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TRENDSJOURNAL

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®



**FREEDOM
IS DEAD**

**POLITICIANS KILLED IT
AND THE MINDLESS MASSES LET THEM**



4 MAY 2021

PUBLISHER
GERALD CELENTE

EDITOR
LAURA MARTIN

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
GREGORY MANNARINO
BRADLEY J. STEINER
GARY NULL
BEN DAVISS
JOE DORAN

COVER ART
ANTHONY FRED A

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FREEDOM IS DEAD

Welcome to this week's Trends Journal:
"FREEDOM IS DEAD. THE

POLITICIANS KILLED IT – THE MINDLESS MASSES LET THEM."

Yes, Freedom's dead. Get the JAB or lose your JOB! No sea cruise without a shot. Can't go here or there without that Green Vax Passport.

Do we join the mindless masses?

Or "We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free," as the great American patriot Thomas Paine said in 1777.

Unite with us to set our countries Free!

Join us at our "Freedom, Peace & Justice Rally" on May 29th in Kingston, New York... Fun, food, music, entertainment, and guest speakers.

Please donate to the cause. We need your support to set our countries free.

And, of course, we do our very best to provide you with a Trends Journal each week that puts you on the cutting edge of the trends shaping the future and how to profit from them. We proudly say there is no magazine in the world that comes close to it.

Hope to see you on the 29th,

Gerald Celente, Publisher

COMMENTS

MORE POWERFUL THAN THE FED?

The Federal Reserve is not the most powerful organization in the world. That dishonor belongs to the BIS (Bank of International Settlements) in Basel Switzerland. This is the central bank of all central banks. But, in reality, the people of the world are the most powerful organization.

Cary English

MASK MANDATES EASING

This is a positive development only if it results in a significant number of people waking up to the truth of what's really going on, and unwilling to be thrown around like a rag doll anymore.

Otherwise it is really only a stay of execution.

Paul Sacco

A BUBBLE BURST GUESS

I agree that a correction for any number of reasons, such as a 10-Year Treasury Yield of >2% is likely later this year. However, it's a bit presumptuous to proclaim a "crash" is imminent at this juncture. Real Estate and the Stock Market will continue to climb into 2023, with some "hiccups" along the way, of course. No asset goes up or down in a perfectly straight line. What I do see by next year is extraordinary high market volatility.

This will result in trading losses and investors becoming more conservative,

possibly exiting the high value, high growth stocks such as in the Technology sector. Sector rotation would be expected in that event. The Big Crash is reserved for 2024 and it will stop the Secular progressives (Leftists) dead in their tracks. The Democrats will be defeated by adverse financial circumstances if not by the voters themselves.

All of President Biden's domestic policies ranging from tax policy (increases) to Climate Change Agenda point to a slower, weaker economy and eventually, a recession. They are just that blind, deaf, and dumb- but so are a great number of voters, as well. No cure for collective stupidity nor old age and senescence. Our Republic is, in-fact, getting long-in-the-tooth, as past (Roman) Republics (Governments) go anyway.

Craig Bradley

GAB PUSHBACK ON VACCINES

I def soured on Trump with his pimping of the "shot". He is absolutely clueless and has been played.

Mary Martin

BIDEN NO CHALLENGE TO CHINA

Ummm recalling Biden's ties to China (as well as his son's), Biden is just posturing. I say Biden is leading the way to Communism. China IS first, because it does whatever it wants and no one does anything. Diplomatic statements are ignored after a verbal swatting by the CCP. I'm praying for the world... Why do we feel helpless? I'm also noticing no more flogging the Russia narrative, as an aside.

otsawatches_1

BIDEN'S DOMESTIC STATE OF FEAR

I hope the general public recognized the closing statement of the State of the Union Address as a code to all government agencies to join in on the surveillance of so-called domestic terrorists as defined in his address as those who participated in the January 6th protest.

The establishment has defined it as a resurrection not a protest against a fraudulent election! We also have a woman behind Biden during the address who was complicit in the stolen election and also was responsible for working with Capitol Police, DC Police, FBI, Deep State and Media to disenfranchise law abiding White Citizens!

This wasn't a typical riot like the BLM/ANTIFA destruction riot over the past year. The scenario and definition was developed by the Deep State , Media and Government Agencies to paint a picture of unhinged WHITE SUPREMACY at its worst attacking Democracy. Biden used the address as a platform to disparage half the US population. This will come back to bite him during this Administration!!!

harlow53

NEXTGOV EXPOSED

Brilliant article – I learn something new each week from Gerald & the Trends Journal.

Dennis Bouverie

This is why I love the Trends Journal, this is a connection that I know was happening but I didn't know how.

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TRENDS ON THE U.S. ECONOMIC FRONT



U.S. MARKETS OVERVIEW

U.S. share prices slipped on April's last trading day but registered gains for the month as companies reported strong first-quarter earnings.

Investors' buoyant mood was tempered by the mainstream media blasting fear and hysteria of rising coronavirus cases in India.

Indeed, last Thursday, *CNN*, the Cartoon News Network, hyped the India COVID crisis as “a problem for the whole world” and that “the more the virus spreads, the more chances it has to mutate and create variants that could eventually resist current vaccines, threatening to undermine other countries' progress in containing the pandemic, experts warn.”

Of course, totally absent in what used to be called “news” are the facts and numbers.

Not a word from the little boy-girl Presstitutes that India, with a population 1.391 billion, has recorded 218,000 COVID deaths, for a fatality rate of 0.016 percent. And that's over 14 months.

But, in the United States, where the Presstitutes cheerlead their lockdown leaders, there have been some 591,000 virus deaths reported from a population of 333 million, for a fatality rate of 0.17 percent.

If the U.S. had the same fatality rate as India, there would only be 52,188 deaths from the virus. If India had the same fatality rate as the U.S. (more than 10x higher), India would have 2,468,712 deaths.

We note this not only to illustrate how small the actual number of deaths is relative to total populations – and yet entire nations have been locked down and hundreds of millions of lives and livelihoods destroyed – but to also note the decline in the equity markets had nothing to do with rising COVID deaths in India!

The overvalued, artificially pumped-up stock markets are ready for a sharp correction.

When will they dive?

When interest rates rise.

And what will force the Federal Reserve to raise rates?

Inflation.

As we have been forecasting, the trillions of dollars of monetary methadone pumped into the system by Washington and the Feds are also pushing inflation higher.

For more on the coming inflation, see Gregory Mannarino's new article, ["INFLATION TSUNAMI APPROACHING."](#)

And, just today, changing the Bankster's tune about rising interest rates, U.S. Treasury Secretary, and former chair of the Federal Reserve, Janet Yellen, gave the rising rate signal:

"It may be that interest rates will have to rise somewhat to make sure that our economy doesn't overheat, even though the additional spending is relatively small relative to the size of the economy."

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that when interest rates climb to near 2 percent, the markets will crash. As for the housing bubble, that will deflate much sooner, as rates begin to rise. Thus, the higher they rise, the more the bubble will deflate.*

Inflation Blues

Ongoing disruptions in supply chains, from product shortages to difficulties in booking firm shipping dates, also have money managers on edge, as these disruptions drive down earnings and add fuel to inflation.

Lumber prices hit new record highs as lumber futures delivery hit \$1,575.60 per thousand board feet... four times higher than the average price for this time of the year.

Across the commodity board, prices keep rising. As we go to press, copper, topping \$10,000 a metric ton, is near its all-time high. As we have previously noted, copper is often referred to as "Dr. Copper" because it is reputed to have a Ph.D. in economics due to its ability to predict global-economy strength and weakness since it is used in most sectors of industry. Thus, as its price rises, it indicates stronger economic growth... and rising inflation.

As demand for products increases as the COVID War slows down and more states open up, so, too, has the U.S. trade deficit.

Remember the “trade war” B.S. being sold during the Trump administration? Like the rest of America’s wars over the past 74 years, they lost that war, too.

The Commerce Department reported today that the U.S. trade deficit hit a record high in March, swelling to \$74.4 billion... up 57.6 percent from the same period a year ago.

And as for the great economic benefits Americans would reap when Bill Clinton and America’s politicians brought China into the World Trade Association and the NAFTA deal with Mexico... the trade deficit with China spiked 22 percent and rose 23.5 percent with Mexico.

Gold/Silver: Both precious metals were up sharply yesterday but retreated back to their month-long trading range. Again, considering our forecasts for rising inflation and a declining dollar, we remain bullish on our forecast for gold to hit \$2,100 per ounce this year and silver to break above \$50 per ounce.

But, as we have noted, prices won’t climb that high until inflation reality hits, interest rates rise, and the artificial equity markets that have been pumped up with massive doses of monetary methadone dive.

Oil: As for rising inflation, oil prices hit a seven-week high today with Brent Crude closing at nearly \$69 per barrel and West Texas Intermediate up 1.94 percent closing at \$65.22 per barrel.

With the massive amounts of monetary and fiscal stimulus injected into the economy, plus summer on the horizon and more nations re-opening up from the COVID lockdowns, we forecast Brent Crude will move beyond \$80 per barrel.

Bitcoin: Where are the cryptocurrencies going? As long as big and small market speculators stay in the game, the higher the prices will go. No better proof than Dogecoin, which started as a joke in 2013 and surged 30 percent to a record high of 50 cents today.

Bitcoin is still trading in the mid \$50K range while Ethereum hit new highs.

Again, the highly speculative crypto market sector will continue to have sharp up-and-down fluctuations, and an array of coins will steadily rise until, or if, governments and central banks restrict their trading.

INVESTORS CASHING OUT OF STOCKS



With the economy opening up after over a year of lockdowns, the hi-tech stocks that boomed as the world went virtual are in retreat.

Today, the markets reversed sharper losses with the Dow up 19.80 points, the NASDAQ down 1.88 percent, and the S&P 500 off 0.67 percent.

Have the markets peaked?

In the week ending 28 April, investors took \$57.3 billion from stock markets and set it aside in cash, according to data from EPFR, the greatest weekly withdrawal since March 2020 when the pandemic struck.

During the same week, about \$10.5 billion flowed into equity funds, a significantly smaller amount than in the previous week and a fraction of the record \$58 billion that went into stock funds in one week in February.

The shifts highlight investors' newfound caution, analysts say: a growing number of players wonder if the market is overvalued and doubt that its recent momentum can continue.

Also, rising prices may dent corporate sales and profits, especially with consumers eagerly spending President Biden's \$1.9 trillion in new stimulus money.

In addition, investors are leery of Biden's plan to hike capital gains taxes, which would make stocks less attractive, especially for the wealthiest investors who own most of the stocks, market watchers point out.

"Cash is the natural stopgap when you're reassessing your investment framework," Bank of America strategist David Jones said to the *Financial Times*. "We are also repositioning for higher taxes" as well as "inflation and tapering" of the U.S. Federal Reserve's bond-buying spree.

First-quarter earnings are averaging 51 percent above the same period last year among the more than 300 companies that have posted results so far. The S&P 500 index closed above 4,200 on 30 April to set a new record.

TREND FORECAST: *The reality hitting The Street is that they had a long, hot bull run and now, with fears of higher taxes and higher interest rates, the markets are running out of steam.*

Thus, we maintain our forecast for a sharp correction in the coming months and bear market before the year's end.

BOND MARKET FALTERS



of bond purchases.

Bond prices have weakened as a growing number of investors expect higher yields, despite 28 April comments by U.S. Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell that the Fed has no plans to throttle back its monthly rate

“It is not time yet,” he said in comments quoted by the *Financial Times*.
“Economic activity and hiring have just recently picked up. It will take some time before we see substantial further progress.”

The Fed has vowed to hold interest rates steady near zero through 2023.

However, reaffirming our forecast, eurodollar futures – a barometer of expectations around interest-rate changes – hint that investors foresee central banks raising rates early in 2023, with at least two additional hikes before April 2024.

Powell’s words sparked a brief rally that quickly faded.

The continuing price slide indicates that the Fed will struggle to keep interest rates low as the world’s economy recovers and prices for goods and services rise, many analysts contend.

With the U.S. economy growing faster than 6 percent, investors are questioning the wisdom of parking their money in bonds with low, fixed yields.

“Pressure will start to build around the [Fed’s] June meeting for tapering talk” to get underway, Invesco portfolio manager Noelle Corum told the *FT*.

“Tapering” is shorthand for the Fed reducing its monthly bond purchases, which will be clearly signaled by the central bank far in advance of any such action to give markets a long lead time to adjust to the Fed’s shrinking presence, Powell and other Fed officials have said repeatedly.

TREND FORECAST: While the Fed has vowed to hold interest rates near zero through 2023, as per Janet Yellen’s warning today of rising inflation, we forecast that as the Biden Bounce economy booms and inflation spikes higher, interest rates may move higher this year.

U.S. HOUSEHOLD INCOME SETS RECORD



In March, U.S. household income shot up 21.1 percent from February, the U.S. Commerce Department reported, setting a record one-month jump and fueling first-quarter economic growth of 6.4 percent.

The windfall, which included \$1,400 in federal payouts to most U.S. adults, sent consumer spending up 4.2 percent and personal consumption spending 10.7 percent higher in March, the biggest monthly gains since June 2020.

The stimulus payments accounted for \$3.948 trillion of the month's extra \$4.213 trillion in household income, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

The federal stimulus checks coincided with the government's vaccine campaign, which is giving the jabbed millions confidence to return to stores and, to an extent, restaurants and other public gathering places.

"While stimulus payments are largely behind us, the savings rate jumped to 27.6 percent in March, Jeffries economist Aneta Markowska said to the *Financial Times*.

TREND FORECAST: Yes, there will be a Biden Bounce as a result of the unprecedented stimulus being pumped into the markets plus the economic rebound resulting in more states and cities ending lockdown rules.

*However, as we continually detail in each issue of the **Trends Journal**, while it is perfectly sensible that business will increase as lockdowns end, the millions of businesses that have been lost are lost... they won't be coming back.*

Moreover, in the new COVID War ABnormal – with a significant number of employees commuting to work much less – the commercial real estate sector and businesses that depended on commuters will take hard economic hits.

U.S. GDP SOARS IN FIRST QUARTER



The U.S. economy grew 6.4 percent in this year's first quarter, led by the return of consumer spending, the U.S. Commerce Department reported.

In mid-March, consumers' outlays were 29 percentage points higher than in March 2020, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

Consumers began the new year venting pent-up demand, spending particularly on goods and less on services.

Armed with a round of stimulus checks and 2020's unspent savings, many bought cars, furniture, and other pricey items, pushing up spending on durable goods – those that last at least three years – by 41.4 percent, according to the *WSJ*.

Congress primed the economic recovery with almost \$5 trillion in various forms of aid and the U.S. Federal Reserve has held interest rates near zero since March 2020, driving a record number of sales of existing homes last year.

Rough Road Ahead

The recovery, however, is lurching forward unevenly. Spending at restaurants remains 19 percent below its pre-pandemic level, transportation services are taking in 23 percent less, and recreational services are languishing at 31 percent below their 2019 mark.

Spending by state and local governments is down by 4.3 percent, about \$89 billion.

TREND FORECAST: *The 2021 three-month spending surge put the nation's GDP just 1 percent below its peak reached late in 2019. We maintain our forecast for the “Biden Bounce” through the year, with the U.S. economy notching growth between 6 and 7 percent in 2021.*

Should a wildcard event suddenly crash the equity markets – which are overdue for a major hit – when Wall Street crashes, Main Street will fall deeply into the “Greatest Depression.”

FED LEAVES POLICY UNCHANGED, ACKNOWLEDGES BRIGHTER OUTLOOK



Once again, the U.S. Federal Reserve's Open Market Committee decided unanimously to leave its policies unchanged, although the Fed has acknowledged the economy is strengthening and prices are rising.

For now, the Fed will continue to hold interest rates just above zero and buy about \$120 billion a month in government and corporate bonds.

“Amid progress on vaccinations and strong policy support, indicators of economic activity and employment have strengthened,” the committee said in a statement after the meeting, although “the sectors most adversely affected by the pandemic remain weak.”

“The ongoing public health crisis continues to weigh on the economy,” the committee's statement said.

Observers noted that the committee used the same sentence in its March statement but then the sentence also referred to “employment.” Fed-watchers took the word’s absence to be the bank’s acknowledgment that the labor market is healing.

However, “the recovery is uneven and far from complete,” Fed chair Jerome Powell said in a press conference following the committee’s meeting. “It will take some time before we see substantial further progress.”

The committee’s statement “offered no hints that it was considering slowing the pace of its asset purchases, let alone thinking about interest rates,” Paul Ashworth, Capital Economics’ chief economist, said in comments quoted by *CNBC*.

The committee also acknowledged that inflation is on the rise, “largely reflecting transitory factors,” and that “overall financial conditions remain accommodative.”

Fed officials have repeated that any price hikes are due to supply-chain disruptions and other hangovers from the economic shutdown and that the rate of inflation will throttle back as those glitches are resolved.

For that reason, the Fed has not altered policy in an attempt to tamp down the current inflation rate, figured at 2.5 percent annually, which is above the Fed’s target rate of 2 percent.

Markets have priced in an inflation rate of 2.5 percent over the next five years, *CNBC* reported, compared to the 0.8 percent the market was betting on a year ago.

TREND FORECAST: *That was last week’s “news.” As we have detailed in this Trends Journal, today, Janet Yellen, former Fed chair and now U.S. Treasury Secretary, clearly signaled a rise in interest rates*

Her comment, "It may be that interest rates will have to rise somewhat to make sure that our economy doesn't overheat," makes it crystal clear that higher rates are on the horizon. And the higher rates go, the faster equity markets will crumble.

Again, when interest rates move toward 2 percent, the overvalued markets will plunge deep into bear territory.

PRICES FOR CONSUMER GOODS SET TO RISE



With prices for raw materials climbing, Nestlé, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, and other makers of consumer staples have laid plans to pass those greater costs to consumers.

We had predicted back in our 4 August 2020 issue that inflation – caused in part by supply-chain disruptions and then pushed up by higher demand as economies reopened – would steadily rise.

The price of palm oil, used in everything from lipstick to animal feed, has climbed to levels not seen since 2008 because of a shortage of migrant labor; milk prices in Europe are up 50 percent this year.

Costs for paper, plastic, and other materials to make packaging have risen 40 percent in the last 16 months, according to Mintec, a commodities market research firm.

The U.S. Consumer Price Index jumped 0.6 percent in March, the largest monthly gain since August 2012, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported; Britain's inflation sprinted at 0.7 percent for the month, due to rising prices for oil and clothing.

Confirming what we had long forecast, Unilever expects its input costs to rise even faster in this year's second half as a global economic recovery sharpens demand for materials of all kinds, CFO Graeme Pitkethly said in comments cited by the *FT*. General Mills reports higher shipping costs.

U.S. makers Procter & Gamble and Kimberly Clark already have announced price hikes "in the mid-to high single digits" will appear on many of their products this summer, as we reported in the 27 April **Trends Journal**.

On-Trend

Also, some companies may choose to cloak price increases with "shrinkflation," which involves holding retail prices steady while shrinking the amount of product in packages, Will Hayllar, managing partner at strategy consulting firm OC&C, told the *FT*.

TRENDPOST: *Will consumers swallow the price hikes? John Ruth, CEO of the Build Asset Management advisory firm, made it clear when he said to FT, "Businesses will tend to pass on what the consumer can stomach."*

During the lockdowns, manufacturers typically swallowed cost increases to keep retail prices competitive. Now that the economy is reviving, consumers will soon share the price pain.

The rising prices in commodities and many products that are now evident are just the beginning of the price spike.

Manufacturers often place market hedges against rising prices, then work through current inventories before jacking up consumers' costs. As a result, consumers will not see higher prices on many items for some weeks yet, even though raw materials costs have been climbing since January.

LUMBER PRICES ADD \$36,000 TO COST OF NEW HOME



Lumber prices have risen 67 percent this year and 340 percent in the past 12 months, according to Random Lengths, a lumber industry research firm.

