



Financial Crisis Report

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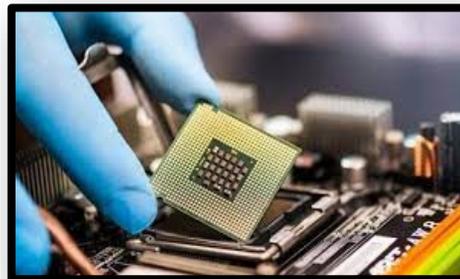
Advancing in a Time of Crisis

Words of Wisdom: “Anybody who thinks money will make you happy, hasn’t got money” David Geffen, American Businessman

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America is No Longer Self Sufficient



become on technology, and it has also shown us how unwise it has been to outsource the production of our computer chips to Asia.

Back in 1990, the United States produced 37 percent of all computer chips in the world.

Today, that number has fallen to just 12 percent.

Business leaders are now pledging to start ramping up production here in the U.S., but that will take an extended period of time, and Intel’s CEO is openly admitting that the current shortage of chips could take “several years” to be resolved...

On June 7 Intel Corp’s (INTC.O) CEO said it could take several years for a global shortage of semiconductors to be resolved, a problem that has shuttered some auto production lines and is also being felt in other areas, including consumer electronics.

Sadly, there are many other industries where our outsourcing makes us extremely vulnerable.

Did you know that 60 percent of all apple juice (not Apple products) that is sold in this country now comes from China?...

Taken together, these practices explain why the apple orchards in the U.S. have disappeared. Nearly 60 percent of the apple juice sold in the United States comes from China, even though most of America has a climate conducive to apple production. The problem is so bad that salmon caught in the United States is shipped to China for processing and then shipped back to the United States for consumption.

This past May my wife was involved in a car accident (more like a fender bender) with our family Mini-Van. The other side was responsible and their auto insurance agreed to pay for the repairs. But soon thereafter the insurance company decided our car was not repairable and declared it totaled. So I had to look for a replacement car. But all new cars (including Mini-Vans) were in short supply and were being sold for prices above MSRP because of a shortage of computer chips from abroad. Fortunately, I was able to locate a new Mini-Van at MSRP but it made me think how the American consumer has now become beholden to companies in foreign countries.

For example, without a steady flow of computer chips, our society as it is today simply cannot not function. We need computer chips not only for our personal vehicles, but also for the trucks that transport all of our goods, for the farm equipment that produces our food, for the extremely sophisticated equipment in our hospitals and for the millions upon millions of electronic devices that connect to the Internet.

The global chip shortage has been a very painful reminder of how exceedingly dependent we have

We are experiencing the most economically unstable period and socially erratic period in the history of the modern world. This period will be marked with extreme fluctuations in the stock, commodity and currency markets accompanied by severe and sometimes violent and deadly social disruptions including historic pandemics, conflicts, wars, riots and even regime changing coups. As is typical of such times, many fortunes will be both made and lost during this period. After talking with many business owners, executives, professionals, scholars and government officials from around the world, the writer believes that for the financially astute investor, this is a time of unprecedented opportunity given the global trade unbalances and distortions in the commodity and currency markets that exists. The Financial Crisis Report is a free compilation of the opinions of David Miyoshi as well as of those advisors he himself subscribes to (with appropriate credits given) on how to benefit during this historic time of crisis. The writer receives no compensation of any kind from any advisors whose articles or ideas may appear in this report. The reader is welcomed to check on all sources of information mentioned herein. Because the opinions and observations of this writer and other advisors are provided herein without charge, the reader is asked to make his/her own judgment on the contents.



America is No Longer Self Sufficient

There is no reason why we can't make our own apples. In fact, weather conditions are ideal for apple growing in much of America.

And how hard can it be to gather apples and squeeze the juice out of them? We should be able to do that here.

But during the "good times", big corporations discovered that they could make a little bit more profit by outsourcing to China, and so that is what they did.

Over the decades, big corporations have come to dominate food production in America, and this has pushed small family farmers to the brink of extinction...

The design of this framework benefits only the largest farmers who have the resources to produce these commodities at scale. For family farmers, the impact has been devastating. The share of each dollar spent on food that winds up in the hands of farmers has fallen from 53 cents in 1946 to 14 cents today, the lowest level ever recorded. Diversified family farms raising a variety of crops and livestock have been replaced by large industrial operations exclusively growing commodities like corn and soy at scale.

This grimness has caused countless family farms to throw in the towel. Since 1980, America has lost 50 percent of its cattle farms, 80 percent of its dairies, and 90 percent of its hog farms. Farmers were forced to choose between getting big or getting out. The average size of a farm nearly doubled from 650 acres in 1987 to 1,201 acres in 2012.

As long as relations with China are good, we will be able to get the apple juice, salmon and other food products that we need from them.

But, if relations with China get really sour, all of a sudden there will be a whole bunch of basic things that will be in short supply and that we won't be able to make for ourselves.

Speaking of China, there is a very serious shortage of shipping containers right now. And one factor that is making it worse is that we buy far more from China than they buy from us. So empty shipping containers are stacking up on our side of the Pacific Ocean because there is not enough commercial traffic going back the other way.

Sometimes empty shipping containers are shipped back to foreign ports without anything in them, but this is exceedingly wasteful...

Using export data from U.S. Customs and Border Protections compiled by trader intelligence data firm Import Genius, they analyzed thousands of U.S. export records marked "empty container" shipped by Thor Joergensen A/S, a supplier based in Denmark whose largest customer is Maersk Logistics.

They found that in 2020, 668,086 empty containers were shipped to foreign ports around the world, 12 times more than in 2019. At the height of this empty container frenzy, in November 2020, 87,000 ghost containers were exported, 87 times more than at the same time in 2019.

Another shortage that is weighing heavily on the U.S. economy is the worker shortage. Even though employment is still way, way below pre-pandemic levels, millions of Americans have decided that they simply do not want to go back to work because of the generous government benefits that they are now bringing in.

As a result, we are now facing a serious worker shortage, and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce says that it is "getting worse by the day"...

"The worker shortage is real — and it's getting worse by the day," US Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Suzanne Clark said.

Most big corporations can easily pay more to bring in new workers, but many small businesses that are barely scraping by cannot afford to shell out higher wages. Along with other factors such as widespread shortages and higher commodity prices, this is creating a "perfect storm" that threatens to force many more small businesses to shut their doors. In fact, one recent survey found that 35 percent of all small businesses in America are "at risk of closing permanently by the end of the summer"...

As small businesses complain that it has never been harder for them to hire workers according to a recent NFIB survey, many are facing growing pressure to survive. As the American economy continues to reopen, some fear it might not happen soon enough to save thousands of small businesses. Data from Alignable's June Revenue Poll shows that 35% of all small business owners are still at risk of closing permanently by the end of the summer.

Among the 3,772 small business owners in the 10 days ended June 1, Alignable's June Revenue Poll showed a myriad of factors – including the remaining closures and restrictions, growing inflationary pressures on prices, rising gas and transportation prices and labor shortages – are creating problems that affect small businesses more intensely than their corporate partners.

The U.S. economy has proven to be quite resilient, but the extreme imbalances that we are witnessing now threaten to cause immense damage in the months ahead, and they won't be solved any time soon. In fact, I believe that our economic challenges will soon escalate dramatically.

It has been said that life is like a coin. You can spend it any way that you want, but you can only spend it once.



Cryptocurrencies and Bible Prophecy

So be sure to spend your life on something that really matters.

D. Miyoshi

Cryptocurrencies and Bible Prophecy



The following article appeared in the Christian publication *The Trumpet* on March 11, 2021. It is written by Josue Michels. Notwithstanding that beginning in mid-May through June, Bitcoin and practically every other alternative cryptocurrency has suffered huge drawdowns in price, which continues even now, yet they have become accepted among key figures in the financial firmament, Wallstreet and among Millennials and it appears here to stay. Indeed, the virtual currency has won over Yale's endowment, JPMorgan (JPM), Fidelity Investments, the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS), and Guggenheim Partners, along with Wall Street legends such as Paul Tudor Jones and Stanley Druckenmiller. The article presents a theological perspective on the premise of cryptocurrencies in our society and I reproduce it here for your reading consideration. D. Miyoshi

Bitcoin has been referred to as the currency of anarchists. Many think digital cryptocurrencies like this one could facilitate a financial world independent from central banks and big government. But as you might suspect, central banks and big government are not interested in losing their control of finance to digital currencies—especially when they can use digital currencies to increase their control.

The development of central bank digital currencies has begun. A January survey by the Bank for International Settlements showed that of the 65 surveyed central banks, 86 percent were exploring the use of digital currencies, and some had already begun testing. The survey concludes that central banks representing one fifth of the world's population will likely issue their own digital currencies within the next three years. We are entering the transition from a cash-based financial system to a cashless one.

The Chinese Communist Party was the first major government to introduce a digital currency, which is a red flag in and of itself. The Bank of France is exploring the use of Ripple-xrp as a possible

platform for a digital currency—not just for France but for all of Europe. (In 2014, a man the Trumpet watches closely, Karl-Theodor zu Guttenberg, joined Ripple's advisory board.) Cryptocurrency is one of the hottest topics for elites like Guttenberg around the world. While bitcoin, the origins of which are mysterious, might be decentralized, they are interested in making it very much centralized—under their own power.

A world is coming where not only individuals but entire nations can be excluded from the financial system.

While the new developments bring a lot of uncertainty, Bible prophecy gives us a clear overview of where these events will lead.

Total Control and Revelation 13.

When almost every government around the world has already launched massive suppression of individual freedom on the pretext of a virus, many fear that giving them even more power over their day-to-day transactions will invite tyranny. The preliminary results of an online survey conducted by the European Central Bank, which is developing a digital currency, show that 41 percent of respondents are most concerned about losing their privacy. Only 17 percent are concerned about having digital euros stolen.

The central bank claims that its electronic euro will be a supplement to cash. Still many fear that once the digital euro is introduced, the government could easily outlaw cash transactions. The government would then gain total control over its citizens' transactions and much of their lives. Its ability to collect and raise taxes would be enhanced. Its ability to trace the income of opposition groups would be a political super-weapon. And its surveillance abilities, already comprehensive, would be total when it came to your transactions and all that they reveal about you. It would be able to coerce you into making certain transactions and not others, and it could restrict or turn off your ability to even make transactions.

In a cashless society, the government could much more easily prevent the funding of an extremist terrorist organization, for example, and trace, track, catch and punish those involved. But what if a government agency suddenly decides that your opinions make you an extremist? You would have no place to hide.

This development is shockingly similar to what the Bible describes in Revelation 13:17: a society where “no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Concerning the prophesied “mark of the beast,” the late Herbert W. Armstrong noted in 1952:

The “mark” is something that will be very popular—something the majority of people will be in favor of, will seek—which custom will approve as right—because no man will be allowed to “buy or sell,”



Cryptocurrencies and Bible Prophecy

unless he receives this “mark.”

Everyone wants to be able to “buy or sell.” In this scriptural usage, the expression “buy or sell” more literally indicates being able to buy—not that stores or those from whom one might make purchases of the necessities of life would refuse to accept the money, but that the one refusing the “mark” would not be able to buy, would not be able to earn a living, to earn a wage or salary, or to engage himself in business.

The mark of the beast has historically been the Catholic enforcement of Sunday worship. Mr. Armstrong explained that a resurrected Holy Roman Empire would enforce this religious teaching once again—on a scale that history has never seen. In a society that uses only digital currencies, anyone who works on Sunday or keeps God’s true Sabbath could be excluded from buying or selling with the click of a button.

In fact, the click of a button could exclude entire nations from world trade.

International Trade and Isaiah 23

“Historians still quibble about what event marked the end of the Roman Empire,” David Goldman wrote in the Frontier Post. “Some future historians might choose Jan. 16, 2021, as the fatal moment for the American Empire.”

This development, Goldman noted, may mark “the overthrow of the reserve currency system that has prevailed for more than two centuries, since sterling became the world’s favored reserve instrument and the Bank of England acted as the world’s de facto central bank.”

America should be greatly concerned about this development.

Most world trade today is conducted in United States dollars. Many nations hold large amounts of this currency in reserve to conduct these transactions, which increases its demand and, therefore, its value. But over the years, the United States has grown more and more materialistic and addicted to debt. Just today its government signed a bill costing \$1.9 trillion into law, adding to its already unfathomable \$28 trillion national debt.

Right now, trading internationally is still a complex business and requires large deposits (in dollars) as collateral. But digital currencies built on a technology called blockchain could drastically simplify these transactions.

“Blockchain allows the tracking of goods from factory to warehouse to port to container to ship, and enables just-in-time deliveries along with just-in-time payments,” Goldman noted.

If European governments can take the lead with blockchain financial tools the entire world could quickly change its orbit to a European digital currency and dispense with the complexities of holding dollars in reserve, not to mention the fear of the dollar’s inevitable failure.

The Bible prophesies that a European economic behemoth will center world trade around itself. The book of Isaiah foretells that Europe will become the “marketplace for the nations” (Isaiah 23:3; New King James Version). It also reveals who will be counted as its major allies.

In his free booklet Isaiah’s End-Time Vision, Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry explains the Bible’s prophecies that the world economy will be dominated by three power blocs in the end time: Tyre, Tarshish and Kittim. Tyre, he explains, represents the commercial center of the modern-day European Union; Tarshish is modern-day Japan and can also refer to Latin America; Kittim is modern-day China. Isaiah 23:1-3 say that the merchants of Tarshish will mourn when Tyre is overthrown. This shows that Japan and China will be in a close economic partnership with a German-led European superstate. As Mr. Flurry explains in “America Is Being Besieged Economically,” Latin America will also play a crucial role in the fulfillment of this prophecy.

