

THE CAPRICORN FESTIVAL

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Greetings Everyone!

With the holiday season finished, we move now into the New Year, looking forward to what is going to be quite an interesting period. Here in Rovereto the Christmas markets have been dismantled and life has returned to its normal rhythm. Here at the house the Christmas lights have come down, we have a new dog (Eddie, another rescue) and the basement awaits my coming to properly put things away. I'll get to it eventually, as the days here since the last letter have been pretty full-on. January is always one of my busiest months, with two letters instead of one and all the news stories in between.

There is a definite sense here the pandemic is passing, in that people here in the city just seem to ignore it now. The news continuously rabbits on about it, but no one much seems to pay attention to it. Folks just want their lives back. Here in Italy we do not have that many restrictions, anyway, so we don't see restriction protests in Italy like we are seeing in France and Germany, for instance. And now that the festivities have stopped, the momentum of the daily schedule has set in again. Life is good here, in general. I really have no complaints. That rhythm of daily life, though, brings in the element of Saturn – responsibilities, chores (chop wood, carry water and the like) time, as in the passing of days. And speaking of time, the times, they are about to be a-changin' in significant ways this year. We will cover that after a look at the full moon.

The Capricorn interval every year reminds us of the best and the worst in humanity. The season represents the great wisdom brought into incarnation as living examples – our world Teachers – and in Christian terms, the birth of Jesus. These beings represent all that is the best and the highest of human experience and wisdom, and should be the focus of the season. Instead, what we most often see in the Western Christmas season is the worst sort of materialism and conspicuous consumption. It also tends to teach our children about that sense of materialism and the fulfilment of desire, the expectation of material reward, rather than teaching them about what it means to be a good person. I know – Bah! Humbug! Yes, I know, too, we also teach them about the joy of giving. And it is a joy to see people's faces light up when they receive something from us. It is one of the truer expressions of Christmas – the joy of giving without thought of reward and the fulfilment of another person's sense of happiness. That brings in the true purpose of Capricorn, which is the realization of ultimate happiness, the bliss of enlightenment.

Esoteric Capricorn: We won't go into the orthodox side of Capricorn this year, with its well-known ambition, its striving for material fulfilment and so on. What we are interested in this year is being able to rise above all that, because Capricorn represents reaching the mountaintop, hence its symbolism of the mountain goat, in reality a chimeric sea-goat – half-goat, half sea creature. The mountaintop, in reality, represents the attainment of enlightenment, of rising above the concrete levels of earthly existence and taking in the cool, clear air of enlightenment and of the soul's supernal light. But the climb up the mountain is arduous and full of dangers, the ultimate danger being that of attachments to worldly goods and concerns. It is related in the Bible (the big pitfall in the climb up the mountain) by the story of the rich young man¹, who asked Jesus what good deed he could do to attain eternal life (full enlightenment). He was told to keep the commandments, which he said he did (the commandments being the discipline of Saturn). That said, Jesus then told him the following: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." When the young man heard this he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions."

There is wide misinterpretation of that passage among the Christian community, in that 'follow me' means to live by the example Jesus set – Great Compassion, tending to each according to their need, refusing no one who earnestly seeks and so on. The passage does not mean accepting Jesus as some personal savior. Any great Teacher only comes into our lives to give us examples as to how to live according to our own higher Self, which the Teacher represents. The story of Jesus is the story of every person, ultimately. That said, to get to the top of the mountain, one has to 'travel lightly', and that means letting go of attachments, of letting go of the control of the personality. One cannot carry the heaviest loads to the top of a high mountain. The air is too thin.

Esoterically the attainment of the mountaintop is representative of the kundalini fire rising into the head centers and burning away the final obstructions to the realization of the soul on its own plane, the first experience of enlightenment. It is experienced as a 'light supernal'. One then has attained the status of what in Buddhism is termed an 'arya being'. This has a certain significance. Once the bliss of enlightenment is experienced for the first time, it is said an overwhelming desire to 'return from the mountain' overtakes the arya being, because they recognize the suffering of those 'down below' and the only desire from thereon is to help others to realize the state of bliss the arya being has just experienced. It is also said that from the first experience of the bliss of enlightenment, the arya being begins to give any and all material possessions away, as well as personal attachments, and joyfully so. Thereon, the person, now more than human, has entered the Path of Seeing, on the ground of the Very Joyous, the first of the Buddhist Ten Grounds.