The price spikes have added \$35,872 to the average cost of a newly built single-family home and \$12,966 to the market value of a multifamily dwelling, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) reported.

Lumber is scarce after seasons of massive wildfires in the western U.S. and duties imposed on imports during the Trump administration.

In addition to lumber, the price of drywall has gained 7 percent this year; steel products have climbed 18 percent to a record high; and copper has shot up 27 percent so far this year, setting a new record of its own.

Builders also have bid up raw land by 11 percent during the current housing rush, trying to stockpile spots to build the new homes the flood of buyers are demanding.

One in every four homes sold now is newly built; in the past, the ratio has been one in ten, *CNBC* noted.

However, the new work-from-home norm for white-collar employees, federal stimulus checks, and record savings during the pandemic are combining to drive people to the housing market in droves.

At the same time, the number of existing homes for sale is at a record low.

Many owners have decided to stay put until the economy is on a more sound footing, some worry they would be unable to afford a new home at today's

record prices, and others have lost their jobs or had their work hours cut and cannot afford to move.

The NHAB is urging federal officials to lift all tariffs on lumber imports.

TREND FORECAST: *To illustrate how fast and high inflation is rising, in our 23 March **Trends Journal**, we wrote,*

Rising lumber costs have added \$24,000 to the cost of the typical newly built home and \$9,000 to the cost of building a single apartment, according to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB).

“Current prices represent an intolerable, and frequently insurmountable, financial burden to home builders and contractors,” the NAHB said in a statement announcing the price rise.

Since that time, a little more than a month ago, the lumber costs to build a home rose to \$36,000!

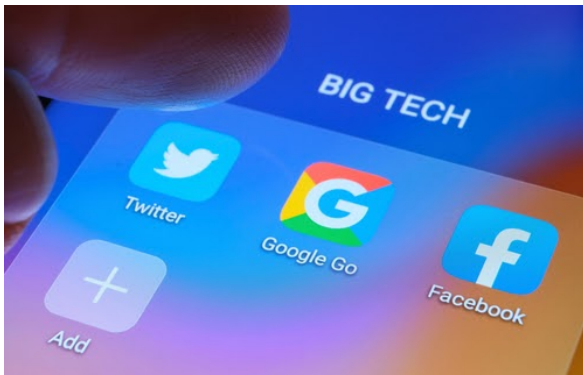
Again, the inflation spike is real, and it will force the Fed to raise interest rates. And the higher interest rates rise, the deeper the economy and equity markets will fall.

TREND FORECAST: *In our 23 March issue, we noted these “dramatic price increases to illustrate how inflationary pressures are rapidly escalating but, at the same time, they are being played down by the Federal Reserve and Washington, as they promise to keep injecting more money into the economic system.”*

And, just today, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is finally admitting what they in fact knew back then but kept playing down to keep equity markets rising.

*As we also wrote in our 23 March **Trends Journal**, “And now, with more lockdowns across the globe and states on hold in the U.S. to open up, the economies will sink deeper, and yet more cheap money will be injected to artificially prop them up. In turn, currencies will depreciate, inflation will rise, and safe-haven assets will increase in value.”*

TECH GIANTS BIG WINNERS IN PANDEMIC ECONOMY



The combined yearly revenue of Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Microsoft is \$1.2 trillion, according to a *New York Times* analysis of earnings figures the companies reported last week.

In less than a week, the five tech giants collect more in sales than McDonald's does all year, the *NYT* noted.

During 2020's shutdown, people used Google to do business-related research and satisfy personal curiosity on every subject. Amazon became the go-to shopping stop for even more millions of people.

Apple's electronics became portals to the world for students and workers; Facebook kept people in touch who couldn't meet personally; and Microsoft's software kept business going as workers shifted from office to home.

Advertising sales usually fall when times are hard. However, the shutdown drove socializing online and advertisers scratched plans to advertise in other media and poured their ad budgets into digital platforms such as Google and Facebook.

In contrast, in 2009, during the Great Recession, Microsoft's stock fell to 40 percent of its earlier value; share prices for Amazon and Google also plunged by about two-thirds.

During this contraction, however, Amazon's per-share value has risen from \$2,315 in May 2020 to \$3,471 on 29 April, a gain of almost 45 percent; its market value has nearly doubled since the pandemic began, now reaching about \$1.8 trillion.

Amazon's sales in this year's first quarter were up 44 percent year over year to \$108.5 billion, including a 32-percent jump in its cloud computing service business. Pre-tax profits nearly doubled, reaching \$8.9 billion, the *NYT* reported.

TRENDPOST: *The tech sector's windfall contrasts dramatically with other economic sectors: airlines bleed money daily, restaurant sales still lag those of 2019, and millions who lost their businesses and jobs to the shutdown may never recover them.*

HOTEL INDUSTRY HIT HARD



The American Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) says that 500,000 of the sector's workers still will be unemployed when this year ends.

According to AHLA projections, states hit hardest by the loss of hotel jobs through this year are:

- California, losing 67,169 jobs;
- Florida, out 39,560 jobs;
- New York, with 38,028 lodging workers idle;
- Nevada, missing 22,282 jobs;
- Hawaii, with 20,029 jobs lost.

AHLA and UNITE HERE, the country's largest hotel workers' union, are urging Congress to pass the recently-introduced Save Hotel Jobs Act, which would provide up to three months' payroll subsidies to hotels, motels, and inns.

Leisure and hospitality remain 3.1 million jobs short of its 2019 payroll, the AHLA said in a statement urging support for the bill before Congress, with the lodging industry's unemployment rate 330 percent higher than the labor market overall.

For every ten workers employed directly, a hotel typically sustains 26 indirect jobs in restaurants, supply firms, maintenance and construction companies, and similar businesses, the AHLA said.

If Washington does not give them money, AHLA says it will close out this year with 500,000 of its workers still jobless.

TREND FORECAST: While leisure travelers are beginning to return, hotels count on business travelers for much of their profits. In the new Zoom world, as we have forecast, business travel will not hit pre-COVID War levels as businesses have announced permanent cuts to their travel budgets.

In addition, tourism, another hotel-reliant sector, will not return to pre-COVID War levels for at least another year.

COMMERCIAL CONSTRUCTION SPENDING FALLS FOR FOURTH MONTH



Spending on nonresidential construction fell 1.1 percent in March from February, its fourth consecutive month of shrinkage, and reaching a 12-month decline of 7.4 percent, the Associated General Contractors of America (AGCA)

reported.

Projects were delayed or canceled as demand for office and retail space has slowed, government agencies are running deficits, materials are fetching record prices when they can be found, and supply chains remain disrupted, AGCA officials said in a statement detailing the sag in spending.

Power industry construction, the largest nonresidential category, slid 0.4 percent in March and 8.3 percent over 12 months; construction for retail, warehouse,

and farm businesses was down 0.5 percent for the month and 8.8 percent for the year, the AGCA noted.

Building for manufacturers sagged by 1.3 percent in March and 7.8 percent since April 2020 and office construction dropped 0.4 percent and 4.2 percent, respectively.

Government construction edged down 1.5 percent in March and 4.6 percent for the year.

TREND FORECAST: *We maintain our forecast that the commercial construction sector will continue to decline as more people commute less and work at home more.*

McDONALD'S SALES GOING HIGHER



Sales at McDonald's U.S. restaurants open since the beginning of 2020 grew an average of 13.6 percent year over year, beating analysts' projections and helping to shore up global sales, which rose 7.5 percent during the period, the company announced.

U.S. sales were bolstered by meals celebrities promoted, such as musician Travis Scott, new menu items including a crispy chicken sandwich, a successful promotion for spicy nuggets, and consumers' federal stimulus checks, the company said.

Outside the U.S., sales were hobbled by COVID virus flare-ups and resulting restrictions on businesses and social movements.

Overall, McDonald's reported first-quarter total sales of \$5.1 billion, a 9-percent increase over 2020's first three months, with the news pushing up share prices 1.2 percent.

The strong numbers prompted the company to raise its 2021 sales projections and forecast a better performance by its non-U.S. restaurants, although those still are expected to underperform domestic stores.

Now, instead of being short of customers, the chain is short of workers.

"We're seeing... definitely a very tight labor market that's putting pressure both on us" at the corporate level "and on our franchisees," CEO Chris Kempczinski said in comments quoted by the *Wall Street Journal*.

TRENDPOST: *We note this article to continue to emphasize that despite all the media hype about people becoming health conscious, the vast majority are fast-food junkies.*

*Indeed, as detailed in this and numerous **Trends Journals**, some 72 percent of Americans are overweight and 40 percent obese. And, people suffering from Type 2 diabetes and obesity are among the highest proportion of coronavirus victims.*

SHOPPERS BACK IN MALLS?



In March, foot traffic in 52 shopping malls monitored by research firm Placer.ai was 86 percent greater than a year before.

Although that figure is still 24 percent below that of March 2019, mall owners expressed relief when interviewed by the

Wall Street Journal.

“There’s no question things are better,” William Taubman, president of Michigan-based mall operator Taubman Co., said. “Sales are also better than anticipated four months ago.”

Share prices of Simon Property Group, which recently bought Taubman, have grown 45 percent this year, more than triple the growth of the S&P 500.

"Our [rent] collection rates are above 90 percent," Ami Ziff, real estate director at mall owner Time Equities, told the *WSJ*. “That’s really good news.”

The firm has been attracting new tenants by offering bargain rents, a tactic shared among many mall owners who hope to lock in tenants now and then raise rates later as the economic recovery continues and shoppers return in greater numbers, the *WSJ* said.

Although malls’ revival has roughly paced this year’s vaccine distribution, the industry’s recovery remains uneven.

Shoppers are spending on jewelry, casual clothing, and accessories, analysts report, while sales of business and formal wear lag.

TREND FORECAST: *We consider this article a puff piece promoted by the owners. The pall on the malls, which we have long forecast, will continue. Malls that did well before the COVID War will remain profitable. Another hit to the malls will be ones where large cinemas were attached since we forecast that fewer people, especially Generation Z, will be going to the movies.*

VENTURE CAPITALISTS GARNER RECORD PROFITS



Several venture capital firms have booked returns in recent months not seen in 20 years or more, a *Wall Street Journal* analysis found.

Among the big U.S. winners:

- Sutter Hill Ventures bet less than \$112 million on cloud computing firm Snowflake and, in March, cashed out with a profit of almost \$12 billion;
- Sequoia Capital put \$235 million into Airbnb, a stake now valued at about \$14 billion; it placed \$240 million with upstart DoorDash and now sits on about \$8.4 billion in the delivery firm's stock;
- Accel holds about \$7.5 billion in the recently-listed Ui-Path software firm after investing \$172 million.

If these U.S. firms sold their holdings, their cash in hand would far surpass that from dot-com-era megadeals, including Accel's \$5-billion profit on \$15 million sunk into a young Facebook and the \$7 billion Kleiner Perkins cleared on its \$3-million wager on Juniper Networks – although the previous deals returned greater percentage gains.

The venture firms' profits have swelled with the influx of federal stimulus money and individual investors lured into the market by tales of quick, large profits driving share prices ever upward, analysts note.

"There's a flight to growth and a flight to innovation," partner Julia Feldman at Silicon Valley Bank, told the *WSJ*.

However, companies' market valuations have been rising faster than their revenues, which smacks of the dot-com bubble and leaves Feldman "cautious... about what that means for future investments."

From 2002 through 2018, the median price-to-sales ratio for tech companies' initial stock offerings, which is its market capitalization divided by the most recent year's revenues, was 12, University of Florida economist Jay Ritter, who monitors IPOs, said to the *WSJ*.

In 2020, the ratio was a record 23 and now sits at 20, he said.

So far this year, 21 IPOs have valued companies at more than \$5 billion after their first full day of trading, Ritter pointed out, setting 2021 on course to set a record.

In all of 2000, the year the dot-com boom went bust, there were 42, he said.

Abroad, Japan's Softbank Group, sank slightly more than \$200 million into Alibaba, China's Amazon clone, a stake that has now grown to more than \$150 billion even after Softbank has sold several batches of Alibaba shares over time.

TRENDPOST: *As we have been reporting, we note these articles to illustrate the rising income disparity and how the rich are getting richer and the Bigs keep getting bigger.*

THE SMALL LANDLORD SQUEEZE



As we have been reporting, landlords with small holdings, typically individuals or couples, are banned by government orders from evicting tenants unable to pay rent. But in the new ABnormal, with no money coming in, they have to pay taxes, mortgages, and insurance payments.

Such landlords often are immigrants and nonwhite and have invested in a few rental units to lay an economic foundation for their future, *Bloomberg* noted.

Rather than see their credit rating destroyed by foreclosure, some landlords are taking equity loans on their properties or even on their own homes to cover overdue expenses.

Others are selling to private equity firms and other big property firms trolling the market for distressed properties.

One small-time landlord reported to *Bloomberg* that he is barraged by offers from investors that would allow him to clear a year's worth of his unpaid fuel bills and property taxes.

He had hoped to pass the building, bought by his immigrant father, to his recently born son.

However, after tenants absconded owing him more than \$140,000 in back rent, he is unable to replace his buildings' broken boiler and will be unable to recover back rent from those disappeared tenants when government aid to tenants arrives.

Almost \$47 billion in rent supports are beginning to flow from the U.S. treasury to tenants behind in their rent, with one installment allotted in December and the other in March.

That aid, which would flow through to landlords, is "moving at the speed of bureaucracy" and may come too late to save small-scale property owners from default and foreclosure, according to *Bloomberg*.

Although no figures have tallied the number of small landlords in jeopardy, less than a third hold mortgages from Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, or other federally-supported loan agencies, leaving them unqualified for mortgage forbearance programs.

At the same time, cities – desperate for cash after the economic shutdown has starved them for a year – have been unwilling to forgive or forestall property tax payments.

In New York State, the federal supports will cover no more than 80 percent of back rent, utilities, and late fees owed to landlords, according to Moody's Analytics; in Illinois, the proportion covered will be a scant 45 percent.

“The concern here, over the course of a few years, is that a growing share of mom-and-pop landlords will be forced to sell and rents will go up,” Peter Hepburn, a Rutgers University sociologist who studies housing inequality, told *Bloomberg*. “There’s a lot of private equity interest and a real possibility of growing consolidation.”

TRENDPOST: *Once again, we note how the “Bigs” and the “essentials” keep getting bigger while the small businesses and entrepreneurs are getting squeezed out.*

AMERICAN COMPANIES BOOST AD BUDGETS



Encouraged by a successful vaccine campaign and consumers' eagerness to spend, U.S. businesses will increase their advertising outlay by 15 percent this year to \$250.7 billion, not including political ads, a global ad-buying firm has predicted.

The rate of growth in ad spending is likely to be the fastest since World War II ended 76 years ago, Brian Wieser, GroupM's president of business intelligence, said to the *Wall Street Journal*.

“We are seeing ad surges pretty much across the board as things get back to normal,” Dani Benowitz, U.S. chief for ad-buyer Magna Global, told the *WSJ*.

“Some of the categories that were most impacted [by the pandemic and shutdown] are starting to pick up again, like travel,” she said.

GroupM expects online platforms to grab 51 percent of ad dollars this year, compared to 44 percent in 2019, and said that percentage might grow in light of Google parent company Alphabet’s surprisingly strong first-quarter performance. (See related story in this issue, [“BIG TECH GETTING BIGGER, REAPING GREAT REWARDS.”](#))

“No one expected the numbers we saw from Google,” Wieser said.

Alphabet’s first-quarter sales were up 34 percent year on year, Facebook’s ad revenues rose 46 percent, Snap’s revenues gained 66 percent, and Pinterest’s 78 percent.

Newspaper and magazine ads will continue to lose market share, GroupM predicted, and television ad buys should grow by 9 percent this year, although the medium will continue to lose customers to the Web.

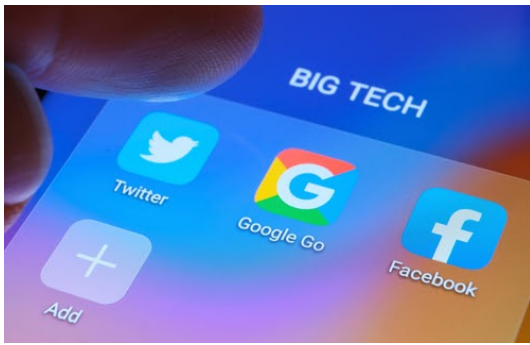
Anheuser-Busch Inbev, the world’s largest brewer, is shifting more of its ads online because television’s audience continues to shrink and digital ads allow the company to “be more flexible and efficient” in disbursing its ad budget, U.S. marketing director Marcel Marcondes told the *WSJ*.

Although viewers are drifting away, TV networks report stronger ad sales this year as Wieser predicted.

“The demand across lots of different categories signals a pretty healthy market,” Marianne Gambelli, Fox Corp.’s president of ad sales, commented to the *WSJ*.

TREND FORECAST: *TV audiences will continue to decline as younger generations abandon the old medium and the older adults die off... and so, too, will ad sales.*

BIG TECH GETTING BIGGER, REAPING GREAT REWARDS



Alphabet Inc., parent company of Google and Youtube, saw first-quarter sales rise to a record \$55.31 billion, spiking 34 percent year on year, with profits soaring 162 percent to almost \$18 billion, the company reported.

People bunkered at home spent more time shopping online, ordering food deliveries, and watching YouTube videos, analysts said, which convinced advertisers to take messages away from television and other media and pour more into Google and other online platforms.

Alphabet's iconic services of search, maps, and Gmail accounted for \$31.88 billion of the record sales, a 30-percent bump from a year before; YouTube pumped up sales to \$6 billion, a 49-percent spike.

The stratospheric numbers rest on Alphabet's market share: Google sees 92 percent of the world's online searches, Google Maps handles 89 percent of navigation requests, and YouTube claims 73 percent of online video demand.

FACEBOOK REPORTS SHARP RISE IN REVENUES, PROFITS



Facebook's first-quarter advertising revenues reached \$26.44 billion, a 46-percent gain year-over-year that drove profits for the period to \$9.5 billion or \$3.30 a share, almost double that of 2020's first three months, the company reported.

Both revenue and profit exceeded analysts' expectations.

People shut in at home during the early months of this year spent even more time on Facebook, clicking more ads, the company said.

As a result, it not only delivered more ads but charged advertisers higher prices for them.

About 2.7 billion people worldwide use Facebook or its subsidiaries Instagram or Whatsapp every day, according to the company.

Facebook is adjusting its platform to accommodate Apple's new iPhone rules that let the phones' owners opt out of some third-party data collection.

Facebook has grumbled about Apple's decision to give customers more power over their data, saying Apple's move will hurt small businesses.

Facebook's stock price was up 16 percent this year through 28 April, compared to a 10-percent boost for the S&P 500.

TREND FORECAST: Government regulators around the world have sounded the alarm on the big-tech monopolies that are reaping in big profits.

For example, in the U.S., the Justice Department and several states are filing antitrust suits, alleging that Alphabet favors its products and secretly steers users away from competitors.

Epic Games is suing Alphabet, claiming antitrust actions by its Google Play store, and the British Daily Mail newspaper is taking Alphabet to court over the operation of its advertising auctions.

Breaking up tech giants will be a global trend, however, whatever measures are taken will be minimal considering big tech's big money reach into the political system where they buy off who they want to get what they want.

WORLD'S LARGEST TECH SHOW TO RECONVENE IN JANUARY



CES, the world's pre-eminent annual display of innovation in consumer electronics, will convene "in person" as customary in Las Vegas this January, the sponsoring Consumer Technology Association (CTA) has announced.

The event's physical restoration assumes that the successful U.S. COVID vaccination campaign will continue and the virus will be largely contained by then.

More than 1,000 companies already have registered to display at the event, CTA said in announcing the convention.

The week-long 2020 CES gathered 171,000 people from 164 countries, CTA reported.

This year's conclave used online portals to bring together exhibitors and customers, enable networking, and conduct meetings and offered a live "anchor desk" delivering news and interviewing attendees and company representatives.