But the prophecy also shows that the English-speaking peoples, the modern descendants of the ancient Israelites, are missing from this trade alliance. This corresponds with many other prophecies that refer to an economic siege against America and other nations. Jeremiah 21:9 refers to the “Chaldeans that besiege you,” a reference to modern Germany. (Request The United States and Britain in Prophecy, by Herbert W. Armstrong, to understand the “master key” to unlocking Bible prophecy: the biblical identities of modern nations.)

China’s and Europe’s efforts to create a financial system independent of the U.S. are a sign that we are about to see these prophecies fulfilled. For more information on how America may find itself soon excluded from international trade, read “Will Blockchain Block Out America?”

How It May Unfold

As China and Europe increase their trade with each other, they are actively plotting to bring down the American superpower. Once the dollar collapses, the U.S. will fall into great economic turmoil. This will trigger a banking crisis on a far larger scale than the economic “Armageddon” narrowly averted in 2008. Mr. Armstrong noted that a financial crisis in the U.S. “could suddenly result in triggering European nations to unite as a new world power, larger than either the Soviet Union or the U.S.”

Mr. Armstrong based this prophecy on Revelation 17:12-13: “And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.” Ten rulers are prophesied to unite a European em-



Hack Attacks Could Take Down America

pire ruled by Germany. At this point, the EU will likely have already instituted a digital currency, primarily used to facilitate international trade. But a large banking crisis may force European nations to ban cash entirely to force economic strength and unity. This would give the European Central Bank a key advantage.

A digital euro and the abolition of cash would lock everyone in with the ECB. Runs on the bank would become impossible. Large-scale negative interest rates would become reality and would force public spending. This would give Europe the ability to rise from the ashes of a massive banking crisis.

The University of Bayreuth's Dr. Thorsten Polleit noted with the reality of a digital euro. "No one needs to worry that their balances held at a commercial bank could be lost if the bank goes bankrupt and the deposit protection fund fails," he said. "If a digital euro is publicly accepted, the scenario of euro commercial banks collapsing becomes unlikely; the euro money and credit system would be supported more than ever by the omnipotence of the ECB."

In a large enough crisis, the government may also decide to enforce a six-day workweek. EU law has already designated Sunday as the primary day of rest in such a scenario. Individuals not abiding by this law could be penalized and even excluded from the financial system. This development would then lead to total state control that starts in Europe and soon spreads globally. Soon the "mark of the beast" could be forced on nations around the world.

As of now we only "see through a glass, darkly" as the Apostle Paul stated. But God has given us Bible prophecies so that we can "watch and pray" (Luke 21:36). As these events are unfolding, followers of Jesus Christ are commanded to not only draw close to God but also warn the world of what is ahead (Revelation 10:11). God reveals Bible prophecy only to His end-time apostle who is proclaiming this warning message and the good news of God's soon-coming Kingdom.

If you want to learn more about these fascinating prophecies and what they mean to each of us individually, request a free copy of Isaiah's End-Time Vision, by Gerald Flurry.

[End of Article](#)

Hack Attacks Could Take Down America

The following is an article by Trish Regan of *American Consequences* and was published on May 15, 2021. After the Colonial Pipeline disaster, I thought this article was very telling and so I present it here for your reading consideration. D. Miyoshi



Let's be clear, America. The Colonial Pipeline hack, threatening half of the fuel for America's east coast and sending citizens into a gas-hoarding panic, was not just a mere bit of ransomware. Make no mistake: this is war.

The FBI confirmed that the hackers responsible for the malicious software attack on Colonial are a group dubbed DarkSide, hailing from Eastern Europe.

We need to rely on our military and intelligence community in moments like this, not an office IT team.

The Department of Defense has to work together with corporations like Colonial to protect the American people and businesses when nation-state black-hat hackers threaten our livelihoods. I know I'm always sounding off on big government, but it's still Washington's responsibility to keep its citizens safe from digital criminals.

DarkSide claimed this past Monday that they just wanted money. Right... A cyberattack from nation-state actors with potential ties to Russian intelligence targeting half of the gasoline and jet fuel the U.S. provides? That's not a cash-grab – that's geopolitical terrorism.

In the wake of all this, how do we hold the hackers and Russia responsible? And is it time America digitally strikes back?

On the *American Consequences* podcast this week, I spoke with Kara Frederick, a former DOD counterterrorism analyst, who explains the changing face of digital battle with the likes of Russia and China and details the best ways our country can fight back.

Hackers: Lying in Wait

By 2025, 5 billion people (nearly everyone) will have access to the Internet – and this past pandemic year witnessed a historic uptick of usage on all our devices. We're more dependent on tech with each passing day, meaning our exposure to digital exploitation keeps rising.

In terms of groups like DarkSide, Kara claims they hide in the too-convenient shadows of a geopolitical gray area – connections between hackers and nations. There's understood complicity between cybercriminals and the countries that harbor them – a disturbing trend of tacit state approval with these international hack attacks.

Should the U.S. digitally crackdown on our enemies? Why not have hordes of our hackers target Russia, China, Iran, et al.?

According to Kara, our party line is "defending forward" – applying our largesse and engineering capabilities to impose costs on bad-faith foreign actors. Our cyber ops strive to be more preventative than reactionary, but maybe it's time to rethink that approach.



Hack Attacks Could Take Down America

In terms of online recruitment for the likes of DarkSide, these types live and breathe in the dark web, and with our ever-growing tech immersion, it's getting easier for these criminals to find each other.

And they don't need a gun to inflict damage... Armed with only a keyboard, monitor, and modem, they can still rob, blackmail, or hold you hostage.

Why can't we better equip companies and citizens to protect themselves? Former Sec. of Defense Bob Work has called for a ramp-up of AI in our efforts, reminding us that the nature of war has fundamentally changed.

America's 21st-century military will wage more battles... not on the soil but the screen, with code and malware as the weapons of choice instead of battle tanks and automatic firearms.

And beyond targeting civilians and politicians, these black hat hackers will continue to go after critical infrastructures like pipelines, grids, water treatment facilities, and hospitals... any place relying on reams of data to keep running and provide services to Americans. They will take any opportunity to threaten our way of life.

Kara notes that if you're in the private sector, assume you'll get hacked. And when companies are victims of cyber-attacks, they need incentives to provide transparent incident reports – they'll worry about stock prices, but national security trumps shareholders' interests.

Russia: A Hacker's Paradise

So, DarkSide emerged out of Eastern Europe with possible (probable) ties to Russia.

Why is the Sickle & Hammer so fertile for harvesting hackers? According to Kara, they stick to their comparative advantage, i.e., there's less distraction in Mother Russia. It's freezing, grey, and bleak – you can drink vodka or learn how to code (or both). Russia, Iran, and China are dedicated and crystalline clear in how they want to dismantle their enemies (us). Stateside, we're less focused as a people.

"Americans have the luxury of petty, emotionally charged cultural spat of critical race theory in classrooms or the legitimacy of trans athletes."

And these countries fully leverage our innate divisiveness for their ends. We busy ourselves tearing each other apart at the throats over Dr. Seuss while our enemies plot our demise – so in a way, we're helping them. And they're not aiming to enjoy their lives – they only want to destroy ours. So far, we're letting them.

Remember the NFL "taking the knee" controversy? Did you get fired up about that one (on either side)? Yes, Russian hackers blew on the Facebook flames of that culture war – another case study in how easily and effectively foreign actors pit us against each other in the digital space. But without a smile: they're laughing at us.

Her comments reminded me of the quote often attributed to Lincoln: "If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of free men, we must live through all time or die by suicide."

Along with meddling in our social feeds, the paramount concern would be more unilateral hack attacks from China and Russia's GRU (military intelligence), those responsible for shutting down Ukraine's gas pipeline a few years ago (sound familiar?)

The Chinese keep making advances in quantum computing and within a decade could break through all of our nation's tech safeguards – that, along with Russia's ceaseless Hacker Farm, should give us pause.

With digital war, it's not a question of if, but when. Rogue actors from lesser states can inflict massive damage – all you need are hackers and hardware to take down a country like America.

America Needs to Bend the Rules of Engagement

In the U.S., we're obsessed with this polished Captain America idea of fighting fair, tying our hands behind our breaking backs still kowtowing to quaint mid-20th-century war paradigms. Meanwhile, Russia and China have fully embraced unrestricted, perpetual, digital gray zone warfare towards us – proving to be a cheap, effective way to interfere with our republic.

Why don't we fight dirty? In the Vietnam War, we fell outmaneuvered by guerilla warfare – we didn't adopt a new military strategy then, and we're not adopting one now.

I have a message for you, China and Russia... You can only poke the bear so many times before it rips your head off.

Our enemies are harboring hacker's intent on wrecking our country – and we're just allowing it. In terms of striking back on the tech battlefield, former Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Sandy Winterfield says we should – but again, the U.S. seems unable to embrace the role of villain. We'd sooner put international optics over national defense...

Listen, I know this is scary stuff. But I love this country and want us all to be safe – and that includes reminders of just how vulnerable our citizens, institutions, and corporations are to cybercriminals. Next, they could come for our electrical grid. Never mind a gas shortage

I hope our American schoolchildren are learning how to code in school because otherwise, the chances of America winning the digital wars of the future are remote at best.

End of Article



How to Forecast Amidst Seeming Chaos



The reason noted economist and investment consultant Harry Dent stopped majoring in economics in college and switched to business was simply that the economists' theories did not seem to have real-life applications. The economists were more of the collective opinion that no one really could predict the future.

To Dent, at least business courses like finance, accounting, marketing, and management had real-life applications. But for forecasting, Dent says he has always gained the most wisdom from following the best of the scientists who study very-long-term trends. When a person does this seriously and systematically, patterns begin to appear.

This is a picture of the center of the ever-changing Milky Way, from the amazing Hubble telescope.

The Universe Looks Chaotic: How the Hell Can You Predict Anything?



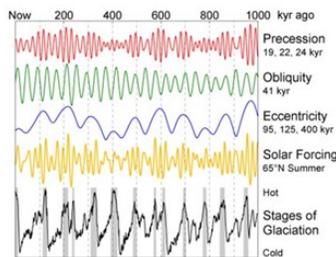
Does this look like absolute chaos, or what? Yet the earth revolves around that center every 250 million years. Well, that already brings to mind a cycle similar to earth's revolution around the sun every year, which breaks into 4 seasons of climate, and so on. That gives us some predictability already!

When Dent was in college, he could see that we had these repeating booms and busts in the economy. Dent always knew that there had to be a reason for that, something driving it... but he didn't know what, back then.

That was the time during which he was first inspired to come up with a system to predict economic cycles—and his inspiration came, of course, from a Serbian scientist, Milutin Milanković. He was able

to track three major long-term cycles that explain climate variations over 1 million years and can project into the future longer than anyone would care about, in 100,000-, 41,000-, and 22,000-year (on average) cycles. We won't go into the details here but the work of Milanković stands as one of the earliest and still most successful systems of long-term cycles and forecasting.

Milankovitch Tracked Very Clear Long-Term Climate Cycles



Milankovitch's model had all of the key success factors. He didn't incorporate endless cycles (as there are), but he found the key few that matter the most. One cycle dominated: the longer, 100,000-year eccentricity cycle, which correlates with ice ages, the most notable climate events in history, and that cycle reminds Dent of recessions and depressions in economics.

The best cycle models typically have 3 (or 4, at most) key cycles arranged in a hierarchy of dominance. The economic hierarchy Dent finds most compelling has at the top the 45-year technology cycle for progress, which is the most dominant cycle. Below that is the 40-year generational cycle, which correlates most with major booms and busts and then the 10-year cycle, which correlates most with major recessions and depressions. That 10-year down cycle tends to hit in the first 3 years of every decade, as in 2000–2002, 1980–1982, and now 2020–2022; the only exception in Dent's lifetime has been 2008–2009. That downturn hit early, because the 40-year demographic cycle triggered a major downturn after the Baby Boom generation peaked in their spending.

The economic cycles in Dent's key hierarchy all converge and point to a major stock low happening around late 2022... a once-in-a-lifetime event that almost no one will see coming!

What's the most important thing to watch here? The dominant cycle is peaking now; that 45-year cycle is especially potent for forming major long-term bubbles every 90 years. This cycle was due to peak around early 2020, but escalating stimulus, especially after COVID hit, instead created one last and most extreme bubble run.

To Dent, this final cycle appears ready to peak soon, and likely now by early to mid-June.

Dent cautions us not to take this time period lightly. Do not think governments have more power to change economies than the biggest long-term economic cycles, which emerged since the Industrial Rev-



Is it Better to Give than Receive?

olution ignited modern technologies on an unprecedented scale.

Plenty of newsletter writers out there can chart stocks and indicators and make short-term predictions. But something different is about to happen....

Dent says this is the time to listen to him and a few others, including Andy Pancholi and Robert Prechter, who seriously study long-term cycles.

After all, what have we got to lose listening to Dent?

D. Miyoshi

Is it Better to Give than Receive?



In the original Greek language, "philanthropy" translates to "love of humanity."

Here is a list of some Americans who are known to have been generous with their money.

