will do what it can to crack down on dissent by violently attempting to disperse them, using agents provocateurs to ignite violence and/or false-flag events as an excuse to militarily disband them.*

CHINA TASK FORCE: U.S. APPROACH TO BEIJING



President Biden visited the Pentagon for the first time last week. Following his visit, President Biden announced a task force that will form a policy to counter China during his term in the White House after he called Beijing “our most serious competitor,” a report said.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported that the team will be comprised of over a dozen members and led by Ely Ratner, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin’s top

assistant on China.

Biden told workers at the Pentagon that the U.S. will “meet the China challenge” by taking a “whole-of-government effort, bipartisan cooperation in Congress, and strong alliances and partnerships.”

Biden had his first phone call with China’s President Xi Jinping last week. *Reuters* reported the two “appeared at odds on most issues.” Xi reportedly went so far as to say that a conflict would mean “disaster” for both countries.

“We will compete from a position of strength by building back better at home, working with our allies and partners, renewing our role in international

institutions, and reclaiming our credibility and moral authority, much of which has been lost,” Biden said, according to the *Journal*.

Xi, who was called a “thug” by Biden during the 2020 campaign, took a “hardline” approach to sensitive issues like Taiwan, Xinjiang, and Hong Kong during the call.

The two reportedly spoke for two hours last Wednesday. Biden told a bipartisan group of senators that the U.S. needs to upgrade its infrastructure or the Chinese are “going to eat our lunch.”

The *Journal* reported that the task force hopes to present its findings to Austin by the early summer, and its results promise to be a blueprint in how he approaches the relationship. The report said that Austin’s expertise is more focused on the Middle East.

Military-Industrial Complex in Full Charge

Austin spent three years under President Barack Obama in charge of U.S. military operations in the Middle East. He oversaw the U.S. backing of Saudi Arabia during the military campaign against Yemen, according to the *Huffington Post*. Austin also sat on several corporate boards including Raytheon Technologies, one of America’s largest military contractors, and he is a partner in an investment firm that buys military supplies.

Rear Admiral James Kirk, the commander of the USS Nimitz carrier group, told the *Financial Times* that Chinese military activity in the disputed South China Sea has been on the uptick in the past few months.

“We’re seeing a larger number of aircraft, a larger number of ships available to the Chinese military being utilized on a daily basis,” he said, according to the paper. “So the capacity has clearly increased.”

Kirk relayed the message to reporters as the carrier made its way back to the U.S.'s West Coast. The carrier had been taking part in a joint exercise with the USS Theodore Roosevelt.

The USS John McCain, a destroyer, transited the Taiwan Strait earlier this month, and it was eyed by Chinese guided-missile destroyers, according to *USNI News*.

The Chinese foreign ministry responded to the McCain voyage by saying it will “continue to stay on high alert and is ready to respond to all threats and provocations at any time and will resolutely safeguard its national sovereignty and territorial integrity.”

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that the U.S. will not confront China militarily. Should China aggressively confront Taiwan, the U.S. and its NATO allies' words will speak louder than their actions.*

As we have noted, being that the U.S. has not won a war since World War II (and did so in part with the assistance of Russia), the Pentagon is well aware that war with China would be catastrophic, considering the size and power of China's military.

If war did break out between the two nations, considering the depth and range of 21st-century weaponry of each nation, it will not only be the war that ends all wars, it will also be the end of life on Earth.

Indeed, when Albert Einstein was asked what weaponry would be used to fight World War III, he replied. “I know not with what weapons World War III will be fought, but World War IV will be fought with sticks and stones.”

TREND FORECAST: *President Biden's quote that the U.S. needs to upgrade its infrastructure or the Chinese are “going to eat our lunch” is meaningless.*

It is more than America's third-world infrastructure that is rotting. As we have reported over the decades, Mr. Biden, along with bipartisan Congressional

support, sold out American manufacturing to China and other cheap-labor nations with the restructuring of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), whose purpose was the “substantial reduction of tariffs and other trade barriers and the elimination of preferences, on a reciprocal and mutually advantageous basis.”

Between the time GATT was formed in 1947 to the end of the Bill Clinton administration, which also brought China into the World Trade Organization, both of which Biden supported, the average tariff levels for GATT participants fell from 22 percent in 1947 to 5 percent in 1999.

