TRENDSJOURNAL.com | FORECASTING SINCE 1980 | 7 JUNE 2022

THE TRENDS JOURNAL®

HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

TOP 5 WAYS TO SPREAD MONKEYPOX

1 CNN
2 BBC
3 NPR
4 NBC
5 NYT

TRENDS JOURNAL
HISTORY BEFORE IT HAPPENS®

7 June 2022

PUBLISHER
GERALD CELENTE

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
EDMUND DeMARCHE

EDITOR
AMY BYRNE

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

COVER ART
ANTHONY FREDA

How to read the Trends Journal on Kindle devices

Suggested "Text Aloud" pdf readers:
– for android phones search "Voice Aloud Reader" or "ezPDF" on Google Play
– for Apple phones search "PDF Voice Reader Aloud" on the App store

About the TRENDS JOURNAL

Gerald Celente is the Founder/Director of the Trends Research Institute and Publisher of the weekly **Trends Journal** magazine. He is the author of the highly acclaimed and best-selling books *Trend Tracking* and *Trends* 2000 (Warner Books).

With a 40-year track record of identifying, tracking, and forecasting trends, Celente is world-renowned as today's #1 Trend Forecaster. Celente has earned the reputation as a trusted name in trends for his many accurate forecasts; among them the 1987 Stock Market crash, Dot com bust, "Gold Bull Run," the "Panic of '08," the rise of organic foods, and the popularity of gourmet coffee long before Starbucks was a household name.

Self-described as a "Warrior for the Prince of Peace," Gerald Celente is also the Founder "Occupy Peace & Freedom," a not-for-profit movement to honor the Constitution and Bill of Rights and restore Freedoms.

INSIDE

TOP 5 WAYS TO SPREAD MONKEYPOX

Welcome to this week's **Trends Journal**: "TOP 5 WAYS TO SPREAD MONKEYPOX: CNN, BBC, NPR, NBC, NYT"

Another week, another reason not to get out of bed.

The Presstitutes in corporate media are selling a new fear in the form of a virus: monkeypox. The disease has been discovered in 12 states and Washington, D.C., prompting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to raise its warning level to Level 2, which means you should stay cautious, but no need to cancel vacation plans... yet.

We've long documented in **The Trends Journal** that a fearful population is a controllable population.

Meanwhile, there is no end in sight for the Ukraine war and President Volodymyr Zelensky confirmed, again, today that Kyiv will not rest until it recaptures every inch of the country from Russian forces. The comment only means more loss of life and destruction, all while the world gets closer to war with Russia.

And going back to the cover of this week's **Trends Journal**, while the mainstream media keeps selling hate, fear and hysteria, not a peep about peace from the Presstitutes.

The stock market was up today during another volatile session, but a new Wall Street Journal/NORC poll found that Americans are deeply pessimistic about the U.S. economy... and their lives.

According to the poll, for some 83 percent of those polled who feel the state of the economy is poor or not so good... the American Dream has turned into a nightmare. Happy Days are NOT Here Again, 46 percent see no hope that their living standards will improve, according to the poll.

We note these findings to illustrate the great divide between Wall Street and Main Street. What is going on in the equity markets is a gambler's game that has little connection to the plantation workers of Slavelandia.

As always, we at **The Trends Journal**, which is 100 percent advertisement-free, answer only to our subscribers. Thank you. We take great pride in delivering analysis and forecasts to help you prepare, prevail, and prosper now and in the future. Please tell your family and friends about us.

And this week we will be **broadcasting** the "Celente & The Judge" podcast with Judge Andrew Napolitano on Friday at 1 p.m. EST.

Sincerely,

Gerald Celente and the Trends Journal Team

COMMENTS

FED RATE HIKE ROULETTE

Does anyone think that Powell's plan is to intentionally incrementally crash the markets a la 2019/20? I think the Fed may have the specious impression that they can control market crashes and cause a kind of economic controlled burn to peel off some of this inflation like 2019. But they'd really be toying with an all-out forest fire. I just get that idea based on their evasive language. They can't possibly not realize that raising rates has caused every crash in the last 25 or so years.

Brettagher

PAGING SOROS ON THE RED HOTLINE

Soros is the One who is the greatest threat to the world. He better shut up and go to hell as soon as possible.
Unfortunately evil like him will stay here longest. There is no threat of World war III if everyone just leaves Russia and Ukraine alone and let them figure out their business. But big money is involved...they can't possibly allow it to stop. They are sending more and more money because war is a very profitable business. Makes me sick....Maybe actually not a bad idea that this World blows up....it's hell anyway...

GALG

NATURAL HUMAN: FUTURE TREND

My rabbit hole took me to a place where unvaxxed female breast milk along with unvaxxed mens semen will be in great demand in the near future due to the toxins present in the covid vaxx. This is a mega trend for this decade.

malvarez

MANDATING SOCIAL CONTROL

Yea, all over Houston, we get to see those giant, lighted highway signs that flash the "news" alerts in text as we push along in the congested traffic. Mostly for "SILVER" alerts... which I guess is for old folks that have dementia? Apparently there's been an ongoing and silent epidemic since those signs were installed across Houston! I have my suspicions for the NWO tactics ahead.... Maybe in the near future, the targeted individual or Enemy of the State will be the one whose information is in the text, as a false alert, therefore there's a reason for him/her to be pulled over. They love reasons to pull people over. That's why the seatbelt law was invented!! Well, no... That's all for safety, I'm sure....

Patrick Houston

MEGA DROUGHT MANIPULATION?

What is the connection between chemtrails, weather manipulation, and haarp type facilities ability to move the jet stream and modify high and low pressure systems, thus creating droughts.
If you were among the Bill Gates of the world and were looking to dominate and control water and food in the neo-feudal future and you could buy up farm land after a major drought?

After gutting the middle class with a plandemic, do you see a pattern here?
At what point do we open our eyes and examine these things?

Derek Dammers

TRENDS ON THE ECONOMIC AND MARKET FRONT

ECONOMIC AND MARKET OVERVIEW

Back in 1932, when the Great Depression had hit America, the Democratic candidate running for President of the United States, Franklin D. Roosevelt, declared the hit tune “Happy Days are Here Again,” as the party’s official campaign anthem. It was a huge hit, and in 1986 it was awarded by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) as the "Most Performed Feature Film Standards on TV."

Here are some of the lyrics:

> Happy days are here again
> The skies above are clear again
> So let's sing a song of cheer again

Happy days are here again

All together shout it now
There's no one
Who can doubt it now
So let's tell the world about it now
Happy days are here again

Your cares and troubles are gone
There'll be no more from now on
From now on (here is the song.)

Indeed, from the Roaring 20's to Swing, from immigrants to the upper class, from black to white, the United States of America was the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

That was then, a time when America was a world leader in sound and style and the message of the nation was to lift the spirit and warm the soul.

Those Happy Days are gone. The skies are cloudy. There are no songs of "cheer again"... it's one bad Rap.

The U.S. has been in a long decline, but the COVID-19 lockdowns were the final nails in the emotional coffin. Joy and spirit in the country were extinguished when states and cities imposed draconian mandates on We the People in their fight to win the COVID War.

Now, even with today's economic conditions, far above the Depression doldrums, the heart of the nation has sunk into sadness:

Pessimistic Mood Deepens

> *Americans are deeply pessimistic about the U.S. economy and view the nation as sharply divided over its most important values, according to a new Wall Street Journal-NORC Poll.*

> *The findings are from a Journal survey conducted with NORC at the University of Chicago, a nonpartisan research organization that measures social attitudes. The survey found Americans in a sour mood and registering some of the highest levels of economic dissatisfaction in years. The pessimism extended beyond the current economy to include doubts about the nation's political system, its role as a global leader and its ability to help most people achieve the American dream.* ([Wall Street Journal, 7 June 2022](#))

Yes, for some 83 percent of those polled who feel the state of the economy is poor or not so good… the American Dream has turned into a nightmare.

Over one-third of those polled said their financial situation is unsatisfactory.

Bingo! *The Wall Street Journal* reported that was the highest level of dissatisfaction since it began the poll a half-century ago.

And, as for the middle class shrinking, just 27 percent said they have a good chance of improving their standard of living, which was a 20-point drop from last year's poll. Adding to the Happy Days are NOT Here again, 46 percent see no hope that their living standards will improve.

Worse than during the Great Recession of 2007-2009 when, 33 percent of those polled said their financial conditions have deteriorated over the past two years, now nearly 40 percent feel they have fallen into the financial doldrums.

For 60 percent of those polled, the American dream is dead… it's a nightmare.

What is their view of what destroyed the state of the nation?

The WSJ quoted Robert Benda, a 69-year-old retired telecommunications worker who said, "I'm angry. Our government is doing what's right for their special-interest groups, and everybody else be damned."

We note these findings to illustrate the great divide between Wall Street and Main Street. What is going on in the equity markets is a gambler's game that has little connection to the plantation workers of Slavelandia.

The WSJ-NORC poll also noted that as a result of high inflation —spending more to buy less—people have dug deep into their savings, which, according to Gregory Mannarino will get worse so, "PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR THE NEXT INFLATION WAVE" (in this issue).

Indeed, today, regular gas in the U.S. hit a new record and got closer to the $5 per gallon mark. Jumping 62 cents in the past month, the AAA said the national average price for regular gasoline costs $4.92 a gallon.

In its report to clients, the Goldman Sachs gang upped its forecast for Brent Crude from $125 a barrel to $140 a barrel between July and September.

What is missing from the "news" is that while oil is hitting the business and consumer sectors hard, when the Panic of '08 hit, Brent was selling at 145 a barrel.... yet, the economic implications of its rising prices were not as severe as they are today.

Misery Loves Company

Adding to the economic misery which drags down the human spirit, today, the World Bank warned the world that it is heading into 1970s era stagflation and cut its global growth forecast from 4.1 percent to 2.9 percent.

"The war in Ukraine, lockdowns in China, supply-chain disruptions, and the risk of stagflation are hammering growth. For many countries, recession will be hard to avoid," said David Malpass, the president of the World Bank.

Passed over by Malpass was the global COVID lockdown that began in 2020 that destroyed hundreds of millions, if not billions, of lives and livelihoods.

Yes, all "manmade"—and in the new Woke World, "womanmade"— events and occurrences that have destroyed the hearts, souls and economies across the globe.

TREND FORECAST: *We totally disagree with the World Bank forecast. There is no risk of 1970s "stagflation." Economies will not "stagnate" as inflation rises. World economies will enter into "Draglation": economies will drag down as inflation rises.*

And, despite our sending out massive press releases to the print and broadcast media warning of Dragflation, they refuse to acknowledge this trend and keep selling the stale stagflation tale.

Money Game

The future of the equity markets and economy will be determined (minus a wild card) by how high and how fast the Federal Reserve raises interest rates.

Now, as reported in the Wall Street Journal, the outlook on The Street is that the Feds may slow its pace of interest rate hikes.

Steve Englander, head of North American macro strategy at Standard Chartered told WSJ yesterday that "The market went through six weeks of thinking the sky's the limit for the Fed. I think the dollar has topped out."

WSJ went on to note:

> *"The muddied outlook represents a shift in markets, after investors bet that a rapid pace of rate increases would drive the dollar higher throughout the year. Many expected a strong dollar to hurt U.S. multinationals, by making their products more expensive for foreigners, with companies including Microsoft Corp. noting a strong dollar's hit on revenue in recent reports. JP-Morgan analysts said the dollar's rise is hurting the U.S. manufacturing sector, which is slowing hiring to compensate for fewer exports."*

TREND FORECAST: *The markets are waiting for Friday's inflation numbers. Lower inflation may slow the pace of Fed interest rates rises which will push equities higher* *as well as being positive for the housing market since mortgage rates won't move higher.*

Unless there is an immediate peace deal to stop the Ukraine War and ease sanctions imposed on Russia, inflation will continue to rise. And with tensions heating up in the Middle East—Israel continue its bombs-away assault on Syria, with Israeli jets striking a town near Damascus—oil prices will continue to rise, further pushing up inflation.

Should inflation numbers come in weaker than expected this Friday, considering the fundamentals driving up inflation, we forecast it will be a temporary weakening.

LAST WEEK: INFLATION, INTEREST RATE OUTLOOK WEIGHED ON EQUITIES

After rising the previous week, all three major U.S. stock indexes rode last week down as inflation remained strong and expectation that the cheap money will dry up as the U.S. Federal Reserve is expected to raise its key interest rate by a half-point this month.

Indeed, nearly each day, equities are on an up and down swing as The Street waits to see what the next Fed move will be. And as we note above, Friday's inflation numbers will indicate what direction rates will move.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average was off 0.9 percent for the week, its smallest weekly shift in the past month. The NASDAQ shed 1 percent; the Standard & Poor's 500 gave up 1.2 percent.

The S&P's energy sector added 1.4 percent for the week as oil and gas prices grew.

The index recently traded at 20 times earnings, below 23.5 where it ended last year but still above its 18.7 10-year average, data service FactSet reported.

The three indexes all fell on Friday after the U.S. labor department reported that the economy added 390,000 jobs in May.

The number bested analysts' forecast of 328,000 jobs but May's result showed a slowdown in hiring, due to inflation and because the economy is approaching full employment.

The unemployment rate last month was 3.6 percent.

"Numbers this strong would likely reverse any hopes the Fed would consider a pause in rate hikes after the June and July increases," economic consultant Tom Essaye said to CNBC.

The benchmark 10-year treasury note's yield edged up from 2.914 on Thursday to 2.955 Friday. Yields rise as securities' prices fall.

Oil prices grew. Brent crude futures broke through $121 a barrel late Friday, with U.S. benchmark West Texas Intermediate's price close behind, just above $120.

Gold bounced through the week, ending essentially flat at $1,854.

Bitcoin lost more than $2,000 on Wednesday, bottoming at $29,570. It struggled through the week but failed to recover, pricing at $29,510 at 5 p.m. EDT Friday.

"You have this really strong U.S. economy right now but we have this really high inflation not coming down," Frank Oland, Danske Bank's chief strategist, said to the WSJ.

"Eventually, that will bring consumers to the point where they say, 'let's look at our budget and maybe tighten a bit'," he added. "If everyone holds back, you're moving toward recession."

Abroad, the European Stoxx 600 was down 1.1 percent for the week but Asian markets were up.

Japan’s Nikkei gained 2.5 percent. The South Korean KOSPI added 1.5 percent. The Hang Seng index in Hong Kong rose 2 percent; so did China’s SSE and CSI composite indexes.

YESTERDAY: MORE UPS AND DOWNS

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 16.08 points, or 0.1 percent. The tech-heavy NASDAQ was up 48.64 points, or 0.4 percent. The Standard & Poor’s index increased 12.89 points, or 0.3 percent to close at 4121.43.

Stocks started the day higher and were up more than 300 points in the early session, but came back down later in the day because of Fed rate rise uncertainty and the economic future.

We reported that both Jamie Dimon, the CEO of JPMorgan, and Elon Musk, the CEO of Tesla, both warned of economic danger ahead, and on The Street there is concern that any market rally would be a “dead-cat bounce.”

The benchmark 10-year Treasury note’s yield increased from 2.940 percent on Friday to 3.037 percent.

The big news on Wall Street Monday was reports out of China that Beijing was easing its COVID-19 restrictions. The country is also reportedly ending its probe into Didi, the ride-hailing company, which was seen by investors as a sign that Beijing could also be easing its crackdown on tech companies.

The WSJ reported that the yearlong probe will wrap up and the country will lift a suspension for new users. The paper said that the data probe was launched due to national security concerns. Didi’s shares popped 24 percent in the U.S. after the report was published.

Other tech stocks targeted by Beijing, like Alibaba, also saw gains.

Twitter shares fell 2.5 percent after Musk announced that he could back out of the deal to purchase the social media giant if it fails to provide data on how many accounts are fake.

Investors are also bracing themselves for the next inflation report, which is due on Friday. Economists believe consumer prices rose 0.7 percent in May, which is higher than the 0.3 percent in April.

The Federal Reserve has a meeting next week and the inflation reading will play a role in how aggressive it will act in raising interest rates. The market expects a 50 basis point increase in the next two meetings, but again, as we note, Friday's inflation numbers will weigh on its rate rising decisions.

TREND FORECAST: *Gerald Celente has been critical of Fed Head Jerome Powell for not acting fast enough to raise interest rates to help tame inflation. Celente and the* ***Trends Journal*** *had forecast the inflation trend which Powell and U.S. Treasury Secretary denied, saying inflation was temporary and then transitory.*

Celente has pointed out that there are also outside factors that are out of the control of even the most experienced trader, like China's COVID lockdowns, supply chain disruptions, and the Ukraine War. The Fed Heads and business media are wrong about stagflation. It's Dragflation. Economies won't stagnate, they will drag down as inflation rises.

Elsewhere, the European Stoxx 600 was up 1 percent on news of China's COVID-19 lockdown easing.

Beijing is a top metals consumer and Miners Rio Tinto and Glencore saw their stock prices increase by 1.6 percent and 4 percent, Reuters reported. Copper prices also jumped to a five-week high.

Investors in Europe will monitor Thursday's European Central Bank policy meeting and U.S. inflation data due the following day.

BITCOIN: Bitcoin traded as high as $31,278.09 Monday but came back down to about $29,520. The cryptocurrency has shed about half its value since its peak in November, and has been stuck at around $30,000 for weeks. Ben McMillan, chief investment officer of Arizona-based IDX Digital Assets, told Reuters that retail investors believe the pain has been "already endured, and we're closer to the bottom than we are to the top."

"If you're getting into crypto at these levels, a little near-term volatility could be worth a long-term payoff," he said. "A lot of institutional investors are starting to look at crypto as a source of longer-term growth potential."

GOLD: Gold futures dropped Monday due to a stronger U.S. dollar and higher bond yields. Spot gold fell 0.5 percent to $1,841.29 and gold futures were also down 0.4 percent. Gold prices will likely remain around that level until the inflation report comes out on Friday.

TODAY: MORE UPS AND DOWNS

It was another wild and crazy day in the market. The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 264.36 points to close at 33,180.14. The S&P 500 gained 0.95 percent, and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite was up 0.94 percent.

Stocks opened the day lower, but rallied as the trading session continued despite a gloomy outlook for Target, which saw its shares fall 2.3 percent. The benchmark 10-year Treasury yield fell below 3 percent, which helped equities see increases. Investors are still cautious about the market, especially with the next round of inflation data due out on Friday.

With the Ukraine War still raging, central banks around the world raising interest rates, tensions rising in the Middle East, equities spiking up and down reflect the socioeconomic and geopolitical whirl wind.

Today, U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, appearing at the Senate Finance Committee, now, after denying it for over a year-and-a-half, says that she believes inflation will remain elevated.

“We currently face macroeconomic challenges, including unacceptable levels of inflation,” she said.

She continued, “We’re seeing high inflation in almost all developed countries around the world and they have very different fiscal policies, so it can’t be the case that the bulk of the inflation that we’re experiencing reflects the impact of the [American Rescue Plan].”

TREND FORECAST: *Given its past timidity, the Fed is unlikely to raise interest rates high enough fast enough to halt inflation. If it did, the U.S. economy would be thrown into a recession and the rest of the world’s economy would follow.*

We have pointed out that Fed Head Jerome Powell promised to try for a “soft landing,” but that is like taking comfort in the captain of a ship who just hit an iceberg who says leave it to him to change the course.

Economic growth fears loomed large in Europe ad central banks aim to bring down soaring inflation through monetary policy tightening.

Europe’s Stoxx 600 was down 0.3 percent and Britain’s FTSE 100 was down 0.12 percent to 7598.93. South Korea’s Kospi was down 44.31, or 1.66 percent.

Retail stocks in Europe have been taking a hit for the entire year and Target’s news that it will be forced to mark down items to get rid of inventory was another drag on the sector.

The retailers are working quickly to adapt to the changing demand of customers. CNBC pointed out that Gap said its shoppers are looking for more dresses and office clothing than the piles of hoodies that have been left over from the height of the COVID-19 outbreak. The report also pointed out that Walmart said families are spending less on discretionary purchases to help absorb the price of gas.

Germany’s industrial orders also dropped at a faster rate in April. Contracts for goods ‘Made in Germany’ fell by 2.7 percent in April while economists expected a

0.5 percent drop. The Ukraine War and supply chain issues weighed down on the German economy.

Japan's Nikkei 225 was down up 28.06 points, or 0.10 percent. China's benchmark Shanghai Composite Index was up 0.17 percent to 3241.76. The Shenzhen Component fell 2.55 percent and Hong Kong's Hang Seng index lost 122.23 points, or 0.56 percent, finishing the trading day at 21531.67.

The yen fell further to below 132 to the dollar. The Associated Press said it was already at two-decade lows.

GOLD/SILVER: Gold up $11.40, closing at $1,852.20 an ounce and silver rose 0.158 cents to close at $22.21 per ounce. Gold, a safe-haven asset, increased based on inflation concerns. Treasury yields also fell from three-week highs, which increased demand for the metal.

TREND FORECAST: *Both metals have been stuck in this trading range for weeks. And, we maintain our forecast that for gold to maintain strength, prices must stay in the high $1,900 per ounce range and when they solidify above $2,200 per ounce, gold will spike to new highs. On the downside, should gold fall below $1,800, its bottom will be in the $1,730 range.*

OIL: Brent crude was up $1.15 to $120.64 a barrel and West Texas Intermediate was also up 0.9451 percent to $119.60 per barrel. Goldman Sachs is now forecasting Brent crude oil prices will average $140 a barrel during the summer months, up from its prior call of $125 a barrel.

AAA said Tuesday that the national average price for regular gasoline increased 5 cents to a record of $4.92 a gallon.

TREND FORECAST: *The picture is clear. The higher oil prices rise, the faster inflation will rise and the greater the pressure on central banks to raise interest rates. And the higher interest rates rise, the deeper equity markets and economies will fall.*

BITCOIN: Bitcoin was trading down $317.50 today at $31,032.80 per coin at 4:09 p.m. ET. The cryptocurrency had a bumpy day and, for a time, dropped below $30,000 a coin.

As of 4:55 p.m. ET, the cryptocurrency was hovering around $31,308.10. The **Trends Journal** has reported that bitcoin lost more than half of its value since November when it hit $68,982 per coin.

Joe DiPasquale, the CEO of crypto fund manager BitBull, wrote to CoinDesk, "BTC remains weak until it conclusively breaches the $31k to $32k range. However, we continue to see some buying below $30K that is keeping the price afloat."

The currency looked like it was on the rise over the past few days. On Friday, at about 4 p.m. ET, the coin was trading at $29,468 and by Monday at 2 p.m. ET, it was trading at $31,600 per coin.

The coin was on its way up when the Securities and Exchange Commission announced that it is investigating whether or not Binance's BNB token could be categorized as a security, Bloomberg reported. Binance is the world's largest crypto exchange. The overall cryptocurrency market cap now stands at $1.24 trillion. Bitcoin's dominance rate is 46.4 percent, according to CoinTelegraph.

Binance allegedly processed at least $2.35 billion in illegal transactions tied to drugs, hacks, and fraudulent activity, Reuters reported.

Any governmental oversight risk for cryptos is a risk for users because one of the appeals of a decentralized currency is lack of government involvement. Bitcoin has been stuck around the $30,000 price point for weeks.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have been noting for over five years, a major factor in forecasting the future price of bitcoin and other crypto currencies is dependent upon government regulations. We had long forecast, the downward breakout point would be hit should prices fall below $25,000 per coin. If it goes that low, bitcoin could well fall back to the $10,000 range. On the upside, we maintain our forecast that bitcoin will find strength to hit new highs when it breaks above $55,500 per coin.*

ECONOMIC "HURRICANE" AHEAD, DIMON SAYS

"I said there are storm clouds, but…it's a hurricane," Jamie Dimon, chair and CEO of JPMorgan Chase, the richest U.S. bank, said of the nation's economic outlook last week at the Bernstein Strategic Decisions Conference.

"Right now…everyone thinks the [U.S. Federal Reserve] can handle this [inflation]," he said, but "that hurricane is coming our way. We just don't know if it's a minor one or a Superstorm Sandy."

Dimon had said in May that a storm was brewing but it might just as easily clear up quickly. His comments were credited with shoring up investors' confidence and even bumping up his bank's share price.

Now he has altered his forecast.

"You better brace yourself," he added.

JPMorgan already has prepared, setting aside $900 million in the year's first quarter to cover loans that might go bad in the storm ahead, as we reported in "JPMorgan Profits Down 42 Percent on $900-Million Set-Aside" (26 Apr 2022).

Dimon attributes the looming heavy weather to the Fed's plan to steadily raise interest rates through the rest of the year.

The central bank also has ended its $120-billion monthly bond purchases and is letting current holdings fall out of its $9-trillion portfolio as they mature.

The end of the Fed's purchases, which began in 2008 as the Great Recession set in, deprives the market of liquidity to which investors have become accustomed. That could make markets more volatile, the *Financial Times* noted.

William Demchak, a JPMorgan alumnus and now CEO of PNC bank, which holds about $540 billion in assets, offered the conference "no weather forecasts" but agreed that the future is darker than the present.

"I don't think it's going to be a hurricane," he said, but "I don't see any possible outcome other than a recession."

TREND FORECAST: *Mr. Dimon's forecast is old news for* ***Trends Journal*** *subscribers. However, what is essential in his and others' vocal declarations of economic danger ahead, is that it is coming from the top of the economic pyramid. Therefore, being that they are on the top of the inside of the banking world and know what is actually going on, for Dimon to make such statements should be taken very seriously.*

Simply stated: The Worst is Yet to Come.

RECKONING DAY FOR THE LIVING DEAD

U.S. "zombie firms"—those whose earnings are unable to cover interest payments on their debts—now comprise 620 of America's 3,000 largest firms, more than one in five, and collectively owe about $900 billion, Bloomberg reported.

The roster includes meme stocks such as AMC Entertainment Holdings as well as familiar names such as American Airlines. ExxonMobil was on the list until recently higher oil prices crossed it off.

The U.S. Federal Reserve's artificially low interest rates and willingness to buy bonds indefinitely over the last 14 years made it possible for these undead businesses to borrow enough to survive, even during the COVID War.

Now that interest rates are climbing, costs are rising, and the Fed is closing its wallet, these companies face shrinking margins, higher payments on the money they owe, and fewer prospects for refinancing their debt.

Stock markets already are seeing the risk: share prices for zombies in the Russell 3000 index have sunk an average of 36 percent over the past 12 months, while the typical company listed in the broader index has given up just 4.3 percent, Bloomberg's data show.