Sheldon & Miriam Adelson, Paul Allen, Michael Bloomberg, Donald Bren, Sergey Brin, Eli & Edythe Broad, Charles Bronfman, Warren Buffett, Ben Carson, Ray & Barbara Dalio, Stanley Druckenmiller, Bill & Melinda Gates, David Geffen, Barron Hilton, Karen & Jon Huntsman, Paul Tudor Jones, Phil & Penelope, Knight, David Koch, Charles Koch, Peter & Carolyn Lynch, Richard & Nancy Marriott, Michael & Lori Milken, Charles Munger, Elon Musk, John Paulson, Ron Perelman, T. Boone Pickens, Emily Pulitzer, David Rockefeller, Sheryl Sandberg, Stephen Schwarzman, George Soros, Ted Turner, Walton family, Oprah Winfrey, Mark Zuckerberg & Priscilla Chan, Mortimer Zuckerman

But rich people giving away loads of money – from Bill Gates to Michael Bloomberg to Len Blavatnik – is often about a lot more than just wanting to, you know, show their love of humanity.

Kim Iskyan of *American Consequences* recently wrote a probing article entitled "Giving It Away: Philanthropy's Dark Side" that explores this phenomenon.

In the article Iskyan presents a quick quiz: Which of the below are actual, real-life philanthropic efforts?

- A donation of \$7 million to establish and support the Sackler Center for Arts Education at the Guggenheim Museum in New York – named for and funded by the family behind Purdue Pharma, which fueled the opioid epidemic that's killed upward of 500,000 Americans via its painkiller OxyContin.
- A bequeathment in 1902 to Oxford University's Oriel College by toxic racist and white supremacist (and founder of diamond purveyor De Beers) Cecil Rhodes – after whom one of the most prestigious post-graduate scholarships in the U.S. is still named.
- The \$50 billion Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – founded by a determined former monopolist. If the U.S. Department of Justice had not taken Microsoft to court in a landmark antitrust case, the development of the Internet and the trajectory of technological innovation of the past two decades would likely have been very different.
- A \$5 million donation (subsequently rejected) to the film school of the University of Southern California toward a scholarship fund for female filmmakers – by Oscar-winning filmmaker Harvey Weinstein... who is now serving a 23-year sentence for rape and sexual assault.
- A \$12 million-multidisciplinary Contemplative Sciences Center at the University of Virginia, funded by hedge-fund billionaire Paul Tudor Jones (and vetted by Jones' yoga consultant).

Give up? All of the above are real... for better or for worse.

The Good of Philanthropy

All of these efforts improved the world in both minor and extraordinary ways: college kids in Virginia learning about the "application of human flourishing," people enjoying art in Manhattan, helping to eradicate polio in the developing world, sending Bill Clinton to a cozy town outside of London to study politics.

And humanity would (probably) be worse off if cartoonishly rich people decided to buy more jacked-up yachts or Caribbean islands instead of giving away \$428 billion to good causes. According to Aspire Research, that's how much institutions, public foundations, and ultra-high net worth (\$30-plus million) gave to philanthropy globally in 2019. (Normal people pitched in another \$304 billion.)

Why do they do it?

There's the obvious, if naïve, initial take: Doing good – however flexibly that's defined, makes you feel good. "Human beings around the world derive emotional benefits from using their financial resources to help others," concludes a 2013 study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*.

And this crosses cultures and civilizations... "The reward experienced from helping others may be deeply ingrained in human nature, emerging in diverse cultural and economic contexts," the study explained.

But if giving wealth away made us so deliriously happy, Elon Musk

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would be snuggling up with Harry Homeless – who'd have his own trust fund. The motivations of the rich to give money away are a lot more than feeling OK about their untold wealth.

Charitable Hubris

The perversion of philanthropy – the twisted ways it's applied to achieve distinctly non-"love of humanity" ends – sometimes suggests another Greek word: Narcissus.

As you may (or not) remember from that sophomore-year Greek mythology class, Narcissus was a dreamboat – such a tall drink of water that he fell in love with his golden reflection beaming back from a lake.



One version of the story says Narcissus drowned when he jumped into the water to go after the object of his obsession. Alternatively, the Roman poet Ovid wrote – well before selfies were a thing – that Narcissus withered away from deprivation because he couldn't tear himself away from gazing at his undeniably beautiful self. (Maybe he'd have lived longer if he'd had the opportunity to endow a professorship in a Psych department somewhere.)

Insanely rich people can instead gaze at their names – and, if they wish, their images – on the walls of universities, hospitals, and orchestras that they support. Personal branding, publicity, and "social signaling" – the do-good version of flashing a Patek Philippe or driving a Lamborghini Veneno – are all-too-common, deeply shallow reasons for giving money away.

There's probably no more self-stroking social signal – like an "I gave blood today" sticker for the billionaire set – than the "Giving Pledge." Launched by Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett, it's "an open invitation for billionaires... to publicly commit to giving the majority of their wealth to philanthropy."

On their site, 221 self-congratulating plutocrats showcase themselves in (maybe) the highest-priced Internet real estate: Airbnb co-founder Brian Chesky, Australian gambling machine magnate Len Ainsworth, even 5-Hour Energy drink founder Manoj Bhargava. The

moody black-and-white portraits are a happy reminder that money can do almost anything – except hide made-for-radio looks or old age.

And if ego weren't involved in philanthropy, the most charitable contributor by far would be that fellow who goes by the name of Anonymous. But he generally accounts for the pocket change of total philanthropy.

Instead, sometimes egos clash when donors get into tacky public disputes about who gets the brightest lights to recognize their generosity – as happened with New York's Franklin D. Roosevelt Four Freedoms Park in 2012. As the New York Times explained then,

At issue is how prominently the foundations that gave money [for the FDR memorial] will be acknowledged at the site, and where... [the two competing foundations] filed suit in State Supreme Court saying that the park's sponsors promised to engrave their names close to the memorial bust that is the centerpiece of the four-acre park.

Welcome to the Whitewash: Milken, Blavatnik, Cosby?...

Business ethics expert Marianne Jennings flags large – and excessive – philanthropic contributions as a sign of "ethical collapse."

Outright fraudsters like Enron founder and CEO Ken Lay (a sizable contributor to a cancer center at the University of Texas) or Ponzi scheme mastermind Bernard Madoff, who gave away (stolen) money through a family foundation, used philanthropy as a cover or distraction.

Sometimes philanthropy is a way to spread Vaseline over the lens to a messy past. An example is Bill Gates... He morphed from the money-grubbing monopolist co-founder of Microsoft... to "travel the globe as near-royalty, knighted by Queen Elizabeth and draped in medals by President Barack Obama," explained by Vox.

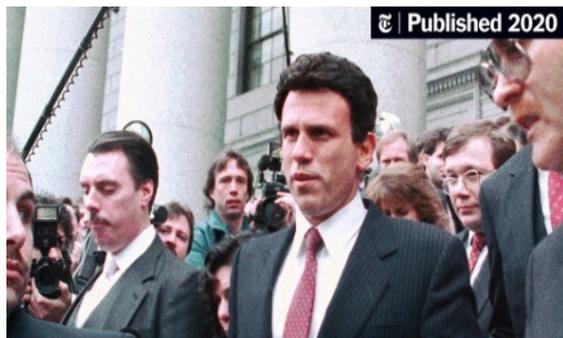
But the stains on Gates's reputation that his philanthropy aims to cleanse are minor compared to the full-blown philanthropy whitewash efforts of other billionaires.

Michael Milken undertook one impressive example of whitewash-by-philanthropy: a pioneer of the junk bond (below investment grade) market who was supposedly an inspiration for the Gordon Gekko character played by Michael Douglas in the 1987 movie *Wall Street*.

Courts indicted Milken in 1989 on charges of insider trading and securities fraud. He spent nearly two years in prison (sentenced to 10), paid around \$600 million in penalties, and was barred for life from working in the securities industry. Milken was subsequently diagnosed with prostate cancer, and told he had 18 months to live.

But, hey, greed is good.

Is it Better to Give than Receive?



But Milken lived... and then set about using his remaining \$3.7 billion fortune to rehabilitate his controversial reputation. Milken donated \$1 billion to cancer research, and in 1993 (in a self-serving move) founded the Prostate Cancer Foundation, which bills itself as "the world's leading philanthropic organization dedicated to funding life-saving prostate cancer research."

He also founded the Milken Institute, an economic think tank that holds a ritzy annual conference in Beverly Hills that CNBC described as "Davos with palm trees." Luminaries in attendance run from Cabinet officials to private equity billionaires to banking CEOs to football quarterback Tom Brady.

And in February 2020, Milken came full circle to achieve the ultimate character resurrection that not even philanthropy could buy: A pardon from former President Donald Trump. The president cited Milken's support for cancer research and explained that he'd "paid a big price, paid a very tough price" for his crimes.

Perhaps even more successful at cleansing his past has been Ukraine-born multibillionaire Len Blavatnik, who – in the words of *the Financial Times* in 2019 – is...

... an entrepreneur who reaped phenomenal riches from the chaotic world of 1990s Russian cowboy capitalism, and who cashed in that wealth in favor of western investments and a place in British and American high society.

Few in the west, outside elite business circles, know of the Siberian aluminum deals or courtroom battles for control of oil assets that built his first fortune. And that is how Blavatnik likes it.

Sir Leonard – knighted by the Queen for his philanthropy – diverted attention from a sordid past with the Blavatnik School of Government at Oxford University (thanks to a donation in 2010 of £75 million, or around \$110 million at the time)... the Blavatnik Building at the iconic London art museum Tate Modern (\$65 million)... and the biggest-ever donation to Harvard Medical School (\$200 million). He's "earned... admiration as one of the world's most generous philanthropists," the FT says.



Blavatnik's former partners in Russia, with whom Blavatnik started on the way to his \$33 billion fortune, haven't enjoyed a similar kind of adoration. Blavatnik's buddy Viktor Vekselberg, with whom he launched his first business in Russia, was placed under U.S. sanctions in 2018, resulting in \$1.5 billion of frozen assets.

Another former partner and Russian oligarch Oleg Deripaska suffered a similar threat. Other Russian billionaire contemporaries of Blavatnik's were even less fortunate... They were imprisoned, forced into exile, or "committed suicide" under suspicious circumstances.

Some rich people may use philanthropy to quiet their own guilty conscience – or do a kind of pre-whitewash. Disgraced comic Bill Cosby in 1988 gave \$20 million to Spelman College, an all-female historically Black school. Thirty years later, he was found guilty of aggravated indecent assault, after more than 60 women accused him of sexual crimes – going all the way back to the mid-1960s. (In 2015, Spelman terminated a professorship endowed in his name and returned the funds. An academic center there still bears the name of Cosby's wife.)

How Philanthropy Hurts

No matter how it's dressed up, billionaire philanthropy aims for Mr. (almost always a Mr., unfortunately) Billionaire to give a helping hand.

Maybe Mr. Billionaire didn't get enough hugs as a kid... his ego's as big as his Scrooge McDuck-style vault... he has something sordid in his past that he'd like you to forget (and that he'd like to forget as



Is it Better to Give than Receive?

well)... or maybe he wants a tax break.

Whatever the reason, Mr. Billionaire wants to give away his cash. But what happens if what he thinks is vital – the effort, building, or museum wing he wants to launch, endow, or support – isn't necessarily what's needed?

Stanford political scientist Rob Reich describes big philanthropy as "an exercise in power," whereby rich people use their money to exert a public influence. Philanthropy generally exists to fill a need that's not met by government or society already – whether it's clothing the homeless, giving mosquito nets to people in malarial areas, or giving iPads to underfunded schools.

And – by definition – private philanthropy prioritizes the issues that donors view as important. The wealthy foreigner will fly in on a chopper and set the agenda of what they want. Research published in the medical journal *The Lancet* has described how the Gates Foundation focused on polio eradication – rather than health challenges (like diseases caused by dirty water) that were, in the view of the people being helped, a higher short-term priority. As a result, local resources needed to be diverted from an immediate priority to facilitate philanthropy.

It's similar with cash gifts closer to home. In 2012, University of Virginia alum and major donor Paul Tudor Jones wanted to build a \$12 million yoga center for his alma mater. *The New York Times* revealingly explained in September 2012 how the institution handled the donation...

I thought, 'Oh, man, people are going to be very cynical about this,' recalls Bob Sweeney, UVA's fund-raising chief. So [university president] Sullivan convened a dinner at her home with professors of religion, medicine and other disciplines. "I said, 'O.K., let us think about it a little bit,' she said. 'We began talking about, wait a minute, it's not just yoga.' The group swiftly produced a proposal for a multi-disciplinary Contemplative Sciences Center, which was vetted by Jones's paid yoga consultant.

Earlier that year, 20 UVA students went on a hunger strike to protest the low wages of hourly workers in the university system. Jones, though, got his yoga center – and UVA kept their deep-pocketed alum close. In December 2019, the university announced plans for a building to be called Contemplative Commons – a \$40 million effort funded in part by a gift from Jones.

Who Needs It? The Wealthy...

Does UVA – or anyone – need a Contemplative Commons? For all of its problems, the Gates Foundation, as its tag line states, fights poverty, disease, and inequity worldwide.

In a world of problems like that, another posh building at one of the world's premier universities – where mostly children of privilege learn how to maintain their privilege – feels excessive.

So does entrepreneur and New York mayor Michael Bloomberg's \$1.8 billion donation to Johns Hopkins University to facilitate need-blind admissions... Blavatnik's gifts to Oxford... the Sacklers' numerous donations to art institutions... Milken's cancer research funding... and anyone who gives money to (for instance) Harvard University, which already has an endowment of \$40 billion.