The preceding is the ultimate aim of Capricorn, to experience this transfiguration of the personality, to being one totally devoted to service to all beings for the sake of their enlightenment. This is the emergence of the Christ-child into universal consciousness, yet it always carries the onus of returning constantly to the earthly realms to guide others to 'that high place'. Hence, we have the esoteric motto of Capricorn: "Lost am I in light supernal, yet on that light I turn my back". This is the true story of Christmas for the West. From here we move on to the full moon and worldly affairs. And we see that there are many 'rich young men' these days who refuse to give of what they have for the betterment of all.

The full moon takes place on 17 Jan 2022 at 23:48 UT (18 Jan at 10:48 am AEDT). The Moon is [out-of-bounds](#) in this figure and opposes the Sun/Pluto conjunction, denoting heightened emotional tensions, greater opportunities to release subconscious hindrances to our soul expression, more strident uprisings of public opinion (like we are seeing in Europe), and on the other side, an increased effort by vested interests to keep us distracted with meaningless media events and outright obfuscation. The reasons for the latter will be outlined shortly.

Adding to heightened tensions and also awareness through this period are several other factors, among them an out-of-bounds Mars, Venus retrograde and Uranus making its direct station. What these factors point to is an ingathering of wisdom for this month (Venus), sudden and or unexpected changes becoming evident as a result (Uranus) and often with swift and fiery results (Mars). With these factors in mind, we take a brief look back over the last couple of years.

A retrospective: We need to take a look back to the start of the pandemic, which was marked by the much talked-about Saturn/Pluto conjunction in Capricorn and the accompanying lunar eclipse, both of which took place in January of 2020. The eclipse was also the full moon of Capricorn that year. The pandemic signaled a turning point in the world order. The reason for reviewing that period is to give us a hint of the evolutionary trajectory for the nations going forward. This year will mark a particular juncture in that regard, one which will establish the greater Eurasian bloc and the multipolar world order as the dominant focus of development for the immediate decades ahead. Western Europe will temporarily be excluded from that development to a large extent due to its connections with the UK and the United States, the latter two of which will be undergoing great internal domestic and political changes in the immediate years ahead. The juncture this year will revolve around two areas: economic and in military security. There will be several events taking place in the latter part of this year, if not before, which will tell us pretty definitively which way the winds of change are blowing. We will have a brief look at all that here, with a more specific look in the Chinese New Year letter in a couple of weeks. At the outset it is worth noting there is nothing to fear in what is taking place. And indeed, these times are ones of great opportunity for our spiritual development and service as we move ever more into the Aquarian Age.

Fun and games in NY: To set the tone for what is to follow, there was a particular incident that occurred in the last quarter of 2019 in the United States, one which was unreported at the time, for reasons that will become clear. [The date was 17 Sep 2019](#). The event was a 4.5 trillion dollar bailout of the Big 3 Wall Street banks for their Repo loans – Citigroup, JC Morgan Chase and Goldman Sachs. [Wall Street banks apparently had a very big problem months prior to the COVID-19 coronavirus](#) even being known. It is a long story, but the gist of it is the aforementioned banks own the New York Federal reserve and the COVID-19 crisis in the US was used as a cover in the following months, to blame the crisis for the banks' problems. This took place under Trump's watch. The reason for the bailout was to keep asset prices high and the NYSE buoyant, asset prices being rent prices, property valuations and so forth, all to the disadvantage of the average American. Essentially, the Fed was saving the speculators. The Fed, shall we say, was stretching the boundaries of the law and violated every aspect of the Dodd-Frank legislation designed to protect consumers. The loans were then passed on to the banks' trading affiliates, which is exactly what Dodd-Frank was supposed to prevent. Jerome Powell, head of the Fed, is appointed by the government. But he is loyal to the banks and favored them over saving the economy.