"The end result could be a prolonged stretch of bankruptcies unlike any in recent memory," Bloomberg said.

Cruise-ship line Carnival sold $1 billion of eight-year notes with a 10.5-percent yield in May; seven months earlier, it raised double that amount by offering just 6 percent.

Carnival will have its entire fleet at sea by the end of the year and is working to restructure its debts, the company told Bloomberg.

American Airlines expects to turn a profit this quarter, a company spokesman said.

Companies with S&P credit ratings of BBB and lower or Baa3 from Moody's—junk-bond territory—have been able to raise only $56 billion in the bond market so far this year, less than a quarter of their haul a year earlier, Bloomberg noted.

May's $2.2-billion total is the slowest junk-bond market since 2002, according to Bloomberg.

As some zombies go to bankruptcy court and die, others will take their place as rising costs, higher interest rates, and tighter money moves more corporations to the brink, Noel Hebert, director of credit research at Bloomberg Intelligence, pointed out.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have long noted, it was record low interest rates that ratcheted up these "zombies." Since the COVID War began in 2020, equities and economies have been artificially pumped up with cheap money to keep the money junkies gambling. The higher interest rates rise, the deeper the "zombies," SPACS and sectors dependent on low interest rates will fall.*

CONSUMER CONFIDENCE SAGS IN MAY

As we detail above, across the socio-economic and geo-political spectrum, these are "Happy Days are NOT Here Again"

U.S. consumer confidence dropped in May to its lowest point since February 2021, according to the Conference Board's monthly survey.

The survey rated confidence in April at 108.6 but found it had slipped in May to 106.4.

The sub-index monitoring consumers' view of the present economy reflected "perceived softening" in the jobs market, the survey report said; consumers also are glum about the economy's prospects for improving this year.

Rising interest rates "pose continued downside risks to consumer spending this year" on big-ticket items such as homes, major appliances, and vehicles, the report found.

Inflation also is a chief worry among consumers.

The median U.S. home price reached another record high in April, increasing 20.6 percent year on year in March, the fastest annual jump in 35 years, the S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller Index reported.

Mortgage rates are now at or close to their highest in ten years.

TREND FORECAST: *Consumer confidence will not rise until inflation shows a consistent downward trend and wages rates rise above inflation.*

Some analysts claim that inflation has peaked, or is peaking now. If so, that will not be clear until at least August, when July's figures are reported. More likely, China's lockdowns and the port clogs it has created will extend inflation's strength through the summer.

If inflation remains strong until fall, it will not begin to reverse until late this year.

AMERICANS: SPENDING MORE, SAVING LESS

Since March 2020, Americans have saved $2.5 trillion more than they normally would have, thanks to government stimulus payments, rising wages, and the COVID-related shutdown of stores and entertainment venues, Yahoo! News reported.

Now that the COVID War has largely ended and consumers can spend again, some of that $2.5 trillion has begun to flow back into the economy as consumers buy everything from new wardrobes to yoga classes, even though a range of goods are in short supply and cost more than they used to.

The U.S. spending spree is not only fueling inflation at a rate not seen in 40 years; it also is slashing the savings rate.

In April, the personal savings rate fell to 4.4 percent of income, compared to a high of 14 percent during the height of the COVID War.

The rate is half of what it was in December and a third of that a year earlier.

Many households are no longer saving, but using past savings to pay for current purchases and expenses as the cost of living keeps rising faster than salaries and wages can grow, Yahoo! reported.

The government's COVID-era "fiscal stimulation is still in the pockets of consumers," JP Morgan Chase CEO Jamie Dimon said last week at the Bernstein Annual Strategic Decisions Conference.

"They're spending it, and they're spending at very strong levels," he noted.

At the current rate, consumers could have only six to nine months of additional spending power left, he said.

Dan Shulman agreed, saying at the World Economic Forum last month that Americans are spending their cash cushions so quickly that those cushions could go flat by the end of this year.

"We're already seeing a reduction in spending at lower income levels for sure, and it's moving up to middle income right now," he warned.

More than 80 percent of U.S. shoppers expect to reduce their purchases over the next three to six months, a recent NDP survey found, noting that consumers bought 6 percent fewer items during this year's first quarter than they did during the same period in 2021.

Reductions in spending have crimped earnings of Target, Walmart, and other retailers, as we noted in "Major Retailers Take a Drubbing" (24 May 2022).

However, airlines and hotels report strong bookings for the summer months, perhaps a sign that consumers are prioritizing the purchases of services over goods, a trend we report in this issue in "China's Exports Fall as World Shifts Spending Back to Services."

Because consumer spending supports as much as 70 percent of the U.S. economy, any reduction will ripple through the jobs, financial, and investment markets as well.

TREND FORECAST: *Once upon a time, back in the 1970s before America's middle class began to shrink and the Bigs got Bigger, there was a slogan: "Shop Until I Drop."*

It was a time when malls were popping up across the nation and shopping mania was part of the culture.

While consumer spending accounts for 70 percent of America's Gross Domestic Product, those free spending days are long gone.

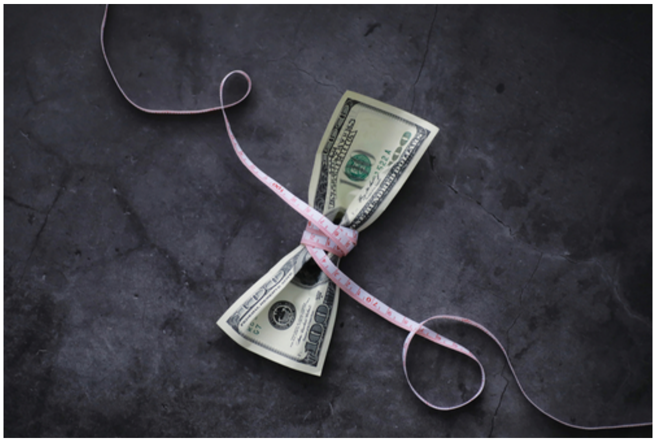
Yet, Americans' compulsion to spend is a key factor driving inflation.

In a world of shortages that will linger into the future, prices are unlikely to fall until consumers pare back their buying habits. The trend of consumers to spend less, which we report in "Retailers and Manufacturers Whack Jobs, Leisure Venues Hire" in this issue, is under way.

The trend will be somewhat masked through the summer as consumers spend on leisure and services while trimming purchases of merchandise, especially big-ticket items.

The trend will become more obvious after Labor Day when summer fun is over and continue until inflation falls significantly below its current level.

EXPANDING ECONOMIC DAYS DYING



A U.S. economy that has grown steadily and reliably has given way to an era in which soaring equity markets, a labor shortage, and strong consumer spending are ending as artificially low interest rates rise and trillions of dollars pumped into the system by Washington to fight the COVID War, dries up.

The facts are in the numbers.

Tesla will lay off 10 percent of its salaried workers, Elon Musk announced last week. Amazon, Meta Platforms, and Uber Technologies are among the companies that have slowed hiring.

Kohl's, Target, and Walmart saw their share prices tank recently on reports of surprisingly weak first-quarter earnings, which we reported in "Major Retailers Take a Drubbing" (24 May 2022). Shoppers are beginning to spend less and buy fewer items, they said.

Stores that were unable to stock their shelves amid last year's supply chain crunch now have more appliances, clothing, and furniture than consumers want to buy, the WSJ noted.

However, not all indicators are flashing red.

The U.S. economy sprouted 390,000 new jobs last month, beating analysts' expectations. Restaurants and airlines are still desperate for workers.

Costco's sales were up 10.8 percent in this year's first quarter, rising above the rate of inflation. Sales by Lululemon Athletica, LVNH, and other luxury retailers are on the rise, which we noted in "Purveyors of Luxury Goods Foresee U.S. Boom, China Revival" (24 May 2022).

Many market analysts expect corporate earnings to improve this year over last, the WSJ said.

On the other hand, in late May the Standard & Poor's 500 stock index followed the NASDAQ into a bear market. The S&P has slipped 14 percent this year as of last week; the NASDAQ has surrendered 20 percent.

Wage growth in April and May fell below last year's average. Sales of existing homes slipped 5.9 percent in April from a year earlier.

Consumers are gouging their savings to keep spending, as we report in "Savings Rate Slows as Consumers Spend Their Cash Cushions" in this issue.

Walmart, Procter & Gamble, and other consumer product companies say they are emphasizing bargain items and store brands as they brace for a pullback in consumer spending.

The chief reason is inflation, which Americans cited as their overriding worry in the University of Michigan's most recent monthly consumer survey.

TREND FORECAST: *In this week's **Trends Journal** article,* "ECONOMIC 'HURRICANE' AHEAD, DIMON SAYS," *we note the economic pessimism spreading across the top of the U.S. business spectrum. These insights are not coming from "conspiracy theorists" the mainstream media stupidly labels and ridicules, but instead from their idols who they bow down to, suck up to and adore.*

Indeed, our economic trend forecasts of what they are now saying which we had written over a year ago were completely ignored. Why have they been discounted despite the hard data to support our forecasts? As the great George Carlin said, "It's one big club, and you ain't in it."

Now that "The Club" is saying "Danger Ahead" it's legit!

The big question remains: Will the U.S. Federal Reserve continue to raise interest rates—with economists from "The Club" expecting the central bank to raise them to at least 2.5 percent by October which raises fears that "rate shock" will send the economy into a recession... or will they hold rates back and slowly raise rates?

The answer will lie in Friday's inflation report.

MORE HALF-POINT RATE RISES ON THE WAY, FED'S BRAINARD SAYS

The U.S. Federal Reserve is all but certain to raise its key interest rate by a half-point this month and again in July, but it may need to continue that pace further into the year to bring inflation under some kind of control, Fed vice-chair Lael Brainard said in a 2 June CNBC interview.

"If we don't see…deceleration in monthly inflation" and "if we don't see some of that really hot [consumer] demand starting to cool, then it might be appropriate to…proceed at the same pace," she said.

However, "if we are seeing deceleration…it might make sense to be proceeding at a slightly slower pace," she added.

So far this year, the Fed has raised rates twice, including the first half-point hike in 22 years, despite inflation running at four times the Fed's announced 2-percent target rate.

Most Fed officials speaking publicly, including Brainard, have supported back-to-back half-point rate hikes this month and next; markets have already priced them in.

After July, the Fed's next meeting, and the next chance to boost rates, will come in September.

"Right now, it's hard to see the case for a pause" in lifting interest rates, Brainard said. "We've still got a lot of work to do to get inflation down to our 2-percent target."

In addition to raising rates, the central bank has ended its $120-billion monthly bond-buying campaign and is letting bonds fall out of its portfolio as they mature.

Late last month, president Joe Biden expressed confidence in the Fed's ability to tackle inflation. His comments have been interpreted as a tacit endorsement of the Fed's plan to steadily raise interest rates in the months ahead.

Some economists have expressed fears that the Fed will boost rates so high so quickly that the economy will cast off jobs and tip into recession.

Fed officials insist that outcome is unlikely because the U.S. job market is so strong now.

TREND FORECAST: *The Fed's plan to bring interest rates to, or close to, 3 percent by the end of this year is a guessing game. And considering the rate of inflation, higher rates will bring the economy and equity markets down, but in the short term do little to slow the inflation rate.*

For example, in Argentina, where inflation zoomed to 51 percent in February, the Central Bank of the Argentine Republic boosted its key rate to 44.5 percent, as we detailed in *"Argentina's Interest Rate Spike. What's Next?" (22 Feb 2022).*

Factoring in the benefits of compound interest, the higher rate lifted investment returns above the rate of inflation, intended to give investors in peso-denominated investments a positive return and cap inflation.

If the Fed were to follow suit and set its key interest rate at one percent above inflation's pace, as Argentina did and the IMF requires, the Fed's base rate would be at least 9 percent since inflation in the U.S. is running above 8 percent.

At its current pace, it would take the Fed more than two years to reach that level and, meanwhile, the economy would almost certainly dive into a recession.

SOCIAL SECURITY TRUST FUND WILL GO BUST IN 2035, REPORT SAYS

The Social Security Trust Fund will be depleted in 2035 at current rates of deposits and spending, the trustees said in their annual report released 2 June.

The trust fund gained an extra year of solvency because of strong wage growth during the post-COVID recovery, which put more payroll taxes into the fund, the report noted.

However, in 2021, the fund's outlay exceeded its expenses.

The fund will continue to bleed its reserves every year for the next 13 until the fund is emptied, the trustees predict.

At that point, Congress will be obligated to fund about 80 percent of benefits owed out of the general budget.

The trust fund consists of two parts. One pays retirees, the other pays benefits to persons with disabilities.

The disability trust has enough funds to cover benefits through at least 2096 at current rates, the report said.

Medicare's reserves to pay hospital costs for older Americans will run dry in 2028, according to the group's projections.

In February, the trustees said they expect Social Security benefits to be increased 3.8 percent next year.

However, benefits have increased partly in response to inflation, which is now flying above 8 percent.

The funding crunch lies at the convergence of two trends: the aging of the Baby Boom generation and a long-term decline in the American birth rate.

More Americans will qualify for benefits that a smaller number of workers will be expected to pay for unless Congress raises the age to qualify, adds funds to the programs, or makes other adjustments that will keep Social Security functioning, *The Wall Street Journal* noted.

TREND FORECAST: *Consumer spending props up more than two-thirds of the U.S. economy and Americans are now gouging their savings to keep up their spending habit, as we note in "Savings Rate Slows as Consumers Spend Their Cash Cushions" in this issue.*

With Americans unwilling to save, it will be up to Congress to adjust Social Security's rule to ensure the program's long-term future.

The alternative would be a compulsory savings plan mandated for all Americans, for which various ideas already have been floated, including additional payroll deductions that would be placed in individuals' IRA-like accounts that they could manage but not touch until a certain age.

One idea: stop investing in war and start investing in the needs of Americans at home.

RETAILERS AND MANUFACTURERS WHACK JOBS, LEISURE VENUES HIRE

Retailers laid off workers in May as hotels, restaurants, and other seasonal services staffed up for the summer months.

In addition to newly penny-pinching consumers, many retailers have too much inventory on hand.

Stores placed orders in past months to meet consumer demand but were unable to get enough stock because of materials shortages at factories and supply line tangles.

Now that those items are arriving in stockrooms, inflation has risen so high that shoppers are beginning to cut back on purchases.

"It's really difficult to get the right amount of product on the shelves today at the right price and also get the right amount of workers to match demand from consumers," Jack Kleinhenz, the National Retail Federation's chief economist, told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Retailers got rid of about 61,000 workers last month, the U.S. labor department reported, although the economy as a whole took on an additional 390,000 employees.

Walmart said it hired too many people in the post-COVID rush, a problem that is being solved "largely through attrition," CEO Daniel McMillon said in a statement last month.

Amazon, a bottomless well of new jobs during the COVID War, has slowed its hiring.

Auto makers trimmed payrolls by 3,500 jobs last month. The industry continues to suffer from a shortage of key materials, especially computer chips, and rising interest rates are likely to crimp sales.

Tesla announced plans to pare its white-collar workforce by 10 percent, while Ford is looking to add 6,200 employees to its factory floors.

Many tech companies have frozen hiring or laid off staff.

Among the 390,000 jobs added in May, the information industry took on 16,000 new workers last month, growing its workforce by 5. 9 percent, slower than the 7.6 percent average over the previous 12 months.

Professional and business services hired 75,000; gas stations also expanded their payrolls.

TRENDPOST: *Consumers, having spent the COVID War buying stuff, are now spending to have experiences—traveling, eating out, going to concerts, and so on, as we report in this issue in "China's Exports Fall as World Shifts Spending Back to Services."*

HORMEL WARNS OF FALLING SALES AS BIRD FLU SPREADS

Avian flu, which already has killed 40 million turkeys in the U.S., has thinned flocks that Hormel Foods relies on for its Jennie-O turkey products.

As a result, Jennie-O sales will fall as much as 30 percent in the second half of this year, the company said, because it will be unable to get enough birds to meet demand, CFO Jacinth Smiley said in an analysts' call last week.

As supplies fall, prices are rising; turkey breast meat is now about $6 a pound.

Prices are moving up not only because of the shortage.

Feed prices are up, with corn meal and soybean meal costing 40 percent and 125 percent more, respectively, than a year ago, Hormel said.

Feed prices will stay aloft for some time, due in part to a cold, wet spring in the U.S. that delayed planting this summer's crops.

Hormel trimmed five cents from its 2022 earnings-per-share forecast, now pegging it between $1.87 and $1.97 a share.

TREND FORECAST: *The avian flu epidemic is the worst in seven years and has spread across 36 states, devastating chicken flocks as well as turkeys and spiking prices for eggs and other poultry products. Therefore, this is another "wild card" event that is driving up prices, pushing inflation higher and putting more downward spending pressure on the working-class consumer sector.*

YELLEN HALF-ADMITS SHE GOT INFLATION WRONG

Last week in an interview with Wolf (Puppy Dog) Bllitzer on the Cartoon News Network (CNN), former Fed Head and current U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told Blitzer, "I think I was wrong then about the path that inflation would take," after he played clips of her saying back in 2021 that inflation posed a "small risk" and would be "temporary."

Indeed, we reported in [“Powell, Yellen Agree: Higher Inflation Ahead”] (26 Oct 2022) that they were continually saying there were no inflation worries.

“There have been unanticipated and large shocks to the economy that have boosted energy and food prices and supply bottlenecks that have affected our economy badly that I didn’t—at the time—fully understand,” she said on CNN.

Yellen, U.S. Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell, and other officials consistently framed rising prices as “temporary” and then “transitory” during 2021, until Powell acknowledged that characterization was wrong ([“The Powell Push: For Better or Worse,”] 7 Dec 2021).

TRENDPOST: *Despite Yellen’s overt failure to see inflationary realities, she refused to admit she was too deaf, dumb and blind to recognize high-rising inflation. She did not say she “was wrong.” Instead, the narcissistic egotist said, “I think” I got it wrong.*

You “think”?

TRENDPOST: *We had long ago forecast stronger inflation in articles such as our Economic and Markets Overview sections in our* 27 October, 2020 *and* 3 November, 2020 *issues and documented it through last year in our Markets Overview sections on* 23 February, 2021 *and* 18 May, 2021, *“Inflation Spreads”* (12 Oct 2021) *and* *“Inflation on the Rise”* (7 Dec 2021), *among a host of other articles.*

However, Yellen continued to echo Powell’s assertions of “disinflationary pressures around the globe” early last year, then for several months parroted his assertion that high inflation is “temporary,” then “transitory.”

Like the Fed itself, which she once chaired, Yellen has lost all credibility as an economic seer.

TRENDPOST: *First, inflation was “temporary;” then it became “transitory,” a more effective weasel word that implies an even more vaguely defined period of time.*

Now Powell knows what everyone else, especially ***Trends Journal*** *readers, have known for more than a year: inflation is a serious, long-term threat to the U.S. and global economies.*

In an August speech, Powell listed five factors convincing him that high inflation was "temporary." One of them: the absence of "broad-based" inflation.

At the time he spoke, inflation already had widely permeated commodities and consumer goods ("Commodities Supercycle Underway?" and "Inflation Ripples Through U.S. Economy," both from our 11 May 2021 issue).

Powell was either deluding himself, deliberately misspeaking—perhaps to keep markets and shoppers calm—or he and the Fed staff are abysmally incompetent at reading numbers available in news reports.

TREND FORECAST: *We were among the first to forecast untamed inflation as a key factor facing the world after 2020's economic shutdown ("Consumer Prices Rise in July," 18 Aug 2021).*

All signs indicate that rampant inflation would continue, for several reasons.

First, the Fed was unprepared to raise interest rates until it closes down its monthly bond purchases, a process the central bank has said would take several months.

Higher interest rates are a nation's key weapon against inflation and the higher rates rise the slower the economy grows and the Feds, in partnership with Washington, artificially pumped up equities and the economy with record low interest rates.

Second, during the COVID War lockdowns, supply-chain kinks and gaps—including the absence of about 80,000 truck drivers in the U.S. alone in 2021—persisted.

Third, Americans manufacture less and less and import more and more, exposing the country more broadly to global financial pressures.

Fourth, with COVID War fear accelerating, consumers were buying everything they could grab.

Back in September 2021, for example, retail sales rose 15.6 percent compared to a year earlier, rising 0.7 percent from August; analysts had expected a slip of 0.2 percent.

Now, some of those trends have ended, but new ones, such as the Ukraine War have added new inflationary pressures. And with the war and sanctions, inflation has been driven higher in various business sectors and commodities.

Therefore, should the Ukraine War persist, so too will inflationary pressures.

TRENDS ON THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC FRONT

TOP TREND, NEW WORLD DISORDER: “FOOD SHOCK” WILL ENDURE FOR YEARS

Investors and government officials are underestimating the impact of the global “food shock” now spreading across emerging countries and beginning to impact developing nations as well, a new report by S&P Global warns.

Ukraine’s inability to ship grains and oils, and sanctions on Russia’s food exports, are threatening food shortages and spiking prices across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

At the same time, harsh weather and poor harvests in North and South America have left those usually-reliable exporters with less to sell abroad.

“For emerging markets, food is a much more significant part of your disposable income,” Uday Patnaik, chief of emerging market debt at Legal & General Investment Management.

"If you're a big importer or poorer country, this is an issue that can cause governments to fall," he added.

Sri Lanka defaulted on its debt last month after soaring food prices slashed the country's foreign currency reserves and sparked street protests. Iraq also has seen angry consumers take to the streets to decry rising food costs.

"Sri Lanka was already highly distressed before the Ukraine conflict," Patnaik noted, but the "food shock" resulting from the loss of Ukraine's and Russia's exports "was the final straw that pushed them over the edge."

Low- and modest-income countries in Africa, the Caucasus region, central Asia, and the Middle East are most vulnerable, S&P said.

The African and Middle Eastern nations of Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Morocco depend on Ukraine's exports, which the war has cut off.

In the Caucasus, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan rely on wheat imported from Kazakhstan, which now has slashed exports to protect domestic supplies and prices.

Vanishing exports and slimmer-than-usual chances of replacing them raises the chances of food shortages, leading to social uproar and political chaos, the report said.

However, not all emerging markets are suffering.

Argentina and Brazil are major exporters of grains, beef, and other foods and are benefiting from higher prices; Middle East oil producers are collecting more for their oil to help cover rising food costs.

"We've already seen the impact of food inflation play out in the market," Brett Diment, chief of emerging market debt investment at Scottish investment firm Abrdn [sic], told the *FT*.

Egypt devalued its currency in March, but Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay as big food exporters have all performed very strongly."

Still, especially now that oil prices have shot into triple digits, a growing number of emerging nations are moving closer to financial crisis and default, as well as social unrest and political turmoil, the S&P report said.

"Rising energy and food prices represent yet further balance-of-payments, fiscal, and growth shocks to the majority of emerging markets," Frank Gill, a sovereign debt specialist at S&P, said in comments quoted by the *Financial Times*.

"This intensifies strains on their public finances and ratings, which are already impacted negatively" by the COVID War, he added, and likely will lead to again downgrading the credit worthiness of many of these countries.

Rising interest rates this year have led to emerging markets posting their worst year-to-date performance "in decades," according to the *FT*.

TREND FORECAST: *Food prices will remain high even after the Ukraine conflict is settled.*

Ukraine's productive capacity has been damaged for years to come; sanctions against Russia are likely to remain in place for some time after the shooting stops. Neither country will be able to restore exports to the larger world market for an indefinite period.

At the same time, extreme weather in the Americas is becoming the norm, making commodity crops such as wheat and soybeans unreliable.

It will take years for the world's food market to reshape itself to meet the demands of emerging nations for enough food at affordable prices.

Meanwhile, more countries will default on, or demand to restructure, their debts at a time when developed nations have less money to bankroll bailouts by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

The result will be not only hunger in much of the troubled regions, but increasing political and social foment and instability.

As Gerald Celente has often said, "When people lose everything and have nothing left to lose, they lose it."

CHINA'S EXPORTS FALL AS WORLD SHIFTS SPENDING BACK TO SERVICES

During the COVID War, China became the world's manufacturer, supplying everything from razor blades to laptops—and the world's consumers bought, boosting China's exports to record growth.

After two years of having little to spend money on other than more stuff, consumers are emerging from their lockdowns and satisfying their need for experiences—travel, dining out, massages, concerts, yoga classes, and the gamut of good times.

As a result, China's export economy has taken a dive.

Exports grew by a modest 3.9 percent in April, year on year, their slowest since July 2020.

External shipments of yarn and fabric grew 0.9 percent in April, year on year, compared to 22 percent in April 2021.

Electronics associated with remote work and schooling slipped 5 percent in April compared to the preceding 12 months; a month earlier, the category grew at a 10-percent annual rate, Chinese premier Li Keqiang said in public comments quoted by the *Financial Times*.

In this year's first quarter, furniture exports added 2 percent, compared with a mammoth 70 percent a year earlier.

China's economy was a phenomenon two years ago but, more recently, the near-collapse of its real estate sector, a crackdown on the tech and financial industries, and two months of renewed lockdowns have slowed the country's economy to a crawl.

We documented China's economic woes in "IMF Cuts Outlook for China's Economy" (1 Feb 2022), "China's Economy Contracted in March" (5 Apr 2022), and China's Economy is Shrinking (10 May 2022).

For 2022, Beijing set a growth target of 5.5 percent, its most modest since the early 1990s.

However, this spring's shutdown paralyzed 46 metro areas and the spending activities of at least 325 million people. That brought the economy to a near-standstill; the country will struggle to show any growth at all this quarter, premier Li Keqiang said recently, as we noted in "China's GDP Could Contract This Quarter, Premier Warns" (31 May 2022).

"Given the big shock the economy's just been through, plus headwinds on the export side, it's quite challenging just to get positive growth at all this year," Julian Evans-Pritchard, China economist at Capital Economics, told the *FT*.

The country's export economy—which grew by 18.3 percent in 2021's first quarter—will contract in the third quarter and for some time after that, he predicted.

That would put the world's second largest economy into a recession.

The export industry employed 80 million Chinese workers in 2020; a single percentage-point reduction in output would erase hundreds of thousands of jobs, the *FT* said.

TREND FORECAST: *China's troubles will persist at least through the summer, as much of the world's consumers in advanced economies focus their discretionary spending on activities instead of merchandise.*

However, inflation's destruction of purchasing power, combined with consumers' spending spree during the COVID War, will cut China's export revenue significantly for the rest of this year.

It is more and more likely that inflation, higher interest rates, and shortages of goods and materials in China, the European Union, and the U.S. will lead the world's economy into recession.

