

October 27, 2023

Really, Seriously Batshit Crazy

What people don't realize, the value of gold doesn't change when it hits \$50,000 an oz.
It's the value of the dollar that decreases. - Kevin Tart

Everything depends on our reviving, recreating, resurrecting, rediscovering or
reinventing the West—before we forget what it was. - Bret Weinstein

Remember, democracy never lasts long. It soon wastes, exhausts, and murders itself.
There never was a democracy yet that did not commit suicide. - John Adams

Markets

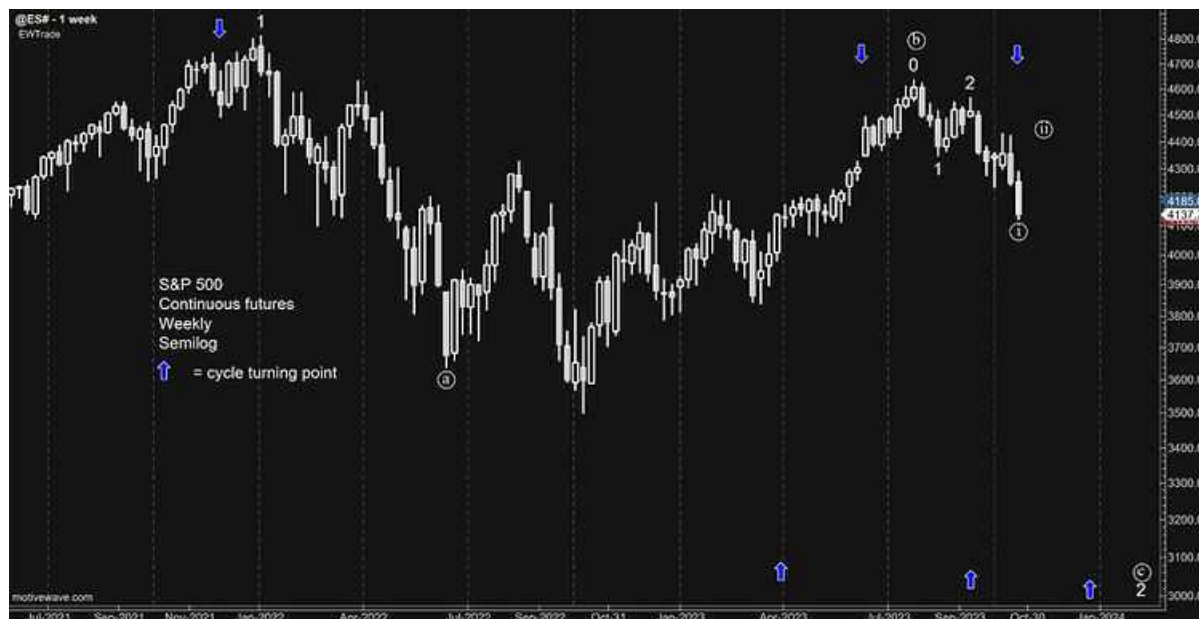
Updated Charts

No change in outlook - I am continuing on a good streak.

Something else I am contemplating -

Let's talk about, what if I am right?

What the hell? Might as well go out on a limb.



I don't want to go into the details of arcane technical analysis, except to say that my analyses essentially call for the beginnings of a crash in the stock market in a few weeks.

It's time for things to get serious.

If I am correct, the stock markets will go down a long way, hit bottom, and then the inflation frenzy will kick in.

It is time to enter the main part of the end game of all the stupidity we have been accumulating over time - the financial part of the Fourth Turning. We entered the end game with the Great Financial Crisis and now the second act is beginning.

I hope I am wrong, as I have been many times in the past, and if I see any signs that I am wrong, I will quickly tell you. My track record in calling the oil market is impressive; the stock market - not so much.

Let's see how this one unfolds.

First comes a rally upward ...

Short Takes

Absolutely incredible - a [recreation of Rome in 3D](#). Really spectacular.

Pro-Palestine rally in France, where such rallies are banned. So, where does the power lie?



The George Floyd thing. Tucker has brought the subject back up. I am not a Tucker Carlson fan - bright and eloquent, but click-baity/tabloidy. When he is good, he is excellent; when he is bad, he is just an intelligent guy looking for clicks. However, his presentations seem to always have a kernel of truth.

Anyway, at the time of Floyd's death, I said that I had reviewed the data and it did not look like Floyd was suffocated. He officially died of "cardiopulmonary arrest" with a lot of drugs in his system, including a normally-fatal dose of fentanyl. He showed no physical signs of suffocation. Did the stress of the arrest bring on heart failure? Could be. Or the drugs? Or a combination?