The marginal utility – that is, the incremental good – of much of the philanthropy of rich people is minimal. It's like a fourth scoop of Ben & Jerry's full-test chocolate brownie ice cream or the size 2 Air Jordans that your toddler will wear twice before he outgrows them.

Most of philanthropy is icing on icing, as the Guardian explained last year...

In the U.S. barely a fifth of the money donated by big givers goes to the poor. A lot goes to the arts, sports teams and other cultural pursuits, and half goes to education and healthcare...

The common assumption that philanthropy automatically results in a redistribution of money is wrong. A lot of elite philanthropy is about elite causes. Rather than making the world a better place, it largely reinforces the world as it is. Philanthropy very often favors the rich – and no one holds philanthropists to account for it.

Hello, Tax Break

Another way philanthropy favors the rich is the tax break. Rarely does anyone just give away their funds... instead, it's placed in tax-efficient structures that allow the donor control – while financially optimizing the transaction. And that imposes a real – and tilted – cost as well, as political scientist Reich explained in 2018...

When a wealthy person taxed at 40 percent of their annual income makes a \$1,000 gift to a soup kitchen, the government forgives 40 percent, or \$400, of their gift. So, the cost of their \$1,000 donation to them is \$600. But when a middle-class person taxed at 20 percent of their annual income makes that identical \$1,000 donation to the same soup kitchen, they are forgiven \$200. The cost they pay is \$800. In these two cases, the identical social good has been produced but the wealthier you are, the higher the subsidy rate is of your giving.

Reich estimated that these tax breaks that disproportionately favor the rich cost the U.S. Treasury more than \$50 billion in 2017 – which naturally means less funding for things like school lunches, college loan programs, and repairing bridges.

Coming Soon: The Zuckerberg Center for Preserving Democracy?

Rich people – many of them, at least – probably mean well. For whatever the reason, they want to "give back." The difference is that their flaky good intentions run the risk of actually coming to fruition... unlike the random delusions of normal people over a beer about how we'd change the world, if only we financially could.



Prospects for a Pandemic Tokyo Olympics

We usually view philanthropy through a relentlessly and exclusively positive prism: Rich person gives away money? Hurrah! It's only in the most extreme cases – say, the reason that a Jeffrey Epstein Center for the Study of Adolescent Sexuality might have inspired – that there's some doubt.

The bottom line is does the world need another art museum wing? Or another comfy space for the kids of rich parents to collaborate and share at a university with more money than the gross domestic product of a mid-sized African country? Or... whatever Bill Gates comes up with, to try to blot out the new divorce story – with the split of Bill and Melinda Gates – and its negative affect on his meticulously refurbished image.

Maybe But it's worth asking the question. Because just because rich people have money doesn't mean they have the answers – or know what's better for you.

D. Miyoshi

Prospects for a Pandemic Tokyo Olympics



© Illustration by Hiroko Oshima and Michael Tsang

With the recent uptake in Covid cases in Japan, resistance against the Tokyo Olympics increased more than at the beginning of the year. This consternation is revealed in an article that appeared in NikkeiAsia on March 30, 2021. It is written by Nikkei staff writers Francesca Regalado and Rurika Imahashi. I present it here for your reading consideration. D. Miyoshi

Pandemic Olympics: Japan searches for meaning in isolated games

With foreign fans nixed, 'reconstruction' slogan rings hollow at Fukushima relay

FUKUSHIMA, Japan -- For the organizers of the Tokyo Olympics, the start of the torch relay last week was a welcome beginning after investing seven years and over \$12 billion. For 82-year-old Teiko Nemoto, it was a bittersweet end to the life she once knew.

The northeastern prefecture of Fukushima was chosen as the starting point to highlight the region's recovery from the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster 10 years ago. Nemoto, who was born and raised in the town of Futaba -- within a 10 km radius of the melted Fukushima Daiichi nuclear reactors -- returned for the first time since the catastrophe with her son, a relay support runner behind the torchbearer.

Futaba remains mostly abandoned. Nemoto and her family have resettled in Tokyo.

"The Olympics were nominally for reconstruction, so I expected my town would become a place we can have hope for," Nemoto told Nikkei Asia. "But I'm now sure that this is a place where no one can live. This is the last time I'll come back."

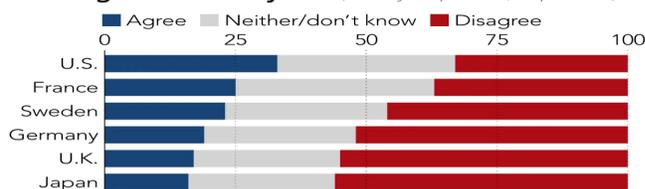
When Tokyo won its bid for the 2020 Games in September 2013, they promised to be a powerful symbol of Japan's recovery from the triple disaster and the crowning achievement of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's "three arrow" economic agenda.

Much has changed, and Nemoto is far from the only one nursing a sense of disappointment. The rebuilding of the northeast has come a long way, but \$200 billion later, it remains an incomplete effort. Abe is no longer prime minister, resigning last year in the heat of the coronavirus pandemic. And the crisis has delayed the games by a year, prompted a ban on overseas spectators, and underscored the unsustainable costs borne by Olympic hosts.

Only 23.2% of Japanese support holding the games this year, according to the latest Kyodo News poll -- a steep plunge from 73% in January 2013.

Since the vast majority of citizens no longer want to play host, and the rest of the world cannot come to watch, a question hangs over Japan's festivities: What was this all for?

Do you agree or disagree that the Tokyo Olympics should go ahead this year? (Survey responses, in percent)



Survey of 1,000 adults in each country, conducted Feb. 11-21
Source: Kekst CNC

Prospects for a Pandemic Tokyo Olympics

"I wanted foreign spectators to come to Japan and Fukushima," said Kenichiro Mizoi, 76, one of the oldest torchbearers and a longtime resident of Fukushima. "I'm not sure we can show the world our reconstruction" without international fans.

Those foreign crowds were originally projected to generate 10 billion yen (\$92 million) through ticket purchases alone. The latest projections put the loss from their exclusion at nearly 196 billion yen, including canceled tickets and other inbound consumption such as hotels, transportation and shopping, according to Nomura Research Institute.

For hosts, the Olympics have always been more about political opportunity than financial profit.

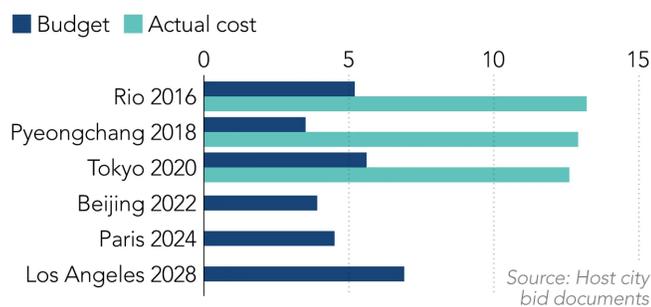
"The Olympics offered countries a chance to become more international and open to the rest of the world," said Jun Saito, guest professor at International Christian University in Tokyo.

Pyeongchang 2018, the most recent event, cost \$12.9 billion, over three times the \$3.5 billion proposed to the International Olympic Committee. Yet for the government in Seoul, it was a priceless opportunity for Korean athletes separated by the 38th parallel to compete under the same flag.

The 2018 Winter Games also handed North Korean leader Kim Jong Un a public relations coup after a year of escalating tensions with the U.S. Kim Yo Jong, the dictator's sister, sat front and center at the opening ceremony with South Korean President Moon Jae-in.

"It marked the transition from the crisis of 2017 to the North Korean charm offensive of 2018-2019," said Ankit Panda, senior fellow at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a Washington think tank.

Olympic costs borne by host city (In billions of dollars)



Nearly empty airline counters at Tokyo's Haneda International Airport on March 29: The delayed 2020 Olympics and Paralympics will be held without overseas spectators to minimize coronavirus risks. (Photo by Ken Kobayashi)

This time around, Japan's government and Olympic organizers have latched on to the coronavirus pandemic, broadening the theme from domestic reconstruction to global recovery.

"We will work closely with the IOC to hold the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics in their complete form, to show future generations that humanity overcame the coronavirus," former Prime Minister Abe said when he announced the postponement last year.

But a true global comeback from COVID-19 could take years, with governments continuing to accumulate debt as their economies suffer. This could make hosting the Olympics an even less attractive proposition, and the pandemic's impact on Tokyo 2020 could ultimately hammer home the wisdom of a more cost-efficient Olympic model.

"Tokyo 2020 can be a turning point for the games to scale down," said Munehiko Harada, professor at Waseda University in Tokyo.



A small cluster of spectators awaits the torch relay in front of Futaba Station in Fukushima on March 25. (Photo by Francesca Regalado)

Already, fewer cities have been bidding as governments become aware that doing so makes little economic sense, Harada noted. Only Paris and Los Angeles -- sprawling metropolises with existing world-class venues and infrastructure that have previously hosted the Olympics -- placed bids for the Summer Games in 2024. Eleven had

Prospects for a Pandemic Tokyo Olympics

sought the 2004 Games.

The IOC, well-aware of cities' growing reluctance, has moved to improve cost efficiency and optimize existing infrastructure. The Tokyo Olympics are "basically the last in the old world where the concept was you spend an unlimited amount and everyone should be all right with that because it's the Olympics," said Victor Matheson, professor of sports economics at College of the Holy Cross in the U.S.

Nevertheless, ICU's Saito said, "Especially because countries have the economic burden of the pandemic, fewer will be able to afford to host the games in the future, depending on their fiscal situation."

Opponents of the games would be just fine with that.

At one stop along the relay route, a lone protester shouted from his van, stressing the folly of going ahead in the middle of a pandemic and economic downturn. Even locals who turned up to cheer on runners from their communities, ignoring advice to watch from home, shared mixed feelings.

"There's no clear goal to the reconstruction," said a 32-year-old resident of Naraha, a town near the nuclear plant, who asked to stay anonymous. "It will last forever."

Torchbearers ran through towns still unpopulated because of radiation. A stadium in Fukushima that was remodeled to host Olympic baseball and softball games will remain mostly empty come summer because of the lack of overseas fans.

Keiko Sugawara, a 73-year-old resident of Nihonmatsu, Fukushima, said: "On the way to see the relay, I saw black plastic bags with contaminated soil on the road, which brought home to me that there's still a long way to go for full reconstruction."

Save for scattered supporters like them, 300 torch carriers, organizers and media, the relay route that weaved through Fukushima and its disaster-hit neighbors Iwate and Miyagi was largely quiet. Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga stayed in Tokyo for a parliamentary session.

"There is no 'festival' atmosphere here," said Michiko Saito, director-general of Utsukushima Sports Rooters, a nonprofit volunteer organization in Fukushima.



Azusa Iwashimizu, a member of the Japan women's national football team, holds a torch during a relay ceremony in Fukushima on March 25. (Pool photo)

At the torch relay ceremony, Fukushima Gov. Masao Uchibori thanked organizers for choosing his prefecture but acknowledged the long road ahead. "People are starting to forget the disaster, so the 'reconstruction Olympics' is very special to the people of Fukushima."

Koichi Nakano, professor at Tokyo's Sophia University, begged to differ, arguing the "reconstruction Olympics" amounted to nothing more than an excuse to spend billions on an international spectacle. "It's always been a facile slogan with no real substance," he said.

Despite the economic losses and sour public mood, Japan still refuses to shun hosting responsibilities like some other countries. Even now it is in the market for another Olympics -- albeit in their more modest winter form.

Snowy Hokkaido, the country's northernmost main island, is gunning for the Winter Games in 2030, with backing from 80% of companies based in the prefectural capital of Sapporo.

Nakano did not hide his skepticism. "I suppose the conservatives in power will try again because they've run out of ideas to restart the economy," he said. Assuming travel returns to normal, he added, "They'll try to continue to think of some kind of circus to bring tourists into Japan."

End of Article

SOME THOUGHTS ON A BEAUTIFUL WEDNESDAY IN MAY

Here is a message I recently came across on the internet. I reprint it here because I wholeheartedly agree with its observations. D. Miyoshi

SOME THOUGHTS ON A BEAUTIFUL WEDNESDAY IN MAY

By E. P. Unum

May 19, 2021

When I was in college a lifetime ago, I played for four years on the school's varsity baseball team, three of them with a wonderful guy named Jose Del Rio. He was two years older than me and played shortstop while I was a second baseman. Jose escaped from Cuba in 1959 when Castro came into power. He and his father, a physician, and his mother and two sisters escaped in the middle of the night on a boat headed for Florida.

Jose taught me fluent Spanish and was my roommate on our team's baseball trips. We actually had a routine to pick base runners off second base communicating in Spanish! Fun times. I don't know why this popped into my mind this morning but here is a brief story: One night while I was out with Jose in a bar in Wilkes Barre Pennsylvania (where we had no business being at) just before competing in a college baseball tournament, I listened to Jose tell stories of his experiences in Cuba and how real terror had paralyzed his country and his family. He spoke of arrests, firing squads, farms, and businesses being seized and I remember saying to him "Wow! That sounds terrifying. We don't know how lucky we are in America". Jose just looked at me and said..."How lucky you are? Thank God we had a place to escape to!"

And in that one brief sentence, my friend Jose captured the essence of what it is all about. America is the last frontier. We are the last best hope for freedom in the world. There just ain't anyplace left to go and if we don't make it work here, freedom ends at our doorstep.