Thus, the off-shoring of manufacturing to cheap-labor nations has resulted in not only the loss of higher-paying manufacturing jobs as the nation devolved into a service sector economy, but wages have also stagnated.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, between 2001 and 2018, as a result of the China deal alone, 3.7 million American jobs have been lost. As for wages, in real terms, average hourly earnings peaked more than 45 years ago, and what wage gains there have been mostly have flowed to the highest-paid tier of workers, according to Pew Research.

Top Trend for 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.

BIDEN PLANS TO CLOSE GUANTANAMO PRISON



The Biden administration said Friday that one of its goals is to close the U.S. military prison at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba, which currently holds 40 inmates.

In 2019, *NPR* reported the U.S. spent more than \$6 billion to operate the facility for the past 19 years. Even with 40 inmates, the prison costs American taxpayers \$380 million a year. The report said the price tag includes charter flights to the island and \$60 million in legal fees each year despite only one conviction.

Jen Psaki, White House press secretary, said,

“In order to see the process through completely and thoroughly, there are a number of key policy rules that need to be filled within the interagency, including sub-Cabinet policy roles at the Defense, State, and Justice Departments, because there are players who need to be part of this policy about the steps forward.”

The facility has been used to house terror suspects, including those accused of playing a role in the 9/11 attacks. The prison held as many as 779 inmates in previous years.

TRENDPOST: *We note this article not only for the meaninglessness of the statement but how politicians will say what they wish to gain support and paint a flowery vision to their darker side.*

While for most people it is ancient history, on his second day in office after winning the 2008 Presidential Reality Show,[®] Barack Obama signed an Executive Order with the promise to the American people that he would close the Guantánamo prison within a year.

It should be noted that Obama had a Democratic majority in Congress for the first two years of his presidency. Highlighting the hypocrisy of this heavily-covered media show was a photo of Vice President Biden standing next to him, hands clapping. The caption under the AP photo read: “Barack Obama caps his pen after signing an executive order closing the Guantanamo Bay prison, while Vice President Joe Biden and retired military officers applaud.”

Showing the true meaning of his spirit, who he is, and what matters most, years after Barack Obama left office, the New Yorker reported that he was asked by a seventh-grader what he would do if he could go back to the beginning of his presidency.

“I think I would have closed Guantanamo on the first day,” he said. But he said the “path of least resistance was to just leave it open.”

Yes, the path of least resistance, the cowardly path for pathological lying politicians... who run and ruin nations across the globe.

CHINA, U.K. FIRE SHOT IN MEDIA WAR



The tension between China and the U.K. increased last week after Beijing barred *BBC World News* from televisions across the country in response to British media regulator Ofcom’s decision earlier this month to revoke the license of the *China Global Television Network (CGTN)*

to broadcast in Britain.

The *BBC* said it was “disappointed” by Beijing’s decision. The *BBC* noted *Radio Television Hong Kong* also said it would cease replaying *BBC World Service* programming. Dominic Raab, the British foreign secretary, said Beijing’s decision is “unacceptable” and curtails “media freedom.”

Jamie Angus, the director of BBC World Service Group, told *CNN* on Sunday that “China is taking its place on a very short list of countries alongside North Korea and Iran that explicitly and totally blocked *BBC News* coverage.”

Ned Price, a spokesman from the U.S. State Department, criticized the decision by China and said its government routinely “restricts outlets and platforms from operating freely” and continues to use the media to promote misinformation overseas.

Other Side

Different countries take different sides. This is the way *China Daily* reported the *BBC* ban this past Saturday:

“In *BBC*, doing China news is like writing novels or shooting films. For its producers and field reporters, facts do not matter while their pre-set opinions do reign their storylines.

To prop up their presumptions, they tend to give interviewees misleading questions, twist answers, and apply special video-editing or shooting techniques. None of those moves are qualified for producing facts-based news products per real journalistic standards.

Still, *BBC* refuses to apologize for producing fake news on China and insists on branding itself as unbiased. What a shame!

BBC’s rumor-mongering against China is a clear demonstration of both arrogance and ideological prejudice deeply rooted in the minds of some Western-centrists.

In their eyes, the Western world holds the monopoly on truth and is entitled to judge what is right and wrong in the world. It is not that those *BBC* reporters did not know what is truly happening in China, but that they

felt utterly uncomfortable with those facts, so that they decided to remold them according to their imagination.”

