

CHINESE NEW YEAR 2022
THE YEAR OF THE BLACK TIGER
(THE TIGER CROSSING THE FOREST)

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Time once again for the Chinese New Year letter. The lunar New Year starts on February 1st this year and always starts at the new moon in the Western sign Aquarius. That is also the start of the Tiger Month, which always starts the lunar New Year. Thus, the Tiger overlaps the Western sign Aquarius, in the West representing groups of all sorts (including legislative bodies, alliances and congregations of people of all types), humanitarian goals, technology, futuristic thinking, free will, friendliness and friends, wireless and communications across long distances and legislation – the rule of law. But we are not talking about Aquarius with the lunar New Year. This Tiger is ruled by the Water element, normally associated with Mercury, and this Tiger will speak to us eloquently this year about the evolving changes in our international order. It is a year to act courageously, yet diplomatically. And there is always an unexpected surprise with the Water Tiger, also known as the Black or Blue Tiger – called poetically, 'The Tiger Crossing the Forest'.

This particular Tiger is very good at working out deals diplomatically behind closed doors. This is typically what we have seen in past Water Tiger Years, to be described as we go along here. Water rules communication. Mercury is the 'Water Planet', so putting this in Western terms, we have a situation of Mercury *governing* Aquarius, as the Orientals would see it. The Element (Water) rules the Branch (Tiger) and the kind of transformation involved, the Branches in this case being both the Month and the Year. The Tiger is a branch (period) of a larger cycle of 12, not to get too technical. So, we have the Tiger Year being governed by the transformative element of Water. What does Water represent in the Oriental system, then, as that will give us a good idea as to how to view this

year? Water is associated primarily with willpower, communication, release, listening, divination and contemplation. This is a thoughtful, contemplative Tiger. Sociologically, Water is associated with the clerical, mining and chemical sectors of workers. This year clerical workers will be particularly busy, as will the energy sector (oil, coal and gas are associated with mining). Water is calm and clear. It abhors upsets and promotes meditative states. Fear destroys the good effects of Water, and *the task immediately before us at the start of this year is to overcome fear.*

As a technical note, this year the new moon of Aquarius is before the *li chun*, the first day of spring in the Chinese solar calendar. The Four Pillars are based in the solar calendar, however, so for people wanting to know their animal sign for the year, the year always starts at the *li chun* for one's animal sign. And for this year, the *li chun* is February 3rd. So, for people born between the 1st and 3rd of February this year, their animal sign will still be the Ox. This year also ends before the *li chun* next year, marking the Year of the Black Tiger as being a 'bright' year. Overall, the situation for the year is seen to be positive and advantageous for growth and development. There is a caveat, though.

Since the Year and the Month Pillars are the same for this year, we have a situation going into the year called *fu yin*, which is not seen to be favourable. In fact, it tends to take away good fortune and to cause stress, like we are seeing now. [I did a post on the phenomenon, describing it.](#) The general import is one of losses, upsets, depression and personal damage. This combination started a month ago at the Capricorn new moon, and it is when the news of problems in Ukraine began as well as problems for the British PM. That will pass at the next new moon, starting the Month of the Water Rabbit, which should see a lessening of tensions. This setup is very typical of Tiger years, one of the reasons Tigers are seen to be at times problematic and at other times symbols of strength and fortitude, which the doubled Pillars can also bring.

The Tiger is associated with leadership. Tigers exude confidence and exclude even the possibility they could be inferior to anyone else. It is seen as the life duty of a Tiger to take on the responsibility of leadership. Referring back to the *fu yin* phenomenon, the problems for Tigers always come from making a break with the past. Leadership requires sometimes difficult decisions, decisions that often upset the status quo. Thus, dangers do not present themselves from new experiences, which the Tiger actually relishes, but from 'crossing the forest of the past'. Upsetting the old order has brought many an unwitting Tiger undone. So, without further ado, we have a look at the Four Pillars (BaZi chart) for the year and see what this Tiger has to tell us.

Lunar New Year: 1 Feb 2022 13:45 (CCT -8:00)

Hour	Day	Month	Year
Stem: 10 yin water	Stem: 2 yin wood	Stem: 9 Yang Water	Stem: 9 Yang Water
Branch: VIII Earth Sheep <i>Sheep in a Flock</i>	Branch: X Metal Rooster <i>Cock Crowing at Noon</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Crossing the Forest</i>	Branch: III Wood Tiger <i>Tiger Crossing the Forest</i>
Combined Wood <i>Pliant Wood</i>	Combined Water <i>Rains and Springs</i>	Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>	Combined Metal <i>Bronze Mirror</i>

Li Ch'un (Start of the Chinese Solar Year): 3 Feb 2021 22:58 (CCT -8:00)

Water/Black Tiger: There are many hidden perils in leaving the present situation. Circumspection is the order of the day. This can be a perilous time. The ability to divine the future and distant worlds.

Element Counts:

Wood: 4 - Inventive, very creative, very artistic

Fire: 0 - Quiet, domestic

Earth: 1 - Too flexible, yielding

Metal: 3 - Sportive, astute

Water: 4 - Eloquent, adventurous

CONSTELLATION OF DAY – Animal: Monkey: **Don't break the rules today.**

Day Indicator: I – Completion – All things are favored on this day, especially long journeys.

