



Financial Survivalist Letter

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More than just a mouthy, pretty face. Alexandria Ocasio Cortez is leading a “schwerpunkt” (tip of the spear) movement to further divide America, perhaps permanently. [This video](#) documents her transformation from New York bartender into the Congresswoman leading socialisms’ go-for-broke charge. AOCs alternate reality began when she answered a “Justice Democrats” 2017 call for candidates to run on their platform in the 2018 congressional elections.

From a group of over 10,000 applicants, she won the role, funding and promotional support. Alexandria apparently didn’t participate in the drafting of her **\$93 trillion “Green New Deal”** proposal—which includes the end of milk cows, airplanes, rebuilding every single building in Amerika, and features goals straight from the [UN’s Agenda 2030](#). Her subsequent attack on Amazon’s win/win plan to build a facility in NYC cost the city 25,000 jobs and \$20 billion.



What’s off and running is an attempted takeover of the Democratic party by strong progressives competing in primaries against vulnerable incumbents. In 2018, the Justice Democrats group supported 79 primary candidates: of the 26 that won, 7 (including AOC and Rashida Tlaib) won in the general election and now sit in Congress. If you’re thinking that [George Soros](#) probably had a hand in this, you’d be right.

Of the entertaining excitement that has been following her around, I particularly liked [James Woods reminder](#) (after AOC declared herself “in charge”) that SHE works for US and that the “last time somebody told Americans to sit down and shut up was 1776.” Right now, the Republicans regard her as a [secret weapon](#) and hope she hangs in there ... but she’s already in trouble with her own constituency.

On a broader scale, what’s on display here is [Hegelian dialectics](#): AOC’s outlandish Green New Deal [the **antithesis**] is intended to pull America from its current political/economic balance point [the **thesis**], nudging it further to the left [**synthesis**]. Simple as that... From a tactical viewpoint, actions by the left are drawing inspiration (as did the Clintons and Obama) from Saul Alinsky’s [“Rules for Radicals.”](#)

Not a puppet, but also very creepy is Texas’ erstwhile presidential candidate Beto O’Rourke, who belonged to the oldest group of [computer hackers](#) in U.S. history and wrote poems, including one about “buffing my balls.” Beto thinks AOC’s ideas are great... These dimbulbs are both members of a ‘Resistance,’ [characterized here](#) by razor-tongued James Howard Kunstler as “the blind leading the deaf and dumb”.

Kurt Schlichter, writing for Townhall has a [different idea](#): “How about a Red, White and Blue New Deal?” It’s pretty simple and it takes care of the people who built this country. “Here it is: **Support your own damn self and leave me the hell alone.** It allows you to set your priorities and work to achieve them.” In that society you “choose where to spend your money and if you’re unwilling to work, you get nothing.”

Reminiscent of **Ron Paul’s** (“no walls needed”) solution to our immigration problem. If you’re not a U.S. citizen, you are entitled to ZERO U.S. benefits.

Across the pond, **Europeans** are reaping the results of the EU’s injection of 1.5% of GDP and green force: since 2008, 4.5 million jobs have been destroyed, the deficit has doubled and household bills for electricity and gas are now 100% higher. The EU is [steadily moving](#) towards a 1984-style Ministry of Truth—telling them [what to think](#). Europe has now emerged as the [world’s “weakest link,”](#) with industrial production falling at the fastest pace since 2009, amid deteriorating demand. It’s an area so weak it cannot handle an interest rate increase to ZERO%.

With what consequences?

- Just as wealth is bailing on tax-starved Illinois, New York, California, etc., European capital is moving abroad—much of it to the U.S. and its stock markets, and
- The political split at home seems likely to intensify into 2020 elections, where neither party is willing to accept a loss. The result could be riots in American streets or even civil war.

The challenging times that prompted **survivalist thinking/planning** ten years ago are returning, and it's not too early to start polishing up...