OIL PRODUCERS RAISE OUTPUT

In a concession to the West, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and an affiliated group of oil producers led by Russia agreed last week to raise their output quota to an additional 648,000 barrels a day in July and August, up from the 432,000 they had negotiated earlier this year.

President Joe Biden and other Western leaders have been pressuring the group to pump more oil to push fuel prices down.

Saudi Arabia supported the higher output limit not to lower prices but to curry favor with the U.S., from which it wants stronger security guarantees, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

The bump in output follows a drop in Russia's production as a result of sanctions placed on the country by NATO after Russia attacked Ukraine.

In April, Russia's output fell by 950,000 barrels a day compared to February, the International Energy Agency (IEA) reported.

Last week, the European Union agreed to bar tankers carrying Russian oil and refined products.

Despite OPEC's promise of more oil, prices rose last week, with benchmark Brent crude rising Friday above $121. It settled at $119.99 on Monday this week.

Prices rose in part because some OPEC members have steadily failed to pump enough oil to meet their share of the 432,000 extra barrels already promised, leading analysts to believe the producer group will fail to fulfill its pledge of 648,000 barrels this summer.

We detailed OPEC's stumble in "OPEC+ Continues to Raise Oil Output. What's the Deal?" (8 Feb 2022).

Even factoring out Russia's missing production, the cartel was producing 1.32 million barrels a day below its overall target, IEA data shows.

The only producers who have the spare capacity to raise their production and sustain the increase for at least 90 days are Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the WSJ noted.

Prices could rise further if Russia decides to withhold more of its oil from the world market this summer "to inflict maximum economic pain" on the West, commodity strategist Helima Croft at RBC Capital, told the WSJ.

Russia should pump 20 to 30 percent less oil to boost its price and keep from selling at a discount to market prices, a Russian oil executive recently wrote in a newspaper essay.

The new higher limit on oil production "may have done wonders for Saudi Arabia diplomatically, but it is a drop in the ocean for world oil markets," WSJ said.

TREND FORECAST: *Oil prices will remain high during the summer season as more people drive and fly to their tourist destinations.*

Consumers' growing reluctance to spend, which we report in "China's Exports Fall as World Shifts Spending Back to Services" in this issue, will combine with the impending global economic slowdown, will push prices down, but not greatly: the winter heating season will raise gas and oil demand again, keeping prices elevated through this year.

SHANGHAI LIFTS LOCKDOWN

On 1 June, China's largest city, with 25 million people, began lifting its two-month anti-COVID lockdown that had trapped people in their homes and workplaces and shut the world's busiest port.

The lockdown was ended after four days with no COVID deaths in the city and the rate of new infections at its slowest since early March.

All residents can return to work, buses and trains are running on normal schedules, and only businesses in high-risk areas still face restrictions.

Shops and restaurants can operate at 75 percent of normal occupancy.

However, to move around town, residents must show a negative PCR COVID test within the previous 72 hours.

Although officials unveiled a 50-point plan to revive the city's economy, "any economic rebound will be limited because Beijing remains committed to its stringent COVID-19 containment policies, said economists," *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

China's official purchasing managers index (PMI) for the manufacturing sector rose to 49.6 in May, up slightly from 47.4 in April. The service sector's PMI jumped from 41.9 in April to 47.8.

Ratings below 50 indicate economic contraction.

The PMIs' rise toward the break-even point in May indicated that businesses expected the lockdown to be ending soon.

TREND FORECAST: *China's economic revival will run into the world's shift from spending on stuff to spending on activities, followed by a decrease in consumer spending as the global economy slows under the weight of inflation and higher interest rates.*

With less revenue from exports, China will take measures to stimulate domestic consumption and accelerate its economic strategy of dual circulation, in which consumer spending and manufacturing for export are equally robust.

HEDGE FUNDS SOUR ON STOCKS

After recent major sell-offs, hedge funds see an even more gloomy future for the world's equity markets, according to the *Financial Times*.

“Life is going to be much more difficult for investors,” Crispin Odey, founder of Odey Asset Management, wrote in a note to clients last week. “Outages, shortages, strikes, and war will come along,” he warned.

Odey’s Opus Fund, which looks for growth companies, recently converted a significant portion of its assets to cash after gaining about 7 percent so far in 2022.

In contrast, his fund that can bet for or against stocks has shot up 87 percent this year.

BlackRock’s $9-billion Strategic Equity hedge fund now has more short holdings—bets that stock prices will fall—than long ones, persons familiar told the *FT*.

Many other hedge funds are cutting back their stock investments, according to a Morgan Stanley client note seen by the *FT*.

In the U.S., the spread between the number of bets on rising prices versus falling prices is close to its lowest since 2010, the note said, indicating that hedge funds are leaving stocks alone generally.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have detailed in this* ***Trends Journal****, people such as top national Bankster Jamie Dimon fear the economic future.*

The same is true with the nation’s largest gamblers, aka, ‘Hedge Funds.” Their aversion to equities has set in as the U.S. Federal Reserve has launched a continuing series of interest rate hikes and begun to empty its bond portfolio of its $9 trillion in corporate and mortgage debt.

Minutes from the Fed’s May meeting indicated that officials felt a more “restrictive” rate policy, which would mean hiking rates higher and faster, “may well become appropriate” in the central bank’s battle to lower inflation.

This Friday's U.S. inflation reports will help indicate the speed and direction of Fed interest rate policy. If the inflation comes in lower than expected, observe the big Hedge Fund analysis and maneuvers... follow the money.

PRODUCER PRICES IN EUROPE ROCKET UP AT RECORD PACE

Across the 19-country Eurozone, the prices manufacturers charge for their products leaving the factory spiked 37.2 percent in April, year over year, the fastest since the euro common currency was created in 1999.

April's pace outstripped March's record of 36.9 percent.

Factory gate prices for non-durable consumer goods, such as food and beverages, climbed 11.2 percent, their first-ever double-digit annual rise. Durable goods, such as cars and appliances designed to last more than three years, sported prices 8.5 percent higher than in April 2021.

Energy prices eased slightly in April from March, but still virtually doubled—up 99.2 percent—year on year.

Despite softer energy costs, producer prices still moved up for the month, indicating that price pressures are embedded more widely across Europe's economy.

Inflation "has been broadening beyond energy for quite a while," Oliver Rakau, Oxford Economics' chief economist for Germany, told the *Financial Times*.

"Higher energy prices will feed through into other products, like food and drink prices, and that could lead to higher restaurant prices, which pushes up services inflation," he noted.

Consumer prices leaped by a record 8.1 percent in the Eurozone during the 12 months ending 31 May.

The European Central Bank's (ECB's) governing council will meet this week to lay plans for raising interest rates above -0.50 percent, where they have remained since 2014.

The council is likely to raise its key rate a quarter-point in July and again in September, ECB chief economist Philip Lane said last week in a statement cited by the *FT*.

The two rates would bring the interest rate to zero, an inconsequential change in the battle against inflation.

Some members of the council are expected to press for a stiffer increase, the *FT* noted.

TREND FORECAST: *As we have long noted, the ECB raising interest rates in July, is a joke. Despite inflation spiking to new records over the past seven months, and their bullshit that when inflation hits 2 percent they would raise interest rates, they have not raised them for eight years.*

Therefore, as with the U.S. Federal Reserve, unless they are super aggressive in raising interest rates, which by their words and deeds they will not be... the ECB will be unable to raise rates high enough and fast enough to fight inflation.

SOUTH KOREA'S ECONOMY DRAGS, BRACES FOR ECONOMIC "TYPHOON"

In April, for the first time in almost two years, South Korea's consumer spending, industrial output, and investment all declined at the same time.

In the same month, the nation's inflation moved at an annual pace of 5.4 percent, the fastest in 14 years.

The inflation rate surpassed analysts' forecast of 5.1 percent and April's rate of 4.8 percent.

Industrial production sank 3.3 percent compared to March, the first dip in seven months and the largest since May 2020.

Investment in new facilities was off 7.5 for the month, more than tripling March's 2.2-percent decline.

Retail sales edged down 0.2 percent, recovering slightly from a 0.7-percent decline in March.

President Yoon Suk-yeol warned of an approaching "economic crisis," saying "our lawn lies in the path of the typhoon."

Korea's export-dependent economy suffered from inflation, economic uncertainty, particularly surrounding the Ukraine war, and choked supply chains because of China's two-month anti-COVID shutdowns, officials said in a public statement.

In late May, South Korea's central bank bumped its base interest rate by a quarter-point to 1.75 percent, its fifth hike in less than a year.

The new economic data prompted analysts to predict another, similar increase in July.

The bank predicted inflation will remain above 5 percent until at least August.

The bank also cut its 2022 growth forecast for the country's economy from 3 percent, predicted last February, to 2.7 percent.

On 30 May, the government approved a record $49.3-billion aid package to help small businesses survive current conditions.

TREND FORECAST: *Prosperous, inventive, economically stable South Korea bracing for economic danger ahead is a shot that should be heard around the world. Indeed, its President's warning of an economic typhoon mirrors that of Chief Executive Officer of JPMorgan Chase, Jamie Dimon, which we note in this* ***Trend Journal*** *(See* "ECONOMIC 'HURRICANE' AHEAD, DIMON SAYS."*)*

Again, when these economic warnings are made outside "The Club" they are ignored. But coming from the top members of the money mob and autocrats-in-charge they are taken more seriously… since they have the facts and figures of what's going on behind the money scene.

INDIA'S ECONOMY GREW 4.1 PERCENT IN FIRST QUARTER

India's economy expanded by 4.1 percent in its most recent quarter, a figure that would have been higher if inflation had not been as strong, *The Wall Street Journal* reported.

Prices grew by 7.7 percent in April, the fourth consecutive month in which inflation's rate surpassed the central bank's target of 6 percent.

Food prices in India have soared since Russia's invasion of Ukraine virtually ended wheat and corn exports from those countries.

The Indian government also reported its economy grew 8.7 percent in the recently completed fiscal year.

In April, the country's central bank trimmed its 2022 growth prediction from 7.8 percent to 7.2 percent.

TREND FORECAST: *Go back to 2019, before the COVID War began, economic growth in India had fallen by half that year, from 8.1 percent in the first quarter of the year to 4.5 percent in the third, as more borrowers and lenders default and the credit crisis deepens.*

The nation's 2019 GDP registered the slowest growth in five years.

The impact is hardest on poor families and small businesses, many of which never recovered from the government's chaotic tax scheme and its 2016 decision to outlaw and replace many denominations of existing paper money.

It should also be noted that as India's government took strong lockdown measures to save its people from the virus, according to a 2019 study by the Global Alliance on Health and Pollution (GAHP), about 2.3 million people died of air pollution-related deaths.

Yet, this does not make the news, only the COVID War did…

To recap what we have been forecasting, India's economy has long been in decline. As we have reported in the ***Trends Journal****, in 2019, auto sales plunged and over one million workers in the auto industry were laid off. And, again, prior to the COVID War, India's GDP had declined for seven straight quarters.*

According to the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, India's unemployment skyrocketed to more than 25 percent due to the lockdown.

Considering the scale of India's lockdowns and the slowly phased reopening of businesses with a vast array of restrictions, we had forecast India's economy and its currency will continue to decline... and as the numbers show, its growth is well below target.

As a result, civil unrest, which had been tamped down with the lockdown, will again escalate.

CANADA'S CENTRAL BANK RAISES RATES—AGAIN

With inflation at a 31-year high of 6.8 percent, last week the Bank of Canada (BoC) boosted its policy interest rate from 1 percent to 1.5, the second consecutive half-point hike.

The bank has not made consecutive half-point interest rate increases since late 2000.

Analysts expect another half-point move in July, the *Wall Street Journal* reported, but the bank's rate-setting committee signaled that it may raise the rate by a larger amount next in its struggle to bring price increases to the bank's target annual rate of 2 percent.

"The governing council is prepared to act more forcefully if needed to meet its commitment to achieve the 2-percent inflation target," the BoC's governing council said in a statement announcing the latest rate increase.

That statement "is an ominous hint that a three-quarter-point hike is now on the table for the next policy meeting in mid-July," economist Paul Ashworth at Capital Economics said to the WSJ.

BoC officials think the “neutral rate”—the interest rate that stalls inflation and yet keeps the economy humming—is between 2 and 3 percent, the WSJ said.

Canada’s inflation pace will quicken in the near term before easing this year as supply chains loosen and China resumes shipping factory exports, the bank predicted.

Personal income in the country grew at one of the fastest rates in 40 years in recent months and the savings rate soared, giving households a deeper pocket to manage higher prices, economists told the WSJ.

Higher incomes and savings rates have been key factors driving inflation in the U.S. as well.

TRENDPOST: *Inflation in Canada ran at 6.8 percent in May, a 31-year high, CBC News reported. Now, with the Ukraine war pushing inflation even faster, there will be more pressure on the country’s central bank to keep raising rates.*

But as with other nations, the fear of Dragflation—declining economies and rising inflation—may well slow down the rate increases.

As a result, central bank interest rates will have little power to derail inflation. That job will fall to consumers, who will be unable to pay high prices and will curtail their spending, forcing miners, manufacturers, and retailers to adjust their costs and margins in response.

SPOTLIGHT: INFLATION

BIDEN SAYS HE CAN DO LITTLE TO REVERSE INFLATION

The Biden administration has little power and few tools to control rising food and fuel prices, president Joe Biden said last week after meeting with Jerome Powell, chair of the U.S. Federal Reserve.

The average U.S. gas price set a record at $4.82 per gallon on 3 June, according to the American Automobile Association, and ended 6 June at $4.86.

The country's overall inflation rate sits above 8 percent, highest in more than 40 years.

"We can't take immediate action that I'm aware of to bring the price of gasoline back to $3 a gallon," Biden said, "but we can compensate by providing for other necessary costs for families by bringing those down."

Inflation "is going to be the defining issue of the midterm elections" in November, Republican political consultant Ken Spain told *The Wall Street Journal*. "The issue is now entrenched in the minds of American voters."

Polls indicate that Republicans are favored to take control of the House of Representatives next year, with a strong chance of taking the Senate as well.

TRENDPOST: *One obvious thing Biden could do to slow inflation but will not do is lift war-related sanctions against Russia's exports of food and fuel.*

To do so would break faith with the NATO allies that Biden worked so hard to align against Russia and its invasion of Ukraine. That would seriously damage the alliance for years to come.

Instead, Biden will continue to point fingers, insisting the Fed, not he, has the power to tame rising prices and that inflation will slow when Putin ends the Ukraine war.

PUTIN ABSOLVES UKRAINE WAR FROM BLAME FOR INFLATION

After U.S. treasury secretary Janet Yellen admitted last week that she had underestimated inflation's strength and duration (see related story in this issue), Russian president Vladimir Putin seized on her comment to absolve Russia and its war on Ukraine from any responsibility for the world's current runaway inflation.

"This [inflation] is a mistake of the financial and economic authorities in the U.S.," Putin told a Russian television interviewer last week.

"It has nothing to do with Russia's actions in Ukraine, not at all," he emphasized.

Like other governments, Russia used fiscal and monetary policy to keep its economy functioning during the COVID War.

However, Russia did it "much more carefully and precisely" than others in ways that kept inflation at bay, Putin boasted.

In contrast, the U.S. money supply ballooned $5.9 trillion, growing by 38 percent in less than two years in what Putin called an "unprecedented output of the printing press."

He blamed Europe's stiff inflation pace on poor energy policies enacted by the European Union that favored renewable energy initiatives in response to the climate crisis.

Rising natural gas prices drove up the cost of producing fertilizer, forcing some European fertilizer factories to shut down. High gas prices also have curtailed industrial production in the auto industry and output from other sectors.

"We warned about this," Putin said. "This has nothing to do with any Russian military operation in the Donbass, nothing at all," he repeated.

TREND FORECAST: *Putin is right about the U.S.'s "unprecedented output of the printing press."*

For years, we have called attention to the government's money-pumping scheme to artificially inflate the economy and the dangers that will befall markets when that scheme ends, as it has begun to end now.

We have warned of the money junkies' addiction to monetary methadone in several of our Economic and Market Overview *sections, for example in our 12 May, 2020, 26 January, 2021 and 24 May, 2022 issues, among many others.*

As for his other comments, Putin protests too much. Of course his war in Ukraine is helping to fuel global inflation and a bad situation is made worse by the U.S. and NATO *sanctions which have driven up prices and created shortages.*

For example, auto factories in Germany have shut down because they remain unable to get wiring harnesses that were being made in Ukraine, which we reported in "Car Sales in Europe Dive 20 Percent in April" (24 May 2022).

Fewer new cars coming out of Europe's factories means higher prices for those that do.

Ukraine is a major exporter of wheat, corn, and cooking oil. Its' inability to plant, grow, harvest, and ship those products is spiking food prices across Africa and the

Middle East, which depend heavily on Ukraine's exports, and driving food inflation around the world.

Because of Putin's war, Ukraine's productive capacity has been damaged for years to come, and it will take at least two years for other countries to replace Ukraine's lost food crops and industrial production.

UKRAINE RAISES INTEREST RATE TO 25 PERCENT

Taking a "resolute step" to rein back inflation now running at 17 percent, Ukraine's central bank jacked its base interest rate from 10 percent to 25 last week.

It was the National Bank of Ukraine's first rate hike since Russia invaded the country in late February.

The high figure will protect household savings and help the country hold onto its foreign currency reserves, which will protect the exchange rate of the hryvnia, its national currency, the bank said in a statement announcing the increase.

The National Bank of Ukraine more than doubled its rate to match its outlook for inflation, which is projected to surpass 20 percent in the near future, the *Financial Times* reported.

A smaller boost "would have had no significant influence on the financial and economic system" during the war, the bank said.

The central bank "expects that the government and banks will respond adequately to the hike in the key policy rate by raising interest rates on domestic government debt securities and deposits," making "hryvnia…assets more attractive."

A smaller bump would not have kept returns on hryvnia-denominated investments ahead of inflation, the bank noted.

Ukraine's defensive war with Russia pushed the government's deficit up 27 percent in May to $7.7 billion, Ukraine's Dragon Capital bank said.

Ukraine's economy will contract 45 percent this year, the World Bank has forecast.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE: *Unlike central banks in the U.S. and European Union, Ukraine's understands that interest rates have to be close to the inflation rate to make a difference.*

Another difference is the war. Ukraine is under existential threat and its economy is already near destruction so raising the interest rate by 150 percent in one move can hardly do more damage than Russia's invasion.

POTASH PRICES SKYROCKET

Russia's war on Ukraine has flipped the market for potash, an essential fertilizer ingredient, from surplus to shortage.

Potash is mined from ancient seabeds and is rich in potassium, one of three minerals necessary to grow food crops.

Belarus and Russia together supply about 40 percent of the world's potash. Wartime sanctions have blocked Belarus's ability to ship potash along its usual export routes and the country's shipments have plunged by 95 percent, the *Financial Times* reported.

However, Belarus is now working out a way to send potash through Russia's ports on the Baltic Sea, IHS Markit analyst Allan Pickett told the *FT*.

Brazil, also rich in potash, has seen prices rise 185 percent this year to more than $1,100 per ton; Europe's price has jumped 240 percent to €875 per ton.

BHP, the Australian mining giant, is rescheduling production from a project in Saskatchewan from 2027 to 2026; its Australian colleague Highfield Resources is finalizing €312.5 million in funding for a new potash mine in Spain.

In part, prices have jumped quickly because many existing potash deposits were largely depleted by China's economic boom early this century.

"We've seen a huge difference in the level of interest since the war in Ukraine," Highfield CEO Ignacio Salazar told the *FT*.

"Europe is realizing its need to be self-sufficient," he added.

Europe's move to provide itself with potash aligns with our Top 2022 Trend of Self-Sufficient Economies.

However, "there are a lot of risks around the market outlook," Humphrey Knight, an IHS Markit minerals analyst, said to the *FT*.

"Russia and Belarus are unlikely to be out of the market forever," he added. "This is one thing that could change very quickly."

Prices are likely to remain high as long as sanctions last because "we are now at the start of a new [demand] cycle but without many attractive [supply] options in the industry's collective hopper," Huw McKay, BHP's chief economist, said in an *FT* interview.

TREND FORECAST: *The equation is simple, the longer the Ukraine War lasts and the stricter the sanctions imposed on Russia and its allies by the United States and NATO... the higher prices of numerous essential commodities will rise.*

Therefore, despite central banks raising interest to bring down inflation, if there are essential commodity scarcities, their prices will continue to rise… and so too will inflation.

TURKEY'S INFLATION RATE REACHES 23-YEAR PEAK

Inflation in Turkey rampaged at 73.5 percent in May, riding on soaring prices for food and energy and president Recep Erdogan's failed policy on interest rates.

Food prices last month were 91.6 percent higher than a year previous, the country's statistics agency said.

Turkey's economy was robust earlier this century, but that eventually led to inflation.

Usually as inflation sets in, central banks raise interest rates to cool spending and slow, or reverse, price growth.

However, Erdogan—for no apparent reason—has long held that low interest rates will tame inflation while allowing Turkey's economy to continue to expand.

As inflation climbed from 20 to 40 and now 70 percent, the lira—Turkey's national currency—plunged to new lows against the dollar.

However, Erdogan has refused to budge, firing central bank officials who raised rates against his wishes or failed to support his quirky view of interest rates' impact.

In spring 2021, Turkey had its fourth central bank chief in two years.

Thanks to low rates, the lira has tanked and banks across the country have exhausted their foreign currency reserves to buy lira to try to anchor its value.

We documented Turkey's succession of central bank governors, price inflation, and the lira's descent in:

- "Turkey's Central Bank Governor Fired After Rate Hike" (23 Mar 2021)
- "Turkey's Financial Markets Crash After Agbal Firing" (30 Mar 2021)
- "Turkey: Another Day, Another Central Bankster Fired" (1 Jun 2021)
- "Turkey: Interest Rates Down, Lira Crashing. War Next?" (19 Oct 2021)
- "Turkey's Economy Continues to Implode" (14 Dec 2021)
- Turkey's Inflation Rate Nears 50 Percent (8 Feb 2022)
- Turkey's Central Bank Interest Rate Gamble (22 Feb 2022)

Erdogan has cast his policies as a "new economic model" ("Turkey's Bonds Downgraded. Worse to Come," 15 Feb 2022) in which a near-worthless lira would spark an export boom, because a cheap lira would make Turkey's products cheaper abroad.

The export boom would wipe out Turkey's trade deficit, taming inflation, he said.

The policy failed on both counts.

Now Turkey faces higher oil prices that must be paid in dollars, the currency the country has spent in its futile attempt to save the lira.

"The laser focus on [unorthodox] measures over conventional monetary policy will unlikely solve the inflation challenge and we anticipate levels breaching 80 percent" in this year's third quarter, Ehsan Khoman, MUFG Bank's chief of emerging markets research for the Middle East, said in a statement quoted by the *Financial Times*.

Until then, inflation will remain above 70 percent due to "a confluence of elevated commodity prices, rising domestic production costs, and a precipitously depreciating lira," he added.

TREND FORECAST: *As we noted in [“Turkey: The Famous Lira Dive”] (23 Nov 2021), the country’s crashing currency and soaring inflation continue to roil an increasingly chaotic and unstable Turkish socioeconomic and geopolitical environment. Foreign investors are pulling their cash out before Turkey’s economy crumbles completely.*

As the global economic recovery decelerates—and as inflation keeps rising across the globe—the lira and Turkey’s economy will continue to decline. Ongoing COVID outbreaks will worsen Turkey’s plight; nearly 13 percent of its GDP rests on travel and tourism.

Erdogan’s domestic popularity recently fell to a two-year low and will continue to sink with citizens’ economic prospects.

For that reason, look for Erdogan to become more belligerent in his comments and actions directed at foreign “enemies.” As Gerald Celente often says, “When all else fails, they take you to war.”

SPOTLIGHT: BIGS GETTING BIGGER

Each week, we report instances where the money junky hedge funds, private equity groups and the already big companies swallow another piece of the global economy. Here are some more of what the BIGS have been gobbling up and how the Bigs keep getting bigger and the rich keep getting richer.

FOOD SPECIALTY COMPANIES JOIN IN €41-BILLION MERGER

DSM, a Dutch firm specializing in bioscience and nutrition, will combine with Switzerland's Firmenich, which makes flavors and fragrances, to make a "global powerhouse" that will produce ingredients for vegan foods and manufactured meats.

The one-to-one stock swap values the new entity at about €41 billion, analysts said, but insiders said the figure was conservative.

The merger also pays €3.5 billion for some shares held by the Firmenich family, pioneers in the perfume industry. The family will retain 34.5 percent of the new company and hold a seat on the board.

The new entity, DSM-Firmenich, will operate four separate units: health and nutrition, perfume and beauty, food and beverages, and animal nutrition.

Total annual revenue among the four lines of business is now $11.2 billion.

The chemicals, fragrance, and nutrition industry is undergoing a wave of consolidation. In 2021, International Flavors & Fragrances paid $26.2 billion to acquire DuPont's nutrition and bioscience operation.

GOLD MINING COMPANIES MERGE

Gold Fields Ltd., a South African gold miner, will buy Canada-based Yamana Gold in an all-stock deal worth about $6.7 billion, based on recent share prices.

The price is 34 percent above Yamana's share price shortly before the takeover was announced.

The combined entity will have a market capitalization of about $15.9 billion, making it the world's fourth largest gold-mining firm, according to *The Wall Street Journal*.

Gold Fields' projects are concentrated in South Africa. The company has seen production dwindle at several sites there.

Through the purchase, Gold Fields will add sites in Australia, Ghana, Latin America, and new mines in South Africa.

BRISTOL MYERS SQUIBB PAYS $4.1 BILLION FOR CANCER DRUG FIRM

New York-based drug colossus Bristol Myers Squibb has agreed to buy Turning Point Therapeutics, which is developing a drug that will address 80 percent of U.S. lung cancer cases.

The drug has been awarded a "breakthrough designation" by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which will speed its review for final approval.

Bristol will pay $76 a share for Turning Point, which also has several other cancer drugs working their way toward clinical trials.

Oncology drugs are among the pharmaceutical market's fastest-growing sectors and brought in $286 billion last year, data service Precedence Research reported.

Drug majors are engaged in a flurry of bolt-on acquisitions, attempting to add to their rosters of new drugs as patents on old ones expire.

When patents expire, drugs move from the lucrative prescription market to the far less profitable over-the-counter sales.

When drugs come off-patent, the pharma companies that developed them usually sell the formula to other firms that specialize in OTC brands.