The CTA will monitor public health guidelines issued by states and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as it prepares for the meeting, it said.

CTA also will again offer online CES access for those preferring not to gather in large groups.

TREND FORECAST: *Cities and businesses across the globe have been hit hard by the decline in conventions and trade shows. We note the CES event since it will be an important barometer to help determine the percentages that will return to these types of events.*

We also forecast that just as frisking people and putting them through metal detectors when attending conventions, concerts, etc., became the new ABnormal after 9/11, so, too, will temperature checks and vaccine passports for convention and big-event goers.

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT



IT'S OFFICIAL: EUROPE IN DOUBLE-DIP RECESSION

As officials and analysts had predicted, first-quarter economic figures show that Europe entered a double-dip recession in the first three months of this year.

A recession is defined as two or more consecutive quarters of economic contraction; a double-dip recession is two recessions separated by a brief recovery.

Europe's economy shrank 0.6 percent in 2021's first quarter, according to Eurostat, the European Union's statistics agency. The region's GDP sagged under the burden of rolling economic lockdowns imposed as the COVID virus resurged around the continent.

That contraction followed a 0.7-percent retreat in 2020's final quarter.

The Eurozone's GDP has receded in four of the last five quarters, with productivity off 1.8 percent year on year during 2021's first three months.

Germany's economy suffered most through January, February, and March, with consumer spending slipping 1.7 percent and erasing positive numbers logged by export manufacturers; Spain's economy puckered by 0.5 percent.

Italy gave back 0.4 percent growth as its service sector lagged; Portugal lost 3.3 percent under yet another COVID-inspired shutdown.

The U.K. has yet to report its quarterly figures. Its economy grew 0.4 percent in February, but analysts expect Britain also to have fallen back for the quarter overall, due to a drastic lockdown in January.

Europe's economy will reverse the loss and show gains this quarter, many observers believe.

The continent's consumers will spend an additional €170 billion this year, adding 1.5 percent to the region's growth, according to analysts at Allianz.

TREND FORECAST: *There will be an EU economic bounce-back as nations unlock and businesses reopen.*

However, countries such as Germany, the continent's #1 economy, were trending into recession at the end of 2019... before governments launched the COVID War. Therefore, after a GDP spike, European Union growth will trend toward moderate and negative in the coming years.

With the EU pushing for vaccine passports, tourism, which accounts for double-digit percentages of GDP for many nations, will not rebound to pre-COVID War levels.

Indeed, today tourism ministers from the Group of 20 were championing a Digital Green Certificate to prove travelers have been fully vaccinated, have immunity, or tested negative upon entry as they cross borders. Yet, according to data compiled by Oxford University, as of Sunday, EU member states had

administered 33.6 vaccine doses per 100 inhabitants – less than half the level in the U.K. and the U.S.

Under a proposal unveiled, EU member states said they would reopen borders to travelers who are fully COVID vaccinated. Thus, there will be hesitancy among many to travel should governments push the requirement that all tourists must be vaccinated.

TREND FORECAST: *According to the World Travel and Tourism Council Travel, tourism's contribution to global output collapsed by 49 percent to US\$4.7 trillion in 2020, causing the loss of 62 million jobs, and international visitor spending plummeted nearly 70 percent.*

As for Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi's statement today at a press conference that "Our mountains, our beaches, our cities are reopening ... I have no doubt that tourism in Italy will come back stronger than before," we disagree.

Yes, there will be a spike, but with hundreds of millions of lives and livelihoods destroyed across the globe, tourism will not be "stronger than before."

EUROPE'S ECONOMY MOVES ON PICKUP IN VACCINE CAMPAIGN



During the week ending 25 April, Italy vaccinated 2.4 million citizens against COVID, 12 percent more than the week before; on 28 April alone, Germany jabbed 2.5 million people. EU officials expect 70 percent of residents in the union's 27 countries to be inoculated by July.

Europe has tied its hopes of economic recovery to a vaccine campaign finally moving at speed and those hopes seem about to be fulfilled.

The region's manufacturers are more positive in their outlook now than at any time since the EU began tracking sentiment in 1986, according to Eurostat, the EU's statistics agency.

Germany reported its factories are now operating at 86 percent of capacity, above the long-term average of 83.6 percent, the government reported, although factories are short of parts due to kinks in supply chains.

However, Germany's economy contracted by 1.7 percent in this year's first quarter, with manufacturers' strength unable to boost sagging consumer spending.

"Strong sentiment may not fully translate into equally exceptional economic growth," Holger Schmieding, a Barenberg Bank economist, told the *Wall Street Journal*.

"This gap is what we call economic scarring and it reflects losses in education, investment, and research and development during the crisis," Alfred Kammer, the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) director for Europe, said in a *WSJ* interview.

To heal those scars, the IMF is urging Eurozone countries to devote 3 percent of GDP to additional supports for households and businesses, including tax breaks, subsidizing salaries and wages, and governments investing directly in individual companies.

TREND FORECAST: *While many economists expect the Eurozone will return to its pre-COVID WAR economic levels by the middle of next year, we disagree. Again, the region was trending into recession in 2019, before the March 2020 COVID lockdowns. Thus, we maintain our forecast for a sharp summer boost but low to negative growth in the coming years.*

IPOs SET RECORD PACE



As of 30 April, 875 initial public stock offerings raising at least \$1 million each have been completed worldwide, easily surpassing the record 592 seven- or eight-figure IPOs in 2000 that marked the end of the dot-com craze, according to research firm Dealogic's 26 years of data.

The \$230-billion value of this year's deals surpasses that of all the IPOs issued in 21 of the last 26 years for which Dealogic has data, the company reported.

About two-thirds of the \$230 billion, and almost half of this year's IPOs, have come through special-purchase acquisition companies (SPACs) that have no assets but raise funds, then merge with a productive enterprise and disappear, leaving the SPAC's shareholders owning stakes in the company the SPAC bought.

China and Hong Kong place a distant second and third in the pack, accounting respectively for 8 and 5 percent of 2021's IPOs.

Although SPACs have recently lost some of their allure under closer regulatory scrutiny, the market's craving for new issues is likely to continue, analysts say.

TREND FORECAST: *We note this flash of IPO offerings, and, as we have noted with SPACs, to illustrate other sectors of artificial momentum driving equity market growth. Get ready for a Dot.com 2.0 crash.*

Indeed, take a look at Deutsche Bank, Germany's 150-year-old, scandal-plagued flagship that reported a €1.04-billion net profit in this year's first quarter, its best three-month performance since 2014.

The bank profited from equities investors (i.e., gamblers) jumping into frenzied markets and also from its various services in mergers and acquisitions, Deutsche Bank said.

AUTOMAKERS FACING MONTHS-LONG CHIP SHORTAGE



Massive February storms in Texas and a 19 March fire at Japan's Renesas Semiconductor Manufacturing Co. have left the auto industry facing more months without an adequate supply of the computer chips that cars now depend on for safety,

information, and other crucial systems.

Chip makers diverted production to home and office electronics during the global economic shutdown when demand for new cars crashed and consumers scrambled for computers, smartphones, and video games to survive the lockdown.

The semiconductor industry then was unprepared for the sudden surge in demand for new vehicles once the shutdown began to ease, which came amid a worldwide shortage of shipping containers, clogged ports, and rolling shutdowns across countries where the COVID virus remains at strength.

Without enough chips, vehicle plants have shut down for weeks or even months around the world and car companies have hoarded their scant supplies of chips for their most lucrative models.

In Germany, Daimler cut hours for 18,500 production workers and halted the lines at two assembly plants; Honda shut down most of its North American plants in March and April.

Automakers thought the shortage of chips would ease as the global economy reopened; now the disruptions in Japan and Texas are expected to prolong the shortage at least through the summer, threatening to slow the world's economic rebound.

"Our second quarter will be the trough this year," Ford CEO James Farley told the *Wall Street Journal*.

The chip shortage will force Ford to halve its production this quarter and rob the company of \$2.5 billion in pretax profits this year, Ford said in a statement last month.

TREND FORECAST: Again, as detailed throughout this and other issues of the ***Trends Journal***, the shortages are real, and it is a simple supply and demand equation: The less supply and the higher the demand, the higher the prices rise.

The higher prices climb, the more inflation rises. The higher inflation goes, the higher central banks will raise interest rates. And the higher interest rates rise, the slower economies will grow and the faster equity markets will tank.

EUROPE'S BANKS PERMANENTLY SLASH BUSINESS TRAVEL



Several of Europe's largest banks have decided to permanently reduce business travel by as much as half from pre-pandemic levels, the *Financial Times* reported.

The decisions to slash travel budgets were made as banks learned during the economic shutdown that business could be conducted effectively by long-distance, the *FT* said.

The year of the pandemic has proven that, while some travel is necessary, many trips taken in the past were unneeded, several senior banking executives told the *FT*.

The budget cuts will help shore up banks' finances after the economic shutdown and years of rock-bottom interest rates and also will burnish their "green" reputations by reducing their carbon tracks.

Lloyd's Banking Group pledged to "sustain the momentum" of the economic shutdown's environmental progress by limiting its travel-related CO₂ emissions to no more than half of 2019's level, the *FT* noted.

Noel Quinn, HSBC's CEO, will reduce his personal travel by half, compared to his pre-COVID schedule, he told the newspaper.

ABN AMRO, the Netherlands' third-largest bank, has set formal emissions targets and will cut staff travel by half over the next five years to help meet them, the *FT* reported.

The decision deals a blow to airlines and hotels, many of which depend on business travel for their profits and have been counting on its return to restore their financial health after the pandemic year.

TREND FORECAST: *We have been forecasting for nearly a year that business class, the airlines' most profitable sector, would decline even after unrestricted air travel resumed for the very reasons now stated in the above articles.*

Moreover, hotels and restaurants in major cities have depended heavily on conventions and business meetings to pad their bottom lines. Thus, the decrease in business travel will hit these sectors hard as well as commercial real estate sectors in urban areas.

CHINA'S ECONOMY SLOWS IN APRIL



China's economic output missed expectations in April, due in part to the worldwide shortage of computer chips, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

The country's official purchasing managers index (PMI) in manufacturing slid from 51.9 in March to 51.1 last month; the service industry's PMI drooped to 54.9 from March's 56.3.

Readings above 50 indicate expansion; the higher the reading, the brighter the outlook.

TREND FORECAST: China was the world's only major economy to grow during 2020. While the new figures indicate that its momentum is slowing, we maintain our forecast for a strong 2021 Chinese Gross Domestic Product... in the 8 percent range.

As world economies reopen, product demand will increase. As we note in this Trends Journal, for example, while America's trade deficit hit a record high, China's trade surplus keeps rising. And the higher their trade surplus, the higher their GDP rises as much of the world buys Made-in-China.

HONG KONG OFFICE MARKET SAGS



Office landlords in one of the world's priciest real estate markets are seeing companies scale back their leased spaces as working from home becomes the new normal, adding to property owners' existing woes wrought by social unrest, U.S.-China

tensions, and the financial injury of 2020's economic shutdown.

Hong Kong denizens letting portions of leases lapse include international banks BNP Paribas, DBS Group Holdings, Société Générale, and Standard Chartered, according to the *Wall Street Journal*.

"It could be years" before the city's office space market returns to its pre-pandemic norms, the *WSJ* noted.

Rents in Hong Kong's central district will fall 5 to 10 percent this year, according to property brokers the *WSJ* contacted.

After falling 10 percent in 2020, rents in February for premium space had slid 27 percent from their June 2019 peaks to the equivalent of \$12.70 per square foot per month now, according to city statistics.

Plunging rents have dragged down property values by as much as 34 percent for Hong Kong's prime office towers, real estate data firm CBRE Group found.

The city's office market mirrors that of New York City, where Manhattan's prime office rents slipped 8.6 percent in 2020 to \$90.42 annually per square foot and then dipped more in the first quarter of this year to \$87.68, data firm Savills said.

TRENDPOST: *We note this article as continuing evidence that supports our forecast for a commercial real estate bust. This is just the beginning of the downturn.*

Again, with business travel being cut back, more people working at home, and less commuting – plus the COVID War that has destroyed hundreds of millions of lives and livelihoods – the current trend line for the commercial sector is straight down.

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



INFLATION TSUNAMI APPROACHING

By *Gregory Mannarino*, TradersChoice.net

Turn on the mainstream news and all the talk now is about the rising state of inflation. It's an interesting situation, as, for years, the talk used to be "there is no inflation" – but that narrative has certainly changed in a big way.

This mainstream spin on this is: "The current spike in inflation is temporary." Oh yes! There is inflation, but do not worry; it is just transitory.

Really? Transitory?

I have explained for years in interviews and in my blog, and, more recently, in several articles I have written for the **Trends Journal**, that rising inflation would become a problem. And, make no mistake about it, this is not by accident.

In my article last week, "[THE FED'S DANGEROUS GAME](#)," I described how the Federal Reserve is using a kind of revolving door mechanism to create currency

devaluation, which is massively inflationary. Through one door, the Fed is creating epic sums of debt out of thin air in the form of currency expansion. And through another door, the Fed is buying debt.

This mechanism, by design, is hyper-inflationary. Today, we are seeing the effect of this inflationary revolving door everywhere. People are getting nervous, henceforth, that is why Fed Chairman Jerome Powell and U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen are propagating the false narrative that the current state of inflation is transitory.

What you are not supposed to know is this: *The current state of inflation is about to get much worse.*

I would like to shed some light on the main forces that are working to assure that inflation will continue to rise.

For nearly a decade, the Federal Reserve has been on a currency creation/money-printing binge, unlike anything that has ever been seen in the history of the world. They have been able to get away with this because the economy is essentially dead and has been since the meltdown of 2008.

The dead economy has caused the velocity of money, which is the rate in which cash moves through an economy, to crater down to historic lows. By the velocity of money being at historic lows, all the extra cash created by the Fed cannot chase the existing amount of goods created, but this is changing.

There is essentially NO WAY for the Federal Reserve to prevent the epic sums of cash it has created from eventually chasing the same or existing amount of goods, which leads us back to the money velocity.

Once the money velocity begins to move higher, even fractionally, the specter of massive and even possibly hyper-inflation become very real possibilities.

The fact of the matter is this: We are currently in a currency crisis, and therefore the Fed, to prevent a complete lock-up of credit, MUST continue to create epic

sums of cash out of thin air. If, for example, the Fed were to stop printing cash, in a nanosecond, we would have a global lockup of the entire financial system.

The prospect of inflation being “temporary” or transitory is a LIE. I foresee a full-blown financial crisis is on the horizon.

Here, again, this is no accident. The Federal Reserve is working to bring this about, so they can roll out a new currency system, which will be 100% digital, 100% fiat.

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM



HOME INVASION, PART ONE: HARDENING THE TARGET

by *Bradley J. Steiner*, *American Combato*

Home invasion is truly a nightmarish problem. No one who hasn't experienced it or who hasn't studied the phenomenon to the extent of realizing its emotional and physical impact on its victims can fully appreciate what destruction this horrendous crime of violence leaves in its wake.

And I am not even speaking about home invasions in which no one is murdered. As for those home invasions that *do* result in the tragedy of innocent deaths, well, it is clear there is no recovery from this, *ever*, for any who survive.

The good news is that, while there are of course too damn many home invasions in our cities, there is little chance – statistically – that individuals who live relatively normal lives (i.e. no drugs, no criminal activities, no freakish friends or relatives who circulate amongst or who deal with questionable types, no “attitude” that makes enemies, etc.) will suffer this catastrophic crime.

Still, there are no guarantees. The targeting of more people for home invasions is not an unlikely thing as our social order increasingly decays. As Gerald Celente has long said, “When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it.” And when people do “lose it,” there is no accurate way to predict what they may do.

My advice to everyone is to **be prepared**. The act of preparing will provide some reassurance and confidence. If you prepare and never need to deal with the problem, great. But, God forbid, if the problem comes to you, you will at least have a chance of dealing with it successfully.

What I want to address now is how to do something that is referred to as “hardening the target,” i.e., in simple language, *making your home an unattractive or very difficult target for invasion*.

If you live in a private house, you absolutely must get a quality alarm system. These systems – with conspicuous sign postings – definitely deter a percentage of violators.

By themselves, signs and the alarm system cannot physically combat intruders. However, the alarm will do one other thing besides warning a percentage of vermin away: *Should a break-in occur, the system will sound an alarm, and a good security company will then signal the police to get to your residence*.

Securing access to your home by making a forceful entry as difficult as possible is important. The idea is to make anyone's forcible entry into your home as *time-consuming as possible*. This means having two deadbolt locks on your door and a Fox Police Lock. Expensive? Yes, but a bargain if this makes would-be intruders abandon their efforts or delays them long enough for you to deal with them as the situation demands.

It should go without saying that you want to be sure your front door (and any other doors in your house) include this security, and every door is as sturdy and resistant to impact as possible.

Securing windows is more difficult. While they are easy to break (unless you are wealthy enough to afford the kind of glass utilized at the White House!), you can and should have your alarm system include sensitivity sensors to window glass breakage. This will, in an invasion situation, at least ensure that you have some warning to ready yourself *at the very moment* the break-in is initiated. Basement windows should have solid steel bars installed, in addition to their glass. No bars elsewhere.

Your garage should be well-secured with a strong, sturdy barrier-type door. There should be a solid and secure door that can be opened only from *inside* your house that connects to the garage.

Having a dog that barks is always a plus. Best if it is also a Doberman or Shepherd that will attack and neutralize an aggressor, but even a small dog that barks whenever anyone is outside can be an excellent deterrent.

In addition to the signs provided by your alarm company, it is useful (for legal reasons) to post simple “*No Trespassing*” signs conspicuously. Do not, no matter how great the temptation, ever post any signs such as the following: “*Is There Life After Death? Trespass Here And Find Out*” / “*These Premises Protected By Smith And Wesson*” / “*Trespassers Will Be Shot*” / “*These Premises Protected By Armed Residents,*” etc.

Another good sign to post is a “Beware of Dog!” or a “Guard Dog on Premises!” sign, only if you do *not* have a dog. The reason is that scumbags will *always* claim that your dog attacked them if they intrude on your property. If you have declared your dog to be “dangerous” because he is trained, then you may be liable.

No dramatic gun signs or death threats. You are warning any invaders who may be highly motivated, willing to take a chance, in search of guns to steal, etc. that you are armed. Why be so foolish? Keep your weapons ownership private (legal, of course, but *private*). And let *any who violently break into your home be surprised by the fact that you are armed*. (More about this in Part Two.) You also

want to avoid being regarded as a crank or a nut. This could easily occur if an investigation follows your ever having to shoot an intruder.

Do not talk about your home security measures or describe them to anyone. Obviously, neighbors will see your alarm system signs and you can acknowledge that you've got the alarm system if they mention it.
BUT THAT'S IT!

If you live in an apartment, you have a somewhat simpler task. You still want an alarm system. You still want two deadbolt locks and a police lock for your front door. A notice that you have an alarm system should be posted on your door and on each window. A dog is a good idea, but it's possible your building does not allow pets.

You should know that it is unwise to live either in a ground floor or top floor apartment. The former permits ready access from the street (and a speedy getaway). Ground floor apartments are popular targets. The top floor apartment permits quick access from the roof and escape via the fire escape.

My advice, frankly, is to move to a building where you can live on one of the intermediate floors if you live in a ground or top floor apartment now. Yes, again, I know it's inconvenient. But we're concerned here with your safety and well-being. By the way, if your building has a doorman or security guard, I would not put any reliance on him. These people can easily be intimidated or bribed.

Valuables

Whether you live in a house or an apartment, you must make certain that your valuables (including important documents) are secured. Place documents in a safe deposit box. I do not like safe deposit boxes for anything else, as my "confidence" that they will not be spied upon by officials is nil. Documents are okay, but anything else must be secured where a search (except by trained law enforcement personnel) will not reveal their presence. For this I will just say "be creative," and you can pick up a book on hiding places if you need ideas.