U.S. ECONOMIC HEALTH

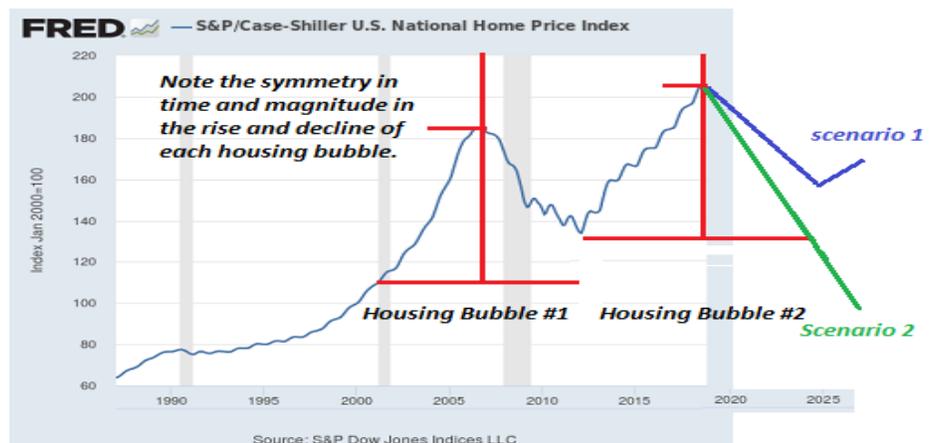
Consumer confidence vaulted to an [18-year high](#) according to the New-York-based Conference Board ... even as [consumer credit](#) hit \$4 trillion, with student and auto loans hitting all time highs. Overdue [credit cards](#) also hit a new record, at 37 million. Then later in February U.S. consumer confidence, measured by the University of Michigan, took a [tumble](#). Shipping giant Maersk expects further global [economic deterioration](#) in 2019.

Employment. Just 20,000 jobs were added in February, the smallest increase in 17 months, but the number of [employed Americans](#) set the 18th record of the Trump era. American employers posted nearly [7.6 million open jobs](#), one million more than the number of officially unemployed individuals. [Wage growth increased](#) and the unemployment rate dropped from 4% to 3.8%. Wyoming became the second state (after Maine) to advance a bill requiring all ["able-bodied" Medicare](#) recipients to work at least 20 hours a week to receive benefits.

Retailers continue losing market share to Amazon and other [e-commerce](#) platforms. After Amazon was forced to introduce a \$15 minimum wage, it [cut the hours](#) of its Whole Foods workers... Following government shutdown delays, U.S. consumers [dialed back](#) their spending to put a damper on retail sales. [JC Penney](#) is hoping to survive without furniture and appliances, just selling clothing. Gap, Tesla and Victoria's Secret are among the nearly [5,000 store closings](#) already in 2019. Dollar Tree will close up to 390 [Family Dollar](#) stores this year, while absorbing the Family Dollar chain.

Home statistics continue to disappoint. [U.S. existing](#) and [pending](#) home sales fell in December YoY for the 13th straight month. Housing starts also [crashed](#), down 11.2% in December alone.

If this is another bursting bubble (looks likely) how deep and how long will it run? Charles Hugh Smith marked up this FRED Chart with his view. [CHS thinks](#) we're headed down from 2019 to 2025, with house prices falling to what buyers—especially over-indebted and underpaid millennials—can afford.



notes added by charles hugh smith www.oftwominds.com February 2019

Automobiles. The auto industry is melting down globally, a result of slowing economies and (surprisingly) sharply increasing popularity of [car-sharing](#) services. [GM closed](#) its Lordstown, Ohio plant after five decades of manufacturing. [Car sales in China](#) fell another 17.7% in January.

Factory orders slumped in December for the [second consecutive](#) month, constituting the worst sequential drop since the Obama era. (So we're going to need more war.)

INVESTMENT ASSETS

U.S. stocks, off to their best start since 1991, continued climbing: the Dow Industrials and S&P 500 Indexes closed February up 4.5% and 3.8% to 26130 and 2807, respectively. The DJI's monthly close above 26000 suggests that the low is in, but an anticipated retest of support is happening in March. Meanwhile, major brokerage firms have been [warning investors](#) to sell, and [they have](#)—driving cash in retail accounts to the highest levels since 2009. European capital fleeing the euro (and the same major brokerage houses) said “thank you” and bought at cheaper prices. Duh! This advance is far from over.