GSK SNAGS AFFINIVAX FOR $3.3 BILLION

Drug company GSK, formerly called GlaxoSmithKline, has committed up to $3.3 billion to buy Affinivax, a Boston company that is testing a vaccine targeting 24 strains of the streptococcus bacteria that cause meningitis, pneumonia, sepsis, and other well-known illnesses.

In early trials, the vaccine has shown a stronger impact on preventing the illnesses than two drugs now in common use for the same purpose, *The Wall Street Journal* said.

Affinivax also is developing a new version of its vaccine that could defend against 30 different strains of the bacteria.

The market for vaccines against this family of sicknesses was worth $7.1 billion in 2021 and could grow to more than $10 billion annually by 2028, Morgan Stanley analysts have said, the WSJ reported.

GSK will pay $2.1 billion up front and has pledged up to another $1.2 billion if Affinivax meets specific performance targets.

EQT NEGOTIATING TO BUY ENVIROTAINER FOR $2.8 BILLION

Swedish private equity firm EQT is in discussions to buy Envirotainer, a medical freight company, in a deal that would value the carrier at $2.8 billion, people familiar told *The Wall Street Journal*.

Envirotainer operates more than 6,000 temperature-controlled air freight containers that biotech and pharmaceutical companies use to ship vaccines, drugs, and other sensitive materials.

It handles about two million doses of medicines every day, the company says.

The purchase complements EQT's current focus on investment in healthcare and logistics.

EQT owns First Student, which operates school bus fleets in the U.S., and mobility-as-a-service company First Transit, which it bought last year in a deal worth $4.1 billion.

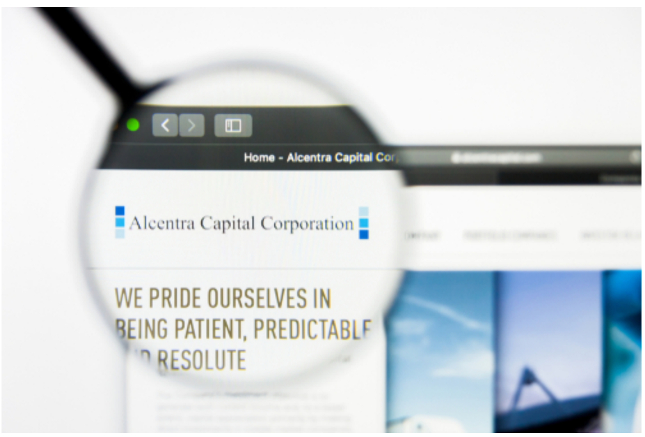
Envirotainer is now owned by London-based Cinvin, another private equity company, that bought it for about $1.1 billion in 2018.

This year through May, the value of private equity deals set a record at $471.2 billion for the first five months of any year, data service Refinitiv reported.

The firms are under pressure to put to work the windfall of cash investors poured into them over the last 18 months.

However, the value of deals announced in May slumped 74 percent below that in March, indicating that rising interest rates and economic volatility are making investment companies more cautious, the WSJ said.

FRANKLIN TEMPLETON WILL BUY CREDIT SPECIALIST ALCENTRA



Mutual fund giant Franklin Templeton will pay up to $700 million to buy European credit firm Alcentra from BNY Mellon, according to the *Financial Times*.

Franklin will pay $350 million in cash now and the same amount again if Alcentra meets a set of performance criteria over the next four years.

Alcentra, with $38 billion in assets, specializes in alternative credit, such as junk bonds, structured credit, and private debt placements.

The purchase is an attempt by Franklin Templeton to broaden its market reach after it experienced outflows of capital in 2020 when it bought brokerage Legg Mason.

In November, Franklin took over private equity firm Lexington Partners for $1.75 billion.

The company also has added investment firms focused on assets from infrastructure to real estate. Such firms generally charge clients higher fees than the more competitive mutual fund industry allows.

SPECIAL UKRAINE WAR REPORT

PUTIN WARNS WEST STOP SENDING DEADLY WEAPONS OR RUSSIA WILL HIT 'OBJECTS THAT WE HAVEN'T YET STRUCK'

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday said Moscow may be forced to target "objects that we haven't yet struck" after the U.S. and U.K. promised Kyiv long-range rocket systems that the Kremlin has previously called a red line.

Putin's comments came on the same day that Russia launched airstrikes on Kyiv. Russia targeted T-72 tanks that were donated by Western countries. *The Guardian* reported that these tanks were stored inside a car repair business, which Ukraine denied.

Kyiv went about five weeks since similar attacks as much of the fighting took place on the eastern edge of the country.

Politico reported that these forces struck railway facilities and infrastructure in Kyiv. Ukraine said one of the missiles fired by Russian forces just missed its

Energoatom nuclear plant in Pivdennoukrainsk, about 220 south of Kyiv. The report said air raid alarms rang out across the capital and the attack "showed that Russia still had the capability and willingness to hit at Ukraine's heart since abandoning its wider offensive across the country to instead focus its efforts in the east. One person was wounded.

The U.S. and U.K. both agreed last week to provide Ukrainian fighters with long-range missile systems after debate on whether these systems could be fired deep into Russia. Kyiv said it needs these systems to counter the Russian offensive in the Donbas.

"All this fuss around additional deliveries of weapons, in my opinion, has only one goal: to drag out the armed conflict as much as possible," Putin said. He continued, "We understand that this supply [of advanced rocket systems] from the United States and some other countries is meant to make up for the losses of this military equipment. This is nothing new. It doesn't change anything in essence."

Last week, the Ukraine War reached its 100th day and most analysts believe the war will continue to drag on and become a war of attrition. With each day that passes, the West seems more and more intent on joining the fray.

"What we're looking at now is what the war in Ukraine is likely to look like in 100 days, not radically different," Ian Bremmer, the president of the Eurasia Group, told *The New York Times*. "But I think the confrontation with the West has the potential to be significantly worse."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky has recently said that he believes victory is within Kyiv's grasp. In his mind, victory means all Russian forces would be expelled from the country and his forces regain every inch of Ukrainian territory.

Zelensky pointed out last week that Russian forces and separatists control about 20 percent of the country. To put the size into perspective, the land mass would be equal to Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg combined.

Dmitri S. Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman, told reporters that Russian troops "liberated" areas of Ukraine that he said had been Nazi-minded.

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has long stated that it is firmly opposed to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, but as we have detailed, we understand and have detailed the reasons why. Among them as noted in articles such as these:*

- "HEY STUPID! PROPAGANDA NETWORKS WILL TELL YOU 'WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT UKRAINE'"
- "KREMLIN BLAMES UKRAINE FOR STOKING TENSIONS AT BORDER"
- "RUSSIA USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN UKRAINE WAS A U.S. LIE"
- "BAITING THE BEAR IS BECOMING A DANGEROUS GAME"
- "UKRAINE CONFLICT HEATS UP: PUTIN RECOGNIZES DONETSK, LUHANSK AS INDEPENDENT FROM UKRAINE"
- "UKRAINE UPDATE #10"
- "BIDEN SAYS PUTIN MUST PAY PRICE OVER INVASION IN UKRAINE"

Yet, despite the "other side of the story," the Western media presents the invasion as unprovoked and paints Putin as an evil madman, like Hitler.

These outlets conveniently forget that the U.S. disregarded Moscow's legitimate security concerns before the war. Zelensky, a former comedian who starred in a TV comedy show playing the President of Ukraine, enjoys his celebrity status in the West, and is playing the role of a wartime leader. But his people are suffering and his nation is being destroyed.

.

The Times pointed out that 6.5 million Ukrainians have fled the country and half of Ukraine's businesses have closed. The paper said up to 90 percent of the country could fall below the poverty line and there has been $100 million in damage to infrastructure. Zelensky said about 100 Ukrainian soldiers are dying each day, mainly in the Donbas region.

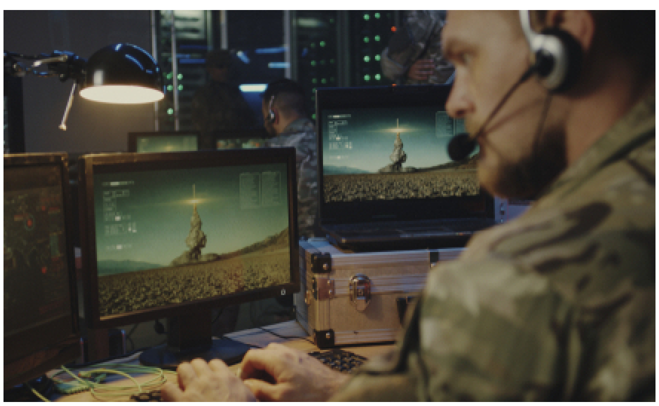
TREND FORECAST: *French President Emmanuel Macron noted the importance of peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine. Macron, one of the few Western leaders in contact with Moscow after the invasion began, said, "We must not* *humiliate Russia so that the day when the fighting stops we can build an exit ramp through diplomatic means. I am convinced that it is France's role to be a mediating power."*

Dmitro Kuleba, the Ukrainian foreign minister, took to Twitter and posted, "Calls to avoid humiliation of Russia can only humiliate France and every other country that would call for it."

Despite the Ukraine tough-talk—and the tens of billions of deadly weapons supplied to Ukraine to fight Russia—we maintain our forecast that Ukraine should have negotiated a peace deal before the war started, since Russia will defeat them.

And by negotiating for peace before war broke out, Ukraine would not have been destroyed, the people would not have been forced to run for their lives to escape the War and Kyiv would have had a stronger negotiation status before the war began. Indeed, when Russia declares victory it will be "winner takes all."

U.S. TOOK PART IN OFFENSIVE CYBER OPS TO SUPPORT UKRAINE, TOP COMMANDER SAYS



Paul Nakasone, the U.S. Cyber Command director, confirmed in an interview last week that the department "conducted a series of operations" in support of Ukraine's war effort against Russia.

The four-star general did not go into specific details about what the operations entailed during his interview with Sky News, but said these offensive cyber operations spanned "across the full spectrum: offensive, defensive, information operations."

The Hill reported that Nakasone insisted that the operations were lawful.

“My job is to provide a series of options to the secretary of Defense and the president, and so that’s what I do,” he said, according to the report. He made the comments during a cyber conference in Estonia. RT reported that he also revealed that the U.S. ‘eavesdroppers conduct information warfare, with the help of corporate media such as CNN.”

He said the U.S. provides true information in its information warfare while the Russians lie. In April, The **Trends Journal** ran a report that called U.S. reports on Russia’s alleged use of a lie. NBC News published a report that challenged Washington's claim that Russia is planning a chemical attack against Ukrainian forces, with one unnamed official going as far as to say that the claim was an effort by the U.S. to get into Russian President Vladimir Putin's head.

The report cited three U.S. officials who said there is no evidence that Russia is planning a chemical attack against Ukraine.

Some analysts say the U.S. is fighting a proxy war with Russia, but we have pointed out that Washington is in a direct war with Moscow. The U.S. has been providing intelligence and weapons training. (See “U.S. INTEL HELPED UKRAINE KILL RUSSIAN GENERALS, SINK FLAGSHIP, REPORTS SAY.”)

The Pentagon denied the report.

TREND FORECAST: *By their deeds you shall know them. Gerald Celente has noted that the U.S. is NOT fighting a "proxy war" with Russia, the reality is that with its endless supplies of lethal weapons and intelligence to Ukraine, Washington is, in fact, at war with Moscow.*

Nakasone said in the interview that the U.S. deployed specialists to 16 countries to “hunt forward” and seek out potential foreign hackers.

“We went in December 2021 at the invitation of the Kyiv government to come and hunt with them,” he said, according to RT. “We stayed there for a period of almost 90 days.”

The **Trends Journal** has said that the U.S. is already at war with Moscow through its actions from the beginning of the war. Washington illegally seized assets held by private Russian citizens, provided over $50 billion in aid to Ukraine, and recently said it will send advanced rocket systems into Kyiv. (See “CHINA STANDS WITH RUSSIA: TELLS EU AND U.S. FU!” “BIDEN’S ‘HATE RUSSIA’ SANCTIONS CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIES” and “WEAPONS POURING INTO UKRAINE, NO TALK OF PEACE, JUST MORE AMMUNITION.”)

Nakasone’s agency did not immediately respond to an email inquiry from the **Trends Journal**.

Nakasone said the U.S. is conducting operations to dismantle Russian “propaganda,” according to *The Hill.*

“We had an opportunity to start talking about what particularly the Russians were trying to do in our midterm elections. We saw it again in 2020, as we talked about what the Russians and Iranians were going to do, but this was on a smaller scale,” he said.

TREND FORECAST: *The U.S. has been provoking Russia since before the invasion and has been focused solely on propping up Kyiv with weapons...no talk of peace.*

Washington has said it essentially hopes to kill Russia with 1,000 cuts. The hope in D.C. is that the Russians will eventually tire of the Ukrainian misadventure and force a regime change in the Kremlin. That will not happen so the war will drag on until Russia defeats Ukraine and Kyiv is forced to negotiate for a cease fire.

TOP 2022 SELF-SUFFICIENCY TREND: "WE DON'T NEED YOUR CHIPS"

Technology companies in Russia are exploring ways to produce computer hardware—namely semi-conductors and chips—since sanctions have been imposed on the country due to its invasion of Ukraine.

JSC Mikron, MCST, and Baikal Electronics are some of the Russian companies impacted by the new trade restrictions after Samsung, Qualcomm, and Intel have suspended business with Russia, the *Financial Times* reported that the ban is forcing Moscow to make a "structural transformation" of its economy.

MCST said it was looking into converting factories into buildings that can create "worthy processors with sovereign Russian technology."

The **Trends Journal** has detailed the worldwide shortage of computer chips and its impact in such stories as "Global Chip Shortage to Cost Auto Makers $210 Billion This Year" (5 Oct 2021), "Global Chip Shortage Slashes Economic Outlook" (2 Nov 2021) and "Semiconductor Stocks Riding High on Chip Shortage" (23 Nov 2021).

This century, computer chip manufacturing has migrated to lower-cost countries, leaving developed economies vulnerable to the kinds of supply disruptions the COVID War exposed. Russia is not a major customer of semiconductors and accounts for less than 1 percent of the product.

"Some companies have organized supplies from Kazakhstan," Karen Kazaryan, the head of the Internet Research Institute in Moscow, told the *FT*. "Some second-tier Chinese companies are ready to supply. There is a reserve of components in Russian warehouses…but it's not the volume they need, it's not stable, and the prices have gone up at least twice."

The Washington Post reported that Moscow has asked China for more support amid these sanctions and had "tense" conversations with Beijing. Beijing has balked at helping Russia evade sanctions out of fears that it could be cut off from Western semiconductor and aerospace technology, *The Washington Post* reported, citing an unnamed Chinese official.

TREND FORECAST: *As a result of the sanctions and strong anti-Russian sentiments spread by the Western governments and the media, Moscow will be leading the anti-Globalization trend by embracing one of our Top 2022 Trends, Self-Sufficiency.*

More than just home-grown chip production, Russia has the human and natural resources to be on its own and live on its own at very high levels by making what it needs rather than importing products, goods and services.

Also, with some 1,000 Western firms exiting the nation, the gaps will be filled with "Made-in-Russia products" with their national style, taste, look and flare.

U.K., BRUSSELS BAN INSURANCE ON TANKERS CARRYING RUSSIAN OIL

The U.K. and EU took unprecedented steps last week to hurt the Russian economy after announcing an insurance ban on tankers carrying Russian oil.

The insurance ban is seen as a way the West hopes to limit Russian oil exports to current customers.

"The impact of a U.K. and EU maritime insurance ban on ships carrying Russian oil cannot be overstated," Leigh Hansson, a partner at Reed Smith, a law firm with a focus on shipping. "We've seen the impact the insurance ban had on Iranian oil a decade ago, and this could well send Russian oil trade down the same path."

The paper said the latest maneuver to damage Russia could have a far deeper impact on energy markets around the world. The move could also put a strain on the industry as a whole.

One official at Lloyd's told the *Financial Times* that these ships are "moving quite quickly and the insurance I contracted quite immediately, it's quite hard to do a lot of homework on the provenance" of these vessels.

Erik Broekhuizen the head of tanker research at Poten & Partners in New York, a ship broker and energy consultancy, told NPR that the EU's latest embargo was important, but this insurance ban would prevent Russia from selling its crude to other buyers.

"It's the one-two punch. It's the second one that could be a knockout blow," he said.

Shipping insurance is an insular industry and NPR pointed out that two entities cover more than 90 percent of the world's tankers. Lloyd's of London covers physical damage and the International Group of P&I Clubs provides liability, the report said.

John Miklus, president of the American Institute of Marine Underwriters, told NPR that these ships are unable to dock at most of the world's key ports without the insurance.

"I would expect an immediate drop of Russian oil exports because the sanctions affect long-term contracts." Dag Kilen, Fearnleys research chief, told the *FT*. "It does not look good for Russia's exports and [oil] industry six to eight months from now."

Thane Gustafson, an oil expert and professor of Russian politics at Georgetown University in Washington, told CGTN that it's an unprecedented move.

"The largest single market for insurance by far is located in London, so the fact that the U.K. government has agreed to cooperate with the EU is a major development," he told the outlet. "But it remains to be seen, under U.K. law and U.K. politics, just how this will be carried out. Nothing on this scale has ever been attempted before."

He compared the oil market as “one big bathtub.”

"Oil comes in from multiple sources. It gets mixed among the various grades in tankers. Then it goes out by multiple drains, you might say—it becomes a game of 'Catch me if you can.' The insurance industry then has to provide protection certification for tankers that exit from ports, and ports will require this. So the measure aimed at insurance is potentially an important lever."

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported on the ineffectiveness of the massive sanctions put on Russia, and how We the People have paid the price. (See* “BIDEN’S ‘HATE RUSSIA’ SANCTIONS CAMPAIGN INTENSIFIES,” “BIDEN BACKTRACKS: SAYS SANCTIONS WERE NEVER MEANT TO DETER RUSSIA FROM INVADING UKRAINE,” “POLISH PRIME MINISTER ADMITS SANCTIONS A BUST” *and* “UKRAINE WAR ECONOMIC OVERVIEW.”)

Western countries have suffered due to these sanctions. German news outlets reported Sunday that Berlin stands to lose $5.4 billion a year to pay for replacement gas. Gustafson also pointed out that there’s a chance that Russia could actually benefit from the insurance ban.

“If the embargo is effective and Russian oil exports do decline, then the consequence is going to be higher oil prices,” he warns. “And that, of course, means that Russia in principle would be getting more dollars for its oil.”

ZELENSKY PROMISES VICTORY AFTER ADMITTING THAT RUSSIA, SEPARATISTS CONTROL 20 PERCENT OF COUNTRY

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Friday that his country will emerge victorious from the Russian invasion despite absorbing major losses in the country's eastern region.

The *AFP* translated a video address to his countrymen meant to assure them that Kyiv is staffed and functioning. He told them that Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal and top advisers are all in the capital.

"Our team is much bigger," he said. "The armed forces of Ukraine are here. And most importantly, the people, the people of our state are here, defending Ukraine for 100 days already. Victory will be ours. Glory to Ukraine."

The Hill pointed out that the video was similar to the one his office released shortly after the Russian invasion on 24 February when he told them that he will not leave the capital.

The video was filmed about a day after he said Russians and separatists control about 20 percent of the country. Kyiv has insisted that it will not lay down arms until Russian troops retreat.

"Exactly 100 days ago we all woke up in a different reality," he said. "Exactly 100 days ago, different us woke up. When Ukrainians are awakened not by the sun's rays, but by the explosions of missiles that hit our homes, then completely different Ukrainians wake up."

French President Emmanuel Macron is one of the only western leaders in touch with the Kremlin since the war broke out. He warned that Russia should not be humiliated on the battlefield so an exit ramp could be built through diplomatic means.

The statement seems to be logical, but not to Kyiv.

Dmitro Kuleba, the Ukrainian foreign minister, took to Twitter and posted, “Calls to avoid humiliation of Russia can only humiliate France and every other country that would call for it.”

One of Zelensky’s top aides also turned down the suggestion that there should be negotiations until Kyiv receives the new weapons from the West and the country begins to drive the Russian forces back to the borders.

President Joe Biden on Friday acknowledged for the first time since the Ukraine War broke out that Ukraine may eventually have to cede land to Russia if it wants to reach a ‘negotiated settlement’ and end the death and destruction.

Biden said he will not tell Kyiv how to proceed, but it “appears to me that at some point along the line, there’s going to have to be a negotiated settlement here.”

TRENDPOST: *Anyone who suggests anything but a complete victory for Ukraine is immediately condemned by Kyiv and its most vocal allies. Russia is a much bigger power and is pounding Ukraine’s eastern side despite billions in weapons and training from the West.*

The Biden administration is in no hurry for a peaceful resolution and has said it wants to see Russia badly damaged and weakened so the military is impotent and cannot invade again.

China, in the meantime, is watching all of this and benefiting from buying Russian gas and oil at a steep discount while the rest of the world struggles.

ZELENSKY WON'T BUCKLE, LAMENTS BEING PRESSURED FOR PEACE

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Monday complained that he is beginning to feel more pressure to negotiate for a peaceful resolution to the conflict with Russia.

"Of course, everyone wants to push us a little towards some kind of result, definitely unfavorable to us, because they don't ask us yet, but it's beneficial for certain parties that have their own interests, both financial, and political ones," Zelensky told reporters, according to RT.

He said he has no plans to negotiate.

"Fatigue is growing, people want some kind of result for themselves, and you and I need a result—for us," he said. "Thus, I did not discuss with them the structures for resolving the issue of this war with a positive result for us."

Zelensky did not specify exactly what parties are beginning to grow impatient with the war but some high-profile people have recently said that Ukraine should consider some kind of concessions to achieve peace.

Zelensky and his closest advisers have been adamant that they will not cede one inch of the country to Russia, despite Russian forces and separatists now controlling about 20 percent of the country.

The Ukrainian president visited the Donbas region on Monday. He greeted his forces in Lysychansk, one of the last cities in Luhansk that Ukrainians fully control, *The Wall Street Journal* reported. The city is near Severodonetsk, the center of the fight for control of the Donbas area, the report said.

"Our heroes hold their positions in Severodonetsk. Fierce street fights continue in the city," he said.

No Peace, Nuclear War

Vladimir Solovyov, also known as “Putin's voice” on *Russia1*, said the decision by Western countries to provide Kyiv with advanced rocket systems means it is only a matter of time before nuclear war breaks out between Russia and the West.

“I hope we'll live through this,” he said, according to *The Daily Mail*. “If everything keeps progressing the way it is, only a couple of mutants in Lake Baikal will survive. The rest will be destroyed in a massive nuclear strike.”

“Because if NATO decides they can place whatever they want on our borders, they'll be sending more and more of American weapons to Ukraine, Ukraine will fire and end up hitting one of our nuclear power plants, and here we go,” he said. “The process will quickly become uncontrollable. Everyone will get more than they asked for. Bang! And there's nothing left.”

TREND FORECAST: *Gerald Celente has accused Zelensky of needlessly prolonging the war that will lead to more deaths and punishment inflicted from the more-powerful Russian army.*

Before the Ukraine War began, Celente pointed out that Napoleon sent 422,000 "brave" young men to defeat Russia and 410,000 were killed. He also pointed out that Hitler’s Operation Barbarossa campaign killed some 25 million Russians in World War II, yet the Russians defeated the Germans.

“You think Biden & NATO can beat Russia? Stop the senseless murder!” he posted. And Mr. Celente is among the very few calling for peace, and for nations to stop sending military armaments to Ukraine and end the needless death and destruction.

Celente’s Side

Agreeing with Gerald Celente’s forecast that Ukraine will lose the war, but absent the mainstream media, The National Interest magazine featured an article by Hugh De

Santis who was involved in monitoring NATO and arms control policy during the Reagan administration.

Noting that it would be best for Washington to pressure Kiev to negotiate a peace deal to end the war, De Santis said "A Ukrainian military victory is not in the cards, and a negotiated outcome is the only realistic goal."

U.K. FOLLOWS U.S., SENDING ROCKETS TO UKRAINE

The British Foreign Office announced that it will send Ukraine advanced rocket launchers that can strike targets up to 50 miles away to assist Kyiv in its ongoing battle for the eastern region of the country.

The move, announced Wednesday, came shortly after U.S. President Joe Biden agreed to send the American version of the rocket technology. Britain said it will train these Ukrainian forces on how to use the U.S.-made M270 launchers in the U.K..

"As Russia's tactics change, so must our support to Ukraine," Ben Wallace, the British defense secretary, said. "These highly capable, multiple-launch rocket systems we'll enable our Ukrainian friends to better protect themselves against Russia's brutal use of long range artillery, which Putin's forces have used indiscriminately to flatten cities."

Reports out of the Donbas region indicate that Russia has supplemented much of its ground fighting with a barrage of long distance missiles that have devastated Ukrainian forces and cities.

The **Trends Journal** reported that Moscow has identified these missile systems as game-changers because they could be fired deep into Russian territory. Ukrainians promise that they will not fire them into Russia.

Western officials have warned that these weapon transfers could provoke Putin into escalating the conflict, including using chemical or even nuclear weapons, the BBC reported.

Ukraine was praised for thwarting Russia's invasion but has been faltering in recent weeks as the war drags on. Russia now controls Mariupol and is close to seizing Severodonetsk, another strategic city in the region.

WSWS.org pointed out that Biden wrote in an op-ed published in *The New York Times* that he does not want war with Russia and has no intention of prolonging the war "just to inflict pain on Russia." The website wrote, he must "take his readers for fools."

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday that Russian forces and separatists now control about 20 percent of the country.

Russian forces and Ukrainians have been fighting it out in Donbas, which Kyiv said is the fiercest fight in Europe since WWII. Zelensky said earlier this week that his country is losing as many as 100 soldiers a day in the conflict.

Zelensky, and most recently his wife, said Ukraine will continue fighting until it gets every inch of its land back from the "occupiers."

TREND FORECAST: *Kyiv gets very defensive whenever someone is anything short of 100 percent behind its stated ambition to completely repel Russian forces.*

Top government officials mocked Henry Kissinger who said the country should consider ceding land to bring a peaceful settlement, and French President Emmanuel Macron was also targeted for saying Russia should not be humiliated on the battlefield.

Macron said it was crucial President Vladimir Putin had a way out of what he called a "fundamental error," the BBC reported. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said in a tweet that "calls to avoid humiliation of Russia can only humiliate France and every other country that would call for it."