Safes provide less security than good hiding places. Safes can be moved, stolen, or blown. My personal use for safes is as DECOYS. Purchase a moderately-sized safe of quality. Its weight should not be beyond what an average-sized man can lift, with effort, and carry away. Fill it with a couple of bricks. It is almost certain that intruders will grab it and run. Got the idea?

And stay off those goddamn “social networking” sites. If you attract attention (some morons actually announce when they’ll be away on vacation, and where they’re going!) then *expect* undesirable attention – sooner or later.

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 TECHNOCRACY



By *Joe Doran*

“SPACE CHIEF’S” VISION OF FUTURE WARS

Human officers and soldiers will carry out battle plans “too complex for them to understand.” A “superhuman workforce” will use technologies like augmented reality and nerve stimulation, among other things.

It’s all necessary since competitors including China and Russia are doing it.

Echoes of the past rationales clearly seep into the present and future of warfare planning as envisioned by Dr. Joel Mozer, head scientist for the newly-created U.S. Space Force.

Mozer outlined what’s coming for combat forces at a recent U.S. Space Force Laboratory seminar. He even likened the so-called “Age of Human Augmentation” to earlier societal changes including the Industrial Revolution and the late 20th Century Information Age.

Mozer did not explicitly delve into genetic “enhancements,” which are already at play across the globe via the unprecedented experimental COVID vaccine roll-outs. And he didn’t mention a current Army Research Lab program embarked on creating “flesh robot” [systems](#) covered recently by the **Trends Journal**.

But his comments about AI involvement in war, and the expectation that humans *throughout the military* will essentially be required to merge with machines, were extraordinary enough.

On the subject of AI, the Space Force scientist said the technology could develop military tactics and strategies beyond any human abilities, and that, eventually, “autonomous” (i.e., independent acting) programs could provide real-time advice to commanders. As he described it, the use of AI sounded something akin to a video game with real consequences:

“This will extend to the battlefield, where commanders and decision makers will have at their disposal multiple autonomous agents, each able to control the execution of things like reconnaissance, or fire control, or attack.”

Mozer noted that significant leaps have already been made by Google’s AlphaGo and other AI projects.

Mozer also touched on various technological “human augmentation” scenarios and said they wouldn’t be optional. “In our business of national defense, it’s imperative that we embrace this new age, lest we fall behind our strategic competitors.”

The need to keep up with adversaries was cited during the race to build nuclear weapons and the decades-old Cold War, which siphoned resources and led to dozens of proxy wars during the latter half of the last century. Weaponized technologies were also put to devastating use within the borders of countries, as governments engaged in “democides” or [internal wars](#) on their populations.

Especially since 9/11, technology has been deployed more and more systematically by governments to surveil and manipulate citizen populations. China has gone furthest down that de-humanizing path. But many globalist elites believe that technocratic control and dictates are an inevitable – and even desirable – for western nations as well.

WEAKENED TECH CENSORSHIP BILL PASSES IN FLORIDA



Florida Governor Ron DeSantis got his “anti-tech censorship” bill last week. But it has a dubious exemption for Disney, which runs one of their marquee theme parks in Orlando. The legislation was roundly criticized by some of the prominent banned individuals it was

supposed to help (see story that follows).

Specifically, the bill stops social media companies from de-platforming candidates for public office, banning other users without notice, and compels them to publish their rules for content.

Democrats tried to pretend the bill was a solution without a problem. But political figures and candidates including Donald Trump and Laura Loomer, among others, were suppressed and banned by Big Tech, harming not only them but the franchise of American voters.

A nearly endless list of dissident persons and organizations including PragerU, The Epoch Times, Diamond and Silk, RightSide Broadcasting, Parler, GAB, actor James Woods, Paul Joseph Watson, Milo Yiannopoulos, Louis Farrakhan (not to mention Owen Shroyer and Alex Jones), have experienced Big Tech censorship.

In 2019, when the bans were becoming more widespread, then-President Trump tweeted, “This is the United States of America – and we have what’s known as FREEDOM OF SPEECH! We are monitoring and watching, closely!!”

But Trump’s tweets never translated to significant Federal action or legislation, and during the 2020 campaign, Twitter progressively snuffed out his power on that platform.

In the week following the 6 January Washington, D.C. protest against election fraud, not only was Trump banned entirely from Twitter and other social media, *Fox News* and independent reporter Ian Miles Cheong noted that at least 60,000 conservative accounts were [purged](#) from Twitter.

Conservative Activists Call Bill Weak

The bill contains fines for companies that ban or suppress political candidates. But critics say the fines of \$100,000 a day are nothing to tech giants.

Activists including Laura Loomer, Michele Malkin, Lauren, Witzke, and Nick Fuentes, gathered late last week at the famed “Trump corner” near Mar-A-Lago to rally for changes or tougher legislation.

ARE AMERICANS HEADING TOWARD A SILENT SECESSION?



Americans have to act together to oppose government and corporate political suppression. That was one of the major messages of several influential dissident speakers who staged a recent “America First Press Conference” in Florida.

“America First” is the title of an influential online show hosted by Nick Fuentes. Fuentes made news just trying to get to the conference when he revealed the

TSA has placed him on their “no-fly” list, supposedly reserved for individuals deemed a potential threat to national security.

The TSA’s move did not stop Fuentes from speaking at the event, which also featured talks by Laura Loomer, Michelle Malkin, Lauren Witzke, and GAB founder Andrew Torba. The gathering focused at least partly on a Florida bill seeking to discourage Tech social media platforms from banning people from exercising their first amendment rights to free speech.

The conference took place just days after President Biden drew withering reactions to his first State of The Union Address for portraying the 6 January Washington, D.C. protest against election fraud as “the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War.”

His administration has used that event to initiate unprecedented political arrests and spying on American citizens, including working with banks and embedding an “ICOP” spying operation in the U.S. Postal Service.

Biden has also backed a two-tier “vaccine passport” regime that would strip travel rights and otherwise penalize and allow discrimination against citizens who choose not to take a COVID vaccine. Political conservatives have been more proactive about their right to refuse medical treatment regarding the experimental vaccines.

Each of the America First speakers touched on different aspects of the “silent secession” movement sparked by technocratic bans and crackdowns. Following are some excerpts from the talks.

Nick Fuentes: Governors and States Can Do More

Nick Fuentes focused on legislation backed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis meant to protect Floridians from big tech censorship. While commending the governor, Fuentes said the legislation was watered down and would probably not prove very effective. He starkly warned that more needs to be done:

“Over the past five years major social media companies like Google, Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram and many others have undertaken a systematic and systemic effort to remove all Trump supporters conservative and right-wing thought leaders. Number one, people are not able to find conservative opinions and they’re also not able to find conservative facts. We know that the liberal media covers up inconvenient things that they don’t like, and we know that the liberal media create opinion contents that they wish to pursue their own agenda.

The first effect of Big Tech censorship is that it becomes impossible for people to get a fair and balanced view of the world. It also becomes impossible for people to hear the other side with a conservative and right-wing opinion... This makes it [increasingly] impossible for conservative Republicans to win elections, as elections are conducted online through social media and fundraising platforms online. We find that it represents an in-kind contribution by social media companies, to allow Democratic or left-wing candidates on their platform, but you arbitrarily and in a biased way censor conservative candidates.

Without the ability to access mass media through social media platforms, conservatives and Republicans are not competitive in elections. And if we’re not able to use social media, and if we’re facing a biased Legacy Media in the form of television, radio and print, then it becomes impossible for conservative Americans to have a voice in government.”

Laura Loomer: China Social Credit Style Communism Being Fast-Trackd in U.S.

Laura Loomer has been sounding the cry longer than most others that technocratic de-platforming and political discrimination against American citizens is an existential threat to the nation. She expressed some doubts that Republicans, even at this point, are taking the threat seriously:

“It’s not just about you know one person being banned or one person being shut down or President Trump being shut down. It’s about the

integrity of our elections, and ultimately if you look at the outcome of the 2020 election, and you look at who stole the election, it was Big Tech. And I warned about this when I confronted Jack Dorsey in 2018 in front of Congress...

We find ourselves facing now with this [Florida] legislation...there are several loopholes that are going to allow for big Tech to continue deplatforming people...

I think a lot of people in the Republican Party think that they're just going to be able to use free speech as a buzzword, or talk about cancel culture as a buzzword, as opposed to actually putting in the hard work to make sure that legislative deals with teeth are actually passed...

As somebody who had their elections stolen by Big Tech election interference, I am here to tell you Governor Ron DeSantis, that big tech will also steal your election, and you will not be guaranteed a re-election victory in 2022. And forget about your 2024 presidential aspirations, if they steal your governor race in 2022. So for the sake of preserving our constitutional republic, and for the sake of preserving America First values, and ensuring the preservation of Western Civilization, and if any Republican ever wants to be re-elected or get elected in this country ever again, this bill needs to be amended.

And I'm proud to be standing here today. I want to thank Nick for giving me the opportunity to broadcast on his livestream, and I want to thank Michelle and Lauren for coming out. And you know, take it as a warning: what happened to Nick today, what has happened to all of us, the type of persecution that we've been subjected to, is going mainstream.

This is called the Chinese social credit score, and it's coming to America quicker than the China virus, so get used to it. Because first it starts with your social media, then it starts with your bank, and then it starts with a no-fly list. And then you'll find yourself like me, where the FBI is putting

you on a secret list and taking away your ability to own a gun, even though you've never committed a crime.

And so that's the quickest way to implement communism, and that's what they're trying to do. They're trying to implement the Communist technocracy by stripping Americans of their first amendment rights and their Second Amendment right, so that they are silenced and unable to protect themselves."

Andrew Torba: "The Silent Christian Secession"

GAB founder Andrew Torba has built a social media platform and is working on other hardware and software assets that can't be shut down by technocratic gatekeepers like Google, Apple, or Amazon.

His talk focused on Christians and Americans in general who want to preserve American traditions of liberty to build an alternate ecosystem of commerce and culture to what the dominant elites control:

"We can take back our local community, our counties, our economy without getting violent at all. The best way to do this, is through what I call a silent Christian secession. And we see this starting to unfold almost on a daily basis, you know, in different red states right now, and in different communities. We see people rising up and taking back their local communities, instead of centering all this as on, you know, the politics of Washington, DC.

I think it's very clear to all of us, or most of us, that whether you're left right or center, the people that are in Congress, people that are in Washington DC, do not represent us, do not represent our best interests. They represent foreign powers, they represent corporations, they represent the billionaire oligarch class...what we have is the unity party of the elites...

You may feel disenfranchised from the voting booth after 2020, but where you still have power is in your pocketbook. When you go to the store and

you're buying stuff, that is your vote... Money talks, when it comes to the globalist. So we need to hit them in their pocketbook and collectively do this. We can't just be atomized individuals anymore. We have to unite...

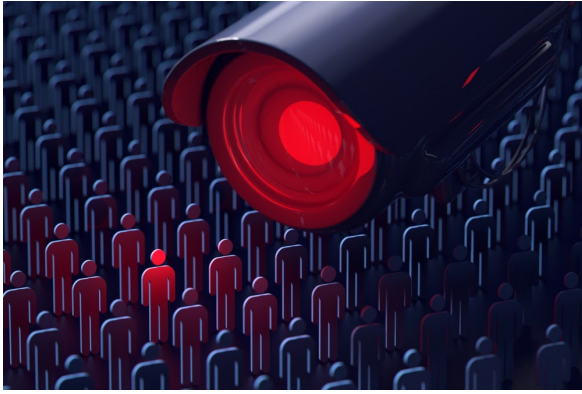
When you step back and think about it and you think about all the stuff that Silicon Valley is doing to this country, you think about all the stuff that these big corporate Fortune 500 brands are pushing on people in this country. Why are we feeding this Beast? So economic secession is a big part of this... There are alternatives out there. There's alternatives for just about everything. Just about everything, you can find an alternative...

And that's the other thing to do. We need to start building. We need people who are building. People that are entrepreneurial, people that are thinking outside of the box, what are the services and products that people are going to be looking for in this new economy that are separating from the woke economy? The Fortune 500 economy, let them keep their chaos. And if we do that, we will annihilate them. Without any violence. All we have to do is collectively aggregate our purchasing power, and stop buying their products and services. That's it that's all it's going to take.

This succession is not geographic yet, but in the next 5 or 10 years it would not surprise me if we start to see a movement in certain key red states, for secession, and that's the reality. I hope that it's peaceful. But it's just the reality of where things are going."

(Transcript excerpts compiled by Amy Byrne)

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE



CHINA SOCIAL CREDIT TO-GO? The Vancouver, Canada location of a famed Chinese restaurant chain has just dubiously raised the bar in offering an authentic Chinese dining experience.

The Haidilao Hotpot restaurant has effectively installed a pilot social credit surveillance [system](#), complete with cameras that watch every table. Manager Ryan Pan said the Chinese-made system was installed to “punish” staff if they didn’t adhere to corporate standards. But the system also records and mines customer activity and data.

Incredibly, Pan also admitted that captured video is sent back to China. He declined to specify the reason, except to say it was “secret.”

The Haidilao story might seem bizarrely singular, but as [reported](#) previously in the **Trends Journal**, China is actively pushing its surveillance technologies beyond its borders, including to western nations.

Haidilao, which was founded in Sichuan, China, has 935 worldwide locations, more than 36 million VIP members, and 60,000 plus staff. So, its foray into surveillance systems is noteworthy.

Currently, China’s “social credit system” infamously tracks and records social and financial behavior of its citizenry via a comprehensive, granular surveillance apparatus. Citizens who don’t adhere to approved behaviors and activities are penalized, stripped of rights, and worse. Disfavored persons and even whole populations including the Uighurs face a horror show of internment, culling of body parts for organ transplants, and enslavement.

Of course, perhaps China is also learning a thing or two about nuance from American-based technology giants like Google and Facebook, which have

wielded their tremendous influence and captive user bases to politically suppress and manipulate public discourse and political activity, and push experimental COVID vaccines to an unwilling populace.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES



PAYPAL ACCOUNTS CAN NOW BE USED ON COINBASE. PayPal announced it is allowing customers to link their PayPal account to Coinbase, making it easy for them to utilize PayPal to buy cryptocurrencies and other blockchain tokens and assets.

Coinbase users will have an option to link a PayPal account as a method of payment for cryptos on the exchange. There will be a purchase limit of \$25,000 a day of cryptos purchased via PayPal accounts.

PayPal currently has a user base of more than [377 million](#), and its new integration with Coinbase is expected to draw many people who've been watching cryptos from the sidelines into utilizing them.

Earlier this month, PayPal made news announcing that its peer-to-peer (P2P) payment app Venmo would include crypto functionality. Venmo users can already buy, sell, and hold Bitcoin, Ethereum, Litecoin, and Bitcoin Cash, and users can convert their digital currency into fiat to complete transactions at checkout.

In reporting on the news, the payments industry website pymts.com also noted that Social Finance has begun allowing customers to redeem crypto-delegated rewards earned through their app. Rewards can be redeemed in Bitcoin or Ethereum, with 2 percent cash back rewards deployed.

Pymts.com summed up the news by [positing](#): “Wallets, exchanges, rewards... bit by bit, might we be moving toward cryptos’ critical mass?”

MOVERS OF THE WEEK. Major cryptos in general recovered off lows the week prior. Ethereum climbed more than most and was flirting with \$3,000 by the weekend.

Earlier news that the European Investment Bank (the EU’s lending institution) issued its first-ever blockchain-based bond, likely boosted Ether. Issued Wednesday, the bond is worth €100 million. Underwriter money is being represented as “CBDC” (central bank digital currency) on the Ethereum public blockchain. The bond is set to mature in April 2023.

The development has been hailed by [some](#) as a crypto milestone. Improved market transparency, reduced costs from intermediaries, and quicker settlement speed were all cited by EIB vice president Mourinho Félix as reasons for the digital bond initiative. “Digital bonds will play a role in giving the Bank a quicker and more streamlined access to alternative sources of finance to boost finance for projects across the globe.”

Ripple (XRP) Caught A Wave

Ripple, currently the world’s fourth-largest cryptocurrency, saw \$233 million in institutional investment inflows this past week. It has been one of the best-performing cryptos in April. According to [CoinShares](#), the global digital assets under management reached \$64 billion for the first time.

News that Ripple Labs might be [close](#) to settling a suit brought by the Security Exchange Commission (SEC) figured into last week’s action. In December 2020, the SEC alleged Ripple was selling unregistered securities and argued that Ripple should be classed as a security instead of a commodity.

But Ripple has maintained that XRP is a virtual coin used as a medium of exchange for international and domestic transactions. Ripple further added that

XRP is an asset that is perfect for payment processing because it's quick and scalable.

According to wiki, Ripple was designed to facilitate “secure, instantly and nearly free global financial transactions of any size with no chargebacks.”

Ripple lost a place on the Coinbase exchange as a result of the SEC suit. But news of a possible IPO that might follow a settlement has buoyed the blockchain project.

BITCOIN WHALES MOVING OFF EXCHANGES. Holders of large amounts of Bitcoin have made large moves in March and April, according to Whale Alert, a blockchain tracking and analytics firm.

On 29 April, one so-called “Bitcoin Whale” took 3,671 BTC off the Coinbase crypto exchange, which represents an estimated \$194 million in current value.

Earlier April [moves](#) from exchanges into more privately-controlled digital wallets have been reported by industry sites. And nearly \$1 billion worth of Bitcoin left Coinbase within 24 hours in late March.

Large BTC wallet addresses accumulated nearly 90,000 coins during the first three weeks of April, according to crypto analytics platform Santiment.

Industry observers say the latest moves might be tied to increased institutional adoption. For example, early last week, Nexon, Japan's top gaming firm, purchased 1,717 BTC for approximately \$100 million.

According to MicroStrategy, Nexon is holding nearly \$5 billion worth of Bitcoin in total.

TRENDS ON THE COVID WARFRONT



PAKISTAN: NEW COVID RULES. LOCKDOWN ALERT

In its fight to win the COVID War, Pakistan announced that from 5 May to 20 May, it will cut international flights into and out of its airports by 80 percent.

The restrictions will come into effect as Istanbul considers implementing a nationwide lockdown due to an increase in COVID-19 cases.

The *BBC* reported that Pakistan was reporting 16,000 cases in the first week of March, and now that number has swelled to 140,000 in April. Prime Minister Imran Khan said the country could be headed for disaster because there are fewer than one doctor of 963 people, the report said, there are over 5,200 patients in the intensive care units

“Right now, the national positivity rate is 11 percent,” Fawad Chaudhry, the minister for information, said, according to the paper. “If it goes up to 14 or 15 percent, we will have no choice but to move toward a lockdown.

The country has already deployed troops within major cities to make sure people are obeying mask mandates and other guidelines. The paper said travel between cities will be banned from 8 May to 16 May. Those dates impact the Muslim holiday Eid al-Fitr.

TRENDPOST: *Unreported in media coverage of Pakistan’s impending lockdown is the fact that among its population of 224,453,453, since last March, 18,070 people died of the virus... or the grand total of 0.00805 percent over the course of 14 months, which is only 0.00057 percent per month.*

Also absent in the mainstream media is that while the government imposes COVID restrictions, according to The Lancet, air pollution kills some 135,000 people, most of them children, each year. (See article [here](#).)

EGYPT LOCKDOWN: NEW MUMMIES NOT BRINGING TOURISM BACK

The once-thriving tourism industry in Egypt has been decimated by lockdowns and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Officials in the country hope that recent finds can lure back some of the market.

But since the COVID War was launched in 2020, the country, like others that depend on tourism, suffered a 69-percent drop in international visitors during the first eight months of 2020, according to *The New York Times*.

The country has been promoting a recent discovery of about 100 wooden coffins, which included some that contained 2,500-year-old mummies. Khaled el-Enany, the country’s tourism and antiquities minister, told the paper that besides the coffins, funerary masks and other statues were located in Saqqara,

a town outside Cairo. There was also a 3,400-year-old city discovered in the country.