[The day after the bailout Powell cut interest rates on loans](#) a quarter of a percent, which infuriated Trump. The cut favored the banks. Trump was angered because Powell did not cut the interest rates still further to zero or near-zero, which would have been more than the quarter-percent cut. A further cut would have sent the stock market (the playground of the speculators and the wealthy) soaring ever-higher. The bailouts continued into 2020 under the Biden administration. The mainstream media has conducted a complete blackout on these stories. [JC Morgan and Citigroup were also involved in illegal Forex trading](#) and confessed to felony charges. "Guilty pleas are also expected by Royal Bank of Scotland and Barclays, while UBS, which cooperated early on in the probe, may receive a different charge." Deutsche Bank was also involved. The New York Fed turns a blind eye to such activities. With [the money-printing machine whirring away](#) in the US, the inflation rate in the US was running at around 7%. These banks and their minions are major donors to US politicians. Keep these points in mind as we go along here. The linked articles are from a site

that is very useful to keep bookmarked, as they track the shenanigans in New York that are leading to one of the biggest market crashes in history.

Saturn/Pluto: It may be helpful to review also what the Saturn/Pluto conjunction in Capricorn represented and foreshadowed. [There is a post on it from March of 2019](#), pre-pandemic. At that time we had no idea what was about to take place early in the next year. We knew tensions across the globe were rising, especially regarding tensions between the Anglo nations and the East, including Russia. Since then the trajectory of the West has come sharply into focus, and it has many people concerned, if not outright frightened. There is no need to be. In terms of cycles and history, what is evolving is simply in the natural order. Yes, there are true concerns to be had, but they are solvable at the same time, provided we work together. A brief comment from the linked post might offer a few clues:

“...Capricorn represents all that is best and worst in humanity. It represents the depths of materialism and the heights of spiritual attainment. And with Saturn together with Pluto there, what it presents to us are the ‘karmic chickens’ either coming to roost or laying golden eggs. The past decades have seen obscene grabs at wealth with the neo-liberal economic system, one that has set human advancement back and openly promoted selfishness, in the sense that “[Greed, for lack of a better word, is good.](#)” [short video, from 1987] It is that which will meet its timely and welcomed end as the ruling economic system, and not too soon, to be replaced by...who can say?

Neoliberalism and the West: The collective West, led in large part by Washington, is subject also to Washington’s misjudgments and mythology, as well as its insecurities. Corporate greed has been the dominant force in American politics for at least three decades. It is much the same in the UK, but is especially a problem in the US. Corporations and banks fund the campaigns of the politicians, corporations often headed by oligarchs. The politicians, thereby, are beholden to them. It is a system that has created monstrous inequality, inefficiency, a culture of dog-eat-dog and survival of the fittest, promoting the so-called ‘sovereign individual’ over the collective. What is a ‘sovereign individual, we might ask? [We have the following:](#)

“For 380 breathless pages, Lord Rees-Mogg [father of Jacob, British politician] and a co-author, James Dale Davidson [American] ...predicted that **digital technology would make the world hugely more competitive, unequal and unstable. Societies would splinter.** Taxes would be evaded. Government would gradually wither away. “By 2010 or thereabouts,” they wrote, **welfare states “will simply become unfinanceable”.** In such a harsh world, **only the most talented, self-reliant, technologically adept person – “the sovereign individual” – would thrive.**”

Where does the last sentence leave the vast majority of us, then? We can call this sort of thought fanciful and fantasy. But in reality it is neoliberal Libertarian-think that pervades what passes for conservative politics these days. The tech billionaires are also in this class. His book also predicted Brexit, which tells us Brexit had been in the Conservative mind-set for years before it actually even appeared as an idea in the public domain and happened. Brexit was never about sovereignty for the British citizen, but instead for these so-called sovereign individuals. It is the Libertarian dream that welfare states – i.e. nations with strong social welfare programs – as well as government regulations, disappear, to be replaced by a world where the few with know-how and connections would survive and thrive, while the bulk of the public would be left to their own devices. This is also reflected in the Schwab-ian WEF doctrine. We have seen this sort of capitalism as well as the neoliberal types advance their agendas and influence via ‘salami-slice’ tactics – gradually over time and stealthily. Keep these ideas in mind as we go along, because it is these people who hold power in the large across the Western world, which is why the lot of the public never seems to change, why the COVID pandemic has been so hard on Western nations, and why the rich only keep getting richer and richer.