Then, I thought of something I learned while recently reading information from Hillsdale College about the American Revolution. On the eve of our struggle for Independence, a man who might very well have been one of the greatest among our Founding Fathers, Dr. Joseph Warren, then President of the Massachusetts Congress, said to his fellow patriots during a heated debate, "Our country is in great danger, but not to be despaired of.... On you depends the fortunes of America. You are to decide the important questions upon which rests the happiness and the liberty of millions yet unborn. Act worthy of yourselves!" Powerful, moving words.

In those words so eloquently spoken, Dr. Warren set the bar high for us all. James Madison echoed Dr. Warren's comments when he said "We base all our experiments on the capacity of mankind for self-government." This idea, that government was and is beholden to the people; that it has no other source of power except the sovereign people, is still today the newest, most unique idea in the long history

of man's relation to man. We are a nation that happens to have a government, not the other way around. And, this fundamental fact makes us special among the nations of the earth. You see, the men who forged our Republic were men of great character, integrity, and courage. They were also well-read and deep thinkers. They reflected carefully upon the works of John Locke, Montesquieu, Plato, Aristotle, Justinian, Cicero, and Tacitus and they struggled mightily to create the documents we treasure like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution which have endured for 245 years. Those who now occupy the House and Senate and the White House today I believe need a refresher course in the principles upon which our nation was founded. They need to be reminded that it is the people to whom they are accountable, not the other way around.

Knowing these things about our Founders, what can we say about those who lead our nation today? What would the Founders say about the decisions of some of our governors in the face of what has been called a pandemic? Have those advisors whispering in the ear of the President given careful thought to their recommendations, or have they vacillated and wavered in the face of challenge? Have they communicated clearly to the people? Are our leaders today the best America has to offer? Are they made of the stuff of people like Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, Warren, Lincoln who gave careful, reasoned thought before taking action? Have they considered history as a teacher or are they instead trying to rewrite history the way they would like it to be? Have the decisions taken in this challenge called COVID-19 been carefully thought through? Were we wise to shut our nation's economy down in the face of a virus that has a 99.6% survival rate or did we panic and overreact? Is it helpful for the media to keep focusing on fear and death and not give voice to recovery and hope?

These are questions that every American should be thinking about, nay demanding action for, now, as we begin the difficult climb back out of what amounts to a self-inflicted depression. But here also are some observations and points I would like to offer from a personal perspective to cast a bright light on what has already been expressed in this writing:

1. According to the CDC if you are 65 years of age or older, you have a 1 in 1,529 chance of dying from COVID-19; if you are 15-64 years of age you have a 1 in 19,589 chance of dying and if you are 0-14 years of age you have a 1 in 5,073,571 chance of dying from COVID-19. There are more people who died from cigarette smoking in 2020 than COVID-19 and we have shut down our entire nation for what, fear? Since when are Americans afraid of danger? We built this nation and everything around us by taking risks!
2. America has always been the land of the free because it is the home of the brave. Why then are governors of states, healthcare officials, and the media continuing to try to fill us with fear? Do they not understand that COVID-19 has a 99.6% recovery rate? Over 37,000 people will die annually from auto accidents (not including motorcycles). Do we shut down driving?
3. If we are really interested in saving lives, why don't we shut down Planned Parenthood. We can save millions of lives by taking such action and we just might put ourselves on a moral footing once



SOME THOUGHTS ON A BEAUTIFUL WEDNESDAY IN MAY

again to boot!

4. Let's get our messaging straight regarding masks. If you have been vaccinated or have post-covid antibodies, there is no scientific reason for you to wear masks inside or outside and schools need to open five days a week...now. If teachers refuse to work, they should be fired. President Reagan fired the air traffic controllers who went on strike endangering air passengers. Our children are our future. We cannot abandon them out of fear. They have suffered enough.

5. I'm not trying to be funny, but it seems to me that COVID-19 has a lower mortality rate than testifying (or threatening to testify) against the Clintons.

But, here are a few more observations, thoughts, and comments on a wide range of topics unrelated to history, statistics, COVID-19, and such. These thoughts pop into my mind from time to time:

1. I think I found a suitable nickname for Barack Hussein Obama. I call him the Great Divider-in-Chief a/k/a "The Big DIC" Every day that goes by we learn more and more about just how corrupt this man is and the harm he caused our nation. And, every day that goes by, we can see clearly just how much he and Valerie Jarret and Susan Rice are pulling Biden's strings and making all the decisions, in my humble opinion.

2. Receiving a stimulus check was nice. But, I want to see my nation get back to work and rebuild our economy. Any action taken by government officials that does not have this as their primary objective ought to be questioned. Americans need to get back to work and they want to get back to work! They hate being dependent on government. That is not how our country grew and prospered. For one thing, sitting on your ass waiting for a government check is not only wasteful and unproductive, but it diminishes incentives and risk-taking, and entrepreneurship, which is how we became the leader of the world.

3. I don't believe I will ever again vote for a democrat - not even for dog catcher. I am sick of their whining and disgusted with their fear-mongering and in-your-face arrogance and race-baiting. It's pointless, un-American, and just plain wrong.

4. If we can stand in line to go to Wal-Mart, Home Depot, or Shop Rite, we can stand in line to vote. Why the hell do we need to vote by mail. Now, thanks to Operation Warp Speed and President Trump, we have the vaccines, we sure as hell don't need mail-in voting. It is a blueprint for corruption and should be scrapped immediately. It was a lousy idea to start with, and it is a lousy idea today!

5. President Trump and Mexico came together in an agreement to stop the flow of illegal immigrants into the United States. We almost completed building the Wall which also helped. For a period of time prior to the 2020 Presidential Election, we hadn't seen any more news broadcasts of large caravans coming north from South America

ca trying to get into the United States illegally. All the news about Kids in Cages seemed to have vanished from the news. Then Joe Biden won the election. He, in a moment of eminent stupidity, stopped building the wall and invited immigrants to come to the U.S. where taxpayers like you and I will fund their every need from clothing to homes to travel to healthcare benefits. The result has been an overwhelming crisis on our southern border with hundreds of thousands of immigrants gaining illegal entry into the U.S. without being tested for COVID or other possible diseases. And, nothing has been done. How does this help America or Americans?

6. Some students are unhappy their senior years have been ruined and proms have been canceled along with graduations, and that is so sad and so unnecessary. And, I do feel sadness for them. However, they might gently be reminded that way back in 1964-1971 many high school seniors took their senior trips to a place called Vietnam...and many never came home.

7. Maybe it is just me, but I think Melania Trump just exudes class. What a First Lady!

8. First, Dr. Anthony Fauci told us not to worry about COVID-19 and continued to say so until March 2020. Then, he repeatedly told us that we did not have to wear masks in public. Then he said we did, then changed his mind again...then said that we should wear double masks out of an "abundance of caution"...all while the Surgeon General correctly said, "Masks will not prevent you from contracting COVID-19." Lots of vacillation, confusion, and uncertainty. Guess what? There is still more uncertainty as mixed messages come forward every single day from the White House and Dr. Doom himself.

President Biden says if you are vaccinated you no longer need to wear masks inside or outside. Dr. Doom says "Wait one minute... you should still wear your mask and parents should insist that children playing outside should wear masks." Here is my advice: Use good common sense...and take back your freedom to choose and to live your life.

9. Does anyone believe as I do that what happened to President Trump was not an impeachment as much it was a planned coup d'etat?

10. I don't know about you, but I think if I were President I would issue an Executive Order that you must show a government-issued ID and proof of citizenship to vote in elections.

11. Why was it a crime for President Richard Nixon to authorize a wiretap of the Democratic Headquarters at Watergate but it is OK for President Obama to wiretap Republicans at Trump Tower?

12. Someone please tell me how releasing convicted felons, rapists child molesters, murderers from prison for fear they could contract COVID-19 and then sending moms who own businesses to prison because they refuse to shut down their businesses is in the best interests of the community. It sure feels like a grab for power to me, and the words of Lord Acton in the 17th century ring out...."All power



The End of ICE (Internal Combustion Engine)

corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

13. Ditto for the idiotic governor Pritzker who declared that “Boating is permissible, but only two people to a boat. If there are more than two people in a boat, it is against the law and you will be punished and sent to jail.” Sure, that makes a lot of sense. “OK, son, you can come out with me while mommy and your two sisters wait on the shore and watch us have fun, provided they are walking and not just sitting there.” It can’t possibly get more ridiculous than that.

14. You can’t fix stupid. But you can vote it out. I’m voting Republican, now and always.

15. And last, but not least, has anyone see or heard from Hunter Biden and John Durham? I understand the wheels of justice turn slowly, but maybe they ought to start moving forward just a little bit. Don’t you think? Also, here is a news flash: Epstein didn’t kill himself!

“Corruptissima re publica plurimae leges.” (The more corrupt the state, the more numerous the laws.)

~ Cornelius Tacitus

Senator and historian of the Roman Empire Annales, 1st century A.D.

End of Article

The End of ICE (Internal Combustion Engine)



I grew up in Southern California, the “car capital of the world.” Here, as young boys our very lives were defined and enervated by the cars we drove. Whether it was a muscle car, a custom car, a hot rod or a woody, our cars were the physical manifestation of our young egos. And if we could make them go faster by hopping up the engines and look cooler by lowering the body and adding special wheels and paint jobs, all the better.

But that culture is now undergoing a vast metamorphous, at least as it regards the engines. No longer will we be able to change the fuel and exhaust systems and add superchargers to both lower our quarter mile times and impress the girls. Because within a decade or so, the internal combustion engine will simply become a quaint relic of the Happy Days of old.

It’s now evident that all major car companies in the world will be selling completely electric vehicles very soon. This is because, as we enter the second decade of the 21st century, there are four major disruptive changes happening in the auto industry that creates a “perfect storm” of change (and opportunity) in the world of automobiles.

Here are those changes:

Disruptive Change No. 1: The Decline of the Internal Combustion Engine

Some of the world’s largest industries have been created to extract fossil fuels, refine them, and burn them while getting from point A to point B.

But over the past decade, EV technology has advanced by leaps and bounds, and companies like those we just talked about are all-in. Before them, other automakers like Tesla (TSLA) and Toyota Motor (TM) invested incredible amounts of money in the pursuit of increasing the range and reliability of electric vehicles.

Toyota hopes to have a solid-state battery prototype working this year, which is a big step forward. These batteries are lighter, last longer, charge faster, and are safer than the lithium-ion batteries that are currently used.

In addition to technology improvements, EVs have governments on their side. Thanks to environmental concerns, governments in China and Europe are moving to phase out internal combustion engines and phase in EVs.

Bloomberg estimates that at least 50% of cars sold by 2040 will be electric. We’re talking about an epic boom in EV sales.

What’s coming is a profound shift in how the automotive industry works. I don’t believe we’ll see the “death of oil” anytime in the next decade. But we will see a massive shift toward EVs.

Disruptive Change No. 2: The Rise of Ride-Hailing Services

Thanks to ride-hailing services like Uber Technologies (UBER) and Lyft (LYFT), the concept of “car ownership” has radically changed in the minds of many consumers.

Instead of going through all the expenses and time associated with owning a car, many people – especially the under-40 crowd – would rather just “Uber it” to get where they need to go.

That’s tens of millions of consumers who don’t care about the American “car culture.” This is a radical shift from days past.

We are already seeing the impact on sales. Total U.S. vehicle sales rebounded strongly coming out of the Great Recession, exceeding 18 million per month in mid-2015. But except for a couple of spikes since then, sales have largely plateaued and even trended lower



The Fauci Virus

Disruptive Change No. 3: The Rise of Autonomous Vehicles

Autonomous vehicle ("AV") technology has also grown by leaps and bounds over the past decade.

Self-driving cars have gone from a science-fiction fantasy to actually operating in the real world.

Waymo – owned by Google's parent Alphabet (GOOGL) – is successfully testing self-driving taxis in Phoenix, Arizona. And Tesla has invested enormous amounts of money into making its vehicles autonomous.

While estimates of AV adoption over the next 20 years are all over the place, it's safe to say this technology is extremely disruptive to the "old" transportation industry.

Disruptive Change No. 4: The Growing Importance of 'Tech' in Cars

Finally, we have the "in car" experience.

Riding in cars of the future is going to be drastically different than riding in cars in the 1990s.

The transformation is already underway. From entertainment systems to navigation systems to voice-activated controls to self-driving features, software-driven high technology plays a bigger role in cars every year.

Alphabet leads the world in self-driving car patents. The technology behind digital assistants – which are operated with voice commands – is dominated by Big Tech companies like Amazon (AMZN) and Google.

The mother of Big Tech changes will be cars that fly. That's right. Flying-car technology is advancing rapidly, and I believe flying cars will be a regular sight in cities around the world by the end of the 2020s.

Anyone who is six years old today and getting his driver's license in 10 years may drive – or maybe I should say pilot – something that looks more like what Cadillac unveiled earlier this year at the virtual Consumer Electronics Show ("CES") in Las Vegas...

But that's still a little further into the future. At the moment, EVs are the furthest along and the most imminent.

Sales are growing every year, and it is expected they will hit hyper-growth as the cost of EVs continues to fall. ARK Invest predicts EVs will cost about the same as gasoline cars within the next couple of years. And then a couple of years after that, it expects EVs will be even cheaper. That's the game-changer.

EVs are the future of transportation – whether the vehicle drives itself or not and whether it flies or not. And they will be made possible in large measure by next-generation battery technology.