Ukraine would have been forced to surrender if not for Western support, so this tough-guy talk from Kuleba is both deadly and destructive since we forecast before the war began that Ukraine will be defeated by Russia.

RUSSIAN NEWS OUTLET WARNS OF WWIII, WESTERN MEDIA CALLS IT 'PROPAGANDA'

The Daily Star, the British tabloid, accused a Russian news outlet of promoting propaganda when it reported that Moscow is no longer interested in just Ukraine and is looking to demilitarize all of NATO, which means WWIII.

The report pointed to Olga Skabeyeva, "of Putin mouthpiece *Rossiya-1*," who said the historic amount of weapons transfers from the West to Ukraine means the war that was once isolated now "spilled over into a global conflict."

"It's time to admit, perhaps, that Russia's special operation in Ukraine is now over, in the sense that a real war has started, World War III. We are being forced to demilitarize, not just Ukraine but NATO as a whole."

She mentioned a missile attack from Ukrainian forces that hit Donetsk, where Russian troops have been focusing their attack. She said they were not only Soviet-era Smerch MLRS that hit the city. They "were carried out with American M777 howitzers. These Russian troops have also been seen using armored vehicles that were provided by the U.K.. One official from the U.K. told the paper that the Russian army is nearing a point where it cannot "take any more losses."

The decision last week by President Joe Biden to provide Russia with advanced rocket systems that can be outfitted with missiles capable of traveling about 200 miles rankled Moscow.

Dmitry Medvedev, the deputy chairman of Russia's national security council, said in an interview with *Al Jazeera* that Moscow could target Western cities if Ukrainian forces fire these weapons into Russia.

"If, God forbid, these weapons are used against Russian territory then our armed forces will have no other choice but to strike decision-making centers," he said. He continued, "Of course, it needs to be understood that the final decision-making centers in this case, unfortunately, are not located on the territory of Kyiv."

The Kremlin said it is open to negotiations, but blamed the U.S. for inflaming tensions in the region by funding the war effort. (See "UKRAINE WAR ECONOMIC OVERVIEW," "RUSSIA ENDS GAS EXPORTS TO POLAND, BULGARIA. GERMANY AND ITALY ARE NEXT," and "U.S. SENDING UKRAINE $500M FOR MORE MURDER WEAPONS.")

"We know that the United States has been purposefully and meticulously adding fuel to the fire," Dmitry Peskov, the Kremlin spokesman, said. "The United States pursues the course towards fighting Russia to the last Ukrainian."

Joe Biden wrote an op-ed published in *The New York Times* last week that confirmed his decision to provide Ukrainian fighters with advanced rocket systems that can be reportedly outfitted with missiles capable of traveling about 200 miles.

Senior officials in Washington insist that Kyiv promised not to fire these weapons into Russian territory.

Anatoly Antonov, a top Russian diplomat, commented on reports that the Biden administration was considering sending these weapon systems last week.

"There is a risk that such equipment will be placed near Russia's borders and Ukrainians will be able to strike at Russian cities. Such a situation is unacceptable and intolerable for us," he told a Russian news outlet, *Newsweek* reported.

The advanced rocket system was part of a newly approved, $700 million military aid package for Ukraine that included 1,000 Javelin missiles, counter-artillery radars, and four Mi-17 helicopters. The aid is the 11th package sent to Ukraine from the U.S. The U.S. previously donated $56 billion in aid to Kyiv since the war broke out.

TRENDS FORECAST: *President Joe Biden, for the first time, told reporters on Friday that there's a chance that Ukraine may have to cede land in negotiations for a settlement with its bigger, stronger neighbor.*

Kyiv has insisted that it will not give up an inch to Russia, but the American president may have just signaled that the West's appetite for war—while inflation soars—may not be unlimited.

Zelensky said that Russian troops and separatists control about 20 percent of the country. If he read these pages back in February, he may have been able to cut a deal with Moscow that would have required less land and would have certainly prevented thousands of deaths and billions in destruction.

One of the theories from the West is that the stronger Ukraine is, the better positioned it will be at the negotiating table, but those believers seem to miss one key point: Russia wants a demilitarized Ukraine and will continue fighting to achieve that objective.

Again, we disagree: "The Winner Takes All."

BRAZIL'S LULA BLASTS U.S. OVER WEAPON TRANSFERS TO UKRAINE

Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, the former president of Brazil who is leading in the polls in this year's election, came out strongly, again, against the U.S. intervention in Ukraine.

Lula, who is enjoying a 21-point lead over incumbent Jair Bolsonaro, questioned the U.S.'s judgment after Washington poured $40 billion in weapons into Ukraine while the country is dealing with record-high inflation. He also mentioned the baby formula shortage.

"Biden, who has never made a speech to give $1 to those who are starving in Africa, finances $40 billion to help Ukraine buy weapons," he said. "This can't be!"

As we reported in the **Trends Journal** last month, the former leader, who was jailed in 2018 on corruption charges only to have them overturned, said that Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky shared blame for the war.

"I see the president of Ukraine, speaking on television, being applauded, getting a standing ovation by all the parliamentarians. This guy is as responsible as Putin for the war," he said.

Lula said Zelensky should have ignored Western officials and acknowledged Russia's security concerns when it came to NATO expansion and that "We should be having a serious conversation. OK, you were a nice comedian. But let us not make war for you to show up on TV."

He noted that the U.S. had the political clout to avoid the war, but instead incited it. (See "BRAZIL'S LULA SAYS UKRAINE'S COMEDIAN SHARES BLAME FOR WAR.")

"Biden could have taken a plane to Moscow to talk to Putin. This is the kind of attitude you expect from a leader," he said.

He continued, “In the same way the Americans persuaded the Russians not to put missiles in Cuba in 1961, Biden could have said, ‘We’re going to speak a bit more. We don't want Ukraine in NATO, full stop.’ That's not a concession.”

Lula, the leader of the Brazilian Workers' Party, brought up Zelensky’s desire to be on camera and said it seems as though “he's part of the spectacle.”

“He’s on television morning, noon, and night. He is in the U.K. parliament, the German parliament, the French parliament, the Italian parliament, as if he were waging a political campaign. He should be at the negotiating table,” Lula said.

TRENDPOST: *Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva also criticized the West for the sanctions against Russia that have badly damaged economies that still have not recovered from COVID-19 lockdowns.*

“And now we are going to have to foot the bill because of the war on Ukraine,” he said. “Argentina, Bolivia will also have to pay. You’re not punishing Putin. You’re punishing many different countries, you're punishing mankind.”

The ***Trends Journal*** *has been opposed to Biden sanctions since they were announced and forecast that they will do nothing to stop Russia's invasion.*

Since the war started, the U.S. has been a total cheerleader for Ukraine and has provided it with some $56 billion of weapons of death.

There is also no evidence that, even with the new weapons—which include advanced rocket systems—that Ukraine can take back any ground lost to Russia. And, there are reports of Russia destroying weapons and equipment sent to Ukraine as they arrive.

The New York Times’ editorial board even admitted last week what we had said before the war started: “it is still not in America’s best interest to plunge into an all-out war with Russia, even if a negotiated peace may require Ukraine to make some hard decisions.”

DENMARK VOTES TO DEEPEN MILITARY TIES TO EUROPE

Denmark held a vote last week that resulted in the country rejoining the EU's Common Security and Defense Policy in light of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The vote was seen as largely symbolic, but means Copenhagen will work closer with its European neighbors to ensure the bloc's defenses are strong in the face of emerging threats. Denmark, which opted out of the shared policy 30 years ago, will be able to take part in joint military operations and Danish officials will now be able to stay in the room when EU colleagues discuss defense issues.

Denmark, a full NATO member, had been the only EU member that was not part of the security policy. Copenhagen also said that it will spend 2 percent of its GDP on its defense by 2033. (The U.S., which has a much larger economy, earmarks 3.4 percent of its GDP for military spending.)

"When there is war again on our Continent, then you cannot be neutral. Tonight, Denmark has sent a very, very important signal to Putin and to our allies," Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen said in a speech after the vote, according to Politico. "The text messages are trickling in from colleagues abroad who are happy on behalf of Denmark."

The **Trends Journal** has reported on Finland and Sweden's attempt to join NATO after the invasion. U.S. General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on Saturday that these countries joining the alliance would put Russia in a difficult military position in the Baltic Sea, Reuters reported.

He said the Baltic Sea's coastline would essentially be encircled by NATO members. (See "BIDEN JOINS BORIS: VOWS TO DEFEND FINLAND AND SWEDEN.")

"So from a Russian perspective that will be very problematic for them, militarily speaking, and it would be very advantageous to NATO," Milley said. "The Baltic (Sea is) very strategically important, it's one of the great seaways of the world," Milley added.

Danish energy company Ørsted, the country's largest, said last week that Russia cut off its gas supply because it refused to pay in rubles, according to the Associated Press.

"The situation underpins the need of the EU becoming independent of Russian gas by accelerating the build-out of renewable energy," Mads Nipper, the CEO said.

Mogens Jensen, the ruling Social Democrats' defense spokesperson, said NATO will continue to be Copenhagen's most important tool but the EU secures "our defense in the East."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said she welcomed the Danish vote and said it sends a "strong message of commitment to our common security sent by the Danish people today."

"Denmark's expertise on defense is much valued. I am convinced that both Denmark and the EU will benefit from this decision," she tweeted.

TRENDPOST: *It should be noted that while the vote passed easily, there are Danes opposed to the measure, who, of course, were labeled "far-left, and far-right." They said that NATO membership is enough and joining the security agreement means Copenhagen's military decisions now rest with the entire EU.*

"NATO's military budget already far surpasses that of Russia," Mai Villadsen, leader of the Red-Green Alliance, a "far-left party," told The Wall Street Journal.

Morten Messerschmidt, the head of the "far-right" Danish People's Party, told Politico that politicians have "tried to abuse the war in Ukraine to make Danes feel that it is important that we stand together."

FEATURED ARTICLES BY GUEST WRITERS

CHINESE BOTANICAL MEDICINE AND WIKIPEDIA: FACT OR PREJUDICE

By *Gary Null, PhD*, *Progressive Radio Network*

Modern conventional medicine has increasingly become a culture of scientific and historical denialism. Although portending to be an objective discipline of consistent progress, the conventional medical establishment more often than not discredits the insights, discoveries, medical systems and methodologies of the distant past and non-Western cultures. The consequence is that Western medicine has become increasingly Eurocentric and placing all its faith in the promises of new engineered, synthetic drugs and vaccines.

Sadly, this pursuit is being misconstrued as synonymous with important medical breakthroughs and the evolution of scientific medicine in general. Yet as the statistics show, modern medicine is on a collision course with itself. This is especially evident in the increasing failures of conventional medicine to treat life-threatening diseases and the annual increases in iatrogenic injuries and deaths.

Upon graduation, every new physician repeats "I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan." The Oath composed by the wise Greek medical sage, Hippocrates, goes on to say "I will use those dietary regimens which will benefit my patients according to my greatest ability and judgment, and I will do no harm or injustice to them."

Hippocrates was a naturalist. Unlike physicians today, he was expert in the healing powers found in the natural world and was a keen observer about the health benefits of different foods, plants and herbs. However, modern allopathic doctors are not only largely ignorant about the natural world but also the epigenetic, environmental and behavioral causes of diseases and the means to prevent them. They have also failed to honor the Hippocratic Oath.

How well has modern medicine lived up to its Oath? Adverse drug events (ADEs) are rising. They have become a plague upon public health and our healthcare system. AARP estimates that there are 1.3 million prescription drug injury events annually. Every day, over 4,000 Americans experience a serious drug reaction requiring hospitalization. And over 770,000 people have ADEs during hospital stays.[1] The most common ADEs are hypertension, congestive heart failure, atrial fibrillation, volume depletion disorders and atherosclerotic heart disease, overdoses prescription opioids.[2]

According to the Centers for Disease Control, in 2016 there were 64,070 deaths directly associated with prescription overdoses; this is greater than the number of American soldiers killed during the entire Vietnam War.[3] For 2021, the CDC reported over 69,000 deaths from prescription opioid drugs alone.[4] Yet this figure is probably much higher due to the CDC's practice of reporting statistics very conservatively and many cases not being properly reported. So when we consider that there were over one million physicians in the U.S. practicing in 2021, potentially most physicians in America have contributed to ADEs.

No legitimate and highly developed alternative or natural medical practice has such a dismal track record of illness and death. Nevertheless, when a rare ADE, poisoning or death occurs followers of the Science-Based Medicine (SBM) movement, who refer to themselves as “Skeptics” and rabidly oppose Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), are quick to report the incident as a national crisis and condemn the use of traditional natural medicine altogether.

Yet if we look at the potential number of iatrogenic injuries and deaths over the last four decades since the start of the pharmaceutical and biotechnology boom in the mid 1980s, we are looking at over 60 million ADE incidences caused by conventional Western medicine alone. This is nothing to celebrate and no concerted national effort within the medical establishment is being made to challenge the dominant medical paradigm responsible for this crisis.

According to the World Health Organization, 80% of the world's population uses herbal medicine. And this trend is increasing rapidly.[5] Skeptics have few viable and rational explanations to account for this trend. Since Skeptics regard traditional herbal medical systems as quackery, anyone experiencing relief or are successfully treated with botanicals is simply having a conversion experience due to the placebo effect.

Fortunately in the U.S. and other Western nations, the public is rapidly losing its trust and satisfaction with conventional Western medical practice and is seeking safer alternatives. With healthcare costs escalating annually and prescription ADE's on the increase as more and more drugs are fast-tracked through federal regulatory hurdles, relying solely upon allopathic medicine is a dangerous bargain.

Dr. Dominic Lu at the University of Pennsylvania and president of the American Society for the Advancement of Anesthesia and Sedation recommends that Chinese herbal and Western medicine might complement each other if we make the effort to investigate their synergistic therapeutic effects. Lu believes oriental concepts of human anatomy should be further included in higher educational health science curriculums.[6] In addition, with conventional medicine in a crisis, people are accessing the numerous resources on the internet to educate themselves about the medicinal properties of plants, herbs, supplements and foods as part of their personal therapeutic protocols.

Wikipedia has a noteworthy amount to say about traditional Chinese herbal medicine. The majority of clinical research into Chinese botanicals and medical preparations are only found in Chinese databases. Therefore, Western analytical reviews, including the Cochrane reports, are extremely limited, inconclusive and biased.

Critics of TCM frequently criticize published Chinese research as "incomplete, some containing errors or were misleading."[7] These are the same Skeptic criticisms Wikipedia levels against traditional herbal medical systems in general. With over 181,000 peer-reviewed research papers and reviews listed in the National Institutes of Health PubMed database referring to TCM, it is disingenuous to assume Wikipedia's editors have scoured this massive body of science to make any sound judgment about TCM's efficacy.

Under the heading "Chinese Herbology," Wikipedia states, "A *Nature* editorial described TCM as 'fraught with pseudoscience,' and said that the most obvious reason why it has been unsuccessful is because the majority of its treatments have no logical mechanism of action... Research into the effectiveness of traditional Chinese herbal therapy is of poor quality and often tainted by bias, with little or no rigorous evidence of efficacy."[8]

Nature's editorial, which reflects the same ill-informed opinions that are all too common in Skeptical criticisms about natural health, does not cite any research to support its sweeping prejudiced opinion. The editorial is primarily a diatribe against the growing popularity of traditional medicine in the Chinese domestic market, estimated by the Boston Consulting Group to be worth $13 billion.[9] In addition, Wikipedia's sources include a review of herbal medicine published in the *South African Medical Journal* that only looked at six African botanicals, none which are part of the Chinese pharmacopoeia.[10]

We would be negligent to not state a serious concern that readers should be aware of regarding Chinese medicinal herbs and preparations. This has been rightly noted in Wikipedia; that is the high levels of toxic contaminants, notably arsenic, lead and other toxic chemicals found in Chinese herbs and formulas being exported. However Wikipedia fails to note the reasons for this warning. Rather it frames caution as a means to discredit Chinese botanical medicine altogether.

The export of toxic herbs is largely due to China's enormous out-of-control environmental problems including toxic atmospheric particulate matter from over-pollution, toxic dumping and waste spills in water supplies and poor agricultural practices. However, in some countries such as Japan and Taiwan, federal regulations for the import and export of medical botanicals are stricter and clean, non-toxic botanical herbs and preparations are readily available. There remain very reliable sources for acquiring high quality grown Chinese herbs.

One of SBM's prominent spokespersons would have us to believe that Mao Tse-tung should be condemned for restoring traditional Chinese medicine in mainland China.[11] This is a blatant half-truth. In fact, it was during Mao's reign that classical Chinese medicine took an enormous leap backwards. The ancient system was originally banned during the Chinese Nationalist movement in the early 20th century because its leaders believed the old ways were preventing the nation from modernizing. Mao initially made a small effort to restore the practice when he came to power.

However, it was after the Communist Revolution when Mao turned against traditional medicine. The Cultural Revolution again outlawed the practice. Traditional doctors who retained the most extensive knowledge and wisdom about classical Chinese anatomical theory and knowledge of medicinal herbs were systematically gathered for Communist conversion programs, imprisoned and/or murdered. TCM nearly died out altogether from the mainland.

Years later after the Communists attempted to resurrect the ancient medical wisdom, only a few hundred doctors could be found throughout the country with sufficient knowledge to start TCM anew. Yet Mao remained ambiguous. He wrote, "Even though I believe we should promote Chinese medicine... I personally do not believe in it. I don't take Chinese medicine."[12] Unfortunately what is commonly called Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) today is only a partial reconstruction of the original ancient system that had developed over thousands of years. Much has been lost.

According to Dr. Brigetta Shea, "once the government decided to reinstate some form of China's traditional medicine, they did it with an emphasis on combining it with Western medical theory. This shifted even acupuncture theory, as Western anatomical teaching was adopted and esoteric subtle anatomy was discarded."[13] The result has been that TCM today is a shadow of its past and heavily contaminated by Western reductionist medical theories. Fortunately, growing interest in TCM is inspiring young researchers and practitioners to travel to China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea to try to recover the more ancient classical medical teachings that were not included in the standardized TCM curriculums.

SBM founder Stephen Novella remarks, "TCM is a pre-scientific superstitious view of biology and illness, similar to the humoral theory of Galen, or the notions of any pre-scientific culture. It is strange and unscientific to treat TCM as anything else. Any individual diagnostic or treatment method within TCM should be evaluated according to standard principles of science and science-based medicine, and not given special treatment."[14]

The remainder of Novella's argument is an example of taking TCM terms literally and not penetrating their deeper functions to discover the correlations with scientifically identified bio-molecular substances and events. Novella also believes that the Chinese medical theories of qi and the acupuncture meridians share the same magical thinking as "ether, flogistum, Bigfoot, and unicorns."[15]

The master physicians and pioneers of the advanced traditional medical systems of Greece, India, China and Tibet, were very skilled and astute in identifying metabolic disturbances in their patients. Although on the surface, the humors may appear to be primitive mythological terms, a deep study of the traditional medical texts reveals they have direct correspondences to biochemical and biological processes that are well known in modern medicine.

For example, according to the recent translators of the enormous medical corpus composed by one of the world's greatest medical doctors Avicenna in the 11th century, who revived the medical theories of Galen at the height of Islamic civilization's golden age, Dr. Hakima Amri, professor of molecular biology at Georgetown University and Dr. Mones Abu-Asab, a senior scientist and expert in phylogenetic systematics at the National Institutes of Health, discovered the ancient descriptions of the humors have a direct correlation to properties of fats, proteins and organic acids—the cornerstones of metabolic changes.

Due to its linear and non-systematic way of analyzing health and disease, modern medicine focuses upon single metabolic pathways and fails to consider that these pathways work in concert and are codependent with others. For example, a patient with high LDL cholesterol will be prescribed a statin drug without fully understanding the biological imbalances that increased LDL. But traditional herbal systems, including Chinese botanical medicine, provide more parameters such as a tissue's hydration and energy production in the case of abnormal cholesterol levels. Western medicine does not take into account hydration and energy production in making an accurate diagnostic assessment of the reasons for a patient's cholesterol imbalance. This is where the ancient theory of humors, or the fundamental "fluids" in the body—traditionally defined as blood, phlegm and yellow and black bile—may provide clues.

Western medicine has no equivalent to what traditional systems refer to as "dystemperament" in a biological system or organ. Dys Temperament was understood as an imbalance in a person's unique personalized physical, genetic and psychological disposition. Today the rapidly growing discipline of Functional Medicine finds agreement with this principle for diagnosing and treating an illness. In fact, conventional medicine still endeavors to define the causes of many diseases at a singular cellular or molecular level. It also faces a serious predicament in being based upon a one-drug-one-target paradigm in drug research and development.

Traditional systems, including Chinese herbology, being far more complete and efficient medical systems, don't struggle with this dilemma. For half a century we have spent hundreds of billions of dollars on biomedical research to identify genes, proteins and metabolic biochemical changes that contribute to disease. But despite the enormous body of knowledge and data we have gathered from astronomic costly projects there have been few practical and meaningful results to find safe and effective treatments outside of prescribing potentially lethal drugs.

Most evidence-based medical reviews of research conducted on the efficacy of specific Chinese herbs fail to take into account that Chinese herbology is a complete system. It is unrealistic to research a single traditional Chinese herb and draw a definitive conclusion. An herbal concoction can include up to 18 or more ingredients, and these may be fermented or simmered for hours to produce pharma-therapeutic properties useful for the treatment of a disease.

This was noted in a Cochrane review of Chinese medical herbs for treating acute pancreatitis.[16] It is estimated that there are over 13,000 different medicinal ingredients found in the annals of Chinese medical texts and well over 100,000 unique decoctions and recipes. While the vast majority of substances used in Chinese medicinal preparations are plant-based, parts of animals and specific minerals may also be included.[17,18]

Regardless of Wikipedia's invective to diminish Chinese medicine's efficacy and successes, TCM is booming and extraordinary research continues to pump out positive discoveries. Even Bayer Pharmaceutical purchased the Chinese herbal company Dihon Pharmaceutical Group in 2014 to capitalize on the huge potential for discovering powerful phytochemicals to treat a wide variety of diseases. Helmut Kaiser Consultancy in Germany predicted that annual revenues in Chinese botanicals will triple by 2025 from 2015 revenues of $17 billion.[19] A Morgan Stanley 2012 review found that even among Chinese physicians trained in Western medical schools, TCM is being used as the first line of defense against disease in 30% of medical cases.[20]

Curiously Wikipedia fails to acknowledge that the 2015 Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to China's scientist Tu Youyou for her use of the Chinese medical remedy *artemisia* to develop an anti-malarial drug.[21] In 2015, researchers at the Texas Biomedical Research Institute and the Center for Integrative Protein Science in Munich published their findings in *Science* of an alkaloid in an ingredient of the Chinese formula *Han Fang Ji* that protected human white blood cells from the Ebola virus.[22] And in 2006, the FDA gave its first drug approval to an ointment based upon Chinese botanicals, including green tea leaves, for the treatment of genital warts caused by human papillomavirus.[23]

In a bioinformatics database analysis comparing phytochemicals in Chinese plants with the modern Comprehensive Medical Chemistry database of pharmaceutical drug ingredients, over 100 Chinese herbal phytochemicals had direct correlates with ingredients used in approved pharmaceutical drugs on the market.[24]

Taking one excellent example of the synergistic effects of herbal combinations in TCM is the duo *Coptidis rhizoma* and *Evodia rutaecarpa*. In classical Chinese medical practice, this formula has been prescribed for centuries to treat gastric conditions and to heal ulcers. Research has shown that together these herbs inhibit the bacterium *Helicobacter pylori*, which frequently accompanies ulcers. In the US approximately 20% of people under 40 years and over 50% of those above 60 years are estimated to have an *H. pylori* infection which can be responsible for gastritis, stomach and duodenal ulcers, gastric lymphoma and stomach cancer. The herbs contain limonene used in drugs as an antineoplastic molecule and gamolenic acid used as an ingredient in pharmaceutical anti-tumor drugs.[25]

Finally, we might take a look at the 2017-2018 flu season. In fact, the influenza vaccine for that season failed to protect most recipients from infection. According to the CDC, the vaccine was 36% effective.[26] Later research at Rice University determined the vaccine was at best only 20% efficacy.[27]

With conventional medicine and our federal health agencies failing to protect the public, tens of thousands of people experiencing the onset of flu-like symptoms rushed to purchase the Chinese herbal cold formula *Nin Jiom Pei Pa Koa*. The formula cost as little as $6 in New York City's Chinatown. *Pei Pa Koa* is one of the most popular cold, flu and cough remedies across East Asia and Singapore. It was first formulated during the Qing dynasty in the 17th century. The results are often immediate. When we desire relief from a health condition that is all that matters.

We have no need for Skeptics to preach from their bully pulpits. There is no need to read the vitriol of Science-based medicine's priesthood. And we certainly have no need to consult Wikipedia's encyclopedia of biased misinformation to censor natural and traditional medical modalities. The fact of the matter is that the science supporting TCM will never meet Skeptics' standards because fundamentalists cannot be persuaded by factual evidence that conflicts with their ideologies and fears. And this is the fundamental fallacy and blatant hypocrisy that runs throughout SBM Skepticism and Wikipedia. It is not "science-based" because it is impoverished of the necessary inquisitive open-mindedness that defines those who are authentic scientists.