Treasury bonds lost ground, as 10-year and 30-year T-bond yields closed 3 and 6 basis points higher at 2.73% and 3.09%, respectively. U.S. debt passed the \$22 trillion mark, an amount equivalent to \$67,000 per U.S. citizen. Martin Armstrong warned that over \$2 trillion in investment grade [corporate debt](#) matures by 2021; he predicts that their renewal will begin pushing interest rates higher.

Jeffries economist Ward McCarthy noted that the Federal Reserve continues to display a “very [significant lack of understanding](#) ... between the balance sheet and the behavior of the money markets.” On the other hand, is this an example of the Fed's bungling, or are their harmful actions intentional?

The dollar (USD Index) eased higher, up 0.8% to 96.04. Max Keiser comments [at the 8:10 mark](#) of his report about an IMF plan to engineer a two-tiered system which would impose deeply negative interest rates on those who are trying to save.

Precious metals. Gold continued rising into the 1330's and after failing a fourth time to break above 1362, fell back to close the month at 1316/ounce, down \$9. Silver followed suit, dropping 44 cents to 15.63/oz. The market remains weak, with support at 1305 and then at 1197. The next major change appears to be a turndown from an April reaction high.



Meanwhile [central banks](#) have become strong gold buyers, adding a multi-decade high 651 tons last year. Canada has been the exception, [selling off](#) most of its remaining gold reserves to the general public.

In a far-ranging [Greg Hunter interview](#), Jim Sinclair reasserted his belief that the COMEX paper gold market will crumble because it has just 1 ounce of gold bullion backing each 300 ounces that it trades (plus other worthwhile observations). Gold's day is coming; we anticipate its arrival in 2020.

Mining stocks (measured by the XAU Index) took a breather, closing down 0.7% at 75.75.

Commodities (GCC Index) also paused, finishing February down 0.3% at 18.06. The continuing U.S. [agricultural depression](#) is reducing productive capacity—a classic precedent for a commodity boom.

Energy. Crude oil (WTIC Index) moved \$3.50 higher to 57.22/barrel. [Russia and Saudi Arabia](#) are discussing cooperation to keep oil prices up, following a U.S. threat to sell 5 million barrels from the Strategic Petroleum Reserve. Bethany McLean is interviewed [here](#) about U.S. fracking shortcomings.

An MIT study suggests that a [hybrid renewable electricity](#) generation system combining wind, solar and storage could compete with natural gas—the cheapest fossil fuel electricity in the U.S... China announced plans send into orbit a [space solar station](#) that would capture sunshine 24/7... Hydrogen automobiles are also [in development](#), but presently unable to compete cost-wise with electronic vehicles.

Cryptocurrencies. Bitcoin bounced up to 3945, then resumed its decline, closing February up 12% at 3819 and continuing to trade neutral in a range between 3371 and 4027. We may see the crypto complex begin its next advance in April, and it looks to be a big one.

Crypto investing pro Boss Cole: “The speculators have gone home, the optimists have packed their bags and pessimists are running the show. Now is the time to be an intelligent investor in the cryptocurrency markets.”

*Detailed information on cryptocurrencies is published in our weekly Crypto Report.
To receive this letter, send an email to wayne@waynepeterson.net.*

WINDOWS into the FUTURE

What's the [next "big thing"?](#) With iPhones becoming passé, augmented reality glasses, brain/computer interfaces, and smart cars seem to be leading the pack.

AI/Robotics. Artificial intelligence [gained notoriety](#) in large part due to high profile successes such as IBM's Watson winning at Jeopardy and Google's Alpha Go beating the world champion at the game "Go".



There are many other examples, but there have also been disappointments. Personal assistants, for example, are unable to do much more than play music or check the news and weather. At this point, AI has the potential to make things a lot better – and a whole lot worse.