However, the culture was ripe for explosion, Floyd was the match, and facts did not matter too much - still don't. The optics of a cop with his knee on a black guy's neck were both terrible, and perfect for the eruption.

Hysteria, it is.

In a wonderful metaphor in several dimensions, a low-life drug addict became the symbol for social upheaval that resonates to this day, particularly in all things crime related.

This is not about Floyd, or even about police excess. If it were not Floyd, it would have been something else. This is about mass hysteria in a highly-charged

atmosphere. This is about acting out frustrations, including real and perceived racial injustice.

(IMO, there was an argument for manslaughter for Chauvin, but murder was not remotely justified and evidence of a metaphorical lynching - which some people might find appropriate and satisfying.)

The hysteria has calmed a little, but we are still hysterical.

Healing will come when the hysteria has subsided.

Could take a while.

Tucker's piece on Floyd was flawed, but it was a start.

Um ... say, what?



Here's one approach to discourage migrants from settling in New York City: The City is considering giving them a free, one-way plane ticket out of town.

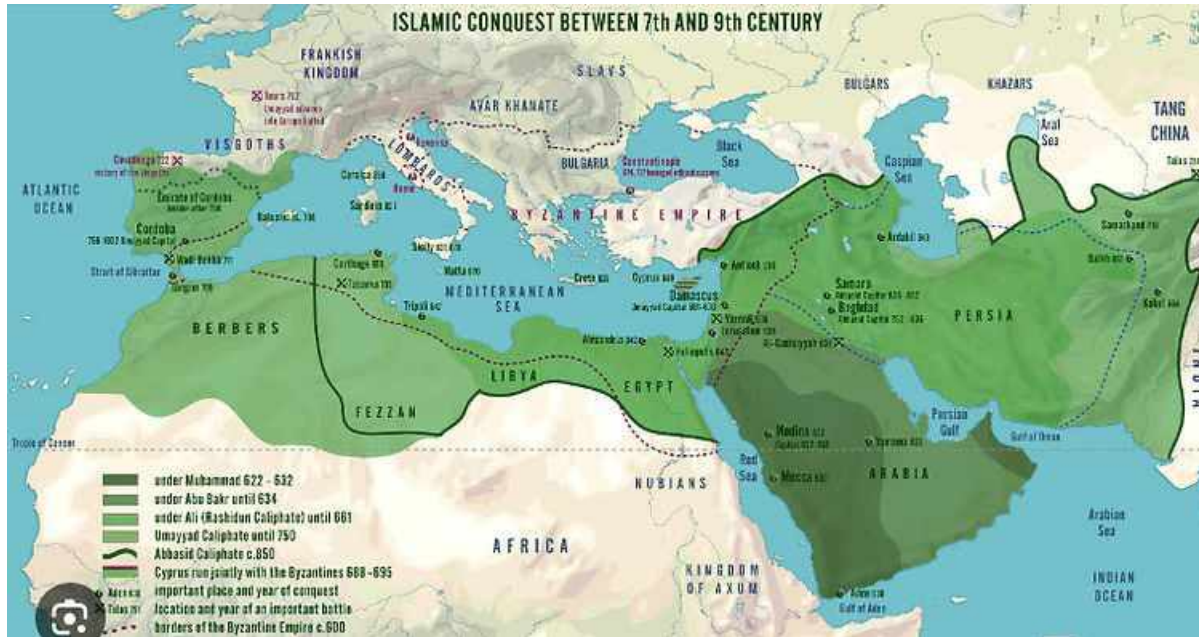
I had my say on the Hamas - Israel thing last week. I know facts don't matter, but in what is ultimately a useless conversation about who took land from whom, I note the Muslim territorial conquest after Muhammad.

Jews and Muslims are another example of the countless human tribes in conflict. It may or may not be worth noting that Neandertals have the ultimate hominid claim to land in Europe.

Give England back to the Celts?

It is thought that the Israelites came to Israel in around 1250 BCE, but there were tribes already there.

And, I am sure there are Native Americans woefully enjoying the irony.