Tetragram 10: Distortion: Yang chi assists. **All things cast off their obscuring wrappings.**

1 Feb (Daytime): **Recovering from small mistakes, the wise one always learns.**

Divining the year: From the bolded points above we see that this year bears watching, as in for hidden dangers – dangers due to misjudgement. It is best to sit and think long and hard about actions going forward and to consider all possibilities. But in doing so, we are able to creatively shape a good future going forward. The future is more assured if we abide by the rules, too. In sitting in calm contemplation, the ‘obscuring wrappings’ of all things are cast aside and the future is seen with clarity. This will be a year for revelations. Individual leaders are indicated by the Day Pillar, and that shows a ‘Direct Resource’ placement, especially for the East. The leaders who will prevail are the ‘Big Picture’ leaders, who are able to see what is common for the good of all. It is a year that will require a creative and inventive outlook. It is also a year that will be marked by eloquence for those people who can rise to the occasion, as well as a year for great adventures.

Tiger years – 2022, 2010, 1998, 1986, 1974, 1962 and onwards in divisions of 12 – are always years of intrigue, of plans being formed behind the scenes, of military posturing and changes in the balance of power in regions and internationally. In terms of changes in the balance of power, in 2010 we saw the beginning of the Arab Spring uprising, ending with the destruction of Libya. In 1998 we saw the beginning of the dissolution of Yugoslavia (Kosovo War), the end of Suharto’s reign in Indonesia, the Good Friday Agreement in Ireland, Chavez elected in Venezuela, the European Central Bank being formed and Clinton bombing Iraq. In 1986 the Single European Act was signed, Marcos went into exile from the Philippines, we heard the first words about Glasnost and Perestroika in the Russian Duma, there was the Iran-Contra Affair, and informal stock trading taking place for the first time in communist China. In 1974 there was the Carnation Revolution in Portugal ending 41 years of dictatorship, the Turkish invasion of Cyprus, Nixon resigned, Haile Selassie was deposed, Whitlam was re-elected in Australia, leading for him to be dismissed the following year in a soft coup. In 1962 the biggest news of the year was the Cuban Missile Crisis and the pivot toward escalation by the US in the Vietnam War. Regarding the latter, Kennedy wanted to end it and started to do so, but the military-industrial complex expressly wanted the war to escalate. What happened to Kennedy the following year still plagues the conscience of the US.

We could go back further from here – 1950, 1938, 1926, 1914, 1902 – and see similar themes evolving and taking place, but we won’t. Suffice it to say, though, all of these years bear a common thread, part of which is economic, another part pertaining to control of resources, and another part pertaining to assertions of dominance in international affairs. 1914 and 1938 in particular stand out, as what happened in those years precipitated the two World Wars. 1902, another Water Tiger year, involved Cuba and the United States and this Black Tiger year will be no different, mentioned later. This year, all three factors of the common thread uniting the Tiger Years in the last 100+ years are present and mark this year as being particularly important in the evolving multipolar world and a new ‘peace in our times’. As a result, this year will also appear to be quite tumultuous as power

across the West wanes and a new Asia emerges, to incorporate the larger portion of Europe in the near future. That brings us to our present state of affairs and a message going forward. With these points in mind, we dive straight into the year ahead – and it is going to be quite a year!

Gone to the Pure Land: The world was recently saddened by the death of the one of the most famous and influential Buddhist teachers, [Thích Nhất Hạnh](#), of the Vietnamese Từ Hiếu Temple, near Huế. He was the leader of the largest monastic order in the West. He passed on at midnight on the 22nd of January at his temple in Vietnam. He was also founder of the [Plum Village Tradition](#), primarily a Mahayana tradition, but also drawing on elements of Theravada and Zen Buddhism. Nhất Hạnh was a ‘Tiger in the Forest’, born on the day of the Water Rooster in the month of the Earth Dog (Libra) of the Fire Tiger year (1926). We don’t know the hour of his birth. But the day and the year symbols are of particular relevance for the present. The Water Rooster carries the symbolism of the ‘Sharp Sword’, meaning very sharp and discriminating mind training in his case, with the Rooster giving a very refined presentation of the discipline. The Fire Tiger made him adept at ‘reshaping resources’ and working behind the scenes (as in subjectively) in the jungles (forest) of our modern society. His was an extraordinary combination of factors, befitting an extraordinary life and message for humanity. His teachings, along with so many others, have particular relevance today. P4

We could go into a long discourse on Buddhism and Oriental astrology here, but [one of his quotes stands out in relation to our current state of East-West relations and the high state of anxiety it has generated](#) among many people:

“Someone asked me, ‘aren't you afraid about the state of the world?’ ‘I allowed myself to breathe and then I said, ‘what is most important is not to allow your anxiety about what happens in the world fill your heart. If your heart is filled with anxiety, you will get sick, and you will not be able to help.’ There are wars - big and small - in many places, and that can cause us to lose our peace. Anxiety is the illness of our age. We worry about ourselves, our family, our friends, our work, and the state of the world. If we allow worry to fill our hearts, sooner or later we will get sick.”

Along that line, there will be wars and rumors of wars, [we are told](#):

You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but **see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen**, but the end is still to come. Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. **All these are the beginning of birth pains.**

One door closes, another opens: This is not to suggest for a moment we are seeing the so-called ‘end times’, as the Bible passage is addressing the second coming. Those end times lay untold millennia into the future. But we *are* seeing the end of an unsuitable world order, one that has caused the decline of the middle class, an increase in authoritarian policy and increasing poverty and wealth disparity across the West, along with the emergence – the beginning of birth pains – of alternatives to that Western system. It is within the cycles and historical precedent that the East is rising and that the economic systems across the world will see major adjustments in the immediate years ahead, starting this year. There is nothing to fear in this and it should, in fact, be celebrated, keeping in mind we do have many options being laid out before us and that humanity will weather this period and go on to greater achievements. Rumors of doom and dystopia for the world as we know it are without foundation and should be vigorously countered, with better choices being put forward instead. But we always hear that sort of hysteria when major changes are facing us as a collective. What we need and must endeavour to do is to look at things from a calm and objective perspective – from a state of *samadhi* if we can manage it – or at least disconnected from the flood of media.