The current system has given rise to the technocratic leadership we now have across the West, populated by younger, inexperienced types throughout the ranks who are promoted by and easily

manipulated by the vested interests – like Macron, [Baerbock](#), Obama, Trudeau, Adhern, [Truss \(soon to be\)](#) and Trump (even though old, he was green as a politician and easily swayed). We have seen that neoliberal greed throughout the pandemic. Even now there are commercials here on Italian TV calling for donations by the public for vaccines for the Global South, for example, saying only 7% of the people there have been able to get vaccines. Why should the public have to make such donations when our governments have the wherewithal to donate those vaccines to the needy? Instead across the West, our nations have [hoarded vaccines](#), have put [patent protection over the common good](#), have seen [the wealth of the CEOs](#) of these companies explode and then, we are not given a choice as to which vaccines if we want them, and we are mandated to be vaccinated with threats of fines if we do not comply or of being shut out of essential services. And then our politicians and media go on and talk about how *other* nations are autocratic and totalitarian.

The ignorance of youth: A common refrain from my father when he would witness his university students making poor life choices was, “The ignorance of youth”, accompanied by a slow shake of the head. The refrain can also be said of nations. The United States as a nation is young, and as common as any other. One of its major problems in moving forward into the Aquarian Age is its youth, its corporate and consumerist culture and the fact that it does not have a historical context with the other nations of the world – i.e., it was “born against history” and had no past to define and shape the present”, from a recent article. Another big factor in Washington’s inability to move forward was its ‘unipolar moment’, with the collapse of the Soviet Union, which led to hubris on the part of the more hawkish elements in the Beltway and the corporate interests that wanted desperately to carve up and plunder what was left of the USSR. Putin called a halt to it. Now what we see and hear out of Washington and the more vassal-like European centers is what we in the South would call a big case of butt-hurt over the loss of the largest part of Eurasia, and most especially Russia. That is [why Putin is cast as such a demonic figure in Western media](#). Well, it’s their own fault, these hawkish types, for their loss. It was they who would rather seek to control everything for their own benefit rather than cooperate for the good of all. Not all of Washington is like this. But to keep one’s job there, a certain line has to be toed. To illustrate the true nature of US and Western foreign policy since the fall of the Soviets, we have the following:

“U.S. engagements in the world over the past 20 years reveal a grim record of failed ventures. Most have been caused by **unrealistic goals, blinkered views of the field of action** [think: Blinken], **overweening pride, an ignorance of foreign places and their history, and an unseemly readiness to take complacent comfort in fantasy worlds that exist only in its own imagination**. In short, American foreign policy has been misguided – *badly and consistently misguided*. The inevitable *frustrations and failures owe equally to sheer incompetence*. An endless string of errors – diplomatic, military and political – is as **difficult for the nation to reconcile with its ‘can-do’ self-image as is the admission of the glaring discrepancy between the belief in the country’s providential mission and its increasingly evident ordinariness**.”

Emphases added. For those readers who have studied developmental psychology, do we see any youth in the preceding? A [recent article in the Wall Street Journal illustrates the lack of awareness](#), willful ignorance or just abject stupidity that besets Western elites. That includes the higher-ups in all the tech companies, who think they know the public better than average citizens knows themselves. Regarding the preceding quote, [the entire article is a must-read and a real reality call](#) for people who still might believe in Obama-esque statements such as the US being ‘the one indispensable nation’ and the likes of, “The United States of America is the most powerful nation on Earth. Period. It’s not even close. Period...” Well, it’s not any longer. [There is a short video that explains the situation better than pages of text](#). But the beliefs by the denizens of the think tanks, our media, many of our politicians and our educational/indoctrination system tell us the US is the greatest, most powerful nation on Earth. We in the West are about to take on the look of the sophomore in the linked video. It is a classic movie moment. However, there are people in the Beltway who do have some sense and who *do* know [what is going on](#):

“...there are top level officials in the US who talk in different terms and indicate that at least some powers behind the curtain have a more objective view of reality and the relevant facts. Some of these facts are 1) that the US has lost the arms race, 2) the US government debt is out of control, 3) the US has the worst inflation in 37 years, 4) the US budget deficit is out of control, 5) the US economy is no longer the largest in the world, 6) the US continues to pour money into obsolete weapons systems, 7) The US social, racial, education, and health policies are disasters. Russia, on the other hand, is doing reasonably well on these factors. All the analysts at Langley and the Pentagon cannot be blind to these facts.”