“This unique site is still hiding a lot,” he said, according to the paper. “The more discoveries we make, the more interest there is in this site and Egypt worldwide.”

The country spends a significant amount of money on upkeep. *The Times* reported the country spent \$6.6 million over 14 years to renovate the Djoser’s Step Pyramid, which is 4,700 years old.

“Tourism in Egypt just had one of its best years in 2019, and then came the pandemic which severely impacted it all,” the general manager of one of the country’s largest tour operators told the paper.

Reuters reported the country hopes to make about \$7 billion in 2021 and see about 60 percent of the tourists it had in 2019, with a particular eye on Russia.

TREND FORECAST: *It should be noted that Egypt, a nation of 103 million people, has recorded 3,500 virus deaths since the COVID War began in 2020, or 0.0131 percent of its population. Over 14 months, that virus death rate equals the tiny fraction of 0.00093 percent per month.*

Yet, as if economic conditions weren’t bad enough before the COVID War broke out – and tourism, which accounts for 15 percent of the country’s GDP, is now dying – it will get worse.

A week ago Sunday, Egypt’s President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi declared another three-month extension of a nationwide state of emergency.

FRANCE RELAXING COVID CURFEWS



President Emmanuel Macron announced on Thursday that by mid-May, the country plans to ease its COVID-19 measures impacting bars and restaurants and will lift the ban on domestic travel.

Local reports from the country said Macron announced these initiatives, which begin on 3 May. The *BBC* reported the country will largely be reopened by 30 June. Macron said a “health pass” will be required for individuals wanting to attend large events.

“The health pass should not be mandatory for access to everyday things such as restaurants, theaters, and cinemas or to go see friends. But for places with big crowds, such as stadiums, festivals, trade fairs, or exhibitions... it would be absurd not to use it.”

The *BBC* report pointed out the country of 67.06 million has recorded 5.57 million cases and a total of 104,079 deaths since the start of the pandemic.

On 30 March, the **Trends Journal** published the article, “[FRANCE, GERMANY, UK, DENMARK, CANADA: UPDATES](#),” which mentioned the criticism Macron faced for not ordering a lockdown earlier in the country’s third wave of infections. Macron said at the time that there “won’t be a mea culpa from me.”

The New York Times reported that Macron said schools would reopen during the week of 3 May, along with museums and movie theaters. France’s number of COVID-19 cases has been dropping in recent weeks and is down to 27,000 daily cases from 35,000.

“We must recover our French art of living while remaining prudent and responsible: our conviviality, our culture, sports,” Macron said.

Cafes and restaurants will be allowed to serve indoor dining by mid-June. At around that time, foreign tourists will also be allowed to enter the country as long as they have been vaccinated or had a PCR test. There will still be an 11 PM curfew.

Yesterday, the government lifted its domestic travel ban and permitted secondary and high school students to return to school. Outdoor terraces, cafés, and restaurants have to stay shut down until 19 May.

TRENDPOST: *The Trends Journal has been reporting on the rise of Marine Le Pen, the leader of the National Rally party and Macron's biggest challenger in the 2022 Presidential election. Ms. Le Pen's popularity is rising as the disgruntled country seeks an end to the COVID War, which has destroyed the tourism business and has forced bars, restaurants, and many businesses to be closed – on and off – for months.*

The New York Times' report cited Hans Kluge, the World Health Organization's top European official, who cautioned these countries that are easing restrictions that dangerous variants like B.1.1.7 are still circulating in the public and can "inflict devastating effects."

"It's very important to realize the situation in India can happen anywhere," he said.

We have noted how freedom has been stolen from We the People and millions of lives and livelihoods have been destroyed by so-called "health officials" who have not provided one shred of scientific data to support their wide array of lockdown rules and who do not have to worry about receiving their next paycheck.

TURKEY LOCKS DOWN



Turkey, which has a COVID-19 death rate of 0.8 percent, announced last Thursday it will begin to enforce its first full lockdown amid what is being called a “third wave” of infections.

The country of 82 million has recorded the grand total of 39,000 virus deaths since the COVID War broke some 14 months ago.

A person who works in Istanbul’s tourism field told *CNBC* there are fears the lockdown will “destroy the people who want to earn money for their beloved ones as the economy was hit terribly even before corona.”

The *CNBC* report said the tourism industry in Turkey sank 72 percent in the first 11 months of 2020.

As we have been reporting, the country has been hit hard by high inflation; unemployment keeps rising; and its currency, the lira, keeps hitting new lows against the U.S. dollar.

President Tayyip Erdogan said the country is in a war with a “triangle of evil,” which includes interest rates, inflation, and exchange rates, *Reuters* reported. He said about \$165 billion from central bank “sources” were used to stabilize the economy.

Agathe Demarais, a global forecasting director at the Economist Intelligence Unit, told *CNBC* that the country’s inflation is at 15 percent, and youth unemployment is at 25 percent.

“As a person in the tourism field, we are also struggling because of the badly managed Corona situation by the government as after [the lockdown announcement] there were cancellations of the very few reservations we had.”

The *CNBC* report said another source of consternation was an alcohol sales ban from 29 April to 17 May. The report said secular Turks did not like the idea of the government essentially telling them they can’t have a drink inside their own home. The hashtag #alkolumedokunma, which means “don’t touch my alcohol,” trended on Turkish Twitter.

TREND FORECAST: *Turkey’s economy will continue to weaken, inflation will continue to rise, and its currency will fall to new lows. As social unrest escalates, the ruling government will distract public dissention by ramping up war with the Kurds, increase its military presence in Syria, ramping up its conflict with Greece over disputed drilling, and increase military and financial support to the Ukraine government in its fight against separatists who align with Russia.*

Indeed, as Gerald Celente has noted, “When all else fails, they take you to war.

GERMAN COVID SURVEILLANCE STATE: SS 2.0



Last week, Germany announced plans to surveil those who the Gestapo 2.0 has labeled as “coronavirus-deniers.”

The New York Times reported the country’s federal government believes these individuals – who have been identified as conspiracy theorists – pose a growing risk to the state.

“Our basic democratic order, as well as state institutions such as parliaments and governments, have faced multiple attacks since the beginning of the

COVID-19 pandemic,” the country’s Interior Ministry said, according to the report.

The report said many of the deniers have identified themselves as part of the QAnon movement and have flashed anti-Semitic signs.

The Times reported that the movement has been referred to as *Querdenken*, which means “lateral thinking.” Many of the members follow certain social media accounts on the encrypted social media platform Telegram.

Many took part in a protest that occurred in Berlin in April to voice outrage over new lockdown orders. The *BBC* reported that the anti-lockdown demonstrations have attracted support from the far-right AfD party and anti-vaxxers. Members of the “Reichsbuerger” movement, which denies the existence of the modern German state, have also joined the movement, *Reuters* reported.

The report said these so-called anti-lockdown extremists do not fit one mold, and they include members of the far-right and far-left communities, thus the country’s intelligence officials created the blanket category of “actions that delegitimize the state, thereby threatening the constitution.”

Reuters reported that the movement began during a small protest in the German city of Stuttgart in 2020 but has grown due to the increasing frustrations in the country over lockdown orders. Germany says the group is building off of this anger. According to *Reuters*, Angela Pley, a BfV spokeswoman, said,

“Legitimate protests against the coronavirus politics are being repeatedly and increasingly exploited to provoke an escalation...”

Organizers of demonstrations, which are mainly led by protagonists of the Querdenker movement, have an agenda that goes beyond protesting against the state’s measures against the coronavirus.”

Oliver Nachtwey, a sociology professor in Basel, told the paper it is a “very heterogeneous movement.”

“It’s a turning away from the political system,” he said. “And it’s being done with a sort of regressive rebelliousness.”

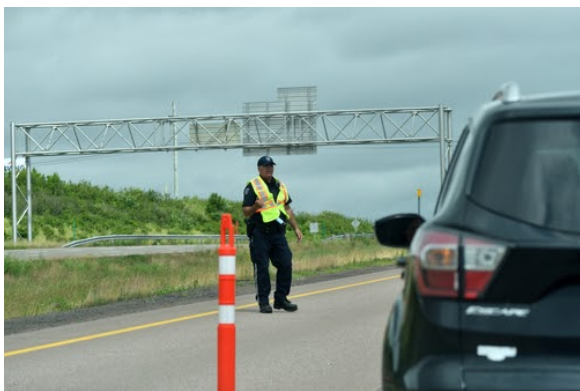
TREND FORECAST: *The trend continues. Anyone – race, creed, color does not matter – who does not believe in and/or does not want to fight the COVID War will be labeled a traitor by governments and must be closely watched. And in the hi-tech world of surveillance, every step you take, every breath you make, they’ll be watching you.*

And those who do not believe what their politicians and bureaucrats tell them will continue to be denounced by the media and politicians as “conspiracy theorists.”

Again, we maintain our forecast for strong anti-vax and anti-establishment movements across the globe.

TRENDPOST: *Our 19 January article, “[TWITTER’S KING MULLS MORE CENSORSHIP](#),” defined QAnon as a conspiracy theory in which there is a high-ranking government official known as “Q” who has been dropping cryptic clues on online message boards. One of the theories, according to the AP, is that President Trump was waging a secret campaign against enemies in the “deep state” and a child sex-trafficking ring.*

NOVA SCOTIA’S COVID WAR: LOCK THEM UP, CLOSE IT DOWN



The owner of a restaurant in the town of Middle Sackville, Nova Scotia, was ordered by a court to pay a \$1,000 fine for not wearing a mask in public. The owner, John Giannakos, told the court he will both refuse to wear a mask in the future and not pay the fine.

“A lot of people have been badmouthing me and my restaurant, but I don’t care,” Giannakos said. “It doesn’t matter anymore. Public health killed restaurants and bars 12 months ago.”

He told the station he is tired of politicians and bureaucrats “running our lives, telling us what’s good for our health. Is that really freedom?”

Giannakos owns the Hellas Restaurant and was reportedly found guilty of not wearing a mask in public.

Lock Down

Nova Scotia’s Premier Iain Rankin also declared that anyone breaking his public gathering mandate would be hit with \$2,000 fines, and businesses that do not enforce self-isolation guidelines face up to \$7,500 fines.

In Rankin’s 27 April speech, he declared the province will be in a “circuit-breaker.”

Rankin said mutations of the virus were spreading through the province, so he called for the closures of nearly all indoor activities, including weddings, funeral services, and schools.

Dr. Robert Strang, the chief medical officer, told the paper the situation is more serious than any other time since the start of the COVID-19 outbreak. Health officials in the country have asked residents not to travel unless it is urgent, and the entire region has been placed on a month-long lockdown.

“We are seeing the stresses on many parts of our healthcare system such as public health, the lab, and we’re beginning to see impacts on our hospitals,” he said. He said the variants that are appearing require the government to “act faster, be firmer, and have a broader reach.”

CBC News reported that three additional people were slapped with the \$1,000 fines for not wearing masks in public. The report said police in the province have been benefiting from a public that appears willing to alert authorities to these violations.

“If individuals see people they believe or not following the directives given by Public Health, then we would encourage them to contact police,” Const. John MacLeod of the Halifax Regional Police told the station.

The report said 22 people were fined \$1,000 for attending a large gathering. It also said a pizza shop owner was fined for not wearing a mask in public, and he, too, said he would not pay because he has a health condition.

TRENDPOST: Indeed, as Mr. Giannakos noted, the politicians and bureaucrats are “running our lives, telling us what’s good for our health. Is that really freedom?”

No, it is not Freedom. As we have continually noted, the rules being imposed on entire populations by politicians and bureaucrats lack scientific data to support them.

For example, Nova Scotia, with a population of 971,000, has registered the grand total of 67 deaths since the COVID War was launched last year. That equals 0.0069 percent of the population who died from the virus.

Despite this tiny fraction – 0.00049 per month over 14 months – tens of thousands of lives and livelihoods in the province have been destroyed while liberty, love, joy, and beauty have been sucked out of life.

COVID LAW: BIG BOX STORES CAN SELL “NON-ESSENTIAL” ITEMS



Small business owners in Nova Scotia have voiced their frustrations over the fact that massive box chains were allowed to stay open during the pandemic because they sell pharmaceuticals and groceries.

But while they continue to sell these items, they also offer customers merchandise like clothing and toys, which critics say gives them an unfair advantage over smaller competitors.

Paul MacKinnon, the CEO of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission, told *CBC News* he had a conversation with government officials about the unfair business advantage these stores have when smaller businesses are forced to operate with curbside pickups. He said he spoke with a few deputy ministers who said the province does not have any intention to limit these stores to what they can sell. MacKinnon said,

“It does create a little of an unfair playing field... Technically, you can go into Walmart and you can buy a bike, but you can’t go into an independent bike shop on one of your main streets because they are closed. So what happens if you go to Costco to buy groceries and a bike? We don’t have the answer to that yet. It’s something that we’re going to try and monitor.”

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has been reporting on how the virus outbreak and subsequent lockdowns have allowed the rich to get richer. (See our 5 January article, “**RICH GETTING RICHER: MUSK & BEZOS RAKING IT IN**” and our 13 April article, “**TECHNOCRATS WIDEN WEALTH GAP THANKS TO PANDEMIC.**”)*

Global News reported that 70 percent of Nova Scotians work for small businesses. The province has offered grants to small businesses, but many

owners say there are hurdles, and new businesses without a 2019 tax return do not qualify for financial support.

MONTREAL: COVID PROTESTERS FLOCK TO STADIUM



Thousands of protesters took to the streets outside Montreal's Olympic Stadium on Saturday to voice their contempt for lockdown orders, vaccine passport mandates, curfews, etc.

So strong was the demonstration, the vaccination site closed down for the day.

City police handed out over a dozen tickets to demonstrators allegedly in violation of social-distancing measures and mask mandates. Later that evening, police shot tear gas into the crowd to break up the protests.

"From the very beginning, this is not normal," one protester dressed in white told *CBC News*. "The reaction of all governments in the west is absolutely not normal. First, they should leave people who are healthy in peace, and test and isolate those who are sick and treat them. There are a lot of good treatments that you can do at home."

Regarding the made-up rules being imposed on the population, a woman told the *CBC* reporter, "Why do we need to go home at eight? Like, COVID doesn't stop existing after 8 o'clock," she said.

Another woman told the *Montreal Gazette*, "We're here to support the cause, to stop the restrictions, and to go back to a normal life."

TRENDPOST: Since the COVID War began, of the 8.4 million people who live in Quebec, 11,944 have reportedly died from the virus or 0.142 percent of the population. On average, 0.01015 percent died per month since that time.

And, from 26 April to the day the protesters took the streets, just one person died of the virus.

CANADIAN JUDGE: THROWING A PARTY COULD BE A CRIME



The Canadian Press published an article last Friday about a provincial judge, Ellen Gordon, when sentencing a citizen to one day in jail and a \$5,000 fine for the minor infraction of failing to comply with a health officer's order and unlawfully purchasing alcohol, added the heavy

threat of potential manslaughter.

The man being charged was accused of holding a party for about 80 people in a condominium.

The judge referred to the event as “a crime, not a party,” and scolded the accused:

“If someone who had been at your party was infected and died, as far as I’m concerned, you’re guilty of manslaughter. If someone who had been at your party was infected and passed it on to grandma, as far as I’m concerned, you’re guilty of manslaughter.”

According to the article, the accused man, Mohammed Movassaghi, “apologized to the judge and to the public for his ‘grievous error of judgment.’” The article reported that the chastened Mr. Movassaghi has since been

“following the public health orders to a ‘T’ including adhering to the mask mandate.”

Some Canadian legal experts agreed with the judge. Professor Lisa Durfaimont of York University law school stated, “When you do a dangerous act that’s also a lead offence under the legislation, and if that were to lead to someone’s death, that could be manslaughter.”

A manslaughter charge could result in life in prison.

The article did note that another law professor, Isabel Grant, who teaches at the University of British Columbia’s law school, responded, “I think it’s technically possible that the Crown could substantiate a manslaughter charge, but I think it’s highly unlikely.”

TRENDPOST: *We note this article not only to illustrate the intensity of the COVID War, the loss of freedoms, and the extreme punishments for those disobeying lockdown rules, but also the overt government hypocrisy.*

Using the judge’s one-sided logic, it would then hold true that she should declare the companies that keep pumping trillions of tons of chemicals and pesticides into our food, water, air, and earth “guilty of manslaughter.”

*Of course, that won’t happen. As the **Trends Journal** has been noting for years, it is punishment to the fullest extent of the law for We the People and a slap on the financial wrist for big corporations, the Wall Street Gang, and the Bankster Bandits for their crimes against humanity.*

OFFICE RUMORS: “BIG BANG” IS COMING



In addition to New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio and Governor Andrew Cuomo proclaiming last week that the city is reopening (see our new article, [“NEW YORK: READY TO REOPEN. CALLS FOR MASS VAX,”](#)) *Bloomberg* reported last Tuesday that JPMorgan Chase CEO

Jamie Dimon issued a staff memo that the bank “would fully expect that by early July, all U.S.-based employees will be in the office on a consistent rotational schedule.”

The article clarifies Dimon’s reference to “rotational schedule” as “50 percent occupancy cap until U.S. authorities revise their social-distancing guidelines.”

Bloomberg noted that JPMC would be the first significant bank requiring a return to the office: “Industry leaders have been preparing for an end to remote work since the earliest months of the pandemic last year.”

The *Bloomberg* article also cited that Dimon “expects economic and social damage to result from a longer stretch of working from home” and that the head of Goldman Sachs Group Inc. referred to the necessity of remote-working to be an “aberration” requiring a quick turnaround.

One of those most pleased by these statements is Bill Rudin, CEO of one of the city’s largest office landlords, who told *Bloomberg*,

“This is fantastic news and the fact that it’s JPMorgan and Jamie Dimon—this will send a very positive message to other CEOs, not just in New York but around the country, to start making plans to on-board their employees.”

In addition, JPMorgan will “strongly encourage” its staff to get vaccinated, but will not mandate it.

Other large banks such as Citigroup and Deutsche Bank AG are also expecting some workers to return to the office. Wells Fargo & Co. announced it would like to see a “more normal operating model.”

To date, the office occupancy rate in New York City is 15.8 percent according to Kastle Systems.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have reported and detailed when the COVID War broke out in March of 2020 and New York and other states locked down, the commercial real estate sector would be hard hit... which it has been.*

While the media is making a big deal about JPMorgan’s honcho calling the team back to work and making it appear that others will follow, as detailed in our numerous reports, we disagree.

Moreover, with the massive amounts of debt the big private equity and other investment groups, which own large chunks of the commercial sector, owe the banks, it is clear that the “Come back to work” Bankster cheer is solely out of fear they won’t be paid when the landlords go bust.

BIDEN: MASKS & VACCINES LEAD TO “NORMAL LIVING”



On 27 April, President Biden pointed to vaccines as helping the country “get back to more normal living.”

Alluding to the CDC recommendation that masks don’t have to be mandatory 100 percent of the time when outdoors, the

president encouraged citizens to get together socially and enjoy fresh air and recreation “as long as you are vaccinated.”

The New York Times, in its 28 April Coronavirus Update, noted that President Biden “set an example” by walking up to the podium with a mask on, removed it before he spoke, and kept it off as he was walking back to the White House, saying he wanted people to see him “take it off and not put it back on until I walk back inside.”

Americans Still Scared

Considering that Americans have been so beaten down by the yearlong barrage of anxiety from political leaders and Presstitutes constantly selling COVID Fear and Hysteria, they are reluctant to take off their masks. As *The New York Times* reported last Thursday:

“The new mask guidance from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which says that vaccinated people can go barefaced in most outdoor settings, is a baby step back to normalcy. But after the trauma of the past year, many Americans are finding it difficult to uncover their faces so quickly—let alone return to their old ways. Do we shake hands now? Hug? Dine indoors? These are questions made more complicated by ever-changing rules, which can vary from state to state and even among neighborhoods.”