TRENDPOST: *Payback’s a bitch. Again, the BBC ban by China and Hong Kong follow Ofcom’s revoking of the CGTN license. We note this occurrence not only to exemplify the importance of research – to find more than one source of what happened, why, and when – but to emphasize the continuing strength of China and its unwillingness to submit to other powers.*

DRAGHI: ITALY’S NEW BANKSTER PM



Mario Draghi, the former leader of the European Central Bank who has been credited with saving the euro in 2012, has been tapped by Italy’s President Sergio Mattarella to be the new Prime Minister to help the country emerge from economic fallout from the coronavirus outbreak.

Now in charge of the EU’s third-largest economy, Draghi worked at the World Bank and Goldman Sachs.

U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, who was head of the U.S. Federal Reserve from 2014-2018, told the *Wall Street Journal* in 2019 that Draghi should receive “straight A’s” for his performance in stabilizing the bond market at the time. Yellen said Draghi’s phrase, “Whatever it takes” would “go down in the annals of central banking history.”

Draghi has been tasked with how to effectively spend the €200 billion-plus relief package for Italy that was raised through debt offerings by the bloc.

TRENDPOST: With Draghi's unblemished track record with the Goldman Sachs Gang, the World Bank, and the European Central Bank, the evidence is crystal clear: the Banksters are in charge of Italy.

Despite both the Five Star Movement and the Northern League, movements that had campaigned on breaking away from the European Union, doing away with the euro, and restoring the lira... both parties voted for Draghi to become Prime Minister. Thus, the populist movements and what they pretended to represent are dead in Italy.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



ANTIBIOTICS IN BABIES CAUSING MAJOR HEALTH CONCERNS

In ancient times, the Greeks and Indians used molds and certain plants to treat infections. Serbians used moldy bread, and Russian peasants applied warm mud as a cure for infected skin wounds.

While some ancient techniques had a level of success in stopping life-threatening bacterial infections, the discovery of penicillin in 1921 by Sir Alexander Fleming helped usher in the era of modern medicine and extended life expectancy.

But now the massive prescriptive overuse of antibiotics by medical doctors is leading to the opposite result: more health concerns, particularly with infants.

The problem of overuse of antibiotics leading to dangerous antibiotic-resistant germs has been known for some time. In 2014, the WHO reported that “drug-resistant pneumonia is present in all six of the WHO global regions. Two

different types of drug-resistant E coli show up in five out of the six.” This led the WHO to warn of a “post-antibiotic era.”

Two additional studies have shown conclusively that antibiotics given to young children are wreaking havoc on their immune systems.

On 16 November, *CNN* reported a new study from the Mayo Clinic that showed:

“Babies and toddlers who received one dose of antibiotics were more likely to have asthma, eczema, hay fever, food allergies, celiac disease, problems with weight and obesity, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder later in childhood.”

The Mayo Clinic study took data collected by the Rochester Epidemiology Project of over 14,000 children who had been injected with antibiotics, most having had multiple shots. Dr. Nathan LeBrasseur, a member of the Mayo Clinic medical staff and one of the lead authors of the study, said, “Receiving three to four prescriptions was associated with a higher incidence of asthma, atopic dermatitis, and overweight in both sexes, ADHD and celiac disease in girls, and obesity in boys.”

The study revealed that one of the most popular antibiotics, penicillin, “increased risk for asthma and overweight in both sexes, and celiac disease and ADHD in girls.” Cephalosporin, another of the most frequently recommended antibiotics, showed a connection to many health concerns including autism and serious food allergies.

The problem of over-prescribing these drugs to children comes from the fact that while antibiotics are very effective at killing harmful germs, they can’t distinguish between the “good” bacteria that are essential to a healthy immune system, and the “bad,” particularly in the developing immune systems of young children. In 2010, *Science Daily* published a study out of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine that stated:

“Scientists have long pondered the seeming contradiction that taking broad-spectrum antibiotics over a long period of time can lead to severe secondary bacterial infections. Now researchers may have figured out why. They show that ‘good’ bacteria in the gut keep the immune system primed to more effectively fight infection from invading pathogenic bacteria. Altering the intricate dynamic between resident and foreign bacteria—via antibiotics, for example—compromises immune response.”

The Mayo Clinic study confirmed this when it stated that regarding the widespread use of antibiotics in children, “We now realize that their widespread application has considerable collateral effect on the microbiome, which may be of special importance in developing children.”