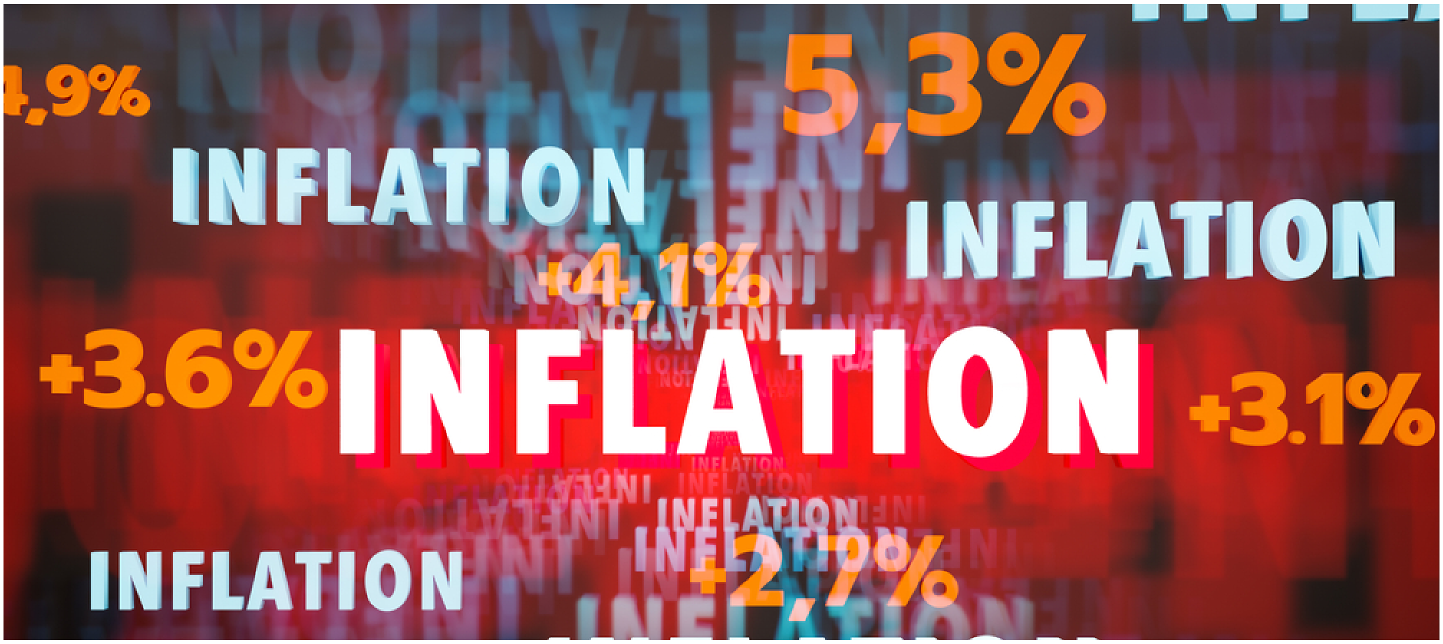
The Skeptic movement is faith-based and holds fealty to a grossly reductionist understanding of disease management and treatment. In his criticism of TCM, Novella brings the absurdity of Skepticism to a climax. "I maintain that there are many good reasons to conclude that any system [i.e. TCM] which derives from everyday experience is likely to be seriously flawed and almost entirely cut off from reality."[28] However, for thousands of years there have been countless people who experienced and claimed the benefits from Chinese botanical medicine.

NOTES

1 Weiss AJ, Freeman WJ, Helsin KC, Barrett ML. "Adverse Drug Events in U.S. Hospitals, 2010 Versus 2014" *Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project*. January 2018
2 Bond CA, Raehl CL. "Adverse drug reactions in United States hospitals." *Pharmacotherapy* 2006 May; 26(5): 601-8
3 Welsh, A. "Drug overdoses killed more Americans last year than the Vietnam War," *CBS News*. October 17,
2017 https://www.cbsnews.com/news/opioids-drug-overdose-killed-more-americans-last-year-than-the-vietnam-war/
4 CDC. "Drug Overdose Death Data." https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm
5 Ekor, Martin. "The growing use of herbal medicines: issues related to adverse reactions and challenges in monitoring safety." *Front Pharmacol*. 2013; 4:
177. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3887317/
6 Lu WI, Lu DP. "Impact of Chinese herbal medicine on American society and health care system," *Evid-Based Complement Altern Med*. Volume 2014, Article ID 251891.
7 Wikipedia. "Acupuncture." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acupuncture
8 Wikipedia "Chinese Herbology." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_herbology
9 "Hard to swallow," *Nature*. Volume 448, 12 July 2007, pp 105-6.
10 Siegfried, N. L; Hughes, G (2012). "Herbal medicine, randomised controlled trials and global core competencies". *South African Medical Journal*. 102 (12): 912–3. doi:10.7196/samj.6392
11 Gorski, D. "In the tradition of Chairman Mao, traditional Chinese medicine gets a new boost by the Chinese government." *ScienceBasedMedicine*. January 2, 2017

12 Lily Kuo. "Traditional Chinese medicine is a getting a voice at the World Health Organization." *Quartz* March 13,
2015 https://qz.com/362182/traditional-chinese-medicine-is-getting-a-voice-at-the-world-health-organization/
13 Shea, Brigette. *Handbook of Chinese Medicine and Ayurveda*. Celestial Arts Press: Rochester VT, 2018.
14 Novella, S. "What is traditional chinese medicine," *ScienceBasedMedicine*. July 25, 2012
15 Novella, S. Ibid.
16 Wikipedia "Chinese Herbology." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_herbology
17 Chen K, Bei Yu. "Certain progress of clinical research on Chinese integrative medicine." *Chinese Medical Journal*. 1999, 112 (10), p. 934,
18 Foster, S, Yue, C. *Herbal emissaries: bringing Chinese herbs to the West.* Healing Arts Press, 1992
19 Helmut Kaiser Consultancy. "Traditional Chinese medicine: In China and worldwide 2015-2025 with History." Updated March 2017. http://www.hkc22.com/chinesemedicine.html
20 Bayer. "Bayer completes acquisition of Dihon Pharmaceutical Group Co in China: Transaction strengthens consumer care business and moves Bayer Healthcare to a leading OTC position." Published November 3, 2014
21 Shea, Brigette. op cit.
22 "Tetrandrine: Compound from Japanese, Chinese herbs shows promise for blocking Ebola virus." *Science News*. February 27, 2015
23 Tung, A. "Chinese medicine increasingly recognized in US." *China Daily*, December 4,
2010. http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2010-12/04/content_11653206.htm
24 Kong DX, Xue JL, Tang GY, Zhang HY. "How Many Traditional Chinese Medicine Components Have Been Recognized by Modern Western Medicine? A Chemoinformatic Analysis and Implications for Finding Multicomponent Drugs." *ChemMedChem* 2008, 3, 233 – 236
25 Ibid.
26 Ducharme, J. "CDC estimates this year's flu vaccine is only 36 percent effective." *Time*. February 15, 2018.
27 Melia E Bonomo, Michael W Deem. Predicting Influenza H3N2 Vaccine Efficacy from Evolution of the Dominant Epitope. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 2018; DOI: 10.1093/cid/ciy323
28 Novella, S. "What is traditional Chinese medicine," *ScienceBasedMedicine*. July 25, 2012

TRENDS IN THE MARKETS



PREPARE YOURSELVES FOR THE NEXT INFLATION WAVE

By *Gregory Mannarino* TradersChoice.net

Turn on any of the mainstream media propaganda ministry fake news outlets and they are all pushing the same narrative… "Inflation Is Peaking."

Well, here is a little secret for you that you are not supposed to know… not only is inflation NOT peaking, but another surge higher is coming. The current action(s) being implemented by the Federal Reserve to "fight" inflation guarantee one thing- HIGHER INFLATION.

The Federal Reserve is still maintaining the false narrative that by raising the Federal Funds Rate/FFR, this will slow the pace of rising inflation… here is another secret for you… in no way will raising the FFR at its current rate slow the pace of inflation.

The Federal Reserve is still maintaining a FFR well below the current inflation rate, and what does this do? By design this creates more inflation. Moreover, the Federal Reserve is now supposedly engaging in some kind of quantitative tightening program, which in theory is slowing the pace of its asset purchases and even possibly reducing the size of its balance sheet.

Just to put this into perspective, the balance sheet of the Federal Reserve is now larger than the gross domestic product of most nations on Earth! And it will take DECADES for the Federal Reserve to reduce its balance sheet to anything which will make any difference whatsoever, or even resemble some kind of normalcy.

Here is yet even another secret for you. **The Federal Reserve will use their new economic model, which is the creation of, proliferation of, and prolonging of, a crisis-to-crisis system to continue to inflate.**

The single goal of a central bank is to inflate, period. The more debt they issue, the stronger they become. Every mechanism imaginable, and things which you cannot even possibly make up, will be utilized by the Federal Reserve as a means to inflate even more.

Wars, and the expansion of war is the business of central banks. Fear, and the propagation of such is also the business of central banks. Wealth redistribution and wealth destruction is also the business model of central banks. Sucking wealth via suppressed rates from savers right up to the one percenters is the business of central banks. Price distortions to an extreme is also the business of the Federal Reserve specifically, in the form of deliberately inflating asset bubbles.

If you were to look back on history, it will become clear to you that the Federal Reserve is a serial bubble blower—by design.

The fact is this—today in no way is inflation peaking. Moreover, the “inflation is peaking” false narrative being fist fed to the masses via the mainstream media should be your biggest clue that just the opposite is going to happen.

So be ready…

TRENDS IN SURVIVALISM

THE TIME FACTOR IN PHYSICAL TRAINING

By *Bradley J. Steiner*

Since the 1960s I have been urging weight-training as the premier physical training for hand-to-hand and close combat. Today, the idea has caught on and many take it for granted that "it's a good idea to lift weights if you want to get stronger," but few who have jumped on the bandwagon know anything about the correct principles concerning that which they now advocate.

In the 1960s, when I wrote the first magazine article in America on "WEIGHT TRAINING FOR THE BUDO-KA" (in STRENGTH AND HEALTH) the preponderance of braindead gleefully pooh-poohed what I was advocating, and, in lock-step with the idiots with whom they were then studying, insisted that "you don't need strength in martial arts."

The hell you don't!

In any case, the truth has finally won out and only the most ignorant still maintain that physical fitness, muscle power, and all-round hardihood (as well as, and in addition to skill and technique) is irrelevant in unarmed and armed hand-to-hand combat.

The problem is, again, that while weight-training has caught on, there are very few who understand its correct principles, and who advocate the correct approach to employing weights.

The advice to "go lift weights" is not sufficient guidance for students of combat disciplines. Sensible physical training with weights is a serious discipline. Unless it is followed correctly it can become at best a waste of time and at worst a harmful activity.

One of the most critical factors for successful weight-training is spending the right amount of time at the activity and not overdoing it.

One correspondent wrote: "It makes sense that weights would help me. But how can I find the time to do both weights and martial arts?"

The answer to that individual's question—as I explained to him, personally—is that it takes little time to follow an excellent and quite complete program of weight-training.

Those whose objective is simply bolstering their combative capabilities need no more than one to one and a half hours per week total training time; and even the most serious of the serious weight-trainee/martial arts devotees need never spend more than four and a half to six hours weekly on this activity!

In most instances two or three workouts per week of never more than 45-60 minutes duration each will be sufficient. In cases where the supremely dedicated and totally committed devotee whose lifestyle revolves around training is concerned, an absolute maximum of three two-hour workouts per week will always be plenty.

Weight-training is concentrated and intensive (which is the reason for its enormous value and desirability as an exercise form). One can achieve, for example, more from doing one hard and heavy set of a dozen or so barbell squats than one could achieve from doing many hundreds of freehand knee bends.

You have the time. Just do it. You can make all the time you need by losing the stretching, the calisthenics, the acrobatics, the meditation, and all the other horse dung that is integral to so many of the so-called "martial" studies*.

*We in no sense suggest that some of the traditional exercises and calisthenic work might not be valuable for those studying with objectives OTHER THAN practical self-defense and close combat in mind. For hand-to-hand battle, however, weight training remains The Method of physical training with which to supplement martial skills work.

TRENDS IN TECHNOCRACY

By Joe Doran

WHAT DO AMERICANS REALLY THINK ABOUT AI AND HUMAN GENE EDITING?

A Pew Research Poll from March reveals attitudes of Americans surrounding some of the most controversial aspects of technological "innovations" being pursued by technocratic interests.

Researchers asked questions about various topics involving Artificial Intelligence, robotics, and the interrelated fields of bio-pharma, gene editing and synthetic biology.

The study posed questions about things like AI powered facial recognition, "transhuman" technologies like brain chip implants and robotic exoskeletons, and about heritable gene editing—a technology which would create genetically modified human beings that could pass on those modifications to future generations.

For those who believe that many of these technological pursuits hold significant or even existential dangers for natural human beings, some results of the Pew Research poll are dismaying.

Overall, people believe that many of these radical technologies will lead to human betterment, despite the erosion in freedoms, the forcing of experimental therapies on unwilling individuals, and the vast power and control imbalances between government-corporate elites and average citizens already exacerbated by such technologies.

Many Willing to Follow the Siren Song of Technological "Progress"

America has long been seduced by the idea of technological progress, though the 20th, and now 21st century are littered with some of the worst technocratic fueled mass exterminations and dehumanizing regimes in all human history.

It has reached a current point where:

- For the first time in more than a century, longevity in the U.S. and other countries is actually decreasing
- The wealth and power gap between have and have-nots has increased dramatically over the last half-century, and only accelerated more from the onset of the COVID War in 2020
- Long cherished American rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution, including Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Religion (1st Amendment), Right to Bear Arms (2nd Amendment), and rights to Privacy (4th Amendment) are under relentless open attack by a Corporate-Government Technocracy

Americans, by an overwhelming majority, believe the country is currently headed in the wrong direction.

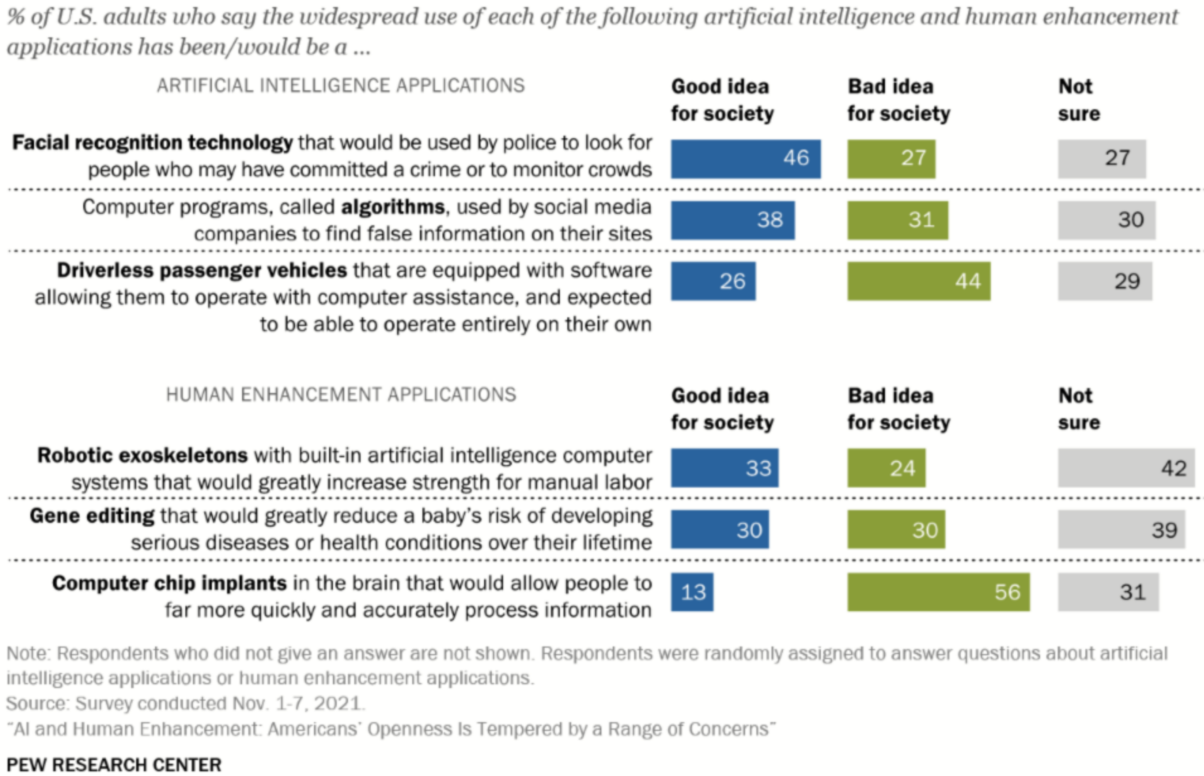
Yet the Pew study reveals a disconnect between the deep pessimism people have about the state of the nation, and the role that technology has played in creating the vast distortions and dehumanizing erosion of prosperity and liberty for the average populace.

The study summarized several themes that characterized responses on a range of technology related questions. One was that Americans are uncertain about various specific areas of AI, robotic and genomic technologies.

This suggests that many people remain either open to the prospects such technologies can provide—or perhaps, more likely, that they remain uneducated about the workings, issues and potentials surrounding the technologies.

In the absence of specific knowledge and understanding, a general bias toward accepting the general idea of "progress" could well have affected attitudes captured by the Pew study.

The following graph shows attitudes regarding some of the specific technologies canvassed by the study:



Some takeaways:

- There was a plurality of positive opinion regarding some troubling technology, including use of facial recognition technology to police populations, AI algorithms policing social media content for "misinformation," and gene editing that would "greatly reduce a baby's risk of developing serious diseases or health conditions over their lifetime"
- Some technologies, like brain computer chip implants, and driverless cars, were notably rejected by a majority of poll respondents

Concerning computer chip brain implants, the public felt strongly that such technology would increase current divides in society:

> *"For instance, 57% of Americans say the widespread use of brain chips for enhanced cognitive function would increase the gap between higher- and lower-income Americans, while just 10% say it would decrease the gap."*

Even technologies which received more neutral responses, such as gene editing to reduce risks of disease or maladies, were seen as likely leading to more stratification of society, not less.

One finding of the survey was that people had a healthy skepticism about heritable gene editing, and whether technocrats would be bound by limits in its usage.

Respondents answered two key questions on the subject as follows:

> *Even if gene editing is used appropriately in some cases, others would use these techniques in ways that are morally unacceptable:*
> Definitely would happen: 45%
> Probably would happen: 39%
> Probably would NOT happen: 9%
> Definitely would NOT happen: 5%
> No answer: 2%
>
> *Development of these gene editing techniques would pave the way for new medical advances that benefit society as a whole:*
> Definitely would happen: 16%
> Probably would happen: 51%
> Probably would NOT happen: 22%
> Definitely would NOT happen: 8%
> No answer: 3%

More Oversight Seen As Necessary. But Is "Oversight" Enough?

The Pew research showed that large majorities of Americans agree that more oversight and public input is needed in some of the most controversial technologies referenced by the survey.

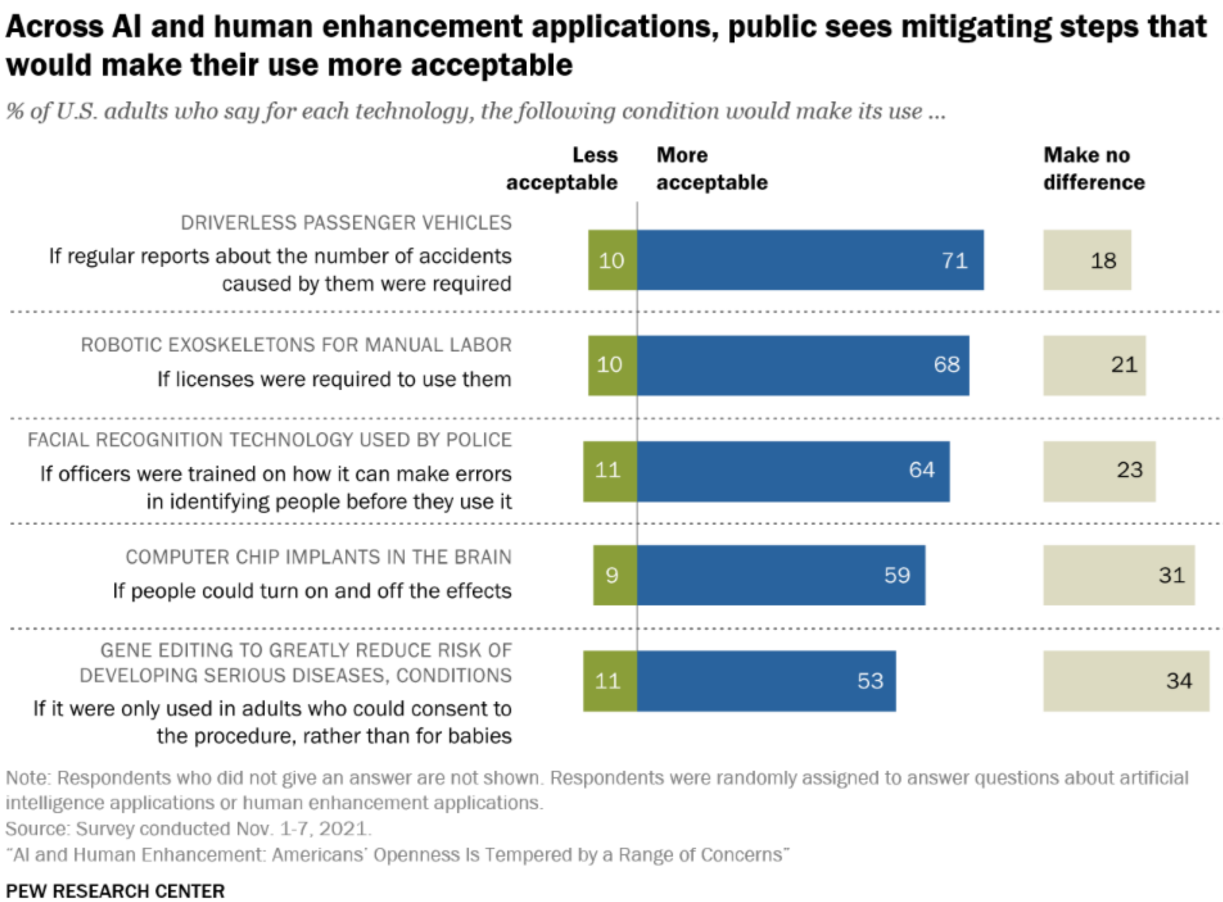
There was a distinct partisan divide between Republicans and Democrats over whether government should be more or less involved in regulating the technologies.

The Pew research noted that across all six technologies explored, a majority of Republicans and independents who lean Republican expressed more concern about government overreach, while a majority of Democrats and Democratic leaners were more apt to believe that there wouldn't be enough government oversight.

But of course survey questions failed to really account for the fact that distinctions between government entities, corporations and highly influential NGOs (Non-Government Organizations) like the World Economic Forum (WEF), George Soro's Open Society and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation are increasingly blurring the lines of who is controlling the direction of policy making in the current era.

The survey questions were arguably biased in other ways. For example, it posed questions that queried about possible steps that would make technologies more acceptable to the public.

The survey found that large majorities would be inclined to be more accepting of even the most controversial technologies, if certain "safeguards" were included:



On the other hand, the study did not ask questions proposing steps that would limit or prohibit technologies likely to significantly threaten or undermine natural human existence and furtherance in the future.

There are currently a number of advocacy groups working to make the public aware of issues at stake in fields such as surveillance technology and human genomics and other genetic experimentation.

Groups like Electronic Frontier Foundation, censortrack.org (a human rights and censorship database) and The Center for Democracy & Technology all work in the area of invasive tech and unlawful and unethical surveillance.

The Center for Genetics and Society advocates for oversight and consideration of the implications of human genetic experimentation and research. And the recent formation of a Europe Non-GMO Industry Association (ENGA), to develop and advocate on behalf of businesses committed to growing non-genetically modified foods has been a positive step.

But unfortunately, many advocacy groups in these important technology areas have small participation and limited influence.

What's more, many groups are riddled with woke political objectives that distort and limit their efforts to narrow concerns, such as ensuring "equity" or preventing "disparate impacts," rather than frankly opposing troubling technologies.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has become a poster child for bias that undercuts much of its original "civil liberties" vision. In 2019 the organization joined with over 80 others in demanding that tech companies stop selling facial recognition and related surveillance technology to the U.S. government.

But the concerns of the organizations largely revolved around supposed racial biases.

The ACLU did issue a February 2022 statement opposing "blanket" use of cameras in public places. The organization said:

> *"The ACLU does not oppose placing cameras at specific, high-profile public places that are potential terrorist targets, such as the U.S. Capitol. But the impulse to blanket our public spaces and streets with video surveillance is a bad idea. The growing presence of cameras will create chilling effects that bring subtle but profound changes to the character of our public spaces."*

But the American public has a long way to go in terms of really becoming effectively proactive in realizing and responding to the troubling implications of technologies queried by the Pew Research technology poll.

For related reading, check out:

- "THE TRANSHUMAN WAR HAS ALREADY BEGUN" (29 Mar 2021)
- "ARE HUMANS ALREADY BEING GENETICALLY LEGISLATED?" (8 Jun 2021)

- “TECHNO EUGENICS: SUPERIOR BABIES JUST A POLYGENIC RISK SCORE AWAY” (12 Oct 2021)
- “METAVERSE: THE NEW COLLECTIVE” (14 Dec 2021)
- “MICROSOFT ANNOUNCES GLOBAL AI ‘SINGULARITY’” (1 Mar 2022)
- “SINGULARITY UNIVERSITY: FUELING AI ASCENDANCE” (3 Aug 2021)
- “AI IS LEARNING YOUR JOB” (24 May 2022)

DARPA WANTS TO LEAD “THIRD WAVE” OF WEAPONIZED AI

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has put out a new contract call to speed advances in Artificial Intelligence Exploration.

DARPA specifically wants to advance algorithmic processing within military artificial intelligence projects, according to the government and tech conduit web platform Nextgov.

“The pace of discovery in AI science and technology is accelerating worldwide,” according to the program’s announcement. “AIE will enable DARPA to fund pioneering AI research to discover new areas where R&D programs awarded through this new approach may be able to advance the state of the art.”

The project seeks to back “high risk, high reward” AI projects preferably leading to rapid prototype development. The AIE's technologies will largely be tied to the Department of Defense's national security priorities.

The AIE program is focused on putting machine learning algorithms into data processing chains that can calculate both accuracy and uncertainty in their output findings, said Bryan Jacobs, a program manager at DARPA:

"Accurately estimating, predicting, and extrapolating information from multiple combined sensors and subsystems are all key to advancing AI performance—and in deriving and delivering reliable, actionable intelligence for military operations."

AI is one of the most intense areas of defense development spending, not only for the U.S. military, but for China and Europe as well.

Many say it's another example of technology innovations being pursued in ways that are highly unlikely to benefit humanity as a whole, while world organizations and alliances do little to de-escalate or focus resources on projects promoting prosperity, peace and human dignity.

The **Trends Journal** has been covering the militarization of AI and robotics in many stories. Some touchstone articles include:

- "WAR, PROFIT AND TRANSHUMANISM: THE QUEST FOR THE 'SECOND QUANTUM REVOLUTION'" (15 Mar 2022)
- "THE FUTURE: MORE TECH NIGHTMARE THAN NIRVANA?" 20 Apr 2021)
- "A SHORT PATH FROM COVID VAX TECH TO GENETIC WEAPONS" (24 Aug 2021)
- "CHINA CHALLENGING U.S. HI-TECH DOMINANCE" (13 Jul 2021)
- "'SPACE CHIEF'S' VISION OF FUTURE WARS" (4 May 2021)
- "ARMY DEVELOPING WAR MACHINE 'FLESH' ROBOTS" (27 Apr 2021)

The full Nextgov article can be read here.