Insiders are already calling this potential new battery a "paradigm shift" in energy technology. Forbes calls it simply: "The battery that could change the world." It will be revolutionary.

No doubt the young boys of the future will be experimenting with ways to super charge their batteries. I would certainly like to know how they will do it.

D. Miyoshi

The Fauci Virus



This article appeared in the Trumpet Christian publication on June 2, 2021. It is written by Stephen Flurry. I present it here for your reading consideration. D. Miyoshi

Could the whole pandemic actually trace back to Dr. Anthony Fauci?

United States President Donald Trump was right again. He said covid-19 could have leaked from the virology lab in Wuhan, China. That was in April 2020—more than a year ago. And the propaganda media has been hammering President Trump and any other leader or analyst or everyday person who states some obvious, straightforward facts about the origins of this pandemic. They have taken turns vociferously, creatively, smugly, incessantly blasting people for believing in a deranged, dangerous, conspiracy theory—for a year!

Now that they have trashed and repeatedly trampled everyone's reputation and credibility for months and months, the propagandists are quietly admitting that President Trump was right. They have accomplished their agenda of forcing the president out of power, and now it apparently serves their agenda to quietly, subtly admit the truth. This is just another perfect illustration of the Trump Derangement Syndrome the media have been trapped in since 2015.

Rewind to the April 30, 2020, White House press conference when a reporter asked President Trump: "Have you seen anything at this point that gives you a high degree of confidence that the Wuhan Institute of Virology was the origin of this virus?" The president responded: "Yes, I have. Yes, I have. And I think the World Health Organization should be ashamed of themselves, because they're the public relations agency for China."

Just days after President Trump made these comments, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo told ABC News that there was "enormous evidence" that covid-19 originated in a laboratory in the Chinese city of Wuhan. The Global Times newspaper, which is owned by the Com-





The Fauci Virus

unist Chinese regime, claimed that Pompeo had “stunned the world with groundless accusations.” Dr. Shi Zhengli, who directs the Center for Emerging Infectious Diseases at the Wuhan Institute of Virology, demanded that President Trump apologize. The propaganda media rallied to whom? The president? Or the Communist Party of China? You probably know the answer.

ABC’s Jonathan Karl recently admitted that the media dismissed the Wuhan lab leak theory simply because Republicans proposed it. And CNN is now reporting that the Biden administration shut down a State Department effort launched by Mike Pompeo to prove the coronavirus originated in a Chinese lab. Apparently, the Democrat-media complex was desperate to keep the origins of covid-19 secret. In many ways, the radical left thinks more like the Chinese Communist Party than like their fellow Americans in the Republican Party.

Last year, my father, Trumpet editor in chief Gerald Flurry, wrote an article titled “Where Is the China-America Clash Leading?” He noted that the U.S. had withdrawn funding to China in 2014 due to fears over controversial experiments to make pathogens more virulent. An unclassified cable warned of “inadequate safety practices and management weaknesses” as researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology “conducted research on coronaviruses from bats.” The cable said the lab had “a serious shortage of appropriately trained technicians and investigators needed to safely operate this high-containment laboratory.”

The propaganda media decision-makers knew these same things that the rest of the world knew. They knew that China was conducting dangerous research on bat coronaviruses, but still slurred Donald Trump and Mike Pompeo as conspiracy theorists—and, when possible, “racists”—for warning everyday Americans of the danger.

Why would they do something so despicable?

Evidence is accumulating that indicates they did this to protect the reputation of the director of the U.S. National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. His name is Dr. Anthony Fauci.

PJ Media recently reported that Dr. Fauci wrote an article in 2012 saying that “gain of function” research on bat coronaviruses was worth the risk of a pandemic if it increases our knowledge of diseases. “In an unlikely but conceivable turn of events, what if that scientist becomes infected with the virus, which leads to an outbreak and ultimately triggers a pandemic?” he wrote for the American Society for Microbiology. “Scientists working in this field might say—as indeed I have said—that the benefits of such experiments and the resulting knowledge outweigh the risks.”

Only two years after Fauci defended “gain of function” research, it was banned by the U.S. government.

But apparently Dr. Fauci found a loophole because he is now admitting to U.S. lawmakers that, under his guidance, the National Insti-

tutes of Health earmarked \$600,000 for the Wuhan Institute of Virology and funneled it to the Chinese lab through the non-profit Eco-Health Alliance. This money was used to study whether bat coronaviruses could be transmitted to humans.

This research may have caused the covid-19 pandemic.

Even Joe Biden is now admitting that covid-19 may have been the result of a lab accident. A logical person has to consider that the entire media narrative that the Wuhan lab leak was a “conspiracy theory” was a lie! It was used to attack President Trump and hide the fact that the entire covid-19 pandemic may actually be Dr. Fauci’s fault.

Why did the U.S. need to fund a Chinese laboratory to research coronaviruses? Why would Dr. Fauci’s taxpayer-funded institute ever need to send grants to a laboratory in China?

When Dr. Fauci was questioned by Sen. Rand Paul, he said his institute had to send money to the Wuhan Institute of Virology because horseshoe bats do not live in America, and that he was sure the Chinese were not using the funds for “gain of function” research. But he was forced to grudgingly admit that he trusted the Communist Party in China to use the money America provided to study diseases and could not “guarantee that a grantee has not lied to us, because you never know.”

In Fauci’s world, if a Communist Party scientist says she is using U.S. research grants to study diseases, she must be believed and paid. But if the president of the United States says she may be mis-using those grants, he is a conspiracy theorist or liar.

And now a previously undisclosed U.S. intelligence report has revealed that the first three people to catch covid-19 were all researchers at the Wuhan Institute of Virology. Biden and other Democrats have to deal with this as they explain their embarrassing closure of Pompeo’s investigation. Not only did covid-19 escape the Wuhan Institute of Virology, it escaped after being bioengineered by Communist Party scientists using money received from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and Dr. Fauci.

“The coronavirus crisis has exposed the true nature of the Chinese Communist Party as nothing ever has,” my father wrote last August. “It should be a sobering warning to the entire world! ... For years, China has worked ferociously to surpass the U.S. in economic power and scientific advancements. By now, it probably has overtaken America by some economic measures. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is also amassing staggering levels of military power. It is bent on asserting more and more control not just over the people of China, but over the territory and people in the nation’s periphery. Meanwhile, the coronavirus that the CCP unleashed onto the world has cost the U.S. trillions of dollars. America’s national debt keeps climbing toward \$30 trillion. This weakness will be a major factor that strips the U.S. of its superpower status and a lot more.”



The Fed is Preparing a Digital Dollar

Now we have even more documented proof that China was developing covid-19 as a weapon and that the deep state agents in the United States were helping them do so. covid-19 is a man-made plague engineered by radical leftists—on both sides of the Pacific Ocean. You would think that more people in America's government would be suspicious of the Chinese Communist Party, but it is like the Prophet Isaiah foretold: "Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward. Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment" (Isaiah 1:4-6).

The fact that that the National Institute of Health was funding Communist biotechnology research, while the propaganda media attacked anyone who tried to talk about the truth shows the depth of America's spiritual sickness. It's far worse than any biological pandemic. Because of spiritual sickness, America's political, economic and military power is draining away!

End of Article

The Fed is Preparing a Digital Dollar



On May 20, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell issued a notice that the Fed plans to issue a discussion paper "outlining our current thinking" on digital payments, focusing on the benefits and risks of a central bank digital currency. This is not surprising. Actually, in the face of Bitcoin's popularity (albeit its current drop in value), it's to be expected that the central Federal Reserve Bank is planning to issue a digital dollar. The roll-out of this new digital dollar may still be a few years away, but the implications are enormous. It could have a huge impact on banks.

Who needs bank accounts, checks, account statements, deposit slips and the other clunky features of banking when you can go completely digital with the Fed? An account with the Fed could also eliminate the 2.5% fees to process credit card transactions.

Payments in general would be faster, cheaper, easier and more se-

cure than they are today. But there's more at stake than just customer convenience. Trillions of dollars of wealth in the form of financial institutions stock prices for JPMorgan, Citi, MasterCard and VISA could be wiped out as the new digital payments technology takes hold.

Powell did say the Fed isn't in a rush to adopt a digital currency. But really?

On March 22, Bloomberg published an interesting article by Joe Light titled "Federal Reserve's digital Dollar Push Worries Wall Street"

I present that article here for your reading consideration. D. Miyoshi

Federal Reserve's Digital Dollar Push Worries Wall Street

By Joe Light

The financial services industry, braced for what could be its biggest disruption in decades, is about to get an early glimpse at the Federal Reserve's work on a new digital currency.

Wall Street is not thrilled.

Banks, credit card companies and digital payments processors are nervously watching the push to create an electronic alternative to the paper bills Americans carry in their wallets, or what some call a digital dollar and others call a Fedcoin.

As soon as July, officials at the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, which have been developing prototypes for a digital dollar platform, plan to unveil their research, said James Cunha, who leads the project for the Boston Fed.

A digital currency could fundamentally change the way Americans use money, leading some financial firms to lobby the Fed and Congress to slow its creation -- or at least ensure they're not cut out.

Seeing the threat to their profits, the banks' main trade group has told Congress a digital dollar isn't needed, while payment companies like Visa Inc. and Mastercard Inc. are trying to work with central banks to make sure the new currencies can be used on their networks.

"Everyone is afraid that you could disrupt all the incumbent players with a whole new form of payment," said Michael Del Grosso, an analyst for Compass Point Research & Trading LLC.



The Fed is Preparing a Digital Dollar

Lawmakers, U.S. Treasury Department officials and the Fed haven't yet approved the rollout of a U.S. virtual currency, which could still be years away. Nor have they decided how a digital dollar would interact with the existing global payments network. Still, the U.S. and other countries seem committed enough to digitizing their currencies that it's making financial industry executives nervous.

"The fire has been lit," said Josh Lipsky, who has helped convene government officials from the U.S. and other countries working on digital currencies as director of the GeoEconomics Center at the Atlantic Council. "The world is moving very quickly on these projects."

The Race to a Digital Currency

Dozens of countries' central banks are researching a digital form of money

Source: Atlantic Council, Bloomberg

Note: Eurozone countries include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

The Race to a Digital Currency

Dozens of countries' central banks are researching a digital form of money

Country	Digital Currency Status
Bahamas	Launched a digital currency, called the "Sand Dollar," in 2020
Brazil	Expects "digital Real" to enter circulation in 2022
Canada	Developing the infrastructure needed for a digital currency but no current plans to launch one
China	Piloting a digital yuan in major cities with the goal of wider distribution in 2022
Eurozone*	Researching potential "digital euro" with goal of deciding on whether to move forward as soon as April
Japan	Plans experiments with a digital currency this spring
Russia	Plans pilot of a digital currency this year
Sweden	Recently extended a pilot of its "e-krona" into 2022
UK	Has expressed ambition to develop a digital currency but still in research phase
U.S.	Performing research and experimentation with possible technologies but no decision on issuance or timeline
Venezuela	In 2018 launched the digital "Petro" backed by oil reserves but it had design flaws and is considered a failure

Source: Atlantic Council, Bloomberg

Note: Eurozone countries include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia and Spain.

At issue are forms of digital cash being considered by the U.S. and other governments. The growing popularity of Bitcoin, Ethereum and other cryptocurrencies, whose market value has grown to more than \$1 trillion, inspired the projects. Unlike those privately created tokens, the new currencies would be issued by central banks as an alternative to paper bills. Cash wouldn't go away, but its use would likely decline.

Using the currencies could be as simple as holding up the screen of a mobile phone to be scanned. Behind the scenes, the digital cash would move from one account to another. This is similar to how most money already works -- the majority of U.S. dollars are just digital entries in bank accounts -- but the new currency could potentially avoid the go-between of a commercial bank or credit-card network. For vendors, settlement would happen almost immediately, without having to wait for the money or worry about fraud.

The U.S. effort got an extra push last month, when Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said such a project could help Americans who don't have access to the banking system.

In video remarks last week to a payments conference in Basel, Switzerland, Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell may have eased some of the banks' concerns when he said "digital currencies would need to be integrated into existing payment systems alongside cash and other forms of money."

Powell in a Bank for International Settlements panel on Monday said the Fed has "an obligation to be on the cutting edge of understanding the technological challenges" and the costs and benefits of a digital dollar but wouldn't rush the project. Powell also said the Fed wouldn't proceed without support from Congress, ideally in the form of legislation.

Cunha said the Boston Fed and MIT hope to unveil some of their work in the third quarter, including at least two prototype software platforms that could move, store and settle transactions made with digital dollars. He wouldn't say if either platform uses the blockchain technology that underlies Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies. Once the prototypes are released, Cunha said, others will be able to see and build on the code.

Read More: Bloomberg Economics on the rise of central bank digital currencies

The Fed's work is meant to show what's possible without taking a stand on major issues that the central bank, Treasury and Congress must address, Cunha said. These include whether the Fed itself should host customer accounts, whether to allow anonymity, and what protections consumers would have in case of a cyber-breach or mistaken transaction.

"We think it's important that we not wait for the policy debate because then we'll be a year or so behind," Cunha said. "This will take significant outreach to the industry and serious debate."

Earlier: Yellen Signals Interest in Backing Digital-Dollar Research

The potential that the central bank could cut banks out of their middleman role in the lucrative U.S. payments system is causing angst among banks.