The main event: China, too, is doing well with the cited factors and [just had a very good year](#), referring back to [the Sagittarius letter](#). So, what is about to happen? This brings us to what will be one of the most important events of the year, which will be a confrontation between Russia and certain Western powers. But without understanding Russia’s history and the great suffering its people have undergone on and off over the last century, it will be impossible to understand what is about to take place and why. To begin to understand, how many people are aware of the talks that just took place between Russia, the US and NATO? These were the result of what our media tells us was [a Russian ultimatum](#). In reality, the ‘ultimatum’ was Russia stating its demands for its security, given tensions in Ukraine and NATO mission-creep to Russia’s borders over the years.

In an opinion piece in the New York Times, from 1997, George Kennan, called ‘the grand old man of American foreign policy’, stated it was ‘[a fateful error](#)’ to expand NATO eastward to Russia’s borders, incorporating the ex-Soviet satellite states. Further, an open letter signed by the foreign policy heavyweights of the day in 1997 called the NATO expansion, “a policy error of historic proportions”. We are about to see the results of that ‘fateful error’. Why was this ‘historic policy error’ allowed to proceed? – because the [arms industry saw a bonanza in selling the NATO expansion](#). So, the NATO expansion was not about ‘defending Europe’. It was about financing the American military-industrial complex.

The Russian ‘ultimatum’ was scorned in the press, with [all the usual tiresome rhetoric](#). [The outcome of those talks regarding the Russian demands was a foregone conclusion](#) – [Western denial](#) and [doubling down](#). [We see more hubris instead](#) – for now. Still, talks between all the parties involved are needed and welcomed, especially concerning the alternative, which is continued escalation toward a conflict. At least now all the cards are out on the table, whether or not Western leaders understand them. The West has until Wednesday (19th January) to give a written response to the Russian demands. As if to stress the seriousness of the Russian concerns, a nuclear-armed Russian submarine [has reportedly recently surfaced, undetected off the American east coast](#). “Don’t forget your little English assignment, comrades!” We might suppose this incident, if true, amounts to holding the mirror to Washington psychologically. If there is no written response, then Russia will act. ‘Russian aggression’ will then be trumpeted throughout the media, whereas the Russians will see them as acts of self-protection.

With all the preceding in mind, let us be quite clear: Tensions with Russia are going to escalate this year and the fear factor in the media will be running at an all-time high unless Washington and NATO come to their senses. Yet, we hear [Stoltenberg reiterating that Ukraine and Georgia are slated at some point to join NATO](#) (video, in English), saying NATO had decided that in 2008. NATO membership for those two nations is Russia’s red line.

What is [at the heart of the West’s animosity toward Russia](#) (read all three sections) lies buried in historical documents from over a century ago, the aim of which was to destroy any hint of communism/socialism and to gain firm control over the Eurasian landmass. The section in the linked article regarding Lord Halifax is quite enlightening if not disturbing. It goes to show the kind of evil that is whitewashed from our popular historical record. What is outlined in the article is a plan the minions of Wall Street, Washington and the City of London thought they had in their grasp with the fall of the Soviet Union. Going back to the Saturn/Pluto conjunction, [that dream of theirs is](#)

[about to be checkmated by Russia](#). This was the reason for Russia's demands for NATO's withdrawal to its 1997 borders – an act which would essentially end NATO's usefulness, even existence. But it will go largely unreported in the media, the reason being it will be a humiliation for the minions and give a direct realization to the Western public of the falsehoods we have been told about Russia and our own standing in the world. Now, what we face is a showdown between the aforementioned minions and the Russia-China axis. It is a big reason we see the likes of Baerbock and Draghi in positions of power in the EU now, as an attempt to unify the pan-Western bloc against Russia. It won't work.