TRENDPOST: In the NYT’s “Coronavirus Update” last Thursday, they quoted CDC Director Rochelle Walensky who said she was “hopeful” now that infectious cases in the U.S. dropped 20 percent since 12 April.

It should be noted this is the same director of the CDC who, just a few weeks ago, said she felt “impending doom” due to increases in coronavirus cases (even though the fatality rate has been significantly dropping since the beginning of last fall.)

COVID-19 & OBESITY: THE ELEPHANT IS STILL IN THE ROOM



While President Biden insists the vaccines are going to save the day from the terror of COVID-19 (see our new article, [“PRESIDENT BIDEN: MASKS & VACCINES LEAD TO ‘NORMAL LIVING’”](#)), he and the mainstream press continue to question the sanity of anyone refusing to

line up and get vaccinated.

Yet, they continue to ignore a much “bigger” issue. As the **Trends Journal** has been reporting for the better part of a year, the fact that 72 percent of the American public and approximately the same percentage in the U.K. are either clinically obese or significantly overweight is one of the major reasons both countries, despite expensive health systems, are among the world leaders in COVID fatalities.

In our article 25 August article, [“THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM,”](#) we wrote:

On 10 June, the medical journal *BMJ* published an editorial citing the high-risk factor of those who are obese contracting COVID-19 and calling on governments to take a more active role in educating and helping to prevent the rise in obesity.

One author, Professor Graham MacGregor of the Queen Mary University of London, said, “I think people have recognized now that based on every study you look at – including the early studies in China which were open studies, then from Europe, then from New York – they all show obesity increases the severity of COVID-19 and increases mortality.”

Stating what has been virtually taboo in the mainstream media and among politicians, he said, “If you’re elderly and male and obese, I would be

seriously worried and would do anything to try and lose weight and eat more healthily and take more exercise.”

Now, some ten months later, there is still no significant mention of obesity in regard to COVID vulnerability. Yet, there is now new evidence that obesity and illness are even more of a problem for younger people than older.

Last week, two major sources, the medical journal *The Lancet* and Oxford University, published data showing a clear connection between obesity and the rising number of young people showing up in hospitals with COVID-19. *The Lancet* study published last Wednesday stated:

“People with excess weight, even without other comorbidities, are at substantially increased risk of admission to hospital and ICU and death due to COVID-19, especially for younger adults and Black people. Excess weight is a modifiable risk factor and investment in the treatment of overweight and obesity and long-term preventive strategies could help reduce the severity of COVID-19 disease.”

The Oxford University data reported by *Russia Today* last Saturday showed:

“The likelihood of Covid-19 leading to hospitalization, intensive care unit (ICU) admission and death increased with weight. However, the risk was far greater for overweight patients between the ages of 20 and 39. On the other hand, high BMI did not appear to affect whether those aged 80 to 100 suffered from serious cases of the virus.”

Does the mainstream press take notice? Of course not. Last Friday, *Microsoft News* published the headline:

More younger people being hospitalized with COVID-19

But no mention in the article about obesity.

On 7 April, *CNBC* posted the headline:

**Hospitals are seeing more young adults with severe COVID symptoms,
CDC says**

But no mention in the article about obesity.

And last Wednesday, *Microsoft News* joined the press bandwagon with the headline:

**In Michigan, more and more young people are being taken
to hospital with COVID-19, and cases are higher in teenagers
than any other age group**

Once again, no mention of obesity.

TRENDPOST: *On 8 March, the CDC reported the vast majority of Americans who contracted the virus and were hospitalized, put on a ventilator, or died from COVID-19 were either obese or overweight. Their report stated that between March to December 2020, 27.8 percent of these victims were overweight, and 50.2 percent were obese.*

Again, as we note, with some 70 percent of Americans overweight, of which 42 percent are obese, the U.S. is #1 in COVID deaths.

(See our 26 January article on the link between obesity and COVID: “JUNK FOOD VS. COVID-19: THE WINNER IS?” and our 28 July article, “COVID VICTIMS: THE BIGGER THEY ARE, THE HARDER THEY FALL.”)

MASK FLEXIBILITY: THE NEW EXIT RAMP TO FREEDOM?



Said the great American patriot Thomas Paine in 1777: *“We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free.”*

In 2021, as the cover of this **Trends Journal** clearly shows, the “fight” is gone, and the politicians and bureaucrats tell the people what to do and when to do it.

Last week, the CDC and the “health experts” declared Americans are free – sometimes – to not have to wear a mask.

The *Associated Press* wrote:

“The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eased its guidelines Tuesday on the wearing of masks outdoors, saying fully vaccinated Americans don’t need to cover their faces anymore unless they are in a big crowd of strangers. And those who are unvaccinated can go outside without masks in some cases, too. The new guidance represents another carefully calibrated step on the road back to normal.”

Normal? As **Trends Journal** readers are aware, it’s been well-known scientifically for a better part of a year that virtually no one was getting infected while outdoors.

On 16 June, in our article, [“MAKES NO SENSE” RULES: THE NEW ABNORMAL,](#)” we wrote about one of the lockdown advocates, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy:

Absent a shred of scientific fact, Governor Murphy announced he would allow up to 100 people to meet outdoors (up from 25). And if everybody

were good boys and girls, the limit would be raised to 250 by 22 June, then to 500 on 3 July.

On 19 May, in our article, “[MENTALLY ILL POLITICIANS CREATING MENTAL ILLNESS](#),” we wrote:

In fact, even *The New York Times* noted in a 17 May article on beach openings and closing in in New York, ‘Many experts have said the risk of the virus being transmitted outdoors is fairly low.’”

But There’s a Catch

No surprise, the CDC relaxing the mask mandate outdoors comes with a caveat: Get vaccinated:

“The mask guidance is modest and carefully written: Americans who are fully vaccinated against the coronavirus no longer need to wear a mask outdoors while walking, running, hiking or biking alone, or when in small gatherings, including with members of their own households.”

Following its strategy of emphasizing fear and anxiety around the virus, the CDC, according to *The New York Times*:

“Stopped short of telling even fully vaccinated people that they could shed their masks outdoors altogether—citing the worrying risk that remains for transmitting the coronavirus, unknown vaccination levels among people in crowds and the still-high caseloads in some regions of the country.”

Only at the end of its long article did *The Times* admit to the growing pushback against unscientific restrictions on daily freedoms:

“The C.D.C.’s new guidance was issued amid growing debate over why the federal government was still recommending that people wear masks outdoors. Writing in *The New England Journal of Medicine* last week, Dr.

Paul Sax, an infectious disease expert at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Massachusetts, said it was time to end outdoor mask mandates."

TRENDPOST: *Despite the CDC suggesting that vaccinated people do not have to wear masks outdoors and the numerous studies, such as the one from MIT we reviewed in last week's **Trends Journal** of the very low odds of catching the virus outdoors, young and old in most states remain masked-up. (See our 27 April article, "[MIT CHALLENGES SOCIAL DISTANCING RULES](#).")*

Moreover, The Journal of Infectious Diseases has noted: "Five identified studies found a low proportion of reported global SARS-CoV-2 infections occurred outdoors (<10%)."

HANDWASHING MANIA CREATING MORE GERMS



StudyFinds.org recently published the article titled, "Handwashing is clogging up sinks with nasty disease-causing bacteria."

Research from the University of Reading in the U.K. confirms that "bacteria can stay alive and grow in the pipes beneath sinks after people wash them off. The problem may be worse than ever, as surveys find some people are washing 15 times a day during COVID."

This is yet another example of how the fear and anxiety lockdown advice from government health advisors reacting to the spread of COVID-19 has been causing more health issues than the virus itself.

Lead author and doctoral student Zoe Withey said,

"The bacteria that live in our sink drains are shaped by what we are directly putting down them... While we expected that bacteria from the gut would

have a greater impact, caused by the wider environment of a bathroom, it seems that by and large the bacteria living on the skin of our hands are feeding the community in the drains beneath sinks.”

The study found that pipes provide an ideal environment for bacteria to grow. They reported samples were taken from 123 sinks in “non-clinical” settings, such as toilets and bathrooms in social and teaching areas.

Looking at the plumbing beneath the sinks, the team discovered microbe communities dominated by a group of bacteria called Proteobacteria, which include a breed of germs such as disease-causing strains like Salmonella and E. coli.

One of the researchers suggested,

“It is possible to spread bacteria to the surrounding areas of your sink, where they can grow and persist. Reducing transmission of bacteria requires thorough disinfection of the sinks and surrounding areas and not just getting your hands wet.”

TRENDPOST: As we reported on 9 April 2020, which was near the beginning of the COVID War, America’s fear-spreading, self-proclaimed “top infectious disease” expert, Dr. Anthony Fauci, declared,

“I don’t think we should ever shake hands ever again, to be honest with you. Not only would it be good to prevent coronavirus disease – it probably would decrease instances of influenza dramatically in this country.”

The **Trends Journal** has been on top of the “excessive fear of germs” issue that people like Fauci and others keep spreading. In our 16 February article, **“ANTIBIOTICS IN BABIES CAUSING MAJOR HEALTH CONCERNS,”** we wrote:

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.”

In our 3 November article, “[MASK MADNESS](#),” we pointed out how long-term mask-wearing worsens the wearer’s exposure to germs, as it causes a “Re-breathing of germs and viruses already in the body, raising the concentration in lungs and nasal passages.”

And, just last week, we showed how America’s #1 infectious disease expert had been promoting germ-o-phobia in our article, “[SELLING FAUCI SANITIZER FRAUD](#).”

CUOMO COVID COVER-UP CONTINUES



As we have reported, on 23 November 2020, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo was presented with an International Emmy Award in recognition of his leadership in fighting the COVID War. (See article [here](#).)

Bruce Paisner, CEO of the International Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, said Cuomo’s COVID briefings managed to create “television shows, with characters, plot lines, and stories of success and failure. People around the world tuned in to find out what was going on, and New York tough became a symbol of the determination to fight back.”

Beaming in the spotlight, New York’s leader, holding his Emmy, declared,

“I wish I could say that my daily COVID presentations were well-choreographed, scripted, rehearsed or reflected any of the talents that you advance. They didn’t. They offered only one thing, authentic truth and stability. But sometimes that’s enough.”

Turns out the “authentic truth” was a big lie.

According to an article published in *The New York Times* last Thursday, it is now revealed that Cuomo and his top aides:

“Engaged in a sustained effort to prevent the state’s own health officials, including the commissioner, Howard Zucker, from releasing the true death toll [in nursing homes] to the public or sharing it with state lawmakers, these interviews and documents showed.”

As reported by the **Trends Journal** back on 18 August in our article, “[N.Y. NURSING HOME COVID DEATHS: CUOMO CAN’T COUNT](#),” the *AP* reported at that time:

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

Now, according to the recent *Times* article:

“The effort by Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo’s office to obscure the pandemic death toll in New York nursing homes was far greater than previously known, with aides repeatedly overruling state health officials over a span of at least five months, according to interviews and newly unearthed documents...

The actions coincided with the period in which Mr. Cuomo was pitching and then writing a book on the pandemic, with the assistance of his top aide, Melissa DeRosa, and others.”

Back in March 2020, as the virus was spreading intensely in New York City, Cuomo forced nursing homes to accept patients discharged from hospitals after

being treated for COVID-19, which led to thousands of nursing home residents dying from the virus.

As *The New York Times* writes:

“By the time the policy was rescinded, less than two months later, it became clear that not all the deaths had been included... Those who died after being transferred to hospitals were not counted as nursing home deaths... The full data on nursing home deaths was not released until this year after a report by the state attorney general in January found that the official tally may have undercounted the true toll by as much as 50 percent.”

Back on 12 October, Cuomo was asked in a telephone press conference when he would finally release an accurate number of COVID-based nursing home fatalities. He responded, “On the numbers, a lot of politics is being played.”

The obscuring of facts surrounding the spike in deaths due to Cuomo’s edict by aids of the governor, as confirmed by *Times* article, “is the subject of a federal investigation, one of at least four overlapping inquiries into the governor and his administration.”

TRENDPOST: Gerald Celente and the ***Trends Journal*** were among the first in the media to detail Cuomo’s COVID incompetency. And while *The New York Times* is now making a big issue of Cuomo’s nursing home debacle, this was the rag that steadily pumped him up as a COVID War hero.

Yet, despite the steady stream of negative Cuomo articles currently in the press, in democratic New York State, he still ranks relatively high in the polls.

As of last week, according to a Siena poll, the governor’s favorability rating among Democrats was 56 percent, with 57 percent saying he is doing a good or excellent job as governor

TRENDS IN THE VACCINE ROLLOUT



HONG KONG: NO JAB, NO JOB, NO FREEDOM

Hong Kong has taken a move to require its foreign domestic workers in the city to be vaccinated against COVID-19 or lose their job.

The *Guardian* reported the city announced a new measure that would make testing for these 370,000 workers mandatory and also require them to receive a vaccination. The paper said residents have called the initiative discriminatory against these individuals because many come from countries like Indonesia and the Philippines.

Eman Villanueva, a spokesperson for the Asian Migrants Coordinating Body, told the paper the move is “discrimination and social exclusion of these workers at its worst.”

“It’s because to them we are easy targets and scapegoats. It’s because they know we don’t have much choice but to follow their discriminatory, illogical, and unreasonable impositions or end up jobless.”

Dr. Law Chi-kwong, Hong Kong’s labor minister, called these workers susceptible to the virus, thus a “high-risk group.” He said,

“In the long run, we need to think about how to get more domestic workers vaccinated. We will impose new requirements when they apply for work visas, including that they must get inoculated with recognized vaccines when they renew their contracts.”

While Hong Kong eased some COVID restrictions last Wednesday and announced the reopening of bars, nightclubs, and karaoke parlors, the government made it mandatory for patrons to show their Vax Passport before entering.

TRENDPOST: *The “You Must Get Vaccinated,” trend will continue to accelerate across the planet. Governments will declare that people are free to not get the COVID vax, but those refusing the jab will not be permitted entrance into public spaces, businesses, events, etc.*

As this trend gains momentum, there will be strong opposition from those who refuse to get vaccinated and from workers and business owners who were forced to get the COVID shot that they did not want. Thus, the greater the mandatory vaccine initiatives by governments grow, the faster anti-vax movements will accelerate.

Also, as we have reported in detail, the word from the Drug Lords (labeled “Big Pharma” by politicians and Prostitutes) is that to stay COVID-safe, a jab each year will be required.

NEW YORK: READY TO REOPEN. CALLS FOR MASS VAX



Last Wednesday, Governor Andrew Cuomo declared he plans to ease coronavirus restrictions next month, which includes lifting the curfew for New York City restaurants.

The curfew mandate will expire on 17 May for outdoor dining and 31 May for indoor areas. The state will also allow dancing during catered events as long as the participants wear masks and maintain social distancing.

“To be clear: we will only be able to maintain this process if everyone gets the COVID vaccine... otherwise we risk going backward,” Cuomo said.

Mayor Bill de Blasio announced Thursday that the city will “fully reopen” by 1 July. He told *MSNBC* that stores and offices will be able to operate at “full strength.”

“This is going to be the summer of New York City,” de Blasio said. “You’re going to see amazing activities, cultural activities coming back. I think people are going to flock to New York City because they want to live again.”

De Blasio told *NPR* that the vaccines have proven to be effective in protecting people from COVID-19 variants, and he said he was pleased that 6.3 million New Yorkers, out of a city of about 8.3 million, have received vaccinations.

The report pointed out that the American Museum of Natural History is hosting a vaccination drive under its famous blue whale exhibit and then giving those who receive the jab free access to the museum.

TRENDPOST: As Gerald Celente said when the COVID War was launched and rules on social distancing, crowd-size limitations, curfews, mask-wearing, etc.,

were being imposed on citizens without scientific data to support them: “They’re making this crap up.”

Indeed, how can anyone listen to New York City Mayor Bill “Warren Wilhelm” de Blasio with a straight face when he announced a full reopening for 1 July? Why not 15 June or 5 June?

There is no reason. On 1 May, New York City had a seven-day average of 3,560 new cases. Back in August and September, when stringent restaurants and bar rules were imposed, the city maintained a seven-day average of about 750 new cases.

We are relieved to hear that de Blasio will give his blessing for restaurants, stores, and movie theaters to operate at full capacity, but in what world does a former “Public Advocate” – whatever that is – get to determine what businesses survive as a result of his mayoral dictates and where residents can shop?

Pushing the “Get Vaxxed” government protocol, the mayor pinned his hopes on that New Yorkers “have gotten vaccinated in extraordinary numbers.”

TRENDPOST: *Absent in the cheerful glow of Mayor de Blasio and Governor Cuomo’s crowing about New York City reopening was the devastating ghost town they created with their lockdown edicts. As we reported in our 6 October article, “AS GOES NYC, SO GOES THE U.S.A.”:*

New York City has been pushed into an economic death spiral by the state’s Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Bill de Blasio who both have imposed tyrannical restrictions. Having destroyed thousands of businesses and hundreds of thousands of lives, their lockdown rules served as a powerful sedative for the “City that never sleeps”... which is now slipping into a coma.

From Wall Street to Times Square, from Broadway to the Meat Packing District... East Side, West Side, all around the town, the “light fantastic on

the sidewalks of New York” are burned out. There’s no dancing in the street.

Midtown is no town. Dead and empty. Bars are barren, Broadway is locked down, restaurants are closed, stores are boarded up, hotels closing down, tourists are gone, homicides are skyrocketing... from uptown to downtown, homeless fill the streets.”

Yes, the City has come back to some extent since then, but it is a shadow of what it used to be. The office occupancy rate is only around 15 percent according to the latest data and tourism is at a fraction of what it used to be.

The owner of the Empire State Building told The New York Times that 70 percent of the building was occupied in 2019, now only about 48 percent is.

And as we have forecast, with more people doing a large portion of their work from home, as commuter numbers fall, so too will many of the businesses that relied on them fail and the commercial buildings where they worked will go under.

UPDATE: BAD & UGLY, UPS & DOWN



quality-control problems.”

Last Friday, the *Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC)* reported that recently imported doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine were blocked from use after confirmation they came from the same U.S. manufacturing plant “mired in

Last month, it was revealed that 15 million doses of the vaccine had been contaminated at the Emergent BioSolutions plant in Baltimore.

The *CBC* report noted: “Health Canada’s pause on the J&J shot is a setback for the country’s efforts to continue ramping up vaccinations amid a raging third wave of the pandemic.” Health Canada had originally given the stamp of approval to the vaccine back in March and then “had updated its labelling on Monday to acknowledge the risk of rare but serious blood clots.”

Yesterday, Denmark stopped its J&J COVID-19 vaccine rollout. The statement read:

“The Danish Health Authority has concluded that the benefits of using the COVID-19 vaccine from Johnson & Johnson do not outweigh the risk of causing the possible adverse effect, VITT, in those who receive the vaccine. Therefore, the Danish Health Authority will continue the Danish mass vaccination programme against COVID-19 without the COVID-19 vaccine from Johnson & Johnson.”

TRENDPOST: *In the world of overt hypocrisy, if anyone in the medical field outside the government were to question the efficacy and dangers of the J&J jab, they would be censored by the mainstream and social media and denounced as “conspiracy theorists.”*

More Trouble in AstraZeneca Paradise

The *Wall Street Journal* reported last Friday that executives of the large British/Swedish pharmaceutical company AstraZeneca, which produces one of the COVID vaccines on the market, “have struggled to pull together the full data necessary to apply for U.S. approval... further delaying its efforts to secure the Food and Drug Administration’s go-ahead.”

The company announced it will apply for Emergency Use Authorization by the middle of April, however, it concedes it will take at least until mid-May to complete the necessary documents for FDA confirmation.

Important to note is that on 9 April, *Time* magazine reported:

“While the AstraZeneca vaccine is not yet authorized in the U.S., about 25 million people around the world have received it, and in March, after dozens of reports of blood clots occurring mainly in younger people who received the shot, and about 18 deaths, many countries temporarily halted vaccination.”