TRENDPOST: *The adverse health effects of antibiotic use in young children relate in many ways to the harm caused by the obsession of using chemical-laced hand sanitizers, mask-wearing that causes “maskne,” and other yet-unknown negative physical and mental reactions and a lockdown mentality that data proves are deadly and damaging.*

It is a known medical fact that young children are the least affected by the coronavirus, and we need to allow their developing immune systems to learn how to fight infections.

The recovery rate for those between the ages of 1-20, according to the CDC, is 99.997 percent, while the death rate of those under 55 years of age in America represents just 7 percent of the nation’s total COVID deaths.

Fear of Germs

To cite just one reference, on 19 September 2019, US News & World Report published the article, “Could Getting Dirty and Being Exposed to Germs Boost Your Health?” It included this quote from Dr. Christopher Carpenter, head of infectious diseases and international medicine at Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak, Michigan:

“I’m a sound believer that we’re too clean of a society. Our fear of germs has pushed us too far into trying to keep everything safe and sterile. That extreme is harming us more than it’s helping us.”

DESANTIS FLIPS BIRD AT BIDEN



News reports intensified that President Biden and his coronavirus adviser Dr. Anthony Fauci are threatening action to restrict the travel of Floridians unless the state abides more closely to the White House’s COVID demands.

Under Governor Ron DeSantis, the state has been among the most successful U.S. examples of dealing with COVID-19 while keeping the economy open and not imposing strict lockdown rules.

DeSantis posted an 11 February news conference about Washington’s restrictions on Twitter and said, “The recent report that the Biden administration is considering restricting the travel of Floridians is completely absurd, especially when Biden allows illegal aliens to pour across our southern border. We won’t allow Floridians to be unfairly targeted for political purposes.”

In a reported telephone conversation last week with President Biden and Dr. Fauci, the discussion turned into an argument when, according to a *Real Raw News* story, Biden said DeSantis left Florida’s economy open during “the dark days of COVID.”

President Biden claimed he had unilateral and constitutional authority to protect the nation’s health from “rogue politicians” acting in contravention of established health guidelines.

DeSantis replied, “I will not comply,” and said Biden was targeting Republican states that supported Donald Trump. “Florida absolutely will not comply,” DeSantis repeated. “Instituting a travel ban or restriction of movement would be a gross example of federal overreach with no grounding in law or science. We have Covid-19 in check, and you’re trying to exert unlawful authority over our state and its people.”

Biden then reportedly threatened to withhold federal funding and deny Florida access to the COVID vaccinations. DeSantis asked, “How much do you stand to earn from these vaccines, Dr. Fauci?”

He told the President and his COVID advisor that their attacks were a gross example of federal overreach “with no grounding in law or science. We have Covid-19 in check, and you’re trying to exert unlawful authority over our state and its people... And, Joe, if you continue with this course of action, I will authorize the state National Guard to protect the movement of Floridians.”

Biden responded by saying, “Address me as Mr. President or President Biden.”

DeSantis bluntly replied, “I will not, and you can go f**k yourself.” DeSantis then hung up.

TREND FORECAST: We note this occurrence to reiterate our forecast for a strong anti-establishment movement that will spread across America – and many nations – as people fed up with the system will do, as did DeSantis, by telling politicians to go “f**k themselves.”

Considering there are no strong Republican challengers to the Democratic Party, DeSantis has a clear shot of being a 2024 Presidential contender.