There is one fact to keep in mind as we go along here, along with many others. The pandemic was a big sign that all is not well with the Western world. And it is true the East has its challenges, too.

We have seen crisis after crisis in the last two years across the world and much of it has revolved around economic realities, as well as the pandemic being used to cover up those realities. We started to address the latter in [the Capricorn letter](#) ('Fun and games in NY'). Thus we see the need for a big economic shakeup and reorganisation toward more sensible lines, lines which contribute toward the betterment of *all* within society. There are forms of capitalism which can do that and which we have had. There are forms of socialism that can do so, too, regardless of the rhetoric we hear to the contrary. But to get to that stage the financial capitalism of the West must end in its present form. There is a place for it, a small place for sure, but not as the main form of capitalism. It may surprise some readers to know that nations like China incorporate some of the features of capitalism and very limited forms of financial capitalism have their place there. The Chinese call it 'socialism with Chinese characteristics'. And the American and the British people do want certain forms of socialism, though they would not dare to call it that in the current political climate.

Economies of thought: What is more likely to emerge in the intervening decades are various forms of mixed economies, where no one economic system dominates, but where they coexist for the benefit of the entire society. The chaos we see today is a result of the dying system, with rumors of wars, attempts at color revolutions, nationwide COVID restrictions (most often unnecessary), divisions promoted within societies and so on all going toward and being gamed by vested interests to keep the old system alive. What has particularly emerged as a result of COVID in the West is increased monopolization by multinational corporations, financial consortia and tech giants due to small business being killed by the restrictions, and now with inflation putting further hardship on individuals and small business, all to be addressed here later.

The inflation we see is worldwide and is a result of numerous factors – supply chain shocks increasing demand, money being printed at a dizzying pace and poured into financial markets in order to keep asset prices and stock values high, companies jacking up prices in an attempt to recoup the losses incurred over the past couple of years (those companies which survived), and years of poor financial policy on the part of lawmakers, policies which have lined their pockets and which have gone a long way toward producing the present conditions. As a result, there is little political will at present to change those policies because the existent policies favour the wealthy politicians and enable the system to just keep rolling along, while short-term thinking among politicians just keeps kicking the can down the road instead of putting it in the trash. Some painful measures are coming, but they are needed at the same time.

Media hysteria: With the message of Nhất Hạnh in mind, what follows will seem fantastic and as rank Russian disinformation to some readers. But unless we understand what is happening after taking in *all* points of view and facts on the ground, as it were, we will not understand what is going to take place this year and why. Americans and British, along with many Europeans, have a very stilted and false view of Russia due to centuries ([really](#), language alert) of indoctrination and Western propaganda. And [history is whitewashed to exclude the Russian contributions to freedom and democracy](#). Readers from the esoteric community might conveniently set aside the fact that [Blavatsky](#) and [the Roerichs](#) were all Russian. The [Roerich Pact](#) seems to have been forgotten these days. Their messages of peace and the brotherhood of all nations have been lost in the media swill of 'Russian aggression'. Along the lines just mentioned we have the current hysteria in the Western media regarding 'an imminent Russian invasion' of Ukraine. Instead of being imminent now, that 'imminence' has been pushed back to mid-February. [It is utter nonsense](#), and the narrative is beginning to fall apart just in the last couple of days, as of this writing.

So, what is the purpose of the hype and fearmongering if it lacks any basis? Here again, we have a story line being pushed in order to cover for and distract the public from the very real financial and political realities of our Western governments. The political fortunes of Biden and Boris are shaky at best and all the talk of Russian invasion takes the focus away from them and perhaps gives a boost to their ratings – they hope. The latter isn't working out too well for them.

Follow the money: The simple answer as to why we are seeing the ‘invasion is immanent’ narrative comes down to this: Follow the money. The war rhetoric feeds the military-industrial complex (MIC) in the US and the media ratings as well, [and the MIC says so openly](#). The [CEOs of the biggest ‘defense’ contractors are openly candid](#) about their glowing prospects. The longer they can milk this false narrative and have the public believe it, the richer they become. And now the [Democrats under Pelosi are pushing for a massive ‘Ukraine defense bill’](#). Midterms are coming and the Dems need to support their donors and build up a campaign ‘war chest’. Ukraine needs to be defended against the American Congress instead. That may sound cynical, but it is closer to the reality than we may like to think. So, we know the MIC is benefitting from the increased tensions. Who else would benefit in the longer term if something big enough could be pinned on Russia? American fracking interests and Canadian coal tar sand mining, for one. We will see why shortly. The Poles would benefit, too, so they think, because they may stand to regain the Lviv region of Ukraine [should Ukraine break into pieces](#), which was part of Poland prior to WWII, along with the money that comes from being on NATO’s front lines. Who would lose, though? – Central and Western Europeans. Russia would lose economically for a time, too, but only temporarily. And the American taxpayers would be big losers, both by dint of the extra tax dollars spent on weapons to Ukraine, NATO deployments and the very fact they were duped into supporting a war in a country [most Americans probably cannot find on a map](#) and which has no strategic importance to the US. But, we ship weapons to Ukraine anyway, being told we are supporting democracy and human rights, so on and so forth.