So is the push coming from Ohio Democratic Senator Sherrod Brown, the new chairman of the Senate Banking Committee. Brown is urging the Fed to move quickly to create digital-currency accounts for Americans who can't easily access the financial system and have been forced to deal with payday lenders who charge higher fees and interest rates. Brown's plan could threaten the deposits that commercial banks rely on to make mortgages and other loans.



Why is Canada turning against America?

“Rushing anything of this potential magnitude could introduce unintended consequences that threaten the stability of the banking system without contributing meaningfully to economic inclusion,” said Steve Kenneally, senior vice president of payments at the American Bankers Association.

The ABA, which says it’s lobbying Congress on the issue, last year in written testimony called the digital dollar a costly solution in search of a nonexistent problem.

Two lobbyists for a large bank said they’re in contact with lawmakers to keep track of the issue. They expect lobbying to pick up once banks can actually see the Fed’s work and how it might affect them, said the lobbyists, who requested anonymity to discuss internal conversations.

Interest in a digital currency has gathered momentum in part because many banks take days to give consumers access to checks deposited in their accounts and some charge stiff overdraft fees. Those without bank accounts sometimes must pay high fees to cash paychecks or transmit money to relatives.

Some of the profits of credit-card companies, such as Visa and Mastercard, could be at risk if the new currencies let Americans more easily make transactions without their involvement and fees.

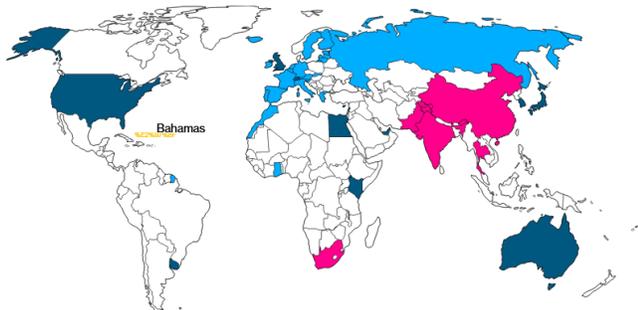
Spokespeople from both companies say their firms are working with central banks to ensure the new currencies can run over their networks. Mastercard in February began to issue pre-paid debit cards loaded with the “Sand Dollar,” a digital currency issued by the Bahamas.

“We’re increasingly having conversations with central banks as they think about designing potential central bank digital currency, CBDC, and we’re talking to them about how they think about design,” said Visa’s North America president Oliver Jenkyn, at a Morgan Stanley conference earlier this month. “So there’s a lot of talking, but there’s actually a lot of action alongside it as well.”

Digital Ambitions

Central banks are at varying stages of developing digital currencies

- CBDC already being issued
- Plans to issue CBDC
- Actively exploring CBDC feasibility
- Conducting research and/or experiments



Source: Bloomberg

Other countries are further along. China is currently piloting a digital yuan in several cities. Lipsky said there’s a chance its currency could be ready for a broader debut at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, which he said could cause tensions if American athletes are asked to use a currency that the Chinese government can completely track.

Brown earlier this month sent a letter to Powell urging him to speed up the research. “We cannot be left behind,” Brown wrote.

Among other threats, Brown pointed to the development by Facebook Inc. and other companies of their own cryptocurrency, once called Libra. That currency, since renamed Diem, was slated to launch in 2020 but has struggled to win regulatory approval.

Advocates of existing cryptocurrencies, like Bitcoin, have mixed feelings about the Federal Reserve muscling into the industry.

A Fedcoin could acclimate Americans to purchasing Bitcoin, said Jerry Brito, who heads Coin Center, a cryptocurrency advocacy group. But depending on the government’s direction, such a currency could be used to track Americans’ spending, destroying the partial anonymity that was once the promise of crypto, he said.

A U.S. digital dollar could also put the final nail in the coffin for Bitcoin as a means of exchange, Brito said. Crypto enthusiasts have already started to acknowledge that’s happening anyway, and instead tout the currency as a store of value or “digital gold.”

End of Article

Why is Canada turning against America?



To answer that question, we need to look at what has recently transpired on the geopolitical horizon.

The coronavirus pandemic (some people call it the scamdemic) ushered in the lockdowns which has destroyed global trade and the world’s industrial output. In the United States, for example, almost 60% of small businesses, once the backbone of a



Why is Canada turning against America?

healthy American economy has gone extinct. By year's end, that number is supposed to reach 80%. In addition, the small mom and pop restaurants are also going the way of the dinosaur as it is projected by early next year that these neighborhood restaurants will be all but extinct.

This has set the stage for the world to be ruled by the elite corporations who were given special treatment in the lockdowns. Walmart, for example, was deemed to be an essential business, as were casinos. However, a competing small business was considered to be nonessential. The box stores, among other "essential" businesses experienced record profits since the introduction of Covid 19 from Wuhan China to America and the capitalist countries. This is setting the stage for the elite corporations, the same ones, that have donated over a billion dollars to Antifa and similar organizations to wreak havoc upon our fundamental institutions in which they hope will eventually collapse the nation. In short, a corporate oligarchy is being created, right before our very eyes and this elitist group of businesses will usher in the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

A clear strategy is beginning to emerge in order to force the nations of the earth to comply. Namely, contrived water shortages are in process right now which will fundamentally change the power structure of the planet. Additionally, agriculture, which is based, will be used to control dissident populations. Political commentator Dave Hodges has been warning about this strategy for quite some time. In order to understand how the geopolitical winds of the world are shifting, one simply needs to look to America's northern border and what was, at one time, its best ally.

Canada's Betrayal

Since the War of 1812, Canada has always been a loyal friend and ally of the United States, at least until recently. But now Canadian Prime Minister, Trudeau, should be placed on America's 10 most wanted list because his recent actions constitute a major threat to the national security of the United States.

Hodges has warned us for some time now of the large numbers of Chinese citizens that have been allowed to enter Canada. Chinese economic interests now dominate British Columbia. But never has this domination been more dangerous to the security of the United States as has been recently discovered through an interview conducted by Sarah Westall of Peter Annett, in which it was revealed that a Chinese military force was being assembled in Canada. Trudeau has allowed this to happen because he is at extreme odds with past president Trump and as a result, is at odds with the average, hard-working American. Basically Trudeau is turning Canada into a very serious national security threat to the United States.

In the short-term, the North American based CHICOMS have been caught 3 times sending weapons and weapons parts to Antifa and Black Lives Matter. Because both groups are involved in insurrection, this is an act of war by China and Trudeau has made Canada complicit in this plot to overthrow the duly-elected government of America.

If Canada's involvement with the CHICOM's act of war by hosting CHICOM troops on their Native lands, we have enough evidence to cut off trade with Canada and close the border until such time as Trudeau is removed from power and new alliances can be negotiated. However, Canada's alliance with the CHICOMS goes much further and it begins and ends with WATER. Add in a little military power, Canada has become the business partner and military ally of Communist China's desires to destroy and occupy America.

Why Civilizations Rise and Fall

If one were to ask most people on why civilizations rise and fall, they would say that a stronger military conquered them. Although this is a contributing factor, military power is a outgrowth of economic strength. So, what causes economic strength to fail?

Most cities, nearly 90% exist within 5 miles of a fresh water source. When water supplies, such as rivers shift, cities die. When this happens countries/empires collapse. Starvation due to the failure of water-based agriculture is often cited as the number one reason. Egypt, 15th century Europe and the migration of people from Africa to Europe, 100,000 years ago, are cited as some of the prime examples of this fact.

Historically, the rise and fall of empires is most correlated with the loss of water supplies. At least that was how it used to be. In recent times, nations that are not abundant in water resources learned to use modern technology to supply their dwindling water supplies as they "mined" ground water. Presently, 97% of the world's water supply is not drinkable. Only 1% of the water on Earth is freshwater. Only 35% of the freshwater is located on the face of the Earth. Therefore, groundwater becomes paramount in importance to the survival of communities/civilizations.

Not only is water necessary for consumption and to grow crops, water is also associated with trade as it supplies the most inexpensive means to transport goods.

For a century, the Panama Canal enriched the United States and impoverished much of Latin America because the United States got to decide who traded in the region and who did not. Early in this century, the United States handed over the Panama Canal to Panama. However, America still benefits from the canal. However, a new trade route, which is more efficient has appeared in Canada and China has become their partner.

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True north is shifting and as such the old icecaps have been melting, since 1800, as new ice caps are being formed in the emerging true north scenario. This has created massive amounts of water in Canada due to melted ice. Hold on to this thought, we will return to Canada's new found fortune.





Things are really SKEWED Up

Temperatures have been rising in Northern Canada since 1800 and this has created a true Northwest Passage which is much more convenient to Europe for trading than the Panama Canal. Also, Canada is now the beneficiary of being one of the world's superpowers when it comes to being a water sufficient nation. Many economists have stated that water will carry the importance in this century as oil did in the last century. Canada is on the verge of being an economic superpower because of the new and emerging trade route and the growing abundance of water.

The previously mentioned trade arrangement is key. However, the main resource that will propel Canada to new heights is its water supply. Nations like Saudi Arabia and the United States have lived off of its ground water for some time. However, these sources are being depleted and ground water has dropped as much as 500 feet in some areas. The American Southwest is in big trouble when it comes to its water supplies. Cities like New York, that brings in its water from the Catskills, over 100 miles away, are stressed to the breaking point. China is the nation that is the most threatened and this is why they are in Canada.

Trudeau sees an opportunity to become a world superpower because of water. However, the nation will need military protection and this is why Canada has turned to China. Canada will be the world's most prominent water exporter and China will provide the military muscle. And what does China want? China wants to occupy the United Nations in order to satisfy its quest for raw materials to fund their economic expansion.

And who is the major obstacle to Canadian dominance and the imperialistic desires of China? It's the United States and if one looks through this frame of reference, it's easy to see why China is supporting the overthrow of the United States government by supplying Antifa and BLM with material support. And Canada is all too happy to provide a base of operations for China's future militaristic designs on the United States.

After all these years of enjoying amical relations with our former closest ally it's difficult to come around to accept this realization. But accepting a hard truth now may be the only way for America to survive later.

D. Miyoshi

Things are really SKEWED Up

On June 15, 2021 the SKEW Index closed at the highest level in its history. The SKEW Index was created 31 years ago in 1990.

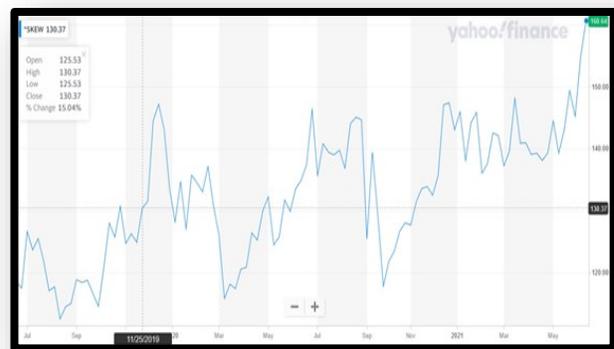
What is the SKEW Index?

The SKEW Index, which is based on stock options, measures the difference in the implied volatility among in-the-money, at-the-

money, and out-of-the-money options. The index moves further away from 100 as investors buy more puts or calls out of the money, betting on a two-standard-deviation or three-standard-deviation move. If investors see trouble on the horizon and load into out-of-the-money puts, the index moves higher.

While the index does a poor job of forecasting big events, it has a decent track record when it comes to estimating normal pullbacks. The SKEW is about what might happen over the next 30 to 60 days, not the next several years.

Here is the graph showing the Skew Index at its highest point on June 15, 2021.



This record level implies that investors expect a significant downside move sometime in the next month or two and are loading up on options that will profit if that happens.

This doesn't mean the markets must go down. Like many indicators, the SKEW often rises only to fall back again without any significant market selloff. But because the current reading is the highest in history, it's worth giving it more than a passing glance, and this is part of the reason that last week professional consultants including Rodney Johnson of Dent Research Institute recommended investors moved part of their portfolio to cash. Johnson believes it would be best to put the money back to work when we see more opportunity and less risk.

Here is to your successful investing.

D. Miyoshi



What Did Hitler think about Americans and Pearl Harbor?



As an American, it's difficult to come up with a greater villain than Adolph Hitler. Our history books are replete with condemnations about the Great Fuhrer of Germany.

But I wonder what the Fuhrer thought of Americans. To answer that we can consult a book that Hitler himself wrote entitled *Hitler's Table Talk* in which he penned his ruminations about America and its people. Here is what Hitler wrote:

"I'm very glad I recently said all I think about Roosevelt. There's no doubt about it, he's a sick brain. The noise he made at his press conference was typically Hebraic. There's nobody stupider than the Americans. What a humiliation for them! The further they fall, the greater their disillusionment. In any case, neither of the two Anglo-Saxons is any better than the other. One can scarcely see how they could find fault with one another! Churchill and Roosevelt, what impostors! One can expect utterly extravagant repercussions.

I'll never believe that an American soldier can fight like a hero.

I don't see much future for the Americans. In my view, it's a decayed country. And they have their racial problem, and the problem of social inequalities. Those were what caused the downfall of Rome, and yet Rome was a solid edifice that stood for something. Moreover, the Romans were inspired by great ideas. Nothing of the sort in England to-day. As for the Americans, that kind of thing is non-existent. That's why, in spite of everything, I like an Englishman a thousand times better than an American.

