

What I See Coming in 2022

The second half of 2020, months 13 through 24, is now over, and we've skipped right over 2021. The question now is, what is 2022 going to bring us? Will we see a return to some normal, or will we have 2020, part 3?

Unfortunately, I don't see us returning to a pre-2020 world. We are already experiencing some of the long-term effects of the pandemic, especially in the economy. Besides that, the political class has learned just how useful a pandemic can be; much easier than creating a crisis. And we all know that Democrats (and maybe even some Republicans) won't allow a good crisis to go to waste.

Besides that, I don't see a whole lot going on to correct the problems we've faced in the last few years. Most of what was done in the massive COVID spending bills was merely stopgap measures. We aren't any more ready for a February freeze than we were last year, and California hasn't solved either their forest mismanagement problem that causes so many wildfires or their twin shortages of water and electric power generation.

The types of problems our nation is facing require years to fix. But as long as all our decisions are made for political reasons, we're not going to do the things that need to be done. Look at how much money is being put into wind and solar power when what's needed is to make upgrades and repairs to the power grid. While I favor wind and solar power for emergency off-grid power, I don't see it as the dependable solution that we need.



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Looking at where we are today, these are the things I see, which concern me for the following year. Watch out, I think it's going to be another rocky one.

Politics

Let me get politics out of the way to get on to more exciting things. We've all seen what a disaster the Biden/Harris presidency has been. We've also seen how ineffective Democrats have been, even though they have control over both houses of Congress. They seem to be focusing on massive bills that make people more dependent on government handouts, not caring what that's doing to the economy.

I have to say that I appreciate the efforts of Senator Joe Manchin, who has been taking a stand along strictly traditional liberal lines rather than caving to the progressives in Congress. If we had a few more Democrats like him in office, it would make a massive difference for the country. But it seems that the rest of his colleagues are bowing down to the radical left.

The result of this is that we're probably going to see a red landslide this fall in the midterm elections. This is already heating up to be the most aggressive midterm elections this nation has ever seen, with a higher number of people voting than in any other midterm. The winner will be whichever side can manage to get the most people to the polls in November.

Besides that, I think we can expect to see the Democrats

continue to attack our founding political institutions, especially the value of the Constitution, the separation of powers, and the sovereignty of both states and the people. There is no question that they are after grabbing and maintaining power, and they will use every trick in the book to accomplish that goal. The real danger here is the gradual cultural creep, which causes more and more people to accept what they want to achieve.

Inflation

The biggest problem we're going to have to face this year is the effects of inflation. There are two scary statistics I've seen so far, and things haven't gotten as bad as they're going to get. The first of those is that inflation cost the average family \$3,500 in 2021, and that was with the surge in inflation not kicking off until April. The second is that if we calculated inflation the same way we were in 1985, then the actual inflation rate would be at 15%, not 6.8%.

There are two prime indicators of a financial collapse, high inflation, and high unemployment. If we've got a 15% inflation rate, then our inflation is higher than during the period known as "the great inflation" between 1965 and 1982. It's considerably higher than it was during the Great Depression.

While the current unemployment rate doesn't sound all that bad at 5.2%, that figure can be misleading. They use as an unemployment rate only the people who are applying for unemployment. The labor force participation rate is a much better figure, which is at 61.8%. That's the lowest it has been since 1977.

As it stands right now, economists are saying that we will be in the current inflationary cycle for at least a decade. We can thank Congress for that, spending trillions of dollars that don't exist and having the Fed create that money out of thin air.

The Electric Grid

Our aging electrical grid should be a concern for everyone. Two of the big indicators that we are in trouble are Texas's problems during the February freeze of last year and California's issues with the need for rolling blackouts in the summertime. Interestingly enough, one of the major causes of both is political, bowing down to extreme environmentalism.

I love wind and solar power... for emergency power and going off the grid. But there are just too many problems with making them viable on a commercial basis, chief amongst them being that there is no practical way of storing electricity on the massive scale necessary to smooth out the fluctuations in power production and usage.

So much money is being invested in wind and solar power. If they are the only possible solutions to our energy needs, that necessary maintenance to the electric grid and existing power plants isn't happening. We are becoming more and more reliable on unreliable forms of energy production.

At the same time, our gap between system capacity and system usage is closing. Texas had a problem in February because there was not enough excess capacity in their grid so that when wind power had to be shut down, there wasn't something to pick up the gap. That problem will become more and more prevalent nationwide as we continue to dump billions of dollars into subsidizing the building of more wind farms.