In what may or may not be an interesting factoid, to Islam, Jews and Christians are "People of the Book," that is, monotheistic kindred spirits who share what Muslims call prophets. Jesus and Moses are Muslim prophets, for example (Muhammad is the last of the prophets). As described in Wikipedia, "Based on [Quranic verses](#) and Islamic traditions, sharia law distinguishes between Muslims, followers of other [Abrahamic religions](#), and [Pagans](#) or people belonging to other [polytheistic](#) religions. As [monotheists](#), Jews and Christians have traditionally been considered "People of the Book", and afforded a special legal status known as dhimmi derived from a theoretical contract—"dhimma" or "residence in return for taxes".

In Yemenite Jewish sources, a treaty was drafted between Muhammad and his Jewish subjects, known as *kitāb ḍimmat al-nabi*, written in the 17th year of the Hijra (638 CE), which gave express liberty to the Jews living in Arabia to observe the Sabbath and to grow-out their side-locks, but required them to pay the *jizya* (poll-tax) annually for their protection. This agreement included the following:

1. The security (dhimma) of God is equal for all groups,
2. Non-Muslim members have equal political and cultural rights as Muslims. They will have autonomy and freedom of religion.
3. Non-Muslims will take up arms against the enemy of the Ummah and share the cost of war. There is to be no treachery between the two.
4. Non-Muslims will not be obliged to take part in religious wars of the Muslims.

So, Islam is a lot like Christianity - you are either in or out, and out is bad. But there is this middle status, People of the Book, which basically says, in return for a tax, you have to treat them better than other non-Muslims. They don't get to go to heaven, but we won't hassle you, much, while you are on Earth. It's much

more complicated than this, because the groups declared dhimmi were expanded. But, basically, for Jews and Christians, if you paid a tax, you were accorded rights. For example, the Jewish community of Medina was allowed to have its own Halakhic courts. The Dhimmi were also allowed to do such un-Muslim things as consume alcohol and pork.

So, Israel/Hamas is complicated, and does not have as much to do with religion as you might think.

This is a tribal conflict over land and power, dressed up in religion and mutual outrage.

Plus ca change

Hitler Leads in Poll

Georgetown Students Vote on
Leading Personalities

SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES.

WASHINGTON, Feb. 24—Adolf Hitler was voted "the most outstanding personality in the world today" by students of the College of Arts and Sciences at Georgetown University in a campus poll undertaken by the Hoya, undergraduate weekly publication. Of 269 votes polled on this question, Hitler received 113. Pope Pius XII took second place with sixty-four, and President Roosevelt third with thirty-five.

We Figured Out the UFO/UAP Thing, Right?

Really, Seriously Batshit Crazy - And Destructive We Are All Black Now

I've discussed this before at some length, but I still can't get my head around the fact that we are actually doing it.

It seems that decades of affirmative action and quotas and Diversity, for some reason (which I will contemplate someday - actually, I have contemplated it, so will write about it someday), were inadequate to raise black educational performance to white levels, much less Asian levels. So, in order to spare blacks' feelings, we are all going to go to the lowest common denominator. This is also showing up in colleges abandoning the SAT as an entry requirement in the name of Diversity.

This has been combined with a lack of consequences for misbehavior and acting out in the classroom.

I understand the discussions around standardized tests, but if you don't have a certain level of knowledge, what was the purpose of education and what does a diploma signify? Most of the bright kids, of all races, will probably be ok, since most of them are self-motivated. Everyone else, of all races, will lose some incentive to do the work.

Just nuts.

We are handicapping a generation of kids and literally threatening the future success of our country. The biggest victims will be blacks, themselves. If they struggled when there were consequences and expectations, they will seriously struggle when there are no consequences and no expectations. In my view, what we are doing to our children and our culture is criminal, particularly to black children. What they are seeing, besides the fact that they can get away with pretty much anything, is that they are not worthy or capable of achieving. In a world looking for toxic, this is genuinely, seriously toxic.

I have deep sympathy for struggling kids. Our older son was learning disabled. He did not have the horsepower to make it through high school without a lot of effort on the school's part and on our part. But he was going to have a tough time in the world, no matter what, and we did everything we could to give him all the tools he could get in order that he could cope the best way he could. He graduated - just barely. But I saw him react to being put in special classes and being labeled as dumb. A spiral downward can begin from just this place, and it was something we battled constantly.

My thoughts are not anti-black. To think that they cannot do the work is, at best, patronizing. I think they can do the work. I know they can do the work. My guess is that they, like most adolescents, need structure and incentive. Not a resounding "whatever" from the system.

Our response is, "you poor dear, you are struggling - let's lower the bar for you and you will feel better." In the short term they may feel better, but in the longer term, they will know that the system thought they couldn't hack it, and they will face the world without the tools they need.