Robots on the other hand are [flooding U.S.](#) industries, which purchased over 35,000 of them in 2018, a 7% increase over 2017. Transportation, electronics and food service are leading the buying spree, as robots get cheaper, better and more versatile. A primary driver of robotic replacement is government minimum wage legislation. Very short-sided ... but then what else should we expect from government? Meanwhile, China is investing heavily in robotics and maintains a large lead in adoption over ALL other countries.

1. FedEx unveiled a [delivery bot](#), aimed at last-mile efficiencies.
2. Walmart is [replacing overnight shifts](#) with "labor-saving" sorting machines, and eliminating store greeters.
3. Citibank is apparently preparing to replace as many as 20,000 operations and technical positions with robotic devices.
4. Don't be surprised if in a future pass through the [drive-through window](#) you find that you are being served by an artificially intelligent voice assistant – emotion-free and immune to stress – with the ability to operate a drive-through station without fatigue, bathroom breaks or compensation.
5. Computers will be used to call [balls & strikes](#) starting April 25 in the independent Atlantic League.

Excess power. As renewable forms of energy production see major efficiency gains, there's a growing question of what to do with excess power produced by a solar array or windmill. Storing the excess energy in batteries can be costly and inefficient. Rather than "curtailing" energy production the renewable energy industry may be able to [install "ASIC" chips and use the energy to mine Bitcoin](#).

Government intrusion against our [Fourth Amendment rights of privacy](#) against unreasonable searches or seizures is increasing at an alarming rate:



- There's a new [spy in the sky](#); cameras are being quietly embedded in commercial airline seatbacks.
- Smartphone apps are sending "intensely [personal information](#)" to Facebook, whether or not you have an account.
- Your smart light can tell Amazon and Google when you [go to bed](#).
- It's probably obvious that many popular iPhone apps [secretly record](#) your screen.
- Automobile manufacturers may soon be adding radar and lasers [INSIDE the cabin](#) to monitor you.
- The government plans to scan your face at [20 top airports](#).
- Using a [debit card](#) at the gas pump subjects your card information to theft by a "skimmer".
- Digital assistants (e.g., Alexa) [are spies](#) and you are the enemy.
- Nest Secure's update allows users to enable Google Assistant, and deal with its [embedded camera](#).
- The American police state is now able and ALLOWED to routinely [take your DNA!](#)
- Arizona is considering legislation requiring many residents to voluntarily [give up their DNA](#).
- Arizona State University is expanding its use of [facial recognition cameras](#) to spy on fans.
- A newly discovered [data breach](#) exposed 772 million emails and 21 million unique passwords.
- And in case you were unaware, even the [Post Office](#) may spy on you.

- One [positive note](#): the NSA shut down sifting thru bulk records of American phone calls and texts.

Are you willing to spend some time/money protecting your privacy?

1. Here's a [step-by-step guide](#), covering specific actions for Firefox/Explorer/Chrome, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, iOS and Android.
2. For public appearances, here's a source for relatively-expensive [masks](#).
3. [Don't use your phone](#) for financial transactions. Get a cheap laptop for that purpose. The reason is that app companies are recording your screens and sending the data back to each company. They are doing this without your permission.

The greatest evolving threat, however, may be to your health. I'm repeating this alert for a second month because it's so serious.

[5G wireless technology](#) being rolled out is receiving priority for two reasons: (1) because of its potential for the [future of warfare](#); and (2) to cut off Chinese penetration in the United States.

The latter concern reflects concern that China could "[weaponize cities](#)" if allowed to dominate 5G networks, linking billions of devices. And Huawei is here, now, with the technology. This appears to be why the President is supporting a rapid rollout of U.S. technology. Even though it means [connecting you](#) and your toaster to the [internet of things](#) for monitoring by the elites.



However, this will mean that tens of millions of 5G antennae are going to be deployed, **without a single major biological test of safety** having been performed. And [there is plenty](#) to be concerned about. For your body, we're talking about DNA single and double strand breaks, oxidative damage, disruption of cell metabolism, and lots more.