The hawks in Washington have already prepared a list of 'sanctions from Hell' on Russia and Russians, should the Russians act, which are very likely to be applied now that the Western powers have rejected the Russian proposals of treaties. But it might surprise some readers to know that the Russian proposals are meant for the greater *security* of Europe, in a spirit of cooperation rather than as threatening behavior. The sanctions by the Americans, if implemented, would *de facto* be a declaration of economic war and would serve to sever European financial mechanisms for payments to and from Russia, effectively cutting Russia off from the Western SWIFT system of international payments. It is doubtful many people realize what it would mean. In such a case, for instance, how would the EU pay for its supply of Russian gas, which is roughly 30% of Europe's gas supply? They couldn't. That gas would cease to flow. The immediate effect of such sanctions would be a new Iron Curtain, with the EU left to freeze through the winter and with EU households scrambling to find the funds to pay for their energy needs, if they can even get the energy. Such a move is very short-sighted on the part of the EU leaders who advocate for such sanctions – an act equivalent to economic suicide – and it shows the lack of any concern the hawkish elements in Washington have for the European public, their supposed allies. Of course, it would greatly favor American energy suppliers, but at the same time it would also cut the Russian supply of hydrocarbons to the United States. And such actions show little thought as to how the Chinese, now *de facto* allies of Russia, would respond to such measures.

Sergei Lavrov just gave his annual presser ([video link](#), see [this also](#)) in which he addressed many of these issues and related questions. It would be informative to hear the Russian side of unfolding events. It is one of my 'popcorn videos', in that it is a long video, but worth seeing to the end. One of the questions posed to Lavrov was what the Russian response might be. He stated explicitly that the patience of the Russians regarding NATO and the actions of Washington had come to an end. He was not at liberty to say much, except to say that any military response would be made after consultations with the military/technical officials within Russia, if necessary. He also mentioned at one point, regarding sanctions, that Russia had taken all that into account and was prepared for any eventuality, adding that Russia and China were also in close cooperation on such matters. This alludes to preparations well underway for completely bypassing the American dollar as a payment mechanism, an effort that would quickly draw in nations also under threat from US sanctions. The threat produced to the value of the US dollar is evident enough. Refer back to the quote above with the bolded points to get an idea of how short-sighted and ill-conceived Washington's efforts toward Russia and by extension the EU have become. We perhaps begin to get an idea why the Saturn/Pluto conjunction has signaled such a shift in influence from the West to the East. But financial wars – which such sanctions would represent – have turned to hot wars in the past. Hence, we hear all the talk of war with Russia in the media.

Possible Russian actions: In recent comments I had mentioned the possibility of something like a Cuban Missile Crisis v.2.0 for this year. Better analyses from people in the know about Russian capabilities dismiss such a frightening scenario in the immediate future, but it could still happen. Whatever happens, it will be unexpected, but will serve to show the powers that be in Washington and London the true capabilities of the Russians and the futility of trying to push NATO eastward, or of continuing to arm Ukraine. Instead, what we are likely to see are isolated events, starting with

things like unexplained interruptions in military communications, war planes suddenly going blind, cancellation of Western flights to Russia and allied nations, spikes in arrest of ‘opposition figures’ (a.k.a. terrorists) throughout Asia and so forth. These would be the preliminaries. If the West chooses to ignore the more subtle warnings, then the [‘pain dial’ according to one commentator](#), would be turned up. We would see things like the bombing of NATO missile installations and the like across Eastern Europe, made to look like ‘accidents’ or sabotage, with plausible deniability. That would be a worst-case scenario. The minions of the Beltway and London will know very well what happened, as in message received, and they will be unable to stop such actions. But the world will be spared a more frightening event, like a hot conflict or a wider war. Russia has no beef with the Western public and wants to avoid a war, if possible. It is the policy-makers who will feel the Russian heat, with the public hopefully left largely unscathed.

At some point NATO will have to withdraw. In fact, we can probably expect EU states, such as France and Italy, to become so disillusioned with Washington as to begin the process of withdrawing from NATO or even the bloc. They already feel excluded by Washington. Washington will eventually have to sign the Russian papers in some form and look for some sort of face-saving withdrawal. Watch for it over the next few years. We will see similar events in the South China Sea and the Middle East. [Recent events in Kazakhstan](#) have been a further embarrassment and setback for Western intelligence agencies, with the failed attempt at their color revolution there. Central Asia has just been sealed off from any major Western interference. The next action by the West will likely be in [Transnistria](#), if [Washington continues to go by the RAND playbook](#). They do not seem to be able to help themselves. Call all this crazy if you like. Just keep your eyes on the news cycle, with reports of unexplained events or even ‘large explosions’ in some remote area of Europe no one has ever heard of. The Russians have many options to check the advance of NATO and to push it back to its old borders, and not just military options. We won’t go into it here.