However, two can play the game of shipping arms (now sanitized as ‘lethal aid’) to Ukraine. [The Donbas](#) is still part of Ukraine and Putin is [weighing approval to send Russian weapons to the Donbas](#). The Russians look after their friends and relatives. There are [720,000 of the 3.7 million who hold Russian passports](#) (machine translate), those who remain out of the 6.5 million who were there pre-Maidan (2014). So, if Kiev decides to invade the Donbas they will be facing Russian citizens as well as relatives, more than likely. This is another big reason why Ukraine has not attacked the region since 2014. As to the types of weapons Russia might send to the Donbas, well, [it is probably a long list](#) (machine translate). There is speculation (only) at this point there [may even be some of Russia’s advanced weapons sent there](#).

The war rhetoric out of Washington is also exposing splintering within European NATO, with France, Germany, Italy and Croatia all opposing the Washington/London narrative and Turkey questioning Washington’s motives. And in the midst of the ramping up of the war rhetoric, Moscow threw a big spanner in the works and produced their ‘ultimatum’ to NATO, which has thrown the invasion narrative into disarray, and which will eventually lead to what I had mentioned before about a repeat of a type of ‘Cuban missile crisis’, which would come later in this year. The present situation is not even close to that, to be explained later. But [sooner rather than later the Russians will checkmate US](#) and NATO and the US will lose a big part of its control over Europe.

Russian invasion – the facts: With all the preceding overview, we start with Russia, because it is immediately in front of us. But the present chain of events will lead to more intensity in the latter part of this year along various lines. The present war rhetoric started on 22 November of last year, but it was preceded by another such ‘threat of imminent Russian invasion’ in March last year. Since April of 2021 the heat had been turned down and NATO had backed off, but the volatile mix has not been resolved and has simmered away to be brought to a boil at various times, really since 2014. Inside information tells us why Ukraine has been of such interest to Washington and why they have pushed so hard on trying to bring Ukraine into NATO’s fold. [It has been reported that Brzezinski’s panic was partly behind this:](#)

“In 2013, the late Zbigniew “Grand Chessboard” Brzezinski was presented with a classified report on Russian advanced missiles. He freaked out, and responded by conceptualizing Maidan 2014 – to draw Russia into a guerrilla war then as he had done with Afghanistan in the 1980s. And here we are now: it’s all a matter of unfinished business.”

The Russians learned from their war in Afghanistan and will not be doing likewise again, especially in Ukraine. 2013 was also the year Xi Jinping announced the Belt and Road initiative, called '[The New Silk Road](#)'. It was clear to the 'Great Game' thinkers in Washington that something had to be done and quickly in order to keep Russia at bay and to simultaneously check the rise of China. Obama's 'Pivot to the East' had become policy the year before, [one of his biggest foreign policy errors](#). Russia has always been a key in Washington's plans for the Far East, as well as its plans for Europe. China has become the biggest focus of US foreign policy since the last decade, with Russia to be used as a hedge against China, by being separated (the hawks hope) from China. Western policy has had the opposite effect. The best they could hope for now – and they are hoping against reality – is for Russia to become so bogged down in other areas like Ukraine, Kazakhstan and Georgia, that the ties between Russia and China would be weakened. So, with the tensions around Ukraine from last year, wholly manufactured by Washington and NATO, the Russians saw what was taking place again this year and said enough is enough. In December they issued what Washington likes to call the 'Russian ultimatum'. [Russia's 'ultimatum' comes down to this](#):

“...the Russian proposals really are mutually beneficial – their theme is that nobody should threaten anybody and if anybody should feel threatened, there should be serious talks to resolve the issue.

*Security is mutual:
if all feel secure, then all are secure;
if one feels insecure, then none is secure.”*

It is common sense, really. Read the linked article regarding the ultimatum. It is a real eye-opener for anyone who thinks Washington can just ignore Russia's concerns. The Russians have experienced devastating wars on their home territory, mentioned in [the Chinese New Year letter from last year](#). They feel threatened by NATO's actions in their region, and not without reason. Some of those NATO nations had invaded Russia in centuries past. And the Russians know neither Washington nor European NATO states are trustworthy, especially when it comes to verbal agreements. Russia has the collective West over a barrel diplomatically, and is probably about to play its next hand, [regarding European powers](#):

But the most crucial cards Russia held were three additional Aces – The Three Cardinal [[OSCE Collective Security Treaties](#)], [The Charter for European Security](#), Istanbul 1999; [The EU-Russia Common Spaces Agreement in 2005](#), signed in Moscow; and the latest, [The “Astana Commemorative Declaration Towards a Security Community,”](#) 2010.

The Russians want binding treaties this time, and they will ensure their own security. And that means the nations who do not want treaties with Russia will feel the breath of the Bear on their necks, possibly including the coastal cities of the United States. Europe faces existential choices as a result – remain increasingly poor under Washington's watch, or join the rapidly developing Eastern win-win dynamic and fully integrate Europe into the Eurasian bloc. And lastly regarding the 'ultimatum', [the two documents from Russia are not a 'negotiating gambit'](#). They are plain statements of fact and intent. Sooner or later – probably sooner than later – Washington will have to acknowledge the Russian concerns and quit trying to sidestep the main issue.

Media blitzkrieg: The American media has been on hyperdrive with their propaganda, a real zinger and example of which is, [“An Aging Vladimir Putin Hopes War Can Make a Sagging Empire Rise Again.”](#) Another op-ed opined that [Russia is seeking to evict the US from Europe](#). And then to top it off, [Blinken made a phone call to the Chinese Foreign Minister](#) to try to cajole Beijing into having some influence on Russia. It didn't go well for Blinken, but Washington is desperate for Putin to do something so the sanctions can go ahead. [The Chinese response?](#): Stop interfering in the Olympics, pay attention to Russia's security guarantees as this is valid and important, give up the zero-sum game and the Cold War mentality and use the correct method to put out the fires the US started.