WILL TECH ANTITRUST BILL CAVE TO LOBBY CASH BLITZ?

Big Tech companies might finally have to brace for the idea of curbing some of their anti-competitive practices if a bi-partisan American Innovation and Choice Online Act gets a vote-up before the Senate recesses for the summer.

Co-sponsored by Senators Amy Klobuchar (D-Minn.) and Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa), the bill would prevent some of the largest tech corporations from favoring their own services on their platforms.

According to a recent Axios write-up, if the legislation is passed:

- Amazon would no longer be able to utilize its inside info and knowledge to unfairly sell and promote its own lines of products prioritize against third-party vendors who use the Amazon selling platform
- Google would no longer be able to rank its advertising reviews higher than others in search results, simply because Google owns the search engine
- Apple would have to enable applications to utilize their own payment methods, and not be limited to the Apple Pay service, and Apple's cut for processing

The Senate measure, if passed, would then be subject to reconciliation with a House bill that was passed last summer by the House Judiciary Committee.

According to Axios, Tech giants are pulling out all the stops to lobby against the Senate bill. Senate Democratic Majority leader Chuck Schumer recently pressured Klobucher to revise the bill, but tech lobbyists still aren't happy.

The industry is also pouring millions into TV and other ad campaigns to influence public opinion. According to advertising analytics company AdImpact, the Tech allied Consumer Technology Association and the Computer and Communications

Industry Association spent $22 million on commercials across more than 30 broadcast and cable markets in just one week in late May in opposition to the law.

For more, read here.

The **Trends Journal** has covered anti-competitive practices of tech corporations in articles such as:

- “LOOKING FOR COLLUSION? TRY GOOGLE AND FACEBOOK”
- “AMAZON CAUGHT ILLEGALLY UNDERCUTTING COMPETITION”
- “HOW BIG TECH MAINTAINS ITS MONOPOLY”
- “SEARCH & BUY: GOOGLE & AMAZON BATTLE FOR DOMINANCE”
- “NEW COALITION WILL PRESS FOR STRICTER ANTITRUST MEASURES”

THIS WEEK IN SURVEILLANCE

NEW AI STREET SURVEILLANCE FINGERS YOU AND EVERYONE YOU MEET

The company is called Vintra and their motto is “Know what the cameras know.”

A new surveillance product leverages AI to analyze video footage and make startling connections that provide a creepily invasive and detailed interaction map of people on public streets.

Not only does the system identify users by matching them to say a photo provided by an authority such as a police or government agency, or private company or employer.

The ACLU recently called attention to an especially troubling aspect of the technology, which detects connections to any other persons that came into contact or were near a given individual in a given time frame. That capability allows the system to build association maps that provide a comprehensive picture of potential relationships.

According to Vintra:

> *"[Using the system], You can really start building out a network. You may have one guy, that showed up a few times, that you're interested in—you can start looking at windows of time around him to see who else is there at the same time, and build out the networks of those people."*

In a video demonstration highlighting the capabilities of Vintra's surveillance technology, a firm executive examined a month's worth of video footage acquired by roughly 10 fixed cameras, as well as body cameras, in a San Jose transportation hub.

The Vintra exec provided the system an image of a male subject, and an AI algorithm quickly produced 23 snapshots of the person from the center's cameras. The footage in which he appeared was presented in snapshots that could be clicked on to play the relevant footage.

Even more disturbing, on inputting a time frame—say, ten minutes—and pressing a "find associates" button, an algorithmic search can sniff out virtually potential contacts of the subject, seen in the video footage.

The Vintra technology can analyze the nature and quality of the "contacts."

For example, in the company's demonstration video, the technology could report that 150 of the persons identified in proximity with the subject person during the given time-frame appeared on camera just once, while three others appeared twice.

The technology could also ascertain that one individual had 14 "co-appearances" with the main subject person. It could be readily presumed that the two individuals had some kind of relationship.

And of course, snapshots of virtually every instance of them appearing together could be clicked for a video review.

According to Jay Stanley, Senior Policy Analyst for the ACLU's Speech, Privacy, and Technology Project, Vintra's technology represents an example of a rapidly advancing potential surveillance nightmare:

> *"Face recognition and other analytic techniques appear to have brought social network analysis to video surveillance. And who knows what purposes such mining could be used for."*

The Truckers Convoy protest in Ottawa, COVID lockdown protests around the U.S. in 2020 and 2021, and the election fraud protest in Washington D.C. in January 2021, have shown the extent to which supposedly free democracies have already shown a willingness and ability to crush organizing and conduct of peaceful protests advocating for the most basic rights of election integrity and medical freedom.

There's little doubt that governments will be only too willing to add technology of the kind companies like Vintra are developing, to further control and crush opposition to their power and designs.

AND THE LATEST U.S. INTELLIGENCE "EMPLOYEE OF MONTH" IS...YOU

Professional spies are so yesterday. Yes, U.S. Intelligence agencies have a vast hook into educational institutions throughout the U.S., cultivating and enticing enlistments into the intelligence fields.

But the most exciting area of spy enlistment is in the area of average, largely unwitting citizens.

Intelligence agencies, in close working collaboration with tech companies, are progressively rolling out technology that not only tracks people, but turns them into surveillance nodes and assets in a fast metastasizing surveillance net that can be leveraged to know about people, what they do, their associations, and indeed, their entire life footprint, in real-time.

Several recent technologies provide examples of how the surveillance net is evolving almost from day to day. Those include:

- Phone based contract tracing apps
- Driverless Car technology
- Embedded microchips in objects including clothing and consumer items like coffee containers, etc.
- Microchipping of medications people ingest

Contact tracing apps and other medical surveillance is rapidly becoming standard in the U.S. and other countries, according to Aaron Kheriaty, Director of the Bioethics and American Democracy Program at the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Writing on substack, Kheriaty noted that contact tracking applications have multiplied, with at least 120 distinct apps being used in 71 different states, and 60 additional digital contact-tracing techniques being utilized in 38 other nations.

Driverless Car technology utilizes video cameras that capture everything that happens around the cars. The cameras and video reportedly are used by companies to enhance the safety and operability of these vehicles.

Examples like GM's Cruise and Alphabet's Waymo, conceal the fact that the film captured by these vehicles may be accessible by the authorities, according to a recent article by reclaimthenet.org.

The outlet noted that the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) has already utilized video from autonomous cars for investigations, according to a document acquired by Motherboard via a freedom of information request.

Clothes, as strange as that might sound, might soon be another vector of surveillance net, opening new treasure troves of data to authorities.

A company called EON (working together with Microsoft) was recently profiled in a Medium.com article for microchipping its lines of apparel.

Microchip clothing tags would use Near Field Communication (NFC), which is now available on all Android devices, when in close proximity.

A Circular ID tag can be scanned and information for that particular product recorded over the life cycle of the garment.

Data is transferred to Microsoft through the Internet of Things (IoT), sorted by Microsoft's Cognitive Services, and stored in Microsoft's Azure Cloud.

According to Medium, the technology opens open a myriad of tracking possibilities:

> *"But what about scanning with NFC or RFID? When you walk through airport security, will your clothes be scanned? Or do you go to a restaurant or a business that has an RFID reader? Will this information be saved in the data file?"*

Eon claims the microchipping allows consumers to be better informed and able to verify the sourcing for materials and ethical production of their products.

But of course all that could simply be attested by the company, on penalty of fines and sanctions for deceptive practices, should they be lying.

No, it seems clear the technology is an inroad for tracking their products and the people utilizing them. Information that might be gathered could be exploited in various ways, including:

- where and when you purchased the garment
- Tagging your clothes on blogger photos to assist with identification, despite visual masking of things like hats, facemasks, headscarves and sunglasses, etc.
- Knowing how many times (and by whom) an item has been leased and/or resold, establishing a trail of relationships as well as a chain of custody, with possible tax or other implications
- When you donate clothing, a stylist may look up all of the items in your wardrobe and suggest outfit combinations for you.

So the clothes on your back may now join smartphones and other devices, appliances and vehicles as the tools that help make citizens nodes of the U.S. intelligence network.

And add medicine to that mix as well, at least if "visionaries" like Pfizer CEO and former veterinarian Albert Bourla realize their visions. Speaking recently at a World Economic Forum event, Bourla pitched microchips in medical pills that could report back to insurance companies on things like when they were taken. (See "BOURLA DOES DAVOS, SELLS MICROCHIPS IN PILLS," 24 May 2022)

From Saturating Higher Ed, to Saturating Every Household

In 2017, the book *Spy Schools*: *How the CIA, FBI and Foreign Intelligence Secretly Exploit America's Universities*, detailed the disturbing extent to which higher ed has become allied with and beholden to American intelligence money, influence and objectives.

It's becoming hard to find a university that doesn't have some connection, via Cyber Security, Law Enforcement, AI Technology and other course fields and Majors.

And if one were to suppose that religious-affiliated schools would be a bastion of independence from government intelligence seeding and influence, that presumption would be very wrong. Religious affiliated colleges have been just as prone to succumb to the money and funding incentives dangled by U.S. intelligence to build programs and departments that become pipelines.

But the "everything connected" vision of metaverse, augmented reality and IoT objects is quickly changing the paradigm of how intelligence agencies are surveilling and gathering information.

In short, it looks more and more like the future isn't so much about a cadre of specialist spies on the ground, but a growing, pervasive web of objects and even our own activities, providing troves of information about us and everything and everyone around us, via connectivity we take for granted, and are mostly unaware of.

Unless of course, authorities have reason to present that information in granular detail, should an infraction of unwanted dissident behavior, protest or defiance necesitate it.

The **Trends Journal** covered and predicted the growing surveillance concerns surrounding IoT in "SMART CITIES WILL BE DIGITAL PRISONS" (30 Mar 2021) and "CANCELED IN THE METAVERSE" (16 Nov 2021).

ACLU CALLS FOR A RETAIL DIGITAL CASH THAT FUNCTIONS LIKE PHYSICAL CASH

Given the surveillance and control capabilities that can easily be designed into government CBDCs (Central Bank Digital Currencies), it seems highly unlikely that the U.S. will ever issue "digital cash" content to mimic the features of physical money.

But that hasn't stopped advocacy groups like the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) from dreaming.

A recent policy paper put out by the organization expressed hope current legislation under consideration in Congress might lead to a "digital dollar" that was circumscribed in features.

H.R. 7231, the Electronic Currency and Secure Hardware Act, or ECASH Act, was cited as an initiative that would authorize the government to produce anonymous digital currency that individuals could save on a smart card or their phone.

Users could send money to one other without paying a charge, without a nosy intermediary or a centralized ledger documenting every transaction, and without the need for a smartphone, technical knowledge, or an internet connection.

According to the ACLU, under the legislation, nobody would be able to track user transactions, just as with actual currency. Users that misplaced a smart card, you'd be out of luck, just as if they had misplaced physical currency.

In part to deal with objections that such a digital cash option would open the door for wealthy tax cheats and criminals to move millions of dollars across the globe without being held accountable, the digital cash system could be make use of gadgets that can only contain a certain amount of money (such as $10,000, which is the present threshold for reporting cash transactions to the government).

Cryptocurrencies Filling a Needed Role

The ACLU statement said that cryptocurrencies are currently evolving to fill an important role in currency and cross border payments:

> *"Advocates have touted the potential for cryptocurrency to fill the demand for digital payments. We share the values of those cryptocurrency and blockchain enthusiasts who embrace the technology because they believe money should be private and permissionless. We also generally view decentralization as a good thing when it comes to technology."*

But the position paper also noted that Cryptocurrencies and related blockchain technologies are not yet a viable everyday money for the general public.

The organization said there was no telling how those technologies will progress or what impact they will have on civil freedoms. And it expressed doubts about whether they would become truly widespread and functional digital currency anytime soon.

The ACLU article said that some of the most popular cryptocurrencies have wildly fluctuating values, are inefficient at processing transactions, are technologically inaccessible to the majority of people, and are inelastic (not allowing the money supply to be adjusted).

Of course, Bitcoin's inventor saw a crucial importance in not being "elastic", which is a euphemistic way of saying susceptible to token inflation.

But though Bitcoin is capped at the number of bitcoins that can ever be produced (21 million), Bitcoin is fractionable. People can trade bitcoin in fractional amounts down to single Satoshis, which translate to 1/100,000,00 of a BTC. Satoshi frantionality is built into the bitcoin protocol.

The **Trends Journal** has covered implications and possible technology that would be used in CBDCs, which are NOT the same thing as cryptos like Bitcoin or Monero, in articles such as "A PERVERSION OF CRYPTOCURRENCY" (12 Oct 2021), "CBDC ON THE SLATE FOR COUNTRIES AROUND THE GLOBE" (15 Mar 2022) and "DIGGING INTO THE FED'S LONG AWAITED REPORT ON A U.S. CBDC" (25 Jan 2022).

More on the ACLU statement regarding digital cash and cryptos can be read here.

(**NOTE:** *web browser users with integrated crypto wallets such as coinbase or metamask may see warning signs when visiting the ACLU website, warning of possible malicious activities. The editors and writers at TJ only access the ACLU website using web browsers not connected to web browser integrated crypto wallets*).

AT DAVOS, FINANCIERS TOUT CENTRAL BANK DIGITAL CURRENCIES

Leaders in the financial industry made their case for central bank digital currencies (CBDCs) at the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland, last month.

"Bitcoin may be called a coin, but it's not money," Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the International Monetary Fund, said, "It's not a stable store of value."

"Cryptocurrencies are not a reliable means of payment," argued an official of France's central bank. "Someone must be responsible for the value, and it must be accepted universally as a means of exchange," he said.

CBDCs patch those cracks in the digital financial ecosystem, they contended.

Digital money issued by central banks and circulated through commercial banks would offer stable value and safety for investors, backers say.

In contrast, cryptos are backed by nothing and their values leap or crash on the strength of something as flimsy as a tweet from Elon Musk.

Bitcoin, which has been hailed as safer and more stable than other cryptos, has yo-yo'd from $69,000 to barely a third of that amount in less than a year.

Not even so-called "stablecoins" are safe.

A stablecoin is a privately-issued crypto, the value of which is linked to a national currency or other relatively reliable asset.

However, the Luna token, which was tied to the U.S. dollar through the TerraUSD stablecoin, wiped out $40 billion of holders' value when it crashed recently to a price near zero.

Still, not even a U.S. Federal Reserve CBDC would have held value in recent months, BlacklistedNews pointed out, as the dollar steadily lost purchasing power against ever-rising prices.

“Neither central bankers nor the issuers of various unbacked digital coins that gyrate wildly are serious about establishing sound money,” BlacklistedNews pointed out.

“If they were, they would tie their currencies to something with tangible value that cannot be destroyed – like gold,” which “does fluctuate in terms of fiat currencies and other assets, [but] over time it retains its purchasing power.”

TECH EXPERTS LOBBY FOR CRYPTO CRACKDOWN

Twenty-six prominent technologists have signed a letter to the U.S. Congress urging a crackdown on the cryptocurrency industry, which Securities and Exchange Commission chair Gary Gensler has called “the Wild West,” as we noted in [“Gensler: Crypto Not Viable Long-Term”](#) (28 Sep 2021).

The signers include Kelsey Hightower, Google’s chief cloud engineer; Miguel de Icaza, a programmer who helped create the MONO and Xamarin projects; and Bruce Scheiner, a computer security expert and Harvard University lecturer.

“We’re counter-lobbying,” signatory Stephen Diehl, a software developer, told the *Financial Times*. “Crypto people…say what they want to the politicians.”

The crypto industry boosted its number of lobbyists working Congress from 115 to 320 from 2018 through 2021, according to advocacy group Public Citizen (PC).

The hired influencers press the industry’s claims that digital currencies bring people without bank accounts into the financial system, guard financial privacy, and offer a hedge against inflation.

Coinbase.com alone spent $1.5 million among 26 lobbyists in 2021, PC reported, with Meta, Paypal, and Visa also paying to sway lawmakers’ views.

In their letter, the technologists warn that crypto’s claims are oversimplified.

"We urge you to resist pressure from digital asset industry financiers, lobbyists, and boosters to create a regulatory safe haven for these risky, flawed, and unproven digital financial instruments," the letter said.

"The claims that blockchain advocates make are not true," Scheiner said in comments quoted by the *Financial Times*.

"It's not secure; it's not decentralized," he added. "Any system where you forget your password and you lose your life savings is not a safe system."

The letter follows president Joe Biden's March executive order directing federal agencies to explore crypto's potential impact on federal operations and possible regulatory actions.

FIDELITY'S FLEDGLING DIGITAL DIVISION STAFFS UP

Fidelity Digital Asset Services, a division of Fidelity Investments, is out to hire 110 engineers and developers knowledgeable in blockchain technology to create a digital infrastructure to support investment services in ether and other digital assets beyond Bitcoin, the *Wall Street Journal* reported.

The division also will add 100 customer service representatives.

In April, Fidelity became the first major investment house to permit small investments in Bitcoin in the 401(k) plans it manages for employers.

Fidelity sees growth in both demand for digital investments and volatility across the sector, the WSJ said.

"We're trying not to focus on the downturns and focus on some of the long-term indicators, including demand from clients," division president Thomas Jessop told the WSJ.

"We measure success over years and decades, not weeks and months," he said.

Despite the crypto market's recent crash, demand for skilled blockchain and crypto technologists remains strong, Dylan Gomez at recruiting firm Selby Jennings said to the WSJ.

"There's more demand and compensation has been driven up," indicating that large financial firms see crypto as a central element of their future business, he noted.

BLOCKCHAIN BATTLES

MORATORIUM ON BITCOIN MINING IN NEW YORK

Despite cheap hydroelectric power, and the highest net outflow of people fleeing the state because of a poor economic environment and other facts, NY is on the edge of cutting off new mining of the sector's most historically successful asset, bitcoin.

This past Friday, the State Senate voted to impose a two-year moratorium on new PoW mining projects powered by carbon-based fuel throughout the state.

Existing mining firms or ones currently undergoing the permit renewal process would be allowed to continue operations. The Senate voted 36-27 in favor of the bill.

Last month the state assembly passed similar legislation.

A bill will now go before Governor Kathy Hochul, who is likely to sign it.

The move severely undercuts New York's supposed push to add cryptos as a "financial related sector," in a state that is bleeding residents to Florida and even New Jersey, because of its policies.

NYC Mayor Eric Adams, who some say has aspirations to mount a Democratic primary challenge to Joe Biden in 2024, evidently did not have enough pull to prevent the state legislature from enacting the bucket of cold water on the crypto industry.

Other States Will Fill Vacuum of NY Crypto Crackdown

Many had predicted the bill to die in committee, as a similar bill did last year. But this time, that didn't happen.

Previously Sen. Todd Kaminsky, a Long Island Democrat who chairs the Environmental Conservation Committee, told CoinDesk.com the proof-of-work moratorium bill could lead to "deleterious economic consequences for New York if people perceive it as being hostile to crypto."

In April Mike Colyer, the CEO of Foundry, a Rochester company focused on the digital currency market, commented:

> "*Voting for [the moratorium] bill is a vote* AGAINST BITCOIN, *Crypto, and Blockchain technology. I would not want my name attached to it. Imagine voting with the one person that wanted to shut down the internet* 30 *yrs ago.*"

According to *The Daily News*, Foundry added that the company recently surpassed 100 employees, with plans to double that number by the end of the year. The company argued:

> "A *moratorium on #bitcoin mining will take* NY *out of the game as our industry flourishes elsewhere, generating jobs and tax dollars in other states that are more welcoming.*"

But an eleventh-hour referral of the bill from the Environmental Conservation Committee to the Senate Energy and Telecommunications Committee, led to the bill being considered by the full Senate only hours before the close of the legislative session at midnight.

Coindesk noted that a number of mining businesses had already promised to leave the state for friendly places like Texas, if the legislation was passed.

The bill's was passage was called "a grim day for blockchain technology, effectively shutting the door on a nascent industry," said Clark Vaccaro, interim president and chief strategy officer of crypto industry trade group BaSIC.

CRYPTO LEGISLATION NOTES

A proposed Senate Bill would End SEC's Oversight of Most Crypto, Create $200 Tax Exemption.

The CFTC would replace the SEC as crypto's prime regulator under a major new bill proposed by Senators Cynthia Lummis and Kirsten Gillibrand. Legislation: H.R.7614 - Digital Commodity Exchange Act of 2022.

The Digital Commodity Exchange Act of 2022 builds off the Commodity Exchange Act to "fill gaps" in crypto regulation not fully addressed by either the CFTC nor the SEC. More info also here.

TRENDS IN THE COVID WAR

DYING TO WEAR A MASK? WEAR ONE, GET COVID AND DIE

A new study out of Kansas found that mask mandates could be associated with a higher rate of death in the population due to COVID-19.

The observational study, which was published in *Medicine* in February considered "whether mandatory mask use influenced the case fatality rate in Kansas" from August 2020 to October of the same year, Town Hall reported.

Dr. Zacharias Fögen authored the observational study titled, "The Foegen Effect: A Mechanism by Which Facemasks Contribute to the COVID-19 Case Fatality Rate," and wrote the main takeaway was that "contrary to the accepted thought that fewer people are dying due to infection rates are reduced by masks, this was not the case."

"Results from this study strongly suggest that mask mandates actually caused about 1.5 times the number of deaths or ~50% more deaths compared to no mask mandates," the German doctor wrote.

Town Hall pointed out that Fögen's theory is that hyper condensed droplets caught by masks are re-inhaled and "introduced deeper into the respiratory tract."

The study focused on Kansas because the decision to force masks was up to the 105 counties and 81 refused to impose them.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continues to insist that masks are an effective tool in preventing the spread of COVID-19. President Joe Biden has made mask usage one of the central themes of his administration. On his first day in office, he signed an executive order requiring masks on federal property and called for their widespread use for 100 days.

The CDC calls for universal indoor masking when a location enters the high COVID-19 community level. There has been a jump in cases across the U.S. There are 13 counties in California considered to be at the high COVID-19 level, *The Los Angeles Times* reported.

The *City-Journal* pointed out that the California city of Stockton, which required masks, and Boston, which did not, "had scarcely different death rates, and so advised against mask mandates except for a few high-risk professions such as barbers."

TRENDPOST: *The* ***Trends Journal*** *has reported extensively on the questions surrounding a face mask's effectiveness in preventing the spread of COVID-19. This Kansas study is not the first to question the adopted position by the CDC. (See "DANISH STUDY: MASKS OFFER VERY LIMITED PROTECTION.")*

The Danish study was published on 18 November 2020 and found after one month, the difference in infection rates between those regularly wearing masks (1.8 percent) was only 0.3 percent less than those who never put on a mask (2.1 percent).

***TRENDPOST:** Again, as reported in the **Trends Journal** for years now, the vast majority of mainstream media either ignore or bury deep into articles any legitimate study showing the ineffectiveness of masks in preventing the spread of the coronavirus.*

Selling more fear and hysteria in the reporting of jumping "cases," never mentioned in the mainstream media is the fact that the day this mask mandate was issued, 18 May, the seven day average of COVID deaths was 304. Yet, one-year-ago-to-date, the COVID death rate was more than double with a 637 seven day average.

ISRAELI STUDY: GET THE COVID JAB, GET CARDIAC

A recent study by Israeli researchers found that the number of cardiovascular-related emergency calls jumped 25 percent in the country among young adults following the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccines.

7 Israel National News reported that the increase occurred in both men and women, and a similar increase was not found "due to COVID infection alone." The study was published in *Nature*.

The report came out as the U.S. Food and Drug Administration warned Americans about the risk of heart inflammation tied to the Novavax COVID-19 vaccine. The patient trial included 30,000 individuals and there were four recorded cases of myocarditis detected within about three weeks of taking the jab.

"These events raise the concern for a causal association with this vaccine, similar to the association documented with mRNA COVID-19 vaccines," FDA staff wrote in briefing documents released on Friday, according to Global News.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said the rate of reports for myocarditis in VAERS in 5- to 11-year-old boys after the second dose of the vaccine was 2.7 cases per million, according to Reuters. The report said the number jumps to 48.1 cases per million in 12-to-15-year-old males, and 74.2 cases per million in 16-and-17-year-old males.

The Israeli report pointed out that there has been an increase in emergency calls regarding heart issues among young adults. The report said, "An increase of over 25 percent was detected in both call types during January–May 2021, compared with the years 2019–2020." That is to say, "increased rates of vaccination … are associated with increased numbers of CA [cardiac arrest] and ACS [acute coronary syndrome]." By contrast, the trial "did not detect a statistically significant association between the COVID-19 infection rates and the CA and ACS weekly call counts."

The authors of the study wrote that "while not establishing causal relationships, the findings raise concerns regarding vaccine-induced undetected severe cardiovascular side-effects and underscore the already established causal relationship between vaccines and myocarditis."

Health officials in the U.S. insist that vaccines are safer when it comes to your heart than coming down with the virus itself and some doctors questioned the value of the Israeli study.

Dr. Deepti Gurdasani, a clinical epidemiologist at Queen Mary University of London, told Reuters, it is "bizarre to study cardiac events (at) a population level, without individual assessment of whether they were linked to covid or vaccination."

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on COVID-19 vaccines and their side effects and their lack of proposed efficacy. Yet, they are being injected into healthy children and adults.*

See:

- *"PFIZER: DRUG DEALERS ON PARADE"*

- “COVID-19 VACCINES: TRACKING ADVERSE HEALTH EFFECTS”
- “FDA SAYS IT WILL STRICTLY LIMIT USE OF THE JOHNSON & JOHNSON VACCINE DUE TO BLOOD-CLOT RISKS”
- “U.K. TO REVIEW VACCINE EFFICACY AFTER ISRAEL REPORTS”
- “VACCINE HALTED IN EUROPE”
- “ASTRAZENECA VAX STILL UNDER FIRE”
- “ACROSS U.S. & EUROPE: MORE SAYING “NO” TO VACCINATIONS”
- “ISRAEL: #1 IN VACCINATIONS, #1 IN PROBLEMS?”
- “NEW STUDIES PROVE: 96 VAX EFFICACY RATE WAS PURE BULLSHIT.”

STUDY: GET ‘BOOSTED,’ GET SICKER THAN UN-BOOSTED

More “boosted” Americans came down with COVID-19 than those vaccinated without a third jab in April, leading health officials to offer theories on how that could be possible.