However, if Washington decides to push things further, Russia does have the capability to stop NATO in its tracks. They have planned for it for years now, knowing the plans for Russia the West has had for many decades. NATO is but a shell of its former military might and capabilities, with European armies in a poor state of affairs, led by defense ministers with no military experience sometimes, and with Europeans in the mind that the US will have their backs in the event that war does eventuate. There would be no time to prepare if Russia is goaded or pushed into war. The Russians won’t initiate it, but [they can end it rather quickly and decisively](#). The pundits and politicians who advocate for war with Russia have no idea, and it has created the situation wherein we have found ourselves in our relations with Russia today. If these people decide to go for broke and push issues further, Europe, not Russia, will suffer, while Washington will sit on its collective hands and dither. These people think Russia is weak. This brings us to the second event that could likely transpire in the 2nd half of this year, related to economics. And that has much more to do with domestic politics than it does with international relations. It is also part and parcel of what is emerging since the aforementioned eclipse and conjunction.

Finance and elections: We in the West, especially in the US, face another round of elections with the midterms in the US and other elections in Europe. Truss will likely be installed as PM in the UK soon. Prince Andrew has just been stripped of his titles due to his alleged(?) philandering with a minor. Boris Johnson just issued his attempt at an apology for partying while his constituents were burying their loved ones during COVID lockdowns, with Conservative MPs calling for his resignation. Boris has responded with his [‘Operation Save Big Dog’](#). He is certainly in the dog house with the British public. Biden’s polling is not healthy at all, either. The pundits in the mainstream media across the West covering the coming elections will blather on about this and that candidate, but there is something we should keep in mind, having looked at this larger picture. Our election cycles in the West now are about whom will best support the donor class. It has nothing to do with the real issues, though a few candidates will either bring them up or give them lip service:

“America chooses leaders, if so they quite are, in popularity contests, and so has leaders whose chief accomplishment is being popular. When last I looked, I think that in all of Congress there was one scientist. Since American leaders are elected every two, four, or six years, they spend more time running for reelection than governing – posing, polishing their images, consulting pollsters, testing the wind. Today the midterms preoccupy Washington with polls looking not at what the country needs but at how not to look soft on China or Russia. In 2024, will we get more Biden, or Harris? Trump? Some pretty governor whose chief appeal will be that s/he is not Biden or Trump? None of whom could do high-school algebra.

Second, the inherent and ineradicable weakness of democracies, that the great majority of the public lack the intelligence, knowledge, interest, or some combination of these, to be allowed to vote. So do most of Congress. They are elected for their ability to be elected, nothing else. Hiding this ignorance, both of people and leaders, is an important duty of the media. Reporters ask, “Senator, what do you think of America’s Afghanistan policy?” not, “Do you have the slightest freaking idea of where Afghanistan *is*?”

[The preceding is a curmudgeonly look at American politics](#), but it applies across much of the West, too. We just saw this with the elections in Germany, now with their Atlanticist ‘stoplight’ coalition. That coalition has just given the green light to further Russophobia in Europe. Australia and the UK are no different, really. All the major parties suffer from the same financial malady of having to raise enough money for advertising space. No advertisement, no exposure, no election. This is a big pointer as to how we are manipulated. Who puts up the money for these advertisements and endorsements? A great number of leaders in the West now are not chosen to lead on their merits, but on their educational status, and often in fields like humanities, economics, law and what passes as political science (which is based in whitewashed history and indoctrination instead of *actual* history and experience). Education is not leadership experience, though, although being placed in positions of leadership is often a great educational experience, as [Obama found out late into his term in office](#). We are often not given a choice of people who can actually lead, but who instead *think* or *are told* they can lead. Perhaps some changes to our democracies are in order. Perhaps money should not be the overriding factor in being elected or electable.