From *The Oregonian* in an article by Sami Edge:

Oregon high school students won't have to prove basic mastery of reading, writing or math to graduate from high school until at least 2029, the state Board of Education decided unanimously on Thursday, extending the pause on the controversial graduation requirement that began in 2020....

Opponents argued that pausing the requirement devalues an Oregon diploma. Giving students with low academic skills extra instruction in writing and math, which most high schools did in response to the graduation rules, helped them, they have argued.

But leaders at the Oregon Department of Education and members of the state school board said requiring all students to pass one of several standardized tests or create an in-depth assignment their teacher judged as meeting state standards was a harmful hurdle for historically marginalized students, a misuse of state tests and did not translate to meaningful improvements in students' post high school success.

Higher rates of students of color, students learning English as a second language and students with disabilities ended up having to take intensive senior-year writing and math classes to prove they deserved a diploma. That denied those students the opportunity to take an elective, despite the lack of evidence the extra academic work helped them in the workplace or at college, they said.

Board members underscored that state-mandated standardized tests will still be administered to most Oregon high school students – they just won't be used to determine whether a student has the skills necessary to graduate.

"We haven't suspended any sort of assessments," state board member Vicky López Sánchez, a dean at Portland Community College, said during Thursday's meeting. "The only thing we are suspending is the inappropriate use of how those assessments were being used. I think that really is in the best interest of Oregon students."

Oregon lawmakers, however, have mandated that families be told each year that they can opt their student out of taking state tests – and one third of high school juniors didn't take the tests last spring, meaning they and their families don't necessarily know how they measure up against statewide academic standards. Proving mastery of reading, writing and math on one of many standardized tests or a teacher-judged in-depth assignment was one of several Oregon graduation requirements. Students also have to earn a prescribed number of credits and complete an education plan that maps out how they can achieve post high-school goals.

During the pandemic, Gov. Kate Brown signed a bill freezing the proficiency requirement, as standardized tests weren't happening amid school closures. Lawmakers decided to order a more comprehensive review of graduation requirements.

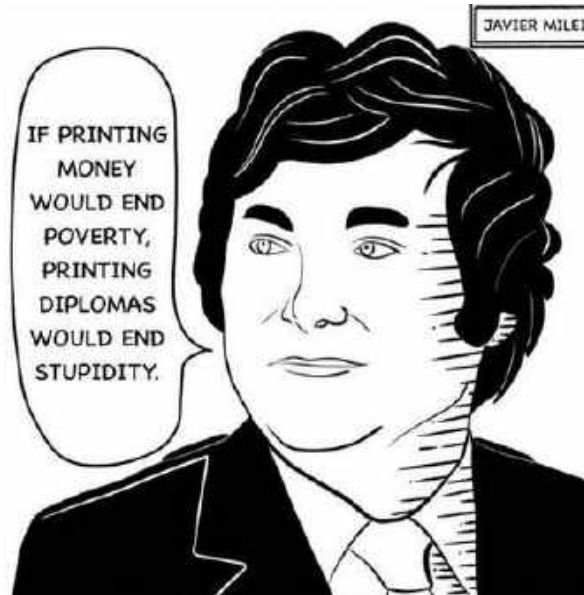
After broad outreach to families, educators, students and employers, with a particular focus on people of color, the Oregon Department of Education recommended new graduation recommendations [about a year ago](#). One of those was to scrap the requirement to show mastery of reading, writing and math. State lawmakers have not acted on that recommendation, and the department in the meantime asked the state board to continue its pause through at least the 2027-28 school year.

Speaking of the academic mastery requirements, Dan Farley, assistant superintendent of research and data for the department, told the state board Thursday, "They did not work. What they were designed to do is protect student interests. We have no evidence that they did that."

Farley pointed to a 2021 analysis by Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission that found no clear evidence that implementing the proficiency standards improved the performance of Oregon high school graduates during their first year of community college or university classes. The report did not study all possible postsecondary outcomes, Farley told the commission, and the state could do further research on that point.