Moderna & The Three-Billion-Dose Jackpot

The *Wall Street Journal* reported last Friday that Moderna Inc, makers of another popular COVID vaccine in use, plans to spend billions of dollars to triple its dose output in 2022, citing increased global demand.

This follows last week’s report that Moderna reached an agreement with Israel, which includes options for variant vaccines. The company’s chief executive, Stephane Bancel, said, “We really believe that the virus is going to keep evolving fast with new mutations and that variant boosters are a must for us to stop this pandemic.”

Note: As previously reported in the **Trends Journal** in our 20 April article, [“U.S. GOV’T PLEDGE: \\$1.7B TO FIGHT COVID VARIANTS,”](#) the “variant” scare is unsubstantiated by data:

Ignoring the solid scientific data, the Biden administration is allocating \$1.7 billion of the \$1.9 billion American Rescue Plan to “tackle” so-called dangerous variants. This even though in the U.K., only 9 percent of tests conducted found variants.

UPDATE: SLOWDOWN IN GETTING THE VAX



In our 1 December 2020 issue, we reported that although COVID vaccines had not been rolled out yet, the Ad Council had plans in play for the general public to buy their “It’s great to get vaccinated” sales pitch.

Lisa Sherman, the Ad Council’s chief executive, told *The New York Times*, “We’re working in advance so that once those vaccines are proven to be safe and approved by all the right people, we’re ready to go.”

Since then, despite over \$100 million having been spent in the “Get Vaccinated” promotional push from political leaders, “health experts,” and a massive celebrity campaign... the U.S. has reported jab declines over the past two weeks.

Last Thursday, *The New York Times*, under the sub-heading “Slowdown,” reported that “President Biden last night celebrated the speed of the country’s vaccination program. And he deserves a lot of credit for it,” and “the U.S. has given at least one shot to more than half of adults.”

They noted, however, that “the average number of daily shots have declined almost 20 percent in the past two weeks.”

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation Poll initiated in March:

“20 percent of U.S. adults said they would either not get vaccinated or would do so only if required. Another 17 percent said they wanted to wait until the vaccine had been available for longer and they could see how it affected others. Put those two groups together and you could see that the country is starting to run low on unvaccinated adults who are eager to get a shot...”

In the U.S., the vaccination slowdown is alarming precisely because of how bad COVID is, and how powerful the vaccines are.”

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been forecasting, rules will continue to be put in place that will make it difficult for people to travel, work, and play if they do not get a COVID vaccination.*

What is barely mentioned in the media, but as we have been reporting, are the significant amount of police and military personnel who are resisting the jab. Yet, when the stories are run by the media about this class of vax resisters, Presstitutes do not denounce them as conspiracy theorists or categorize them as anti-vaxxers.

On the military front, however, the White House will declare that all troops must get the vaccine... and many cities and states will pressure the police to get the COVID shot as well.

While many will succumb to the pressure, there will be resisters among them, who will, in turn, join the anti-vax movements we forecast will arise in many nations, states, and cities.

GET VAXXED, TAKE A CRUISE



Good news for the tens of millions of Americans who’ve lost their jobs, had their businesses destroyed, and are suffering from isolation and anxiety due to the prolonged lockdown: You can soon line up at an “All you can eat” buffet on a cruise ship.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported last Thursday that the CDC now says it’s OK for cruise operators to resume sailings “as early as mid-July.”

This new “freedom,” however, will depend on vaccinations:

“The CDC, in a letter to cruise-industry leaders Wednesday evening, also said cruise ships can proceed to passenger sailings without test cruises if they attest that 98 percent of crew members and 95 percent of passengers are fully vaccinated.”

Showing its “progressive” side, the CDC has agreed that instead of the more-involved PCR test for COVID, it will allow the 5 percent passengers who aren’t COVID-vaxxed to take a rapid test.

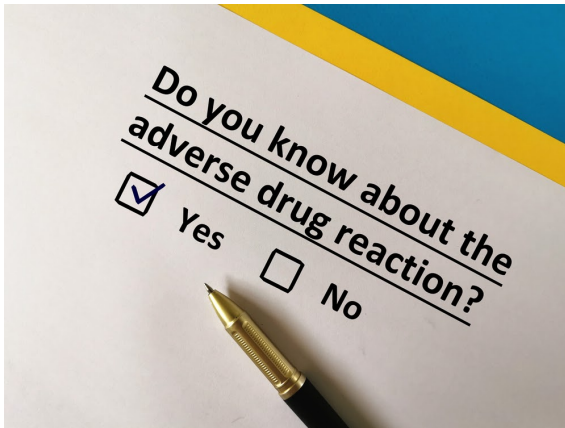
And the other “big” freedom the CDC is offering is that “passengers will be able to quarantine at home if they are within driving distance.”

Before issuing this letter, all cruise ships were restricted under orders since last fall that required operators to “conduct test cruises and apply for a certificate at least 60 days before offering passenger cruises.” Under the new, “more relaxed” rules, the CDC will “review and respond to applications for simulated voyages within five days.”

TREND FORECAST: Celebrating the good news, the Wall Street Journal notes that “the loosening of the requirements brings cruise operators, which have lost billions of dollars over the past year, closer to the opportunity of generating revenue.”

Considering the demographic makeup and psychographic characteristics of those who take cruises, we forecast that by 2022 there will be a strong bounce-back in the cruise industry.

VACCINE FAST FACTS



Serious adverse reactions and deaths in the U.S. from experimental COVID vaccines by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna continue to mount. In four months of use, the numbers surpass all reported deaths from all vaccines dispensed in the U.S. over the last 20 years.

According to the VAERS medical reporting system authorized by the FDA and CDC, data as of 23 April shows 118,902 reports of adverse events following COVID vaccines, including 3,544 deaths and 12,619 serious injuries:

Table		
Event Outcome	Count	Percent
Death	3,544	2.98%
Permanent Disability	1,595	1.34%
Office Visit	19,213	16.16%
Emergency Room	33	0.03%
Emergency Doctor/Room	16,521	13.89%
Hospitalized	8,149	6.85%
Hospitalized, Prolonged	16	0.01%
Recovered	45,575	38.33%
Birth Defect	88	0.07%
Life Threatening	2,436	2.05%
Not Serious	45,375	38.16%
TOTAL	† 142,545	† 119.88%
† Because some cases have multiple vaccinations and symptoms, a single case can account for multiple entries in this table. This is the reason why the Total Count is greater than 118902 (the number of cases found), and the Total Percentage is greater than 100.		

Source: VAERS Data Queried by National Vaccine Information Center (nvic.org)

In Europe, 7,766 deaths and 330,218 injuries have resulted so far following injections of the four COVID vaccines approved for emergency use there. That's according to EudraVigilance, the EU-authorized medical reporting system. The data is current through 17 April 2021, and it covers the four months since the vaccines were first distributed in late December.

Among categories with the most significant adverse reactions and conditions (compiled by Health Impact News):

- 99,747 General disorders and administration site conditions including 1,397 deaths
- 63,051 Nervous system disorders including 393 deaths
- 51,699 Musculoskeletal and connective tissue disorders including 44 deaths
- 32,024 Gastrointestinal disorders including 216 deaths

The vaccine by British pharmaceutical firm AstraZeneca has made the most news for problems, and it has been halted from use in some countries, including Denmark and Norway. Other countries, including Ireland, Italy, and the Netherlands have restricted the use of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

But vaccines of other pharmaceuticals, including Pfizer and Moderna, are showing mounting numbers for serious adverse events. The Pfizer vaccine has been associated with 4,293 deaths and 144,607 injuries in the EudraVigilance database. The vaccine from AstraZeneca has been associated with 1,360 deaths and 169,386 injuries.

TRENDS IN GEOPOLITICS



ISRAEL ACCUSED OF APARTHEID BY HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH

A growing number of Israelis and international groups have accused the country of operating apartheid-like conditions in its treatment of Palestinians both within the country and in occupied areas, *The New York Times* reported.

Human Rights Watch executive director Kenneth Roth told *The Times* that the “oppression of Palestinians there has reached a threshold and a performance that meets the definitions of the crimes of apartheid and persecution.”

The paper reported Palestinians have been making the claim about the conditions there since the 1960s. President Jimmy Carter agreed with this back in 2006, and there is a growing number of Jewish human-rights groups that also make the claim.

While not comparing Israel to apartheid-era South Africa, Human Rights Watch said according to standards imposed by the international community, when one

racial group dominates over another via inhumane acts of oppression, that, too, is apartheid.

Predictable

Israel rebuffed the allegations, with an adviser for President Benjamin Netanyahu telling *The Times* the “apartheid slur is indicative of an organization that has been plagued for years by systemic anti-Israel bias.”

The country’s U.N. ambassador Gilad Erdan told the paper the allegations approach blatant anti-Semitism, and the apartheid term was falsely used, which, in turn, nullifies “the legal and social status of millions of Israeli citizens, including Arab citizens who are an integral part of the state of Israel.” Other defenders say using the term “apartheid” threatens the existence of the Israeli state.

In our 5 February article, [“ICC TO PROBE ISRAELI WAR CRIMES,”](#) we reported that Israel has recently faced international scrutiny over allegations of war crimes during the 2014 Gaza War (“Operation Protective Edge.”) Israel called the International Criminal Court’s decision to investigate in February a politically-motivated move. Palestinians praised the move. The Biden administration also criticized the ICC’s move.

Muhammad Shtayyah, Prime Minister of the Palestinian Authority, called the decision to investigate a “message to the perpetrators of crimes, that their crimes will not be subject to a statute of limitations, and that they will not go unpunished.”

The Times’ reported that Human Rights Watch noted the West Bank is a good example of living under a two-tiered system. Palestinians in some areas live under military rule, unlike Israelis, the report said. The report accused Israel of forcibly moving Palestinians from their homes and refusing to provide basic civil rights to millions.

Human Rights Watch said its goal was not to undermine Israel but simply wants the country to correct its ways.

TRENDPOST: *As for continually labeling those who criticize Israel for being in violation of international law as “anti-Semites,” some 20 years ago, its attorney general accused the state of imposing apartheid measures:*

“We enthusiastically chose to become a colonial society, ignoring international treaties, expropriating lands, transferring settlers from Israel to the occupied territories, engaging in theft and finding justification for all these activities. Passionately desiring to keep the occupied territories, we developed two judicial systems: one - progressive, liberal - in Israel; and the other - cruel, injurious - in the occupied territories. In effect, we established an apartheid regime in the occupied territories immediately following their capture. That oppressive regime exists to this day.”— Israel’s former Attorney General Michael Ben Yair, 3 March 2002

TRENDPOST: *Israel took control of the West Bank from Jordan in the 1967 war. Since then, in addition to destroying Palestinian houses and buildings on the land they seized, they have been, and continue, to build massive “settlements.”*

As reported by Bloomberg in January 2020:

“Almost a tenth of Israel’s Jews live in east Jerusalem and the West Bank, outside their country’s recognized borders. The population of Jewish settlers in the West Bank has grown four times faster than Israel’s itself since 1995. Settlers regard themselves as inhabiting land that is rightfully theirs. A different view is held by the International Court of Justice, a branch of the United Nations, which Israel regards as biased against it. The court concluded in a 2004 opinion that Jewish settlements in what it calls occupied Palestinian territory are illegal.”

Under international law, Israeli settlements are illegal. They violate Article 49 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 that states, “The Occupying Power shall

not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the territory it occupies.”

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

As for Israel’s “settlement” intentions, they were made clear by one of the nation’s respected leaders:

“We must define our position and lay down basic principles for a settlement. Our demands should be moderate and balanced, and appear to be reasonable. But in fact they must involve such conditions as to ensure that the enemy rejects them. Then we should manoeuvre and allow him to define his own position, and reject a settlement on the basis of a compromise solution. We should then publish his demands as embodying unreasonable extremism.”

— Chief of Intelligence General Yehoshafat Harkabi, Ma’ariv, 2 November 1973

CHAD: PROTESTS ESCALATING



Several protesters were killed in Chad on 27 April as thousands took to the streets to voice their contempt over the appointment of Gen. Mahamat Idriss Déby as leader of the Transitional Military Council shortly after his father’s killing – a move many in the nation condemn as a coup.

His father, Idriss Déby – an autocratic ruler of a government noted for its rampant corruption – had the backing of the French and the U.S. in the fight against Islamic militants in the Sahel. (In last week's issue, we pointed out that the term "militants" is broadly used by western nations and the media to describe military forces that want to overthrow governments and leaders they support.)

Idriss Déby obtained power in a 1990 coup and ruled the nation until he died on a battlefield on 19 April... allegedly defending the country from rebels. U.S. officials said details of his death were murky.

Protesters vs. Military

The *Associated Press* reported that police in the capital fired tear gas on protesters and "demonstrators carried signs demanding that the power in the country be handed back to its people." There were reports that security forces in the country used live ammunition on protesters in N'Djamena and Moundou.

The United Nations reported about 700 protesters have been arrested. The U.N. appealed to the government to abide by its "obligations under international human rights law to protect and respect human rights, including the right to life, and to facilitate the exercise of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly."

Chadian forces faced off with the rebels accused of killing the former leader, and the country said on 29 April "security forces finished dealing" with them, indicating they had been neutralized. *France 24* reported on Friday that "several hundred" rebels were killed during consecutive days of fighting. Sixty-six other rebels were captured, and six Chadian soldiers died in the conflict.

Rebels from the same group said they do not recognize the son as the leader.

The French government supports the Chadian troops despite condemnations for human atrocities. These troops also joined French forces in 2013... when France built military bases and regained power in their former colony, Mali. (See our 13 April article, ["FRENCH AIR STRIKE IN MALI: MASS MURDER OF INNOCENTS."](#))

TRENDPOST: *In contrast to the France-led military intervention, China has included Mali as part of its massive “Belt and Road” initiative. China has begun the construction of a hydroelectric dam in the northern part of the country and continues to initiate large infrastructure projects.*

As Gerald Celente has continually noted, “The Business of China is Business. The business of America is War. The 20th century was the American century. The 21st century will be the Chinese century.”

UKRAINE VS. RUSSIA: WAR OR PEACE?



Ukrainian troops that have been sent to the Donetsk region of the country have been squaring off with Russian separatists for nearly seven years. Although Moscow recently withdrew some of its forces from the border, many see no end in the standoff that has killed 14,000, according

to a report.

“The conflict with Russia will continue in the next 10 to 15 years,” Oleksiy Arestovych, a national-security adviser to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky, told the *Wall Street Journal*. “They will not leave us alone.”

The report said there have been almost 9,000 cease-fire breaches in April, and Kyiv reported the deaths of more than 30 troops in Donetsk. The *Associated Press* reported that armed rebels in the region seized government buildings and declared “people’s republics.” Russia has denied claims it has been providing these rebels with weapons and troops.

The **Trends Journal** reported in our 27 April article, “[PUTIN PUTS PRESSURE ON UKRAINE](#),” that Russia announced it was moving the 100,000 troops

deployed to the border with Ukraine back to their home bases by 1 May, which was seen as a major de-escalation in the region.

TREND FORECAST: *In our 13 April article, “**BIDEN PLEDGES ‘UNWAVERING SUPPORT’ FOR UKRAINE**,” we reported that Russia claimed these forces were put into place to prevent a looming Kyiv massacre on Russian separatists in the eastern region.*

In March, the United States sent a \$125 million military aid package to Ukraine.

Should war break out in Ukraine, we forecast the Russians will not be defeated, and the Donbas region of Eastern Ukraine will move toward cession and maintain its open border arrangement with Russia.

MYANMAR: PROTESTS CONTINUE, POVERTY RISING



As we have been reporting in the **Trends Journal**, since 1 February, tens of thousands of protesters in Myanmar have taken to the streets to fight for democracy after a military coup overturned recent election results and arrested the civilian

leader, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who reportedly won by a landslide this past November.

The protests have turned deadly. A recent report said the double-impact of the COVID-19 outbreak and the coup will essentially erase a decade of economic development and plunge about 12 million of its citizens into poverty.

The *Financial Times* reported Saturday that if the situation on the ground does not improve, it could result in half of the country's 54 million citizens sinking below what is considered the poverty line of about \$1 a day in 2022. The U.N. Development Program told the *FT* that even before the coup, the virus outbreak threatened the livelihood of millions in the country.

The International Monetary Fund said in a 12 April report that 39 million people around the world may slide into extreme poverty this year – defined as living on \$1.90 a day or less – in addition to the 124 million that fell into extreme poverty in 2020.

Myanmar's economy has been decimated by violent protests and massive strikes.

TRENDPOST: *The vast majority of the population hasn't a clue of what is going on in Myanmar, where the country is, and what it means. Just as there is no concern about the slaughter going on in Yemen, the uprisings in Chad, the war in Ethiopia, etc., and the socioeconomic and geopolitical implications... which we continue to detail.*

*The **Trends Journal** has extensively covered the conflict in Myanmar. (See our 30 March article, [“MYANMAR: ANOTHER DAY, MORE BLOODSHED,”](#) and our 13 April article, [“MYANMAR MILITARY RAMPS UP ATTACKS ON PROTESTERS.”](#))*

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 the country.

Furthermore, the stronger 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.

On Sunday, Myanmar security forces opened fire on protesters, killing at least eight. Reuters reported that the organizers of the protest billed the event as “the Global Myanmar Spring Revolution.”

In the near term, the military will take measures to accommodate the protesters. In the long run, as they did when Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was in power, the new leader will be only a figurehead, and the military will remain in full control.

ETHIOPIA WAR = TIGRAY SLAUGHTER



As the **Trends Journal** has been reporting since November, the war in Ethiopia's Tigray region has resulted in a mass exodus and slaughter of those living in the area at the hands of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed, the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2019.

The stated reason for Ahmed's government launching the major offense against the Tigray's was because they held an election in September in violation of a countrywide voting ban due to the virus outbreak. He blamed Tigray leadership for violating "the constitution and endangering the constitutional system."

As we have been reporting, there have since been numerous reports of human rights atrocities committed by neighboring Eritrean troops along with Ethiopian forces.

Last week, the *Associated Press* said they were provided evidence from those who fled the area and made it to Sudan of mass killings and rampant sexual abuse... and that the Ethiopian government's mission is to ethnically cleanse the country of the Tigray's.

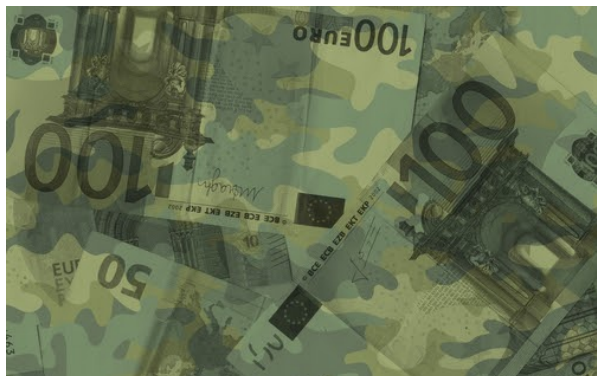
TREND FORECAST: *The Tigray war, launched by the Ethiopian government, has been essentially blacked out from the rest of the world. There are no news reporters in the Tigray region providing firsthand information, thus the true extent of the war, how many have been killed, and the damage done are only estimates.*

However, as we have forecast, the greater the tensions rise and the deeper the nation falls economically, the more people in this highly-populated nation will

seek refuge in safe-haven European nations. This will, in turn, boost populist political party movements throughout the Eurozone.

Beyond Ethiopia, as we have been reporting, this trend will escalate, as economies throughout Africa continue to decline and civil unrest intensifies.

MILITARY SPENDING INCREASES AS ECONOMIES DECLINE



Countries have increased their military spending worldwide by 2.6 percent in 2020, during a year of economic challenges due to the coronavirus outbreak, according to a report.