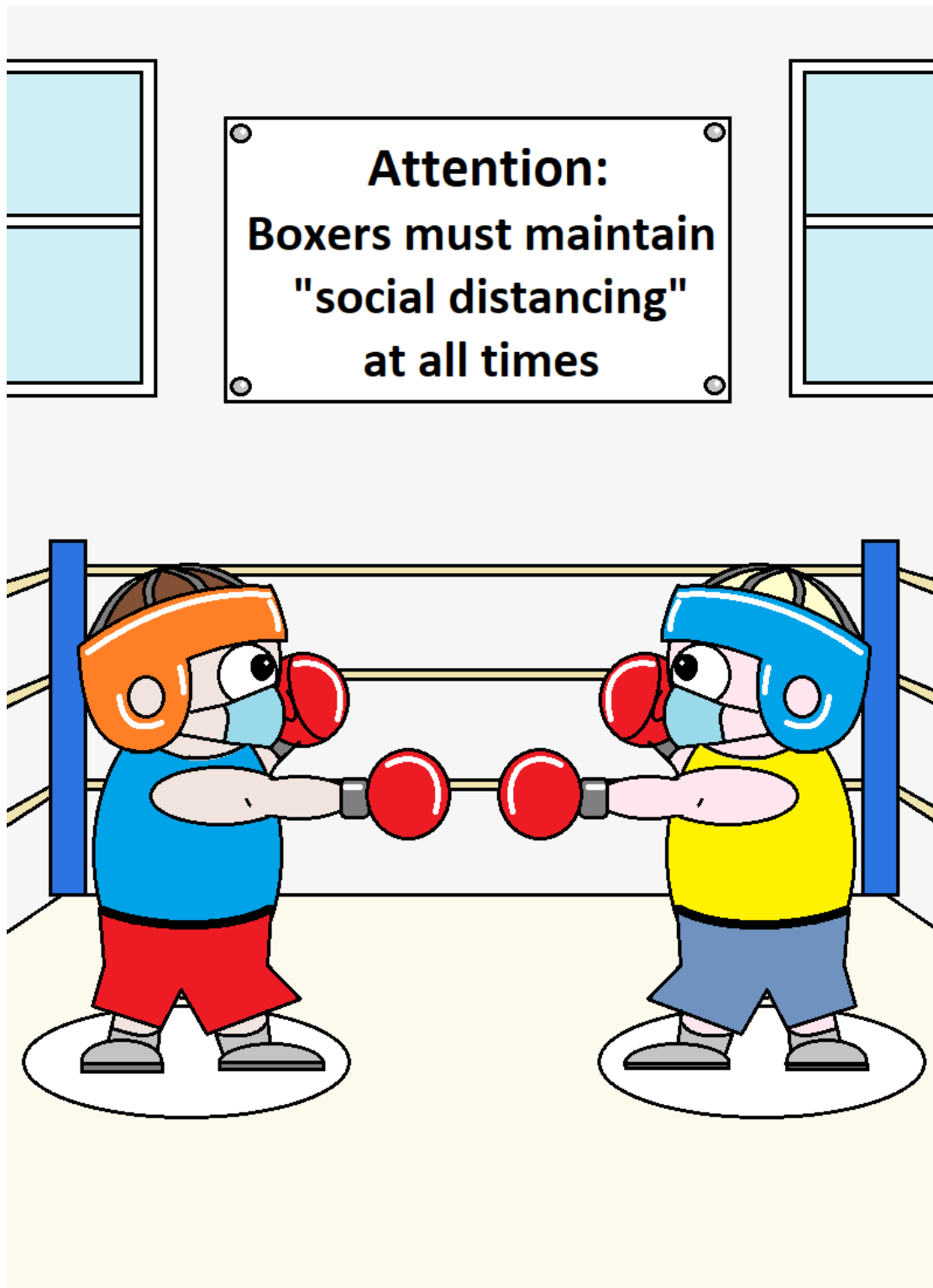
TRENDPOST: Did DeSantis really tell Biden to “Go f**k yourself” at the end of a heated phone call over Biden’s threat of travel restrictions? The outlet Real Raw News says it happened, and they’re standing by their story, despite debunking by the repeatedly unreliable, left-leaning Snopes website.

Snopes admitted that DeSantis was reported by other media including McLatchy as “blasting or attacking the Biden administration in response to the news.”

TRENDPOST: *As we have noted, Florida, with a population of 21.5 million, has continually reported fewer COVID deaths than New York State, with a population of 19.4 million. To date, some 29,000 have died from the virus in wide-open Florida compared to 46,000 in New York state, yet the U.S. media and the Democratic Party continually praise New York Governor Andrew Cuomo as a true hero in fighting the COVID War.*

THE ART OF TRENDS

“A Bout Time” by *Stephen Green*



TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By *Ben Daviss*

DENMARK PLANS WORLD'S FIRST “ENERGY ISLANDS”

The Danish government has unveiled plans to build an artificial island about 50 miles off the Jutland peninsula in the North Sea that will become an energy hub, directing green energy to millions of onshore consumers.

A similar installation is planned for the existing island of Bornholm.

In its first phase, the human-made island – the size of 18 soccer fields – and its natural sibling will gather electricity produced by 200 surrounding wind turbines that will power three million homes.

As the project grows in the future, the number of turbines could reach 600, and the artificial island could more than triple in size.

At that scale, the energy hubs together could deliver 12 gigawatts of power, about 1.5 times Denmark's current total demand, to ten million European

households, about twice as many as in all of Denmark. The electricity will be delivered through transnational, interconnected energy grids.