And what about those Minsk accords? They went on to say [the US itself should put out the fire they started in Ukraine](#).

The propaganda we see on the Anglo-American side is very similar to what took place in the lead-up to [the Gleiwitz Incident](#), a false flag attack on a German radio station, along with several others, that was used by the German propaganda ministry to justify the German invasion of Poland, precipitating WWII in Europe. We might think we have moved beyond that, but the same type of propaganda that was used against the German public to take them to war is being used against the American and British publics today to ‘justify’ going to war. This was covered in last year’s Chinese New Year letter. The current propaganda blitz by Washington and certain European powers has been ongoing since 22 November of last year. There are several reasons for it: P8

- To polarize and unify the Western public against Russia, thus discouraging mutual trade between Russia and the European bloc,
- To distract from domestic political troubles at home, as in Biden, Boris and Zelensky,
- To the preceding point, to [boost the American stock market via weapons sales](#),
- In an effort to cut off the EU from Russia (the larger plan, as in a new Iron Curtain),
- To lend supposed legitimacy to NATO, keeping in mind NATO is an instrument for Washington’s control over Europe and a vehicle to sell American weapons to the EU,
- Especially to end supplies of Russian gas to the EU and to cement a constant supply of very expensive American LNG to Europe, starting with mothballing Nord Stream II,
- To justify the further expansion of NATO, ‘as a necessity for the security of Europe’,
- To cause a massive economic adjustment, especially in Europe, which a war in Europe would provoke.

The chance of the last point happening, regarding a war, is practically nil. And it is helpful to keep in mind that European Russia comprises the largest landmass of Europe in total (40%) and has the largest European population of any nation in Europe, at 110 million people. Russia is primarily European. Asian Russia (Siberian Russia), in contrast, has only a fifth of Russia’s population yet comprises the largest national landmass in Asia. So, it would seem rather foolish to try to exclude Russia from European affairs, though we will not go into that here.

The real purpose of the propaganda: To summarize the bullet points above, there is an overarching purpose to the current propaganda, and that goes back to the creation of NATO, [whose purpose, stated by Lord Ismay](#), the first Secretary General of NATO, has been “keep the Soviet Union out, the Americans in, and the Germans down.” The sentiment holds just as true today as it did at the creation of the alliance, and it is an Anglo-American imperative, so the Americans and British believe. It is a motto primarily based in Washington and London think tanks, as NATO is first and foremost an Anglo-American initiative, formed at the start of the Cold War under the leadership of Truman and Churchill. Churchill was especially pushing for the alliance, because at that time the Soviets were keen on spreading their revolution worldwide and the City of London wanted to keep socialism at bay. ‘Keeping the Germans down’ is the purpose behind delaying the certification of Nordstream, for instance, as such an act weakens German industry and households and the German economy in general. It would help in ‘keeping the Germans down’. But, the Russian Federation is not the Soviet Union. Russia has no interest in their old satellite states or in ‘reclaiming the Russian Empire’, or the old Soviet Union.

Seeing the heavy propaganda at the moment, though, the thing to consider going forward is that any violence along the line of conflict or within the Donbas region will be blamed on Russia, like we saw with the alleged chemical weapons attacks in Syria ([since debunked](#)), which were [used to justify military actions by the West](#) in an effort to oust Assad. False flag attacks are often used as a *casus belli* by an aggressor to invade a country and they are as old a trick as standing armies have existed. Preceding the action, the nation to be invaded is cast in the worst light possible – as

barbaric, inhuman, oppressive, run by madmen/dictators/what-have-you in an effort to ready the people of the invading nation for war and to manufacture consent for said war. Now, [we hear in the Western media the exact talk](#) of Russians getting ready to stage such a false flag operation in Ukraine. Well, Washington has used that tactic, too, like [the Maddox incident in the Gulf of Tonkin](#) that was used to justify escalating the Vietnam War. And solid intelligence from inside Ukraine has it that [Kiev and the Western allies are busy staging such a false flag](#), to be blamed on the Russians. But here is a question: What if they gave an invasion and nobody invaded? What if the Russians have no interest in Ukraine? We might suppose we would see headlines then like, “Putin weaponises American propaganda!”

Washington’s win-win gambit: As it would appear that some folks in Washington see it, whether or not the Russians invade is immaterial. Either way will be cast as a victory for political ends. If they don’t, Putin will be cast as weak, having backed down under Washington’s tough talk. Biden’s ratings would receive a boost. If the Russians invaded, it would be, “See? We told you so!” and ‘[sanctions from hell](#)’ would immediately be piled onto Russia. Concerning the latter, [the Russians take them in their stride](#). If the Russians fail to address the written responses to the ‘Russian ultimatum’ sanctions can again be applied. But with an invasion, life would be breathed into NATO once more, the Europeans would be corralled back into Washington’s orbit. The latter case is what Russia wants to avoid. The sanctions wouldn’t matter. The Russians are essentially autarkic (self-sufficient) now and are focussed on development in the East, having seen the duplicity of the Anglo-American bloc. Western sanctions prompted Russia to become autarkic and to turn increasingly to China as a partner. It has been a classic case of Washington’s and London’s short-sightedness producing the very situation they now face and wanted to upend – a united pan-Asian economic bloc and military alliance. Talks along those lines will proceed between Putin and Xi at the Winter Olympics.