“We can say with some certainty that the pandemic did not have a significant impact on global military spending in 2020,” Diego Lopes de Silva, a researcher with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute’s Arms and Military Expenditure Program, said, according to *DW*. “It remains to be seen whether countries will maintain this level of military spending through a second year of the pandemic.”

The report said total military spending rose to nearly \$2 trillion. Its share of the GDP expenditures rose to 2.4 percent, which marks the biggest jump since 2009, the *DW* report said. The report pointed out that the U.S., China, India, and Russia were the top four countries in military expenditures and amounted to 62 percent of the world’s total.

The U.S. remained the top spender, and, in 2020, it increased its military expenditures by 4.4 percent to \$778 billion.

TRENDPOST: *These findings were barely reported in the mainstream media. While much of the world’s population suffers from the destruction of the COVID*

War, which has destroyed lives and livelihoods of billions, politicians keep stealing more of We the People's money to enrich the military-industrial complex.

Do you want to help reverse the trend? Join us on May 29 at our "Unite for Freedom, Peace & Justice" rally in Kingston, New York, and [please donate what you can](#) in the name of Peace.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW



MIGRANTS: COME ON IN. COVID DON'T COUNT

Some politicians in cities near the U.S. border with Mexico have raised concerns with the influx of migrants and the lack of COVID-19 testing for new arrivals.

Douglas J. Nicholls, the mayor of Yuma, AZ, told *The New York Times* that before a city medical center took over testing these individuals for the virus, they would be dropped off on the side of a road without having been tested.

“It’s completely crazy,” he said. “It’s not the way we should be handling things during a pandemic.”

Ken Paxton, the attorney general for the state of Texas, filed a lawsuit that claimed the federal government was “encouraging the spread of COVID-19 at the border,” *The Times* reported.

The paper said that Washington insists there simply is not the infrastructure in place to absorb so many people and test them.

John Modlin, the interim Border Patrol chief for the Tucson sector, told the paper it takes up to three hours to process a migrant, and COVID-19 testing would take another 20 minutes. He said that number would need to be multiplied by a thousand people.

“The Border Patrol does not want to get in the business of testing or inoculating people,” Modlin said.

TREND FORECAST: As we have reported, in our 19 January article, “**LATIN AMERICA FACES SLOW, PAINFUL ECONOMIC RECOVERY**,” most of the continent has been devastated by the COVID War, and it will take at least until 2023 to return to pre-pandemic levels, according to the World Bank.

We also noted the region was the world’s slowest-growing before the COVID War was launched. At the end of this year, the region’s economic production will still be 4.8 percent less than in 2019, according to the International Monetary Fund’s forecast.

Thus, as with Africa and hard-hit Asian nations, hundreds of millions of people will do all they can to escape poverty, violence, crime, and government corruption. In turn, there will be strong anti-immigration/populist movements among the countries they are trying to escape into.

SUPREME COURT FIDDLING WHILE AMERICA CHURNS



The same Supreme Court that refused cases brought by Donald Trump and various states regarding alleged 2020 election fraud found time this past week to argue over how “a” should be read in a 1996 immigration-related act.

The case, *Niz-Chavez vs. Garland*, concerned how the government sends deportation notices to nonresidents who have been living in the United States.

The nation's highest court was divided over whether a requirement in the 1996 statute to send "a notice" meant one communication or a communication strung out in several communications, as the Federal government has been doing.

The need for such a question to reach and take up the time of the highest court in the land might strike average Americans as bizarre.

In the aftermath of the controversial November 4th, 2020 election, the Supreme Court rejected several lawsuits brought by the Trump campaign and states on technical grounds. The Court's refusal to hear the merits of the cases contributed to the frustration of millions of voters who believe they were disenfranchised by the widespread reports and indications of illegal voting, mail-in ballot fraud, changes in laws not authorized by state legislatures, and other issues.

That frustration boiled over during a mostly peaceful protest on 6 January 2021 that drew hundreds of thousands to Washington, D.C.

Since then, the Biden administration has used the protest, which briefly saw protesters occupy the Capitol building, to smear, surveil, and even arrest political opposition as "domestic terrorists."

During arguments in the immigration-related case, the Court did show at least some self-awareness of how ridiculous their deliberating would appear to Americans who might be paying attention. Justice Neil Gorsuch said:

"To an ordinary reader—both in 1996 and today—'a' notice would seem to suggest just that: 'a' single document containing the required information, not a mishmash of pieces with some assembly required...

Admittedly, a lot here turns on a small word. In the view of some, too much... But that's not how the law is written, and the dissent never

explains what authority might allow us to undertake the statutory rearranging it advocates.”

In addition to shirking hearing the merits of 2020 election fraud cases, the Supreme Court also has yet to hear any cases involving the use of the U.S. Postal service ICOP program to spy on Americans or significant, recent abuses of power trampling the Constitutionally-guaranteed rights and freedoms of Americans.

FBI USES “DOMESTIC TERRORISM” LABEL TO TARGET POLITICAL DISSENT



Forget foreign-funded Jihadis and drug cartels. Pay no attention to the Communist China-connected agents and organizations embedding into American education, business, entertainment, and political institutions.

Trump supporters and groups like Oath Keepers, made up largely of retired police and former members of the Armed Forces, are the biggest threats to the country.

That’s the assessment of Jill Sanborn, the executive assistant director for the FBI’s National Security Branch. In written testimony provided to the House Finance Subcommittee last week, Sanborn did her best to downplay Jihadi violence, while peddling the myth of violent Trump supporters.

Her remarks also played loose with facts to excuse Antifa and BLM protests that caused dozens of deaths and millions in damage to government and private property across the U.S. in 2020.

“Anti-Government or Anti-Authority Violent Extremists were responsible for three of the four fatal DVE attacks in 2020. Also, in 2020, we saw the first fatal attack

committed by an Anarchist Violent Extremist in over 20 years,” Sanborn asserted in her testimony.

That doesn’t align with readily available data and reports. Even the left-wing *Guardian* news outlet acknowledged in a 31 October 2020 [article](#) that dozens were killed during BLM and Antifa riots in 2020, most as a result of violent acts by left-wing sympathizers or persons with no clear political motive:

“At least 11 Americans have been killed while participating in political demonstrations this year and another 14 have died in other incidents linked to political unrest, according to new data from a non-profit monitoring political unrest in the United States.”

A *Forbes* article from 8 June 2020 titled, “14 days of Protests, 19 Dead” included a detailed list of casualties to that point, surrounding BLM and Antifa protests. Among incidents on the list:

“Dave Patrick Underwood, 53, California: Underwood was shot May 30 while on guard duty outside a federal courthouse in Oakland and was one of two officers targeted in a drive-by shooting amid nearby protests.

Chris Beaty, 38, Indiana: Just a few feet from his apartment, the former Indiana University football player and local business owner was killed on May 30 amid unrest in Indianapolis.

John Tiggs, 32, Illinois: Tiggs was fatally struck in the abdomen by shots fired inside a Metro PCS during lootings in the South Side of Chicago on May 31.

David Dorn, 77, Missouri: The retired St. Louis police captain was killed by people looting a pawn shop after midnight on June 2, according to authorities.”

Sanborn gave lip service to an even-handed approach to domestic violence, vowing that “the FBI would pursue DVEs, like rioters who destroy property and

individuals who commit violent assaults against law enforcement regardless of their political ideology.”

But the FBI has taken zero action against the BLM organization or its leaders, who are literally busy buying mansions in white enclaves, having raked in contributions from government employees and corporations falling over themselves to prove their “wokeness.” This despite BLM protests having caused millions in damage in 2020 and 2021, as well as human carnage.

Meanwhile, the FBI continues to punish and persecute the “Proud Boys” and “Oath Keepers” organizations, as well as non-affiliated 6 January protesters, none of which caused anything even remotely approaching the property damage or violence that have characterized BLM and Antifa riots.

September 2001 to January 2021: Terrorism Laws Turned Against Average Americans

Sanborn’s focus on and smearing of Trump supporters, citing them as more dangerous “looking forward” than Islamic terrorist groups, was even more appalling:

“Looking forward, the FBI assesses DVEs pose an elevated threat of violence to the United States, and that some of these actors have been emboldened in the aftermath of the [January 6] breach of the US Capitol.

We expect Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremists, Anti-Government or Anti-Authority Violent Extremists, and other DVEs citing partisan political grievances will very likely pose the greatest domestic terrorism threats in 2021 and likely into 2022.”

By some compiled [accounts](#), Jihadist terrorists the world over have caused 39,078 deaths since 9/11.

And their activity in America, though systematically downplayed not only by politically correct media but by Federal authorities like the FBI, have included the following in 2021 and 2020 alone:

- **2021.03.22 Boulder, CO:** A migrant from Syria shoots dead ten patrons at a 'Jewish' supermarket after swearing allegiance to ISIS. **10 killed.**
- **2020.10.24 Staten Island, NY:** A young woman is honor-killed by her father over her becoming 'too Westernized' and not wanting to wear the hijab. 1 killed.
- **2020.06.03 New York, NY:** An illegal migrant from Bosnia stabs one police officer and shoots two others while shouting praises to Allah. 3 injured.
- **2020.05.29 Temple Terrace, FL:** A radicalized woman is shot after trying to stab police officers.
- **2020.05.21 Corpus Christi, TX:** A Muslim terrorist opens fire on a navy base, injuring a sailor. 1 injured.

Again, Sanborn's testimony to the House warped and ignored facts and data such as the above.

CHINA: COAL OVER CLIMATE CHANGE



A Chinese official said in an interview that coal power is essential to the country's growth and worries about its carbon footprint will have to take a back seat for the moment, according to *CNBC*.

Su Wei, the deputy secretary of the National Development and Reform Commission, said China's "energy structure

is dominated by coal power,” and “Because renewable energy (sources such as) wind and solar power are intermittent and unstable, we must rely on a stable power source.”

According to the network, Wei also said, “We have no other choice. For a period of time, we may need to use coal power as a point of flexible adjustment.”

CNBC noted that China’s President Xi Jinping announced last September that the country’s carbon footprint would begin to decline by 2030 and plans to reach carbon neutrality by 2060. In just the last year, according to Global Energy Monitor, China built more than triple the amount of new coal power capacity as the rest of the world combined.

The Union of Concerned Scientists identified China as the world’s heaviest emitter of carbon dioxide and the world’s biggest coal consumer. Beijing has also funded half of the world’s coal-fired power plants in 2020, according to *Reuters*.

The U.S. and India were the next two countries, the *CNBC* report said. China’s electricity use increased by 3.1 percent in 2020, the report noted.

The U.S. in March sold about 663,000 tons of coal to China, according to the *South China Morning Post*.

TREND FORECAST: *Despite the push for climate change and the elimination of coal, last year, some 40 percent of the world’s electricity, close to its highest share in decades, was coal-generated.*

According to CarbonBrief, since 2000, the world has doubled its coal-fired power capacity to around 2,045 gigawatts (GW) after explosive growth in China and India. A further 200GW is being built and 300GW is planned.

We have also reported that many developing nations, such as Vietnam and Indonesia, will be building coal-fired plants because it is cheaper.

Thus, until a new power source is invented, the push for “clean energy” is decades away.

BIDEN’S SPEAKS, NOT MANY LISTEN



Last Wednesday, President Biden laid out his plans for the future of the country during a joint session of Congress. In the nation of 332 million, it attracted about 27 million television viewers, which Nielsen reported was “much smaller” than the first speech by

other recent presidents.

The number may come as a surprise since, according to the vote count that has been disputed by his challenger Donald Trump, Biden managed to get more votes than any president in U.S. history in 2020.

The New York Times reported that former President Trump got about 48 million people to watch his first address to Congress. The paper said in 1993, President Clinton attracted 67 million viewers.

TREND FORECAST: *While the nation is divided between pro-Biden and anti-Biden forces, seeing his low viewer ratings further supports our trend forecast for a new, anti-establishment political movement.*

Considering Biden’s announcement to allow 62,500 refugees into the U.S. and his proposal to double that number in the next fiscal year... as with other movements we forecast that will be building across the planet, anti-immigration will be a strong component of the new political parties.

CEOs GET RICHER AS PROFITS TANK & LAYOFFS SOAR



CEOs at major companies that suffered historic losses and fired hundreds of thousands of employees during the COVID-19 War got much richer in 2020, according to a report.

The New York Times reported that the heads of Boeing, Norwegian Cruise Line, and Hilton each earned over \$20 million last year. Frank Del Rio, the chief executive at Norwegian, a company that furloughed 20 percent of its staff, watched his pay double to \$36.4 million. Chris Nassetta, the head of Hilton, pulled in an eye-popping \$55.9 million in 2020, despite a quarter of the corporate staff being laid off due to travel bans and virus fears.

The paper said even though employees at these companies faced unforeseen economic hardships, “the executives in charge were showered with riches.”

The Times pointed out that the people who benefited the most economically during the pandemic were technocrats. Larry Page, the co-founder of Google, saw his fortune increase by \$21 billion in the last four months to \$103 billion.

The paper said the shift is not isolated to 2020. The average CEO at a major company now earns more than 320 times what a typical worker pulls in, the report said. To put it in perspective, the ratio used to be 61 to 1 in 1989.

The *NYT* also reported that compensation grew for the typical worker by 14 percent while CEOs saw their compensation increase by 1,167 percent since 2019.

Robert Reich, the labor secretary under President Clinton, told *The Times* that compensation is a “logical consequence” for the total embrace of “shareholder capitalism,” which started in the 1980s with corporate raiders.

“The pay packages reflect soaring share prices, which in turn reflect, at least in part, the willingness if not eagerness of corporations to cut payrolls at the slightest provocation,” he told the paper.

The Times pointed out that other companies like Tenet Healthcare, a hospital chain, and AT&T furloughed and cut thousands of jobs, but Tenet pulled in a profit of nearly \$400 million. John Stankey, the head of the phone giant, still earned \$21 million.

The paper pointed to Disney and how even when executives pull in a fraction of what they’ve earned in previous years, they still can earn over \$20 million. Disney laid off more than 28,000 employees at theme parks during the COVID-19 shutdowns, yet Robert Iger, who stepped down as chief executive and is now executive chairman, still earned \$21 million.

TRENDPOST: When the COVID War was launched in 2020, *The Trends Journal* had forecast that small businesses would suffer the most, the “essential” Bigs would grow bigger, and the richest would get much richer. Indeed, Oxfam reported that the combined wealth of the world’s richest jumped by \$540 billion last year.

TREND FORECAST: Our “*OFF WITH THEIR HEADS 2.0*” trend from December 2019, forecasting the global rise in anger directed at the 1 percent, was already spreading globally prior to 2020’s COVID War.

As the gap between the rich and poor widens, so, too, will the animosity between the “haves” and “have nots.” And as the Bigs keep getting bigger, income inequality will be a key platform in the formation of new political parties across the globe.

Gated communities will increase in popularity, and more private security will be hired by the haves who will be gangland targets.

THE ART OF TRENDS

“Sanitized Life” by *Stephen Green*



TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE



By *Ben Daviss*

NEW TRANSISTOR ACTS LIKE A BRAIN CELL

At the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), scientists have been exploring the mineral perovskite as a cheaper, more efficient replacement for silicon in photovoltaic cells.

In one test, researchers combined perovskite with carbon nanotubes and shot a laser at the new material. They should have seen a blip of electricity from the combination.

Instead, the current flowed out of the alloy for more than an hour, well after the laser was shut off.

This strange “optical memory,” in which a material can store light as an electric current, had only been seen before under high voltages and unnaturally low

temperatures. In the past, materials also have “remembered” the light as current for a fraction of a second.

But in NREL’s test, the lingering memory took place at room temperature with a low voltage and a low light intensity.

The scientists realized this is similar to the workings of a neuron in the brain: it collects data as a burst of energy and then transmits that news out through a network of other neurons to form a memory, answer the phone, or avoid tripping over the dog.

NREL is now testing arrays of these connected artificial neurons as memory devices.

TRENDPOST: *In the short term, NREL’s new phototransistor could have applications for optical memory arrays in computers or as guidance sensors in self-driving cars.*

But the greater implication is for tomorrow’s computers that combine these devices with artificial intelligence and quantum computers running on light, eventually giving devices the size of a tablet the power of today’s supercomputers.

ROBOTS TAKE THE (FARM) FIELD



The new generation of farmhands is armed with lasers and thinks with artificial intelligence.

Instead of a hoe, Carbon Robotics' four-wheeled weeder patrols crop rows using high-resolution cameras and an

on-board computer to identify weeds, then blasts them to a crisp with its eight 150-watt lasers.

The 9,500-pound can work around the clock, zap 100,000 weeds in an hour, and cover 20 acres a day, the company says.

Carbon Robotics has sold out of its 2021 inventory and is taking orders for 2022.

The U.K.'s Small Robot Company also has an automated weeder, but it's only one of a pair of field robots aiming to give farmers more time off the tractor.

The first squad member is a battery-powered, four-wheeled scanner that can cross 50 acres, or 20 acres, in a day, using GPS to amass data about the location of each plant and each weed.

After collecting as much as six terabytes of data, it trundles back to its shed, plugs itself in to recharge, and sends its data to an artificial intelligence platform that analyzes the health of the plants and suggests steps needed to keep a crop healthy.

That includes weeding, which enlists the team's other automaton, another battery-driven four-wheeler that takes the scanner's details, scrutinizes the fields weed by weed, and fries them with 8,000 volts of electricity.

The gadget analyzes six different wavelengths of light to make sure it's electrocuting harmful invaders while avoiding plants such as veronica, which bees love, or clover that fixes nitrogen in the soil.

This new farm labor force is expensive, but farmers and government agencies are exploring ways to make them affordable, including subsidies and also purchasing through co-ops that could give a dozen or more farmers access to the same machines.

TRENDPOST: *The average age of the U.S. farmer was 57.5 in 2017, according to that year's U.S. Census of Agriculture. The farm force is aging, environmentalists are at war with chemical herbicides, and more consumers are demanding organic foods.*

The future of commodity crops belongs increasingly to farming “clean” with automation and artificial intelligence. Entrepreneurs and investors, take note.

Photo credit: Small Robotics Company

“SPACE FORCE” OF GARBAGE TRUCKS NEEDED



In the past 60 years, earthlings have shot more than 56,000 objects into space, according to the European Space Agency (ESA), with more than half still in orbit but only about 4,000 still working.

That means more than 50,000 satellites, rockets, and other remnants have died or broken apart, creating a field of swirling debris – an estimated hundreds of millions of loose nuts and bolts, paint chips, rocket engines, lens covers, thermal blankets, and so on – that threatens to collide with the satellites we depend on to communicate, drive somewhere we've never been, and other routine tasks.

The danger of collisions and satellite failures is about to rise exponentially with the ongoing launch of so-called satellite “mega-constellations.”

Amazon's Project Kuiper has slated as many as 3,200 satellites to offer broadband access to the world's poor. Starlink, an effort of Tesla offspring SpaceX, has 1,200 orbiters aloft, having launched 350 already this year. A company called OneWeb is planning a phase-one fleet of 650 to surround the planet with web access.

With neither governments nor private launch companies stepping in to pick up after themselves, a Japanese start-up called Astroscale is testing a garbage collection service in space.

Launched March 22 aboard a Russian rocket – which was laden with dozens of other satellites – Astroscale’s “End-of-Life Demonstration” is a device that the company says will gobble trash out of the debris field, then fall from orbit, burning up itself and its accumulated debris as it re-enters the atmosphere.

TRENDPOST: *Astroscale is a nice idea, but burning up a garbage truck once it’s full is hardly practical. Also, space junk comes in different sizes, from bits smaller than a fingernail to ESA’s eight-ton Envisat, a defunct space observatory the size of a double-decker bus. Different means will be needed to collect different kinds of trash.*

When governments and private launch companies realize that the orbiting garbage patch threatens their operations – a realization most likely to dawn after a major crash that cancels key services on Earth – those entities will begin to create a market for researchers and entrepreneurs in a fledgling waste collection industry in outer space.