The point to the preceding comments on democracy is this: We are told democracy makes us strong, that it is the best system in the world, a much sought after system. But over the last decades we have seen the erosion of media coverage, as in not requiring opposing points of view to be heard in American media (and it is much the same in Murdoch media) and with the (il)liberal media dominating the air space. This is undemocratic, since it excludes dialog and the voices of segments of the population. We also see increasing censorship across the internet, also undemocratic. Of interest is that one of the bastions of the liberal media, [CNN, has just lost 90% of its viewership over the last year](#), with viewers shifting to more right-wing sites like Fox News – a Murdoch outlet. And Fox is no more worthy of trust than CNN. The other thing that has contributed to the erosion of media coverage is the media takeover by oligarchs, including the internet sites and the takeover of campaign funding by corporations and the very wealthy, all of which favors the neoliberal system. Given the way the West has handled the pandemic, what do we realistically expect to happen in the next few years? Given inflationary pressures, supply line shocks, the massive printing of fiat currency – [indeed, the fact that our economies are not based in anything tangible and thus have no true value other than what we are told](#) – and now the energy crunch in Europe, the threat of bypassing the dollar, and on and on, is it any wonder we may in fact see a sudden shift in our financial/economic structure this year?

Our electoral systems these days in our democracies are at the behest of the neoliberal system, elections which only further that system, elections that only further entrench the agendas of Wall Street and the City of London, along with all of their millions of adherents. It is those millions of adherents, in general having deep pockets, who aid in vetting our candidates and exclude those who advocate for an overhaul of the present system. Materialism is very deeply embedded in our political life, to exclusion of our spirituality and the betterment of the human condition. We in the

West can hardly say now that our current system has benefitted the general public, given the behavior of our governments over the past two years. And this will begin to show as people increasingly rebel as more and more of us wake up to what is going on. It will show in the voting booths. And candidates who tell the public what they want to hear, like we saw with Trump and other candidates, will win. This is just human nature. This will only accelerate the fractious nature of our societies. It has the danger of leading to authoritarian leaders – truly dangerous autocrats. We will cover the economic aspects of what is happening in the near future, but underlying that is the wider geopolitical situation, described above.

In closing, should we be alarmed at what we see taking place? No, not at all. Saturn, as with the Saturn/Pluto conjunction, represents opportunity. It calls on us to cast aside our old modes of thought, to work through the challenges involved and to give us cause to build a better future going forward. Saturn calls upon us to make better choices and to see our responsibility for what has brought us to our current state of affairs, whether personal or international. Pluto represents the end of old situations. At this Capricorn interval we are reminded of what has worked well and where we have need to re-think our lives, our loves and our responsibilities. If we can work together the way forward is much easier. We are being prompted to look at what is real to us, what is untrue and to call those people who go against the greater good of humanity to account. We must become aware that our challenges lie within our own borders and have little if anything to do with nations across oceans or hundreds of kilometers away. Our problems are our own, speaking of individual nations, and that is where our immediate focus should be. What happens across the waters and outside our borders is not our concern. The main threat we face is from some of our own politicians and unelected officials, people who have made quite comfortable lives for themselves on the backs of other peoples' misery, at home and abroad.

If news of Russia and financial adjustments sounds frightening, the best thing to do is to take it all as a sort of exercise in discrimination. Any news item, if we want to call it that, which causes a strong emotional reaction, should be held up to the light of day and studiously examined. There is a lot of that going around these days. It is better to focus on our communities and in finding our quiet center within ourselves, and to ready ourselves for yet another barrage of fearmongering. Our best defense is to educate ourselves about whatever seems to be of concern. In that, we find solutions. In all, we see that 2022 is going to be quite an interesting year. Just keep in mind this is all just a passing moment in history, albeit one that will present us with ample opportunities. The old system is passing, and as it struggles to stay alive it causes great disturbance, especially to those people who seek to keep it alive. We have no need to buy into that struggle. Our purpose is for the future, for whatever wisdom we can bring to bear in the present moment, and to live as an example of calm and wisdom in the midst of the whirl and clamor of events. They are just events, after all. They will pass. We, however, will persist and grow from the experience. As we go forward into this year, be of good heart. Very great and needed changes to our world order are taking place. We are here to be those changes and to implement them. In supporting each other, we rise together to the light of day.

Capricorn blessings,

Malvin

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malvin@malvinartley.com

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¹ *The Bible*: Matthew 19: 16 – 22