That pan-Asian economic bloc is a particular worry for Wall Street and the City of London, as well as the DC think tanks, because it is a threat to the hegemony of the US dollar. Once China and Russia bypass the SWIFT other Asian nations will quickly follow suit. The digital yuan is set to become operational during the Olympics. The same will be true for nations like Venezuela, Syria and other Latin American nations. Washington will lose its last effective non-violent weapon, that of sanctions as leverage against a country. De-dollarization along with inflation, monopolization, unemployment and underemployment, as well as supply chain problems is producing what may prove to be a perfect storm of events leading to a large financial correction. It is definitely already leading to restiveness across the West. And now we see fractures appearing in NATO, which is the projection arm of the US military overseas. What exactly are the Europeans thinking about all the British and American carry-on, then?

Europe’s growing spine: Macron and other EU leaders are increasingly [calling for an independent European military](#), not led by the nose by Washington. The [Germans are calling for a qualified fresh start with the Russians](#), despite calls from the German opposition parties for a tough stance on Russia and Washington pressuring them to send weapons and to cancel Nordstream. [An open letter by 40 former top officials in Germany has condemned the rhetoric out of Washington](#). Germany’s Foreign Minister wants to go so far as [to normalize relations with Russia](#). [Germany’s reliability as a NATO ally is being called into question](#). The Daily Mail in the UK, always a reliable source for news about Russia (sarcasm alert) is [blaming Germany’s greed for gas on the German reticence](#). Germany is even [being called an unreliable American ally](#). Hopefully the German public is paying attention. Last I heard, Germans have a pretty dim view of Nazis, of which there are plenty in Western Ukraine.

The Croats have stated they will withdraw their NATO contingent if anything goes down in Ukraine. [France wants to start its own dialog with Russia](#), independent of NATO. [The Hungarians](#)

[want to discuss nuclear power with Russia](#), of the peaceful kind. Perhaps Ukraine will come up in their conversations. [Bulgaria is not going to risk its energy supply from Russia](#) over a little spat in Ukraine. But across the channel, Boris has travelled to Ukraine to ~~party~~ parlay with Zelensky on Ukraine's sovereignty. And then, across the American lake, [American energy corporations are warning Biden about what is at stake](#) with possibly sanctioning Russia. [NATO will not be sending troops to Ukraine](#) in the event of a Russian invasion, in a show of NATO solidarity. But even now, Zelensky – the president of the land-that-would-be-invaded – [is telling Biden to tone down the rhetoric](#), that all the talk of war is hurting the Ukrainian economy. [And of Russia? – they have:](#)

“...lots of territory, lots of raw materials, lots of water, lots of energy, all the manufacturing it needs, self-sufficient in food, well-educated people, backed up government, armed to the teeth. It's pretty impregnable and it's not run by fools. And it's very closely allied to the biggest manufacturing power and population in the world. Not an easy target at all and almost impossible to hurt without hurting yourself more.”

It is not difficult to see, then, that all of Washington's and London's posturing toward Russia is going nowhere fast and will probably dissipate once Mars 'moves to the north' again (goes in-bounds on 11 February). After that, Washington will have another worry on its hands, since Russia has just signed on to [strategic cooperation with Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela](#), possibly including military cooperation. China is making inroads there, too. Russian troops in those countries have not been ruled out. Blinken has said if that were to be the case, the US would act 'decisively'. What that means precisely is anyone's guess at this point. Perhaps they will decisively look at Russia's security concerns at that point. War with Russia again? The cooperation between Russia and the three Latin American nations (probably with more to follow, we might imagine) will develop over the coming months, perhaps to lead to another crisis later in the year – a Cuban Missile Crisis v. 2.0? Let's examine the former, the original crisis a bit to get an idea of what Russia is actually up to there, because it did not happen the way it is portrayed to western audiences.

The Cuban missile crisis was such in name only. The main confrontation was in the Caribbean, but the root cause of it was American [Jupiter missiles stationed in Puglia, southern Italy and Turkey](#). Those were nuclear-tipped missiles, aimed at Russia. The warheads had a capacity of over a megaton ([W49](#)) and were clearly designed to destroy entire urban areas, though they were described in Wikipedia as being meant for tactical deployment, which would require only a few kilotons. [The Soviet missiles were deployed in Cuba after the American deployment](#). All this is mentioned for context, because American history depicts the Cuban missile crisis as Russia having been the aggressor. The Russian deployment in Cuba in reality was a tit-for-tat strategy to force the Americans to remove their nuclear missiles from Europe, one which ultimately worked. Therein lies a hint for the future. It was a strategy that also led to the first negotiations on nuclear détente as a result of the crisis. There are similarities with what is evolving today, with Russia feeling threatened by the actions of NATO (Washington, essentially), with the necessity to force the Americans to withdraw NATO forces back to the 1997 borders. Although history might rhyme, the circumstances today are different from what they were in 1962. The Russians have the upper hand in Europe now, though they would be quite happy if NATO would just go away from its borders. Then there would be no need to escalate tensions to get Washington's attention. The European concerns today are the same as they were in 1962, or very similar. From the last link, preceding, regarding the Cuban Missile Crisis:

In fact, America's allies...were aghast that the U.S. was threatening nuclear war over a strategically insignificant condition [sound familiar?] – the presence of intermediate-range missiles in a neighboring country – that those allies (and, for that matter, the Soviets) had been living with for years. In the tense days of October 1962, being allied with the United States potentially amounted to, as Charles de Gaulle had warned, “annihilation without representation.” It seems never to have occurred to Kennedy and the ExComm that whatever Washington gained by demonstrating the steadfastness of its commitments, it lost in an erosion of confidence in its judgment.