What that means that at any moment in time, we are closer to a shortage of electric power generation than we have been at any time in almost a century. Should there be unexpectedly hot or cold days, we can expect the system to become overloaded, forcing those in control of the grid to institute rolling blackouts as the cure. We will begin to see those rolling blackouts as the norm rather than a rarity.

Electric Cars

While this problem is a few years away yet, the push towards electric cars is just going to make the problems with our electric grid all that much worse. Electric vehicles require a lot of electricity, and the only place they have to get it from is our already overworked electric grid.

California, the progressive testbed, already has an electricity shortage, yet they have passed a law stating that all new cars starting in 2030 must be electric. Where are they going to get that electricity from?

If you ask the environmentalists this question, the answer you get is “wind and solar,” showing how out of touch with the technology they are touting they really are. We aren’t ready to switch to electric cars, no matter how much they might desire it.

Of course, the other problem with electric cars is the massive amount of pollution they make, both in building and disposing of them. Those figures are high enough that they about catch up with how much fossil fuel pollution a car with an internal combustion engine creates through its entire life-cycle. But that’s a story for another day.

Crime

The last two years have seen a rise in mob violence, both in vandalism and theft. I wrote about this a couple of weeks ago, so I don’t want to spend much time on it here. But I do want to say that we can expect a spreading of this sort of crime around the country, even into cities that have not experienced it yet, especially the mob looting. It’s just too profitable for the criminals for them to ignore the potential.

It looks like the “defund the police” movement is losing steam, especially in some of the cities that were forerunners

in that misguided gesture. However, it will take years and a lot of hard work on the part of the police to undo the damage they created by cutting down their police forces.

In the meantime, gun sales will stay high, and ammunition shortages will still be with us, along with high ammunition prices. I don't expect that to be rectified until after the 2024 elections when we get a Republican back in the highest office in the land.

COVID

Democrat politicians are enjoying the feeling of power that the COVID-19 pandemic is giving them just too much. As Bill Maher has recently said, going to a blue state, with all the COVID restrictions in place, has become a pain in the _____, while going to a red state is pleasant. I don't see that problem going away anytime soon.

The reality is that COVID is here to stay. We're going to continue seeing variant after variant, just like we do with the flu. The good news is that the latest variant, the Omicron, seems less dangerous than previous ones. That's apparently rather typical for viruses, as the virus's mutations tend to make it less virulent.

Yet there's an entire political machine out there, which has made COVID their reason for existence, including such illustrious personages as Dr. Fauci. None of us knew his name before COVID came along, but now his name is known in every household in America. Some love him, while others throw darts at his image. Either way, it seems that Dr. Fauci has gotten to like all the attention he gets as one of the nation's top medical "experts" and is fully intent on making sure he keeps getting that attention.

We've already experienced five surges of cases and are in the midst of the sixth. At this point, anyone who tries to say

that the next surge or the one after that is going to be the last is lying. The number of cases will continue, although the severity and number of deaths will probably continue to decline. We've seen the death rate drop from somewhere over 30% in March of 2020 to the current 2%, which has been around for a while. I suspect that it will drop even lower between new variants of the virus that are less virulent and new medicines coming out to treat it.

However, that doesn't mean that the hype and fear-mongering will go away. There's too much to be gained, politically speaking, for those who have benefited from it to let go quickly. Expect to keep hearing how dangerous it is and threats of everything from lockdowns to locking up people who don't get vaccinated.

Having said all that, I still recommend taking the normal precautions that we would take for any other disease. Just don't buy the hype. Wash your hands, stay away from people, and if you can see your way to doing so, wearing a mask isn't that much of a problem. While the mask is more effective on the face of an infected person, it does have a small chance of protecting you.

Weather

Other than the February freeze, otherwise known as Winter Storm Uri, last year was a rather mild year in the weather department. We didn't have any problems with hurricanes, and other than the wildfires in California, there wasn't much else to worry about.

I think that means that Mother Nature has been saving things up for this year. There were a lot of hurricanes last year, but by some fluke, they mostly stayed out in the Atlantic. While there is always a percentage of storms that stay out there and never make landfall, 2021 was probably a record year for it. I imagine the hurricanes will be quick to make up for

it.

Other than that, we're going to see the usual mix of weather-related disasters. What's left of this winter will probably be rather harsh, with a good chance of another freeze akin to Uri. The tornado in December was a bad sign, as December isn't usually a month for tornadoes. To have such a bad one happen in the wintertime leaves a bit of foreboding for warmer weather.

We need to become more prepared to deal with these weather events than ever, including getting by without electricity. With the powers that ignore making repairs and upgrades to the grid, we can expect more frequent and longer blackouts, making them a regular part of our lives.



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