Existing 4G towers are already prime suspects behind [increasing cancer rates](#) all over the world. In northern California, parents of 4 children diagnosed with cancer are fighting to have a cell phone tower near their elementary school removed. 5G transmitters will be much more dangerous.

Major corporations are pushing this potential \$7 trillion industry and unfortunately there appears little that can be done to stop the development and little, if any, possibility of escaping this radiation once it blankets the planet via satellite. Judging from the control capabilities of 5G, it should be no surprise that it was developed in Communist China first. But in America, we have a little time...



Other items of possible interest

- Oklahoma became the 15th state to abolish its requirement for a [concealed carry](#) permit.
- Missouri took it one step further, creating a "[gun rights sanctuary](#) state," banning state and local enforcement of federal gun control.
- Maryland Sheriff Mike Lewis says he and his deputies "[will not comply](#)" if lawmakers impose long gun licensing and confiscation. Sheriffs in a dozen [Washington](#) counties seconded that emotion. And 21 of 23 counties in [New Mexico](#) also refused to enforce gun control.
- Two years of community college are being provided [free to Tennesseans](#), regardless of income.
- A Chilean designer created a sustainable, [biodegradable](#) alternative to single-use packaging.
- An Australian couple turned three 10x20 metal [shipping containers](#) into a comfortable home.
- Relativity Space is getting ready to start [3D-printing rockets](#) at Cape Canaveral.
- Monsanto's toxic Roundup weed killer has been found in many top [beer and wine](#) brands.
- [Gene-edited food](#) has quietly arrived in restaurant cooking oil.
- The U.S. government approved the experiment to create a type of [bird flu](#) that could kill millions.
- NJ residents are furious about Gov. Murphy's intent to sign a bill [taxing rainfall](#) on their driveways.
- Police departments are making millions by [seizing private property](#).

- Here's a video about [growing microgreens](#) in your home and "making \$100,000 a year."
- And yet another story about a \$15 [minimum wage](#) hurting workers in the Big Apple, the problem being that wages legislated above the value of the skills results in reduced hours or layoffs.
- For the first time in **132 years**, the temperature in February failed to reach [70 in Los Angeles](#).

TWILITE ZONE

Energy up there. European scientists announced plans to start [mining the moon](#) as early as 2025. Their primary interest is waste-free nuclear energy thought to be worth trillions of dollars. We're talking about helium-3, a fuel source for future fusion reactors. Its contained in dust-like regolith deposited by comets over billions of years, and also contains water, oxygen, metals. There's enough regolith up there to meet the world's energy demand for CENTURIES. India and China agree that it's a good idea.

It will be interesting to see how the current inhabitants take to the Europeans. After 6 manned Apollo missions, American astronauts were told to scrap the last two missions and not return. The direction came from extraterrestrials who were [mining there](#). Assuming their activities aren't concluded, will they share their mines with the Europeans?

We're living in a video game. Computer scientist and game designer Riz Virk explains in this [fascinating article](#) why quantum physics, AI and Eastern mystics agree that our reality is a simulated, pixelated 3d world of the sort visualized in The Matrix and the Star Trek Holodeck.



"We know where you are. We know where you've been. We can more or less know what you're thinking about... Your digital identity will live forever, because there's no delete button." – Former Google CEO Eric Schmidt

"Putting in tens of millions of 5G antennae without a single biological test of safety has got to be about the stupidest idea anyone has had in the history of the world." – Dr. Martin L. Pall, PhD

FUNNIES

Don McMillan shares his [greatest charts](#) (YouTube). GOOD HUMOR!