This approach to foreign policy was guided – and remains guided – by an elaborate theorizing rooted in a school-playground view of world politics rather than the cool appraisal of strategic realities. It put – and still puts – America in the curious position of having to go to war to uphold the very credibility that is supposed to obviate war in the first place.

The root of today's tensions between Russia and Washington revolve around the intransigence of the hawkish elements in Washington, who see Russia either as weak or as bluffing, and that they still control the European continent outright. They want the Russia they had in the 1990s – lying on its back while the Western opportunists and financial capitalists picked the pockets of the Russians – financial capitalists like [Bill Browder, for instance](#) (video, a tale of white collar crime and how the world financial system works). Their view is about to be adjusted. From their side, the Russians want to do business with the EU, but they have no desire to dominate Europe or to reclaim the old Soviet empire. Russia is not the Soviet Union. P11

The rule of law: The Russian Federation has no imperial ambitions. Their aim these days is to develop their huge country – a monumental task – and to uphold the UN charter, in that they want peaceful relations with other nations, including the US. It might be useful to review the [preamble of the charter](#):

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbors, and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS.

The unelected bureaucracy in Washington connected with the military-industrial-intelligence complex has [consistently and repeatedly ignored this charter since its adoption](#), opting instead for their 'rules-based order', set up in the late 1940s. The latter is the order led by the United States, also known as the '[liberal international order](#)' – liberal democracy, open markets, security cooperation (like NATO, AUKUS and the Quad) and monetary cooperation, the latter being our current fiat financialized economic system. China is consistently put forward as the main 'threat' to the rules-based order. And in certain respects it *is* a threat to the rules-based order, in that it has chosen its own way and rejects certain American ideals about how the world order should operate. China, like Russia, opts to live by the UN charter. The debate about these matters will rage on for some years into the future. We won't go into those debates here. In conclusion on Russia, the Russians have no desire or intention of attacking anyone. What we will see over the coming period is a process of standing up to bullying and [holding up the mirror psychologically](#) to the folks in Washington who want to keep control in Europe and over the world's finances. Events to come may seem terrifying to some in the American public, but that will force change in Washington. We can probably rest assured there will be strenuous negotiations behind the scenes, in true Water Tiger fashion, between Russia and Washington, and NATO by default as the year unfolds. Look for the security situation to change dramatically in Europe in the months ahead, one way or the other.

The financial adjustment: We close this letter with a quick look at the financial adjustment that will probably come in the latter part of this year. The internet and social media has been flooded of

late with fears of Klaus Schwab and his 'Great Reset'. Some people believe the pandemic has been a cover for the implementation of such a plan. [There are aspects of truth in the belief](#), but on the whole it is not very likely to happen, not for the long term if it does. It is an elitist plan that is disconnected from reality and promoted by a select few. We won't go into that here, either. But the financial system is ripe for the picking now and certain nations, like New Zealand and Canada, have leaders who were at one point affiliated with Schwab's school and thinking. Overall, though, it is finance that is driving the current world tensions, embraced by millions of people and promoted over decades, before anyone ever heard of Klaus Schwab. We are seeing the end results of such policies now. We will cover the financial and economic sphere more comprehensively as the year progresses, but there is a particular aspect of it we want to look at here because it sets the scene for what is evolving.

[What follows concerns primarily the United States](#), but it also applies across the West. What has led to the current economic crisis point has in fact been a consistent undercurrent in international affairs for many centuries – the control of the supply of money, trade routes and resources by a few wealthy and influential people at the expense of the populace. The end of that system, or a major pivot away from it was signalled by [the 'pandemic eclipse' of January 2020](#). In the US the situation is working out as follows:

After the financial crisis of 2008, [quantitative easing](#) (QE) became policy of the US Federal Reserve rather than a stop-gap measure. It has reduced interest rates, poured money into the financial sector to keep the stock markets high (thus giving the illusion of economic health and growth) and has reduced the foreign exchange rate on the dollar. Regarding interest rates, you have probably noticed the money you have in the bank, if you have any, does not produce any interest – in other words, there is no increase in what one has in savings, as the interest rates are close to zero. EU banks have employed QE as well, and I can tell you that here in Italy people are not seeing any joy in having money in the bank. It sits there like a stagnant pool. And that brings us to what is happening in the financial sector, because the financiers also see no advantage to having money in banks. What the financial sector wants is liquidity and to maximize profit/financial gains.

Over the course of the pandemic, unseen to most people, there has been a vastly increased injection of funds into the donor class – corporate interests, hedge funds, the rentier class and banks – due to QE and money-printing. BlackRock has been one of the big beneficiaries of such acts, for example, as well as the billionaire class. Capital gains have shot up exponentially, like the infection curves during the pandemic. The result has been a relatively strong stock market (financial markets) and those funds have been used to refinance Repo loans and stock buy-backs, very little of which has trickled down to the average household. Now the situation is changing. In past letters mention was made of a housing crisis soon to come in the US: There will be, but it will not be like what we saw in the 2008 crisis. Now what we see are the vast amounts of financial capital moving out of financial markets and into private equity markets and real estate. Stock prices will begin to fall as a result. It will be called a crisis, and it *will* be for retirement accounts linked to stock markets, but it is being wholly engineered.