John Moore, a professor of microbiology and immunology at Weill Cornell Medical Center, told CBS News that he believes one of the factors in play is that people who are boosted believe that they’re “more protected than they actually are, so they increased their risks.”

“That, I think, is the major driver of these statistics,” he said.

The report pointed to data released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that the rate of infections among boosted Americans was 119 cases per 100,000. The number was more than double the amount of infections for those who were vaccinated but not boosted.

The CBS report said federal data suggested that deaths and hospitalizations were lowest among individuals who were boosted. Vaccinated children aged 5–11 are at the highest risk of infection overall, MacIver Institute, a think tank in Wisconsin said. Their rate of infection is 902.1 per 100,000, which is nearly three times the rate of infection as their unvaccinated peers.

The number of COVID-19 infections seems to be exploding across the U.S. and some hospitals are beginning to see an increase in patients. San Diego County said eight more individuals are being treated for COVID-19 inside hospitals than last week, which brings the current number to 210. Of those, 29 were being treated in intensive care.

The omicron (B.1.1.529) variant has an "increased capacity to elude immunity and cause breakthrough infections," according to a recent study in *Lancet.*

Federal data shows that despite widespread vaccination among seniors, virus death rates among the age group surged to near-record levels during the first omicron wave, according to ABC News.

The report said about 90 percent of American seniors have been fully vaccinated, but that number drops dramatically when it comes to getting booster shots. Only 30 percent of those seniors have received the third jab and about 28.5 percent received a fourth shot. The report said nearly three-quarters of the deaths due to the virus were among those over 65.

Vaccine makers are preparing another jab just in time for Halloween.

"It's unclear what the mix will be in the vaccine that's used in the fall, but there's a very good chance that it'll be against the original Omicron," Celine Gounder, an infectious disease specialist and KHN editor-at-large, told Axios.

"But it's really unclear that it's going to be much of an improvement versus the original vaccine when BA.4 and BA.5 are so significantly different than the original Omicron," she said. "It's pretty challenging. We're very much behind the virus given the speed at which it's moving."

TRENDPOST: *Health experts are already warning that another COVID wave seems to be forming just in time for the summer months in the U.S. due to the Omicron sub variants BA.4 and BA.5.*

Dr. Christopher Doehring, vice president of medical affairs at Franciscan Health in Indianapolis, told News 8 that these sub variants make up less than 10 percent of the cases in the U.S., but the number is accelerating.

"Those variants are out-competing the other omicron sub-variants," he said. "They appear to be a little more contagious, and they are able to evade the immunity that has already been established."

*The **Trends Journal** has reported on the vaccine shortcomings since they were released after Operation Warp Speed. (See "COVID BOOSTERS ARE THE FUTURE?" "COVID JABS: STRIKE THREE," and "LACK OF OFFICIAL CDC VAX GUIDANCE. COVID FREAKS IN CHARGE.")*

*The **Trends Journal** has also reported on the data that has questioned the efficacy of mask mandates, social-distancing guidelines, Plexiglas dividers, washing down surfaces, and devastating lockdowns because we knew that these important decisions were not science or data-based, but rather based on politics.*

TREND FORECAST: *We still hear nothing from political leaders, their health "experts," or mainstream media about the most natural, self-controlling safety feature against any virus: Keeping one's immune system strong through healthy eating, exercise, and activities that bring joy and beauty into one's life.*

Moreover, the vaccines were promoted by politicians and the media as a passport to COVID Freedom, meaning if you got the vaccination, you were safe from catching the virus.

But that is no longer the message, meaning, as with the flu vaccine, there will be ongoing pressure each year to get re-vaccinated.

Also missing in their reporting of fighting the COVID War, is that those with pre-existing comorbidities who are most susceptible to getting the virus must be protected, rather than politicians forcing their draconian mandates on the general public.

FAUCI: FACTS DON'T COUNT, AUTHORITIES DO AND WE'LL TELL YOU WHAT TO DO

Dr. Anthony Fauci said in an interview last week that the Justice Department's effort to reinstate the COVID-19 mask mandate on planes is about control and not about the need of the mandate itself.

The DOJ On Tuesday called on a federal appeals court to overturn U.S. District Judge Kathryn Kimball Mizelle's decision to strike down the mandate in April. Mizelle, who was appointed by former President Trump, said in her ruling that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention acted inappropriately when it invoked the so-called "good cause exception."

"Because our system does not permit agencies to act unlawfully even in pursuit of desirable ends, the Court declares unlawful and vacates the Mask Mandate," she wrote.

Fauci joined Fox News's Neil Cavuto to discuss the DOJ's appeal.

"One of the issues, Neil, that I have articulated in the past and I will in the future—it is less about mandates on the plane that it is about who has the right and the authority and the capability of making public health decisions," Fauci said.

He told Cavuto that he believes that the DOJ is operating "on the principle that decisions that are public health decisions belong with the public health agency, in this case, the CDC."

“So it's more of a matter of principle of where the authority lies then it is about whether or not there's going to be a mandate on a plane or not,” he said.

The U.S. has seen an increase in COVID-19 cases, which health officials say could actually be about 30 times higher than reported. But airlines in the U.S. have urged the administration to end pre-departure testing requirements for international flights.

Robert Isom, the CEO of American Airlines, told a conference on Friday that the requirement is "nonsensical" and "depressing" leisure and business travel, according to Reuters. The report pointed out that international air travel is down by about 14 percent. Airline executives say Americans are concerned about testing positive overseas and being stranded.

"We're really frustrated and this is something that is damaging not only U.S. travel but it just doesn't make sense," Isom said.

TRENDPOST: *Fauci's comments on face masks is further evidence that these mandates were never based on science, but only on the politics of how to control the public.*

*The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on masks and how they give wearers a false sense of security. (See “MASK MADNESS: PART 2,” “NEW CDC CLAIM: ‘TWO MASKS BETTER THAN ONE,” and “STUDY: MASKS HARMING CHILDREN.”)*

Ambarish Chandra from the University of Toronto and Tracy Beth Høeg from University of California, Davis published research in Lancet last week that pointed to multiple observational studies by the CDC that claimed school mandates were effective in stopping the spread. They replicated the study and the CDC's findings were accurate.

But they said when they extended the study using a larger sample of districts and a longer time interval, employing almost six times as much data as the original study, they found “no significant relationship between mask mandates and case rates.

TRENDS-EYE VIEW

SUICIDE IN U.S. MILITARY HAS BEEN MAIN DRIVER OF DEATHS SINCE 9/11

The rate of suicides in the military is at its highest in nearly 90 years and there has been a noticeable jump in women personnel who end their lives, according to a new study from Brown University.

The Defense Department saw a 16 percent jump in suicides among troops in 2020, with 580 deaths total, the *Military Times* reported. More than 30,000 military personnel have killed themselves since the 9/11 attacks. The report said 22 members of the military kill themselves each day.

Jama Psychiatry reported that the COVID-19 outbreak has "raised considerable concerns about increased risk for suicidal behavior among US military veterans, who already had elevated rates of suicide before the pandemic."

Fox News pointed out in January that more than 100 members of the U.S. military took their own lives in the third quarter of 2021. The figure is higher than the number of service members who have died from the coronavirus since the outbreak. As of January 8, 86 members of the military have died from the coronavirus, the report said.

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent mental health crisis in the country. (See "MENTALLY ILL POLITICIANS CREATING MENTAL ILLNESS," "LOCKDOWN LUNACY CREATING 'MENTAL HEALTH PANDEMIC" and "MORE KIDS DIE FROM SUICIDE THAN COVID.")*

The Brown study found that the number of suicides in the military is at its highest rate since 1938, and women accounted for 7 percent of all suicides, which is up from 4 percent in 2012.

TRENDPOST: *Instead of the U.S. sending billions to keep the battlefields bloodied in Ukraine, some of the funding could have been better used to work on how to defeat our troops' biggest killer.*

The COVID-19 lockdowns have stolen the joy out of life and the country's mental health may never recover. We still have not seen the long-term impact that the virus had on the country's psyche.

TRENDPOST: *Regarding military suicides, as Gerald Celente, the founder of Occupy Peace, wrote in 2015:*

On a personal level, who would want to be in a relationship if it's a constant battle? Whether between a couple or among nations, the choices are clear. Who doesn't prefer peace to war? Living in peace provides many more benefits, is more joyous, enhances beauty and encourages creativity.

The march to war brings only death and destruction and breeds hatred and revenge. Some 22 U.S. veterans commit suicide each day; another 53 attempt suicide each day.

That should be headline news. How can the rationale that war is both a moral and an acceptable way of life be promoted while peace is just brushed off and dismissed as just a remote possibility? If that is true, then maybe we should be called the "inhuman" race because there is nothing human about a constant state of war.

UNIONIZATION, TOP TREND 2022: MICROSOFT ON-TREND

The president of Microsoft wrote in a blog post last week that the software giant will not discourage its employees from forming unions.

"Recent unionization campaigns across the country—including in the tech sector have led us to conclude that inevitably these issues will touch on more businesses, potentially including our own," Brad Smith, the president, wrote in a blog post, according to *The Wall Street Journal.*

The paper pointed out that tech companies across the U.S. have been faced with the push by employees to form unions and Microsoft's decision to openly support unionizations seems to be an attempt to "carve out a position" for the company "distinct from other tech giants."

The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the push to unionize across the U.S. after the coronavirus outbreak as workers were stuck in menial, low-paying jobs with no room for career growth, while the companies they work for pulled in record profits. Unionization was named a TOP TREND FOR 2022. (See "POLITICO JOURNALISTS FORM UNION. A TREND OF THE TIMES," "WORKER ON DEMAND: STRIKING KELLOGG'S WORKERS SECURE PAY INCREASE," "STARBUCKS UNIONIZATION: 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE" and "AMAZON UNIONIZATION" 2022 TOP TREND ON THE RISE.")

Data provided by the Labor Department found that the labor market was the tightest it has been in over a decade. There are 0.5 unemployed people for every one job opening as of March.

Microsoft also said that it believes that workers will "never need to organize" to urge executives at the company to meet their needs.

"None of us ever knows precisely what challenges the future will bring," Smith wrote. "But we're willing to bet that a company that listens to and works well with its employees is likely to have a winning hand."

Amazon and Starbucks have been accused of actively trying to stop the formation of unions at their companies. Starbucks was accused by workers on Friday of closing a store in Ithaca, N.Y., that voted in favor of unionization. (The company denied the charge.)

The *Leader-Telegram* reported that Microsoft seemed to make the announcement "seemingly unprompted." A spokesperson told the paper that the company is not aware of any active union campaigns and did not elaborate on why the company issued a statement.

The paper did point out that Microsoft hopes to acquire Activision Blizzard that has a small union. (See "ACTIVISION STUDIO WILL FORM A UNION, SOLIDIFYING TRENDS JOURNAL FORECAST.")

TREND FORECAST: *When the COVID War began in 2020, there was never an expectation of the combination of an employee shortage, spiking inflation and worker strikes.*

Indeed, just the opposite was expected. After being cooped up, locked down, and out of work, when there was a ceasefire in the COVID War, the workers were expected to rush back to their jobs. As we have detailed, there are several reasons for the falloff: from "No Jab, No Job" employer mandates, not wanting to work at jobs that are unfulfilling and refusing to go to work for a company that pays non-living wages.

*The **Trends Journal** has reported extensively on the country's shift toward so-called gig economies and cheap labor.*

See:

- "SLAVELANDIA: RICH GET RICHER, POOR GET POORER"
- "AMERICA: TAX/AUDIT 'WE THE PEOPLE,' NOT BILLIONAIRES"
- "BILLIONAIRES BEAT TAXES: LITTLE PEOPLE PAY"
- "AMERICA'S RICHEST 400 FAMILIES PAY A TINY PERCENT OF FEDERAL INCOME TAX COMPARED TO THE WORKING CLASS."

And now, with the Bigs in control in virtually every business sector, and no room to move up the corporate or small business ladder, many would rather not work at all than work at a job that pays $15 an hour or less, that will take them nowhere.

Thus, we forecast that unemployment numbers will remain high and hiring difficulties will persist. And, with more companies mandating and/or requiring employees to be vaccinated, this too will add to the job gap.

GERMANY TAKES TOUGHER STANCE AGAINST CHINA: 'SELF-SUFFICIENCY' TOP TREND

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz came hot out of the gate when it comes to how he will approach China during his chancellorship.

In April, he used his first visit to Asia as chancellor to visit Japan instead of China, Berlin's top trading partner. Scholz did not hide the significance of the trip to Tokyo and used his press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to stress the meeting's importance.

“It’s no coincidence that my first trip as chancellor to this region has led today here, to Tokyo,” he said. “My trip is a clear political signal that Germany and the EU will continue and intensify their engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.”

Beijing's decision to support Russia during its invasion of Ukraine has resulted in Berlin reconsidering its relationship with the world’s second-largest economy. German politicians recently expressed shock over the release of the “Xinjiang Police Files,” which document alleged human rights abuses.

Annalena Baerbock, the German foreign minister, called for an investigation, DW.com reported. She said human rights, "which Germany is committed to protecting globally," are a fundamental part of the international order.

Germany decided last week to refuse the request by Volkswagen that would renew its risk insurance for operating in China, *The Wall Street Journal* reported, citing several people familiar with the situation. The paper said the move is significant because it now means VW is operating at its own risk in China. The move is seen as a way to discourage businesses from dealing with China.

Germany did not announce its decision publicly. Herbert Diess, the VW CEO, said, “We can guarantee that we have no forced laborers there, that we are working according to our standards there, and we make a positive contribution with our presence in region,” the WSJ said.

Diess called China the world’s leading driver of economic growth and the company remains committed to its operations in the country.

The paper said the move is the first of its kind in Germany that “links support for German companies investing in China with Beijing’s treatment of Muslims in the Xinjiang province.”

Mikko Huotari, the director of the Berlin-based China think tank Mercator Institute for China Studies, wrote that engagement with China should be calibrated "in relation to the extent of Beijing's support for Putin," DW.com reported.

Huotari wrote that the "overriding priority of reducing those dependencies on China that threaten to limit Germany's strategic ability to act in the event of sustained tensions or a crisis."

TREND FORECAST SELF-SUFFICIENCY TREND: *The German government is looking to detach itself from its economic dependence on China, which it considers an unreliable partner. But as we note, "the business of business is business" and German exports to China are a lucrative market sector that companies will not vacate.*

Despite The Wall Street Journal pointing out that Berlin has appealed to companies to become less dependent on the Asian market in general, exporters will not abandon the Chinese nation of 1.4 billion people and a middle class of which McKinsey & Company projects that 76 percent of China's urban population will enter the middle income bracket by 2022.

However, Berlin's decision is a reflection of our Top 2022 Trend *of Self-Sufficiency in which nations, rich in human and natural resources, will seek to attain as economic conditions deteriorate and geopolitical tensions escalate.*

The trend toward self-sufficiency will see companies and countries cultivating homegrown capabilities across a range of critical industries, energy independence and agricultural production.

This trend will also place an even greater emphasis on automation to cut costs and streamline production, as we explained in "Virus Speeds Automation: Bye Bye Workers" (21 Sep 2021).

TOP TREND 2021: THE RISE OF CHINA: *As we have forecast, the 20th century was the American century—the 21st century will be the Chinese century. The business of China is business; the business of America is war.*

While America spent countless trillions waging and losing endless wars and enriching its military-industrial complex, China has spent its trillions advancing the nation's businesses and building its 21st-century infrastructure.

And while America and Europe have outsourced their manufacturing to China and developing nations to increase profit margins, China's dual circulation/self-sustaining economic model is directed toward keeping jobs and trade and profits within the nation, thus relying less on global trade.

TALIBAN CRACKS DOWN ON POPPY TRADE THAT SURGED DURING U.S. OCCUPATION

Taliban leaders have cracked down on poppy farmers throughout Afghanistan and made the crop used in drugs like heroin illegal. Farmers across the impoverished country are trying to figure out ways to turn a profit without the relatively lucrative crop.

Despite the U.S.'s effort to tame poppy production, more farmers became producers in recent years. NPR pointed out that in 2021, the year the U.S. exited the country, about 438,000 acres in Afghanistan were devoted to poppies, which would yield enough opium to produce 650 tons of heroin. The country's opiate production makes up about 14 percent of Afghanistan's GDP.

The NPR report said the Taliban banned the crop when it was in control of the country in the late 1990s. The U.S. ousted the Taliban from control in 2001, and the fields began to emerge once more. The Taliban issued an edict in April that banned poppy cultivation.

The country is the world's biggest opium producer and the Taliban's move to eliminate the crop will likely destroy the livelihoods of millions of farmers already dealing with financial hardships.

News reports indicate that armed Taliban fighters visit these farms in the southern Helmand province and use tractors to tear up fields while farmers look on. The Taliban condemned opium as anti-Islamic.

Mullah Abdul Haq Akhund, the Taliban deputy interior minister for counter-narcotics, told the Associated Press that those found in violation "will be arrested and tried according to Sharia laws in relevant courts."

Noor Mohammed, the owner of a poppy field in Washir, watched his plot of land torn up by the Taliban. He said his farm is small and lacks water so it will "not earn anything" without the poppy. ABC.Net.Au reported that poor villagers often borrow money to buy staples like flour, sugar, and cooking oil on the promise of the upcoming poppy season.

TRENDPOST: *The New York Times reported that Taliban leaders are walking a fine line between "hypocrisy and holiness" because opium production helped to fund their 20-year insurgency against the U.S.*

The previous American-backed government had spent $8.6 billion on poppy eradication, but top Afghan officials were deeply complicit in the opium trade, building garish "poppy palaces" and on "gaudy villas in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates."

The paper said an inspector general's report in 2018 concluded that the campaign to end poppy cultivation "had no lasting impact."

Speakers at the World Economic Forum last month warned that Kabul is edging toward an economic collapse, and completely icing out the country because governments disapprove of the Taliban leadership is shortsighted.

Achim Steiner, administrator of the UN's Development Program, said, "we cannot abandon 40 million Afghans simply on the principle of moral outrage," the Associated Press reported.

GUN CONTROL? NAKED BIDEN BOY WAVES GUN WITH HOOKER

It's a freak show, and the freaks are in control. Need proof?

Listen to U.S. President Joe Biden—a man with a track record of decades of backing murderous wars of death and destruction that have killed millions and cost trillions—demanding that the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, "the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed" ... should be "infringed."

"How much more carnage are we willing to take," said warmonger Biden last week, declaring that "We the People" should have limited gun rights... but not for his son Hunter, The Crack Cocaine Kid.

Radar Online posted a photo of Joe Biden's son Hunter waving around a handgun while naked with a hooker. The report said Biden's son was taping a "sickening and dangerous sexual game of role-playing on Oct. 17, 2018."

The video's emergence should be embarrassing for the President because he is campaigning for tougher gun laws in the U.S. due to the recent mass shootings. Biden appealed to Congress to quickly pass new legislation to ban assault weapons. He also called on expanded background checks, and new gun control measures.

The New York Post reported that the image of Hunter Biden was verified as authentic by Radar. The son bought a .38-caliber revolver in Delaware five days before recording the sex tape, the report said.

The paper said, "Two separate photos showed Hunter's hand on the trigger of the gun as he cupped his genital area, while a third image showed what appeared to be crack cocaine and drug paraphernalia on paper plates, including a spoon."

The **Trends Journal** has reported on Hunter Biden's laptop and how laws that apply to us little people do not apply to politicians and their families. (See "HUNTER BIDEN'S LAPTOP SUPPORTS RUSSIA'S BIOLAB CLAIM," "'HERD' MEDIA FINALLY ACKNOWLEDGES PART OF HUNTER BIDEN LAPTOP STORY" and "BIDEN BANDITS? DIRTY DEALS OR ARE THEY LEGIT?")

The reported photos of Hunter Biden with the gun are just another example of how laws just apply to the little people. *The Post* said that Hallie Biden, the widow of Hunter's late brother Beau Biden, "tossed the gun into a supermarket garbage can, setting off a Secret Service and FBI probe, Radar Online reported. No charges were ever filed."

TRENDPOST: *The **Trends Journal** had reported extensively on the Biden deals with Ukraine. Back in 2013, Vice President Joseph Biden's son, Hunter, and Devon Archer, a partner in Rosemont Capital, a private-equity firm he co-founded with Christopher Heinz, Secretary of State John Kerry's stepson, were both appointed to the board of directors of Burisma Holding, Ukraine's top private gas company: "Burisma Holdings reminds me of Exxon in its early days," Mr. Archer boasted.*

How did Hunter Biden and Devon Archer, two members of the White Show Boy Gang, who live over 5,000 miles away and know dick about shit about Ukraine energy, get an allegedly $50,000 a month each to sit on Burisma's board? Archer was convicted in 2018 in a securities fraud scheme that involved $60 million worth of bonds owned by the Oglala Sioux Indian tribe.

TRENDS IN HI-TECH SCIENCE

By *Ben Daviss*

WHAT MICROPLASTICS DO INSIDE YOUR BODY

The world is covered in microplastic, from 27,690 feet up Mount Everest to seven miles deep in the ocean at the bottom of the Mariana Trench.

You're covered, too, inside and out.

A synthetic jacket weighing two pounds sheds 400 microplastic fibers every 20 minutes that you're wearing it, according to a 2020 study.

Also, as we reported in "Tap Water Shields Against Microplastics" (2 Nov 2021), the typical North American ingests about 100,000 microscopic bits of plastic every year, especially people who drink from plastic bottles.

What does that mean?

To answer that, scientists at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona turned to the trusty fruit fly, which shares a large number of disease susceptibilities with humans.

They fed microparticles of polystyrene—a common plastic used to make containers—to the flies, then used an electron microscope to watch what happened.

The particles were able to breach the intestinal wall and make their way to the bloodstream.

The flies didn't react as if the granules were toxic.

However, the particles distorted the way genes respond to stress and to physical damage to the intestinal lining that keeps alien materials from crossing into the bloodstream.

The researchers also found damage to DNA.

The microplastics were especially good at breaking down biological barriers and producing "toxicological effects," the biologists noted.

TRENDPOST: *Study after study has shown that disposable coffee cups and plastic beverage bottles shed particles into the liquids they contain.*

Other research has shown that particles as large as 20 micrometers— about a third the thickness of a typical human hair—can be found floating in air and can be inhaled and enter the body through the lungs.

Microscopic plastic nuggets have been linked to aneurysms in fish, mental abnormalities in hermit crabs, and swimming problems in shrimp.

One scientist compared the plastic problem to an overflowing bath tub.

When you walk into the bathroom and see the mess, he said, the first thing you do isn't to grab a mop and a bucket; the first thing you do is turn off the tap.

Scientists around the world are working to develop plastics from materials that will biodegrade to harmless components. Until those products reach store shelves, the tub will keep overflowing.

AUTOMATING THE TRAFFIC COP

Pittsburgh has retired the white gloves and the whistle and turned traffic management over to something it calls Scalable Urban Traffic Control, or Surtrac.

Surtrac is an artificial intelligence that instantly analyzes data taken from cameras, stoplight controls, and sensors at individual intersections so the stop-and-go lights there can decide how long to stay red or green.

Surtrac then communicates that decision to traffic signals at other intersections nearby so they can make their own decisions about timing their lighting patterns.

In corridors where Surtrac has been installed, traffic congestion has been slashed by 40 percent and smog from cars idling at the intersections is down by 20 percent, according to the Metro21 Smart Cities Institute at Carnegie Mellon University, which was a partner in Surtrac's creation.

In 2016, Surtrac was spun off into RapidFlow Technologies, a for-profit company that has installed the system in "hundreds of intersections" in over 20 cities in cities in Maine, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania.

Fitting up an intersection with Surtrac costs about $100,000, RapidFlow says, but the technology moves people through 25 percent faster and cuts wait times by 40 percent because folks confront 30 to 40 percent fewer stops in a Surtrac-managed corridor.

A city using Surtrac at 10 intersections cuts carbon emissions as much as taking 100 cars off the road, according to RapidFlow data.

TRENDPOST: *This fall, RapidFlow will introduce Routecast, an improved version of the system that will speed folks through intersections as much as twice as fast as Surtrac.*

While we wait for self-driving cars that will negotiate intersections between themselves, smart cities are solving the problem without the aid of Elon Musk.

Surtrac is one of the most elaborate demonstrations yet of how state-of-the-art telecom technology can improve city life. More will follow.

WILL ELECTROFUELS GET TRACTION?

Battery technologies grab the headlines, but hydrogen has been touted as a clean, abundant alternative fuel that literally is all around us: hydrogen is the most common element in the universe.

Unfortunately, carbon waste gases are becoming increasingly common as well.

Electrofuels combine the two.

Hydrogen for fuel usually is distilled from natural gas. In contrast, "green" hydrogen doesn't come from fossil fuels but typically is sucked out of water.

Electrofuels blend green hydrogen with carbon gas pulled from the air or from industrial waste streams to create a drop-in replacement for fossil fuels.

The mixture doesn't rely on pumping oil or gas out of the ground; there's more than enough carbon to harvest out of the atmosphere. Electrofuels simply recycle the carbon that's already around us.

Also, unlike EVs, electrofuels don't make every vehicle now on the road obsolete.

Earlier this year, the U.S. energy department granted almost $3 million to an electrofuel project that draws carbon from a fertilizer plant's waste stack and combines it with green hydrogen to make formic acid, which can be used as a liquid replacement fuel in some engines.

Last fall, Amazon's Climate Pledge Fund led a $69-million funding round for Infinium, a California electrofuels venture putting together projects in Texas and Japan and now building a facility in France that, the company says, will convert more than 300,000 tons of carbon waste gas each year into fuel for the aviation and shipping industries.

The fuels are "an instant replacement" for conventional diesel and jet fuel and emit 95 percent less pollution compared to the entire life cycle of drilling, production, and refining oil to make today's engine fuels.

Porsche also is aboard the electrofuels bus.

It has partnered with Siemens and others to build a pilot plant in Chile that will flip the switch next year, producing 130,000 liters of electrofuels and quickly ramping up to 550 million liters by 2026—enough, the venture says, to fuel a million vehicles.

TRENDPOST: *Electrofuels won't have their own pumps at convenience stores, but are likely to become a niche member of the energy ecosystem.*

Plants to produce the fuels will be located at a source of waste carbon gases, such as industrial stacks or among future plants that will exist specifically to pull carbon from the atmosphere.

That will place the fuels' production in industrial or rural areas, making fleet vehicles—garbage trucks, box trucks, and possibly city buses—early adopters along with farm tractors, combines, and other agricultural machinery.