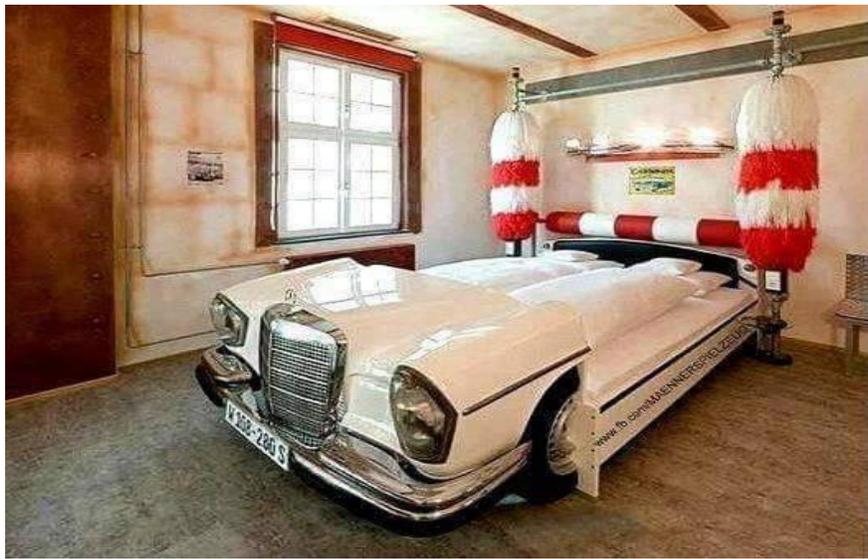
A man and his wife were having some problems at home and were giving each other the silent treatment.

Suddenly, the man realized that the next day he would need his wife to wake him at 5:00 AM for an early morning business flight.

Not wanting to be the first to break the silence (and LOSE), he wrote on a piece of paper, 'Please wake me at 5:00AM.' He left it where he knew she would find it.

The next morning, the man woke up, only to discover it was 9:00 AM and he had missed his flight. Furious, he was about to go and see why his wife hadn't wakened him, when he noticed a piece of paper by the bed.

The paper said, 'It is 5:00AM. Wake up.' ... **Men are not equipped for these kinds of contests.**



Two elderly ladies had been friends for many decades. Over the years, they had shared all kinds of activities and adventures.

Lately, their activities had been limited to meeting a few times a week to play cards. One day, they were playing cards when one looked at the other and said, "Now don't get mad at me. I know we've been friends for a long time, but I just can't think of your name! I've thought and thought, but I can't remember it. Please tell me what your name is."

Her friend glared at her. For at least a minute she just stared and glared at her. Finally she said, "How soon do you need to know?"



A man walks into the street and manages to get a taxi just going by. He gets into the taxi, and the cabbie says, "Perfect timing. You're just like Frank."

Passenger: "Who?"

Cabbie: "Frank Feldman. He's a guy who did everything right - all the time! Like my coming along when you needed a cab, things happened like that to Frank - every single time."

Passenger: "There are always a few clouds over everybody."

Cabbie: "Not Frank. He was a terrific athlete. He could have won the Grand-Slam at tennis. He could golf with the pros. He sang like an opera baritone and danced like a Broadway star and you should have heard him play the piano."

Passenger: "Sounds like he was something really special"

Cabbie: "There's more"....." He had a memory like a computer. Could remember everybody's birthday. He knew all about wine, which foods to order and which fork to eat them with. He could fix anything. Not like me. I change a fuse, and the whole street blacks out."

Passenger. "Wow, some bloke then."

Cabbie: "He always knew the quickest way to go in traffic and avoid traffic jams, not like me, I always seem to get stuck in them."

Passenger. "Mmm, there's not many like him around."

Cabbie: "And he knew how to treat a woman and make her feel good and never answer her back even if she was in the wrong; and his clothing was always immaculate, shoes highly polished too - the perfect man!"

Passenger: "An amazing fellow. How did you meet him?"

Cabbie: "Well, I never actually met Frank."

Passenger: "Then how do you know so much about him?"

Cabbie: "I married his widow."



Thanks for reading. Hope you continue to experience a happy, healthy and successful 2019!

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This "Dragon aurora" over Iceland was caused by a hole in the Sun's corona that expelled charged particles into a solar wind that followed a changing interplanetary magnetic field to Earth's magnetosphere.



Only in China would you find a [sky bridge](#) erected over the tops of 4 skyscrapers

Vertical auroras photographed near Murmansk, Russia when it was minus 30 degree Celsius.