It goes without saying that we have no affinities with the Japanese. They're too foreign to us, by their way of living, by their culture. But my feelings against Americanism are feelings of hatred and deep repugnance. I feel myself more akin to any European country, no

matter which. Everything about the behaviour of American society reveals that it's half Judaised, and the other half negrified. How can one expect a State like that to hold together — a State where 80 per cent of the revenue is drained away for the public purse — a country where everything is built on the dollar?



It is reported that the Metropolitan Opera House in New York is to be closed; but the reasons given for its closing are certainly false. The Americans do not lack money; what they lack is the artistes required to maintain the activities of the greatest of their lyrical theatres. One requires but little knowledge to know that the most famous operas are all of either German, Italian or French origin, and that among the artistes who perform them the Germans and the Italians are the most celebrated. Deprived of the Services of the artistes from these two countries, the management has preferred to close its doors rather than expose the inadequacy of American artistes.

Although, in general, I hold no brief for the Americans, I must in this respect take off my hat to them. The American statesmen, by subjecting the Church to the same regulations governing all other associations and institutions, have limited its field of activity to reasonable proportions; and, as the State does not contribute from State Funds one single cent to the Church, the whole clergy cringes and sings hymns in praise of the Government.

According to the Americans themselves, America has the finest, biggest and most efficient of everything in the wide world; and when one then reads a book like this about them, one sees that they have the brains of a hen! Well, the disillusionment will be all the more severe, and the consternation, when this house of cards collapses, will be enormous. This has already occurred as far as the Far East is concerned. Why should a people of that sort fight — they've got everything they want!

It is very difficult to argue with Americans.

American civilization is of a purely mechanized nature. Without mechanization, America would disintegrate more swiftly than India. Actually, in America the European has reverted to becoming a nomad.

What Did Hitler think about Americans and Pearl Harbor?

It is perfectly true that we are a people of romantics, quite different from the Americans, for example, who see nothing beyond their skyscrapers.” —



So we can see that Hitler saw White Americans as stupid, materialistic, arrogant and lacking in the capacity to create culture. He viewed the United States as being plagued with “social inequalities” and “racial problems”. He considered American society to be “half Judaized” and “half Negrified”.

However, he did have some good things to say about White Americans, but only about those who had German or Germanic ancestry.

“Our country today is overpopulated, and the numbers emigrating to America are incredible. How I wish we had the German-Americans with us still! In so far as there are any decent people in America, they are all of German origin.”

The Führer believed that the only decent people in the U.S. were people who had German ancestry, but this isn’t surprising considering the Germanic supremacy of the National Socialists.

What’s surprising is that the Führer stated that he feels “more akin to any European country, no matter which” than to the United States. This means that Adolf Hitler, renowned for his distaste of Eastern Europeans, probably felt more affinity towards Poles and Russians than he did towards Americans, which is definitely saying something, considering that the Polish and Russian nations were to be treated as second-class by the National Socialist regime.

As such, Adolf Hitler generally had a negative opinion of White Americans, considering those of German ancestry to be the only “decent people” in the United States. It seems that, to him, it didn’t matter whether they were “Aryan” or not because his animosity to the U.S. wasn’t due to racial reasons, it was due to cultural reasons.

Now to the question, what did Hitler think about Pearl Harbor?

The answer is from a reply appearing on Quora.com on April 6, 2021 written by Brent Cooper, an attorney for the law firm of Cooper & Scully.

“Hitler was delighted with the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Hitler did not know of the Pearl Harbor plan beforehand. When informed in his headquarters on the evening of Dec. 7 of the strike and the damage suffered by US forces, he was “delighted,” according to British historian Ian Kershaw.

This comment was typical of Hitler in that it was both grandiose and a touch self-delusional. In fact, Hitler viewed the Japanese through the lens of his own racial prejudice. In “Mein Kampf” he patronizingly wrote that Japanese scientific and technical progress would cease without “Aryan” influence. His top lieutenants recalled that he accepted Japanese gains in the Far East with some resignation, and occasionally warned that eventually Germany would find itself in a showdown with what he called the “yellow race.”

But for Hitler, the Japanese triumph at Pearl Harbor came at an opportune time. Operation Barbarossa, the German invasion of the Soviet Union had stalled. On Dec. 6, the Soviets had launched a counterattack that would eventually save Moscow and doom Hitler’s dream of an empire in the East.

Thus, Hitler seized on Pearl Harbor as a light in the general gloom. His assumption was that the Japanese

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would now tie down the United States in the Pacific and weaken Britain by threatening its Asian possessions, according to Kershaw.

Germany and Japan had already agreed on a strengthening of their existing Tripartite Pact, which would bind each to declare war on a power attacking the other. This provision had not been formally signed, however, meaning that Hitler by treaty was required only to aid Japan, not enter the war against the United States.

But for Hitler this was a foregone conclusion – he wanted to ensure that Japan would stay in the war, and perhaps invade Russia from the east. He also felt that war with the U.S. was inevitable, and he wanted to take the initiative. On Dec. 8, he ordered German U-boats to sink U.S. ships on sight.

In a lengthy speech to the Reichstag on Dec. 11, Hitler recounted recent military events, excoriated President Roosevelt, and declared war on the United States. Given that U.S. public opinion was far harsher about Japan than Germany, this was a mistake, writes British journalist and historian Max Hastings in his history of World War II, “Inferno.

Four days after Pearl Harbor, [Hitler] made the folly of the strike comprehensive by declaring war on the United States, relieving Roosevelt from a serious uncertainty about whether Congress would agree to fight Germany,” writes Mr. Hastings.

The Japanese, for their part, had begun the war with the U.S. in the belief that Nazi Germany was an unstoppable force that would soon conquer the Soviet Union and end the war in Europe. So the Axis powers lurched forward, each blind to the particular strategic situation they now faced.

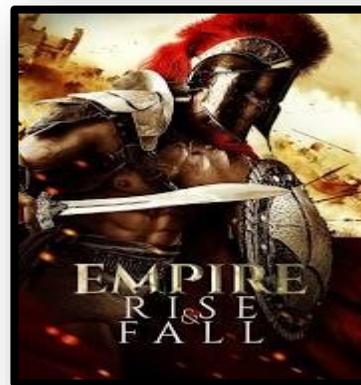


In the final analysis, it's obvious Hitler did not think much of Americans. But as the saying goes, there are two sides to every story. In the case of the Americans, not only do they not think much of Hitler, they also don't think much about him.

So, as the saying goes, all is fair in love and war. Things never change.

D. Miyoshi

The Rise and Fall of an Empire



Some people ask me what I think is happening to America these days. To simplify my answer, I quote the findings of Alexander Tyler, a renowned Scottish historian and philosopher that accurately depicts the life cycle the American Empire is now traversing.

“Democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters dis-

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cover that they can vote themselves largesse from the public treasury. From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidates promising the most benefits from the public treasury with the result that a democracy always collapses over loose fiscal policy, always followed by a dictatorship. The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years.

Great nations rise and fall. The people go from bondage to spiritual truth, to great courage, from courage to liberty, from liberty to abundance, from abundance to selfishness, from selfishness to complacency, from complacency to apathy, from apathy to dependence, from dependence back again to bondage..." Alexander Tyler

Tyler noted eight stages of the rise and fall of the world's great civilizations. The following are the eight stages in red and a short commentary of each stage.

1. From bondage to spiritual growth – Great civilizations are formed in the crucible. The Ancient Jews were in bondage for 400 years in Egypt. The Christian faith and the Church came out of 300 years of persecution. Western Christendom emerged from the chaotic conflicts during the decline of the Roman Empire and the movements of often fierce "barbarian" tribes. American culture was formed by the injustices that grew in colonial times. Sufferings and injustices cause—even force—spiritual growth. Suffering brings wisdom and demands a spiritual discipline that seeks justice and solutions.

2. From spiritual growth to great courage – Having been steeled in the crucible of suffering, courage and the ability to endure great sacrifice come forth. Anointed leaders emerge and people are summoned to courage and sacrifice (including loss of life) in order to create a better, more just world for succeeding generations. People who *have*

little or nothing, also have little or nothing to *lose* and are often more willing to live for something more important than themselves and their own pleasure. A battle is begun, a battle requiring courage, discipline, and other virtues.

3. From courage to liberty – As a result of the courageous fight, the foe is vanquished and liberty and greater justice emerges. At this point a civilization comes forth, rooted in its greatest ideals. Many who led the battle are still alive, and the legacy of those who are not is still fresh. Heroism and the virtues that brought about liberty are still esteemed. The ideals that were struggled for during the years in the crucible are still largely agreed upon.

4. From liberty to abundance – Liberty ushers in greater prosperity, because a civilization is still functioning with the virtues of sacrifice and hard work. But then comes the first danger: abundance. Things that are in too great an abundance tend to weigh us down and take on a life of their own. At the same time, the struggles that engender wisdom and steel the soul to proper discipline and priorities move to the background. Jesus said that man's life does not consist in his possessions. But just try to tell that to people in a culture that starts to experience abundance. Such a culture is living on the fumes of earlier sacrifices; its people become less and less willing to make such sacrifices. Ideals diminish in importance and abundance weighs down the souls of the citizens. The sacrifices, discipline, and virtues responsible for the thriving of the civilization are increasingly remote from the collective conscience; the enjoyment of their fruits becomes the focus.

5. From abundance to complacency – To be complacent means to be self-satisfied and increasingly unaware of serious trends that undermine health and the ability to thrive. Everything *looks* fine, so it must *be* fine. Yet foundations, resources, infrastructures, and necessary virtues are all crumbling. As virtues, disciplines, and ideals become ever more remote, those who raise alarms are labeled by the

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complacent as “killjoys” and considered extreme, harsh, or judgmental.

6. From complacency to apathy – The word apathy comes from the Greek and refers to a lack of interest in, or passion for, the things that once animated and inspired. Due to the complacency of the previous stage, the growing lack of attention to disturbing trends advances to outright dismissal. Many seldom think or care about the sacrifices of previous generations and lose a sense that they must work for and contribute to the common good. “Civilization” suffers the serious blow of being replaced by personalization and privatization in growing degrees. Working and sacrificing for others becomes more remote. Growing numbers becoming increasingly willing to live on the carcass of previous sacrifices. They park on someone else’s dime, but will not fill the parking meter themselves. Hard work and self-discipline continue to erode.

7. From apathy to dependence – Increasing numbers of people lack the virtues and zeal necessary to work and contribute. The suffering and the sacrifices that built the culture are now a distant memory. As discipline and work increasingly seem “too hard,” dependence grows. The collective culture now tips in the direction of dependence. Suffering of any sort seems intolerable. But virtue is not seen as the solution. Having lived on the sacrifices of others for years, the civilization now insists that “others” must solve their woes. This ushers in growing demands for governmental, collective solutions. This in turns deepens dependence, as solutions move from personal virtue and local, family-based sacrifices to centralized ones.

8. From dependence back to bondage – As dependence increases, so does centralized power. Dependent people tend to become increasingly dysfunctional and desperate. Seeking a savior, they look to strong central leadership. But centralized power corrupts, and tends to usher in increasing intrusion by centralized power. Injustice and intrusion

multiply. But those in bondage know of no other solutions. Family and personal virtue (essential ingredients for any civilization) are now effectively replaced by an increasingly dark and despotic centralized control, hungry for more and more power. In this way, the civilization is gradually ended, because people in bondage no longer have the virtues necessary to fight.

In the end it’s back to crucible, until suffering and conflict bring about enough of the wisdom, virtue, and courage necessary to begin a new civilization that will rise from the ashes.

I have underlined what I believe is happening in the U.S. now. Because of all the freebies we are now “enjoying,” we are now in a freefall of our economy.

At current budget levels, for example, the U.S. government is spending 45% of GDP.

Add medical care, in which the feds play a major role, and the U.S. now has about the same level of government involvement in the economy as France.

And whoever expected the feds to send out stimulus checks to up to 165 million people – 75% of whom, apparently, had lost neither job nor income – not once, but three times?

And even with this flood of liquidity flowing their way – so much that U.S. households are said to have more money than ever before – the feds are now considering “round 4” or even “round 5” of their stimulus efforts.

The effect of all this aid and succor from the federal government is twofold.

First, it weakens the citizens’ desire and ability to

The Rise and Fall of an Empire



Advancing in a Time of Crisis



Financial Crisis Report



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take care of themselves.

"You get what you pay for," said Nobel Prize-winning economist Milton Friedman. And when the government pays for idleness and dependence, it gets plenty of both.

With so much money available from stimulus checks, fewer people want to work in the Main Street economy... and even fewer want to invest in it.

This shows up in the most obvious ways. The economy produces fewer and fewer goods and services, while the government produces more and more money. The result is inflation.

The second thing the federal aid and succor does is to make any change of direction impossible.

Once you're on this road to oblivion, you can't turn around. Because the political pressure – from the desperate slackers you created... who now need more and more red meat from government giveaway programs... forces reformers and deniers into hiding.

Inevitably, standards of living fall. So the feds need to plan for poverty and disguise it as virtue such as eating bugs.

But the United States of America is not

the first or only country to deliberately impoverish itself. Argentina is ahead of us, having begun its "Reset" back in the 1940s.

That was when Juan Domingo Perón figured out that he could win an election by promising the slackers of Buenos Aires meat from the pampas at discount prices.

This was achieved by taxing and regulating the farm sector for the benefit of the urban proletariat.

And so developed the "culture of poverty" – penalizing the productive sectors in order to support the more numerous zombie voters, and thus stay in power.

And it continues in Argentina today, seven decades later.

The U.S. is now catching up to Argentina. At least that's what I think.

So what stage do you think America is in now?

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