Denmark foresees the islands eventually storing green electricity and using a portion to produce green liquid fuels, such as hydrogen, to be piped through undersea tubes to the European mainland.

Denmark will be the island's majority owner, but it is recruiting private companies as partners to provide technical and business expertise.

Studies have estimated that by 2040 the North Sea could be producing enough wind energy to light 150 million homes across Europe. That capacity is unlikely to be reached, however, due to issues related to shipping and the North Sea's notorious heavy weather.

Denmark is the North Sea's largest oil producer but has ceased granting new drilling and production licenses and has set 2050 as the end date for offshore petroleum production there.

TRENDPOST: *Energy hubs will be a component of the next-generation energy network. Unlike utility companies, which usually make the power they sell, hubs will aggregate electricity from a variety of green sources and store it in battery banks to ensure power is available on demand when winds are calm or the sun has set.*

Like Denmark's, hubs offer will offer a new testbed and market niche for energy entrepreneurs, aggregators, and technology development.

Photo Credit: Danish Ministry of Climate, Energy, and Utilities

NEW KIND OF ANTIBIOTIC KILLS GERMS & BOOSTS IMMUNITY



The growing army of bacteria able to resist conventional antibiotics is one of the top ten threats to human health, according to the World Health Organization, and, by 2050, will kill ten million people a year and drain \$100 million annually from the global economy.

But not if researchers at Pennsylvania's Wistar Institute can help it.

The research group has concocted a new family of antibiotics that kills a wide range of pathogens while boosting the human immune system's strength.

A bacterium becomes drug-resistant by mutating the portions of its cell surface that an antibiotic targets.

The research group dove deeper, targeting a cellular process that makes enzymes crucial for almost all dangerous bacteria's survival but is absent from human cells.

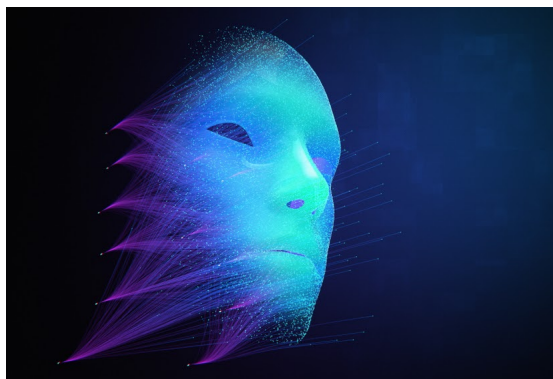
The team used a computer to sort through millions of commercially available substances and rate their ability to bind the enzyme; then the scientists used the most promising of those as starting points to design drugs for the task.

The resulting drugs not only were effective in neutralizing the bacteria's essential enzyme but also stimulated human immune responses at the same time, giving the drugs double capacity: killing bacteria and making immune responses more powerful at the same time.

TRENDPOST: *Wistar's breakthrough does more than hint at a solution to the pandemic of antibiotic resistance. It also is among the first pharmaceuticals to*

unite the power of a drug with that of the human immune system in a single compound.

SCIENTISTS FOOL DEEPPAKE DETECTORS



Deepfakes – doctored videos that show persons saying things they never actually said or, often, would say – have become a growing scourge of social media. Computer engineers quickly put together “deepfake detector” software to alert viewers whether a video is phony.

Now researchers at the University of California at San Diego have shown how easy it can be to fake out a deepfake detector.

The detectors were tripped up when the researchers inserted something called an “adversarial example” into each frame of the video. An adversarial example is a manipulated bit of code that causes a computer to make a mistake.

By inserting an adversarial example into each frame, the software designed to detect a deepfake made a mistake in every frame, thereby consistently judging the video to be authentic.

For example, in deepfakes, it is particularly difficult to replicate natural human eye movements. Therefore, deepfake detectors often focus on eye-blinking in a video to determine its genuineness.

To defeat the detector, saboteurs could insert code that disrupts the detector’s perception of eye movements.

In tests, the technique defeated the detector 99 percent of the time.

Compressing and then re-expanding a video often can erase adversarial examples. But the San Diego group's method left the bugs in place 85 percent of the time even after compressing and uncompressing videos.

TRENDPOST: *There is less and less reason to trust the authenticity of anything posted on social media. The future will be an expansion of the constant war between hackers who falsify and manipulate data of all kinds and their opponents, with malignant actors always leading by a length.*