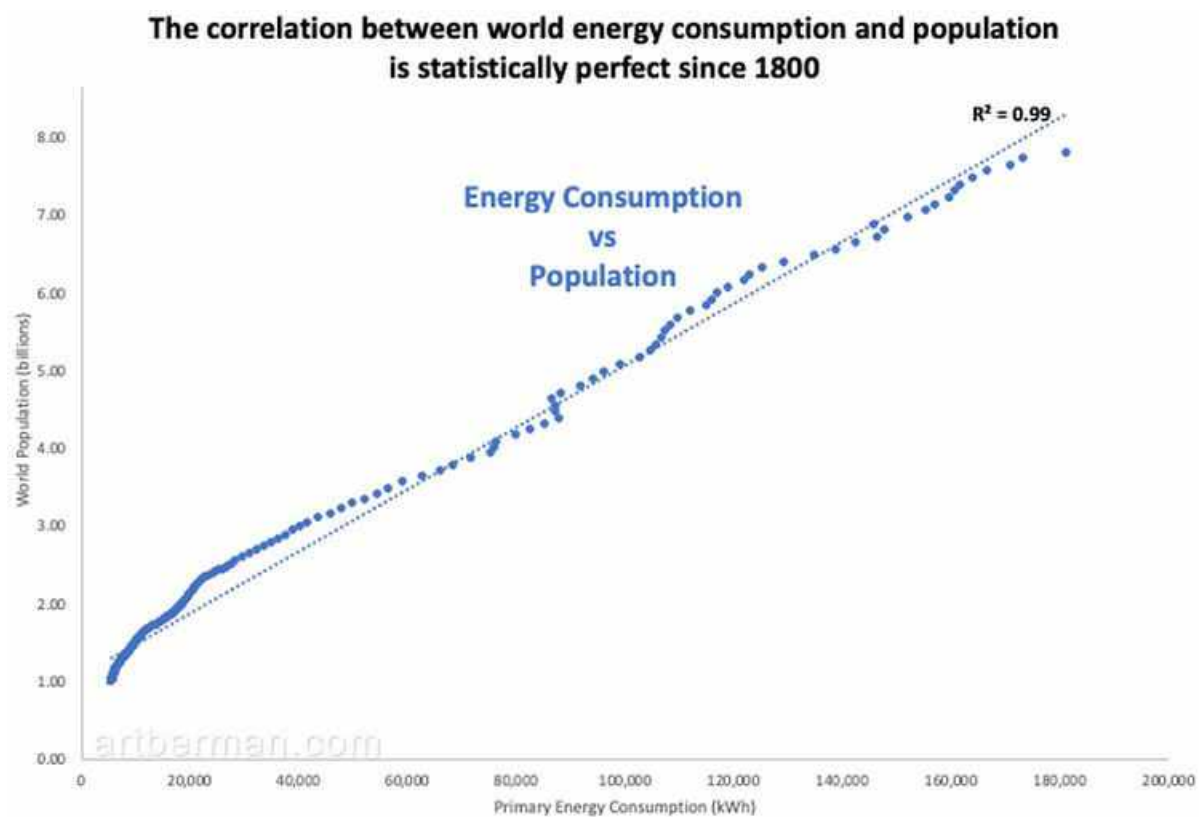
The report also notes that it's possible that the level of skill required to meet Oregon's since-paused academic mastery standards was "too low to improve college and university outcomes." It's also possible, the report said, that student success in college relies more heavily on other factors than writing or math skill levels.

Suspending the requirement at least until the class of 2029 gives the state more time to do community outreach about how best to overhaul the grad standards, Farley said, and gives future high school students plenty of time to prepare if this standard does resume. ...



War, Energy and Food

A fact you should internalize



Source: Our World In Data & Labyrinth Consulting Services, Inc

Labyrinth/Climate Change/OWID/ OWID MASTER

See the article at the bottom of this page by George Friedman on the war in Ukraine.

It Ain't Easy Being Green

A financial crisis is unfolding in the offshore wind power industry. The form of clean energy production is an essential component of all of the world's possible decarbonization pathways, but soaring inflation costs have undercut the sector's growth and left major projects dead in the water just when their output is most needed. A major policy shift is in order, but the public and private sector are at loggerheads as to who should have to pay for the increasingly expensive development plans.

- The costs associated with U.S. offshore wind projects have risen by 57% since 2021 due to inflation in components and labor costs, as well as rising interest rates, leading to a large number of canceled or renegotiated deals.
- The recent cancellations of major offshore wind projects have erased billions of dollars in planned spending and put at least 9.7 additional gigawatts of offshore wind projects in the U.S. at risk.
- Despite the financial crisis in offshore wind energy, the Biden administration is persevering with its goal of achieving 30 GW of offshore wind energy capacity by 2030.

We're serious, unless it gets serious

US MARKETS



Canada to pause carbon tax on home heating oil for three years



Credit: REUTERS/ELAN GABLE

George Friedman on the War in Ukraine - Geopolitical Futures

October 24, 2023

[Russia, Ukraine and Thinking Extreme Thoughts](#)

By: George Friedman

In a recent article, I wrote that the war in Ukraine is over, but [nobody knows how to end it](#). What I meant by that was that the general outline of the military aspects of the war is locked in, and the conflict is contained. The war was started by the Russians, who wanted to take control of Ukraine to create a buffer zone that would prevent the United States and Ukraine from threatening Russia. The United States intervened by sending weapons to Ukraine to block a Russian advance that could threaten NATO and Western Europe. The Ukrainians wanted to block the Russians from taking any territory from their homeland.

The war was part of a series of defensive moves by Russia, the United States and Ukraine, with each more offensive and dangerous than the last. The Russian thrust failed to break the Ukrainians and the Americans. Their defensive capabilities, coupled with their fear of defeat, blunted the Russian advance. The Russians' fear prevented them from abandoning their constant efforts to disrupt the defenses. The Russians are not, in my opinion, breaking their enemies. At the same time, the Ukrainians will not be able to break the Russians, in part because the improbability of success will limit any attack, and because the United States, having succeeded in blocking threats to its interest, has little will to sustain the battle. This would seem to impose the endgame on all sides, but the matter is more complex.

Any settlement not emanating from the total defeat of one side would have to address the root cause of the war, which was Russia's fear of a future attack. Russia would have to be induced to a deal by both the realization of the improbability of military success and some reduction of its sense of vulnerability via the annexation of a significant part of Ukraine, but far from all of it. The problem for Ukraine is that such a settlement could serve merely as an interlude until Russia refreshes its force and resumes the attack. Ukraine cannot be certain of U.S. military support at a later date and therefore would face a difficult military situation.

In a war that ends without the total defeat of one side, the fear is that any settlement would simply be a prelude to a renewed conflict and defeat down the road. The Russian view would be that any cession of land would be insufficient. The Ukrainians fear that the cession of land would make Russia far more dangerous, and the Americans would be afraid of endless war causing domestic resistance and vulnerability to other threats.

In examining what appears to be a hopeless situation, we need to consider Russia's non-military needs. The Soviet Union was impoverished, and its military position was not as strong as many thought. Its fall left Russia in a similar position. There was no radical solution. Russia needs to rectify this situation at a time when its military weakness is even clearer. For Russia, turning itself into a nation that is in the first rank economically is fundamental. Using military force to achieve this hasn't worked. The United States faces a choice between ongoing war or effectively capitulating to Russia. Russia's fear of attack coincides with the reality that the United States intends to cripple Russia economically. In supporting Ukraine, that is clearly Washington's intent, but before the war, the U.S. approach was more like indifference. After World War II, the United States took an almost economic track toward its former enemies. Rather than breaking the Japanese and German nations, something that would have been quite rational, the United States undertook programs of reconstruction, enabling both Japan and West Germany to emerge as world-leading economic powers. The Americans understood after the treatment of Germany following World War I that trying to crush a nation could cost the United States and the world a great deal, whereas rehabilitating the defeated helped to avoid wars of revenge while enhancing the global economic system. It also opened the door to military and political alliances. West Germany joined NATO, and Japan became a long-term American ally. I have tried to show that the war has ended – in the sense that no one is in a position to achieve their goal – but that a peace settlement that sustains itself is extremely difficult. If the United States follows the World War II model in which, rather than demanding surrender, which is not possible for Moscow, it focuses on a relationship based on rebuilding rather than destroying Russia, it might withdraw from a war that is over, while the Russians might pursue their economic interest: developing an economy that places them in the top rank of nations. Russia is filled with valuable natural resources, a workforce that requires training and an industrial plant that needs rebuilding. This would not be a government project beyond some encouragement, but an investment opportunity. The U.S. government did not create Toyota or Daimler-Benz. The strategy humanized barbaric enemies. I am not by any means a pacifist, nor am I given to heartwarming fantasies. What I am doing is facing the fact that the United States is involved in a war that will not yield to common sense because of the reasonable fears of all sides. And I am reaching back to the lessons of World War II and how the U.S. treated its defeated enemies. Russia is not defeated and has the power to continue the war, even if it does not win. This is not in America's interest, but turning Russia from an insecure enemy to an investment opportunity would be. And, of course, U.S. troops would remain in Europe for now, if needed. There is nothing idealistic in this. It is simply the way American wars tend to end. Therefore, it is intended as a solution in the national interest. Whether it will be

followed or anyone will agree is uncertain, but the question is: How many years is a war in gridlock worth?