What we will see now at real estate auctions will be buyers representing large consortia outbidding the small owner-buyers and causing a concentration of ownership by the rentier class. House prices will stay high as a result, but home ownership by individuals will crash. The speculators will rule the housing market. This is what we have seen developing over years in Australia, for instance, blamed on the Chinese (of course), but in fact encouraged by the government. We will increasingly see an absentee landlord class and high rental prices. This is likely to go on for some years yet until enough people wake up and call a halt to it. I am not a financial advisor or economist, but looking at this from the outside, I would do the following:

Owe no one: If you own your own home and/or land, hang on to it. If you are tempted to speculate in the housing market just be aware of what is happening, but if you can, stay away from auctions and try to find private sales, as they are becoming more and more like hens' teeth. As a good friend of mine is fond of saying, bricks and mortar are always a safe bet, and this is precisely what the moneyed classes are buying. Renters need to beware, too. Conglomerate rental agencies will not look after you and will always increase rental rates, as well as being slow to address issues with the property, if at all. Many of us have had first-hand experience along those lines. Conglomerates are always flipping properties, too, and it is common for speculators to sell rental properties out from under a renter, thus evicting them. I have experienced this myself. When it comes to essentials, it is helpful to have skills, when it comes to home repairs and improvements – like solar panels, for instance. It also helps to have skilled friends.

If you want to see what *should* happen with high-end property speculators and conglomerates, look no further than [Evergrande in China](#), which the CPC is slowly reining in, so as not to cause a financial panic within China. The move is widely panned in the Western press, but it is returning home ownership and saner housing prices to the masses in China. BlackRock was discouraged from investing in China, as in Evergrande, with Soros going on a rampage about how China will not open its markets as a result. The Chinese actually do encourage investment, but it is tightly controlled, not the free-for-all Soros and his kind would like to see. Soros and his ilk would like to see China turn into Yeltsin's Russia, which was a basket case, and which has been happening to the US and UK by stealth, now more fully out in the open as a result of the pandemic restriction.

The coming fall in stock prices, already indicated by volatility in the markets, will auger corporate takeovers, being put forward as 'corporate saviors'. In reality, that will involve 'asset stripping' and downsizing, as well as consolidation of monopoly ownership. We will also see sell-off of public land and infrastructure, as if it had not been sold off already. But the NHS in the UK is a prime example and is on its way to the chopping block, to be privatized. The sell-off of the public assets will be done under the slogan of the need for greater efficiency and individual free markets. Monopolists will let the shortages develop and prolong them so as to wait out the governments. For the moment, the recent wave of payments into treasury bonds has staved off the gutting of pensions, but that will not last forever. We are currently on a path that will lead to Schwab's statement that we will own nothing and we will be (un)happy. But we have been here before. In effect, we are headed toward the wealth disparities we saw during the American [Gilded Age](#), when the top 10% owned ¾ of all the wealth in the US. It led to [Teddy Roosevelt and his trust-busting](#) at the turn of the 20th century. It is worth reading the link on the Gilded Age because it gives us a perspective on where we are as a society and what the vested interests are seeking to impose on us.

Monopolization and a dystopia for the average citizen should not be taken as a *fait accompli*, though. There is growing discontent with economic conditions and government policy across the West and officials and elites are taking notice. [Justin Trudeau was recently whisked off to a secret location](#) after comments he made about unvaccinated people and the truckers' convoy in Ottawa. The Moon would be a good secret location. Actually, 10,000 protesters represent more than a 'small fringe minority', as Trudeau called them. [At some point, the oligarchs will be reined in again](#) and the likes of Trudeau and Adhern will go by the wayside, to be replaced by experienced leaders.

The international economy: But there is one more economic adjustment that is coming that will turn international finance on its ear and which will filter down into local transactions eventually. This adjustment will end Washington's ability to coerce nations financially. As mentioned before, we are looking at the digital yuan, along with Russia, China and other nations beginning to trade in their own currencies, [independent of the SWIFT system](#) in Brussels. [The digital yuan is not a cryptocurrency like Bitcoin](#):

“Some things to know: The dijiywan [digital yuan], being rolled out in the Winter Olympics, is not a cryptocurrency like Bitcoin, intended to maintain anonymity of users: all transactions are or can be known to Beijing. A dijiywan account is not a bank account, though it is administered by PBOC, the People’s Bank of China. You don’t need to have a bank account to use it. It does not earn interest. You cannot speculate in dijiywan any more than you can with normal yuan, because the digital yuan is the normal yuan, but in digital form. A dijiywan account does not provide access to credit. It is as close to being physical currency as you can get without being physical currency. Transactions are instantaneous and final.”

The linked article raises some interesting ideas and points to possible futures. Also, [central banks from China, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Hong Kong are exploring a digital currency cross-border payment project together](#). People can say what they want about China, human rights, authoritarianism and so forth, but this form of transaction is coming, is immanent (unlike a Russian invasion of Ukraine) and will be a game-changer in international relations. Iran is already setting up alternative payment systems, too. Iran is also looking toward [a formation of countries’ union against sanctions](#). And when it comes to money, we might question how much control we have over our money anyway. Bank accounts can be frozen already. All transactions with banks are on a permanent internet record. Every purchase with a cell phone is recorded and can be tracked at will. The only untraceable transaction involves cash or barter. And if you own a mobile/cell phone, your every move is recorded by virtue of the cell phone towers. So, welcome to the brave new world! For the great majority of us, such matters do not affect us. But incidents do happen, mistakes are made. How many people, though, would be willing to give up the convenience of a cell phone?

Closing remarks and possibilities: Water Tiger years are always ones to watch, but the events that happen in them have been set up in years past. As to what we might expect, we have the following:

- A new domestic distraction in (insert Western nation) after February 20th, the closing of the Olympics. If there has not been an invasion by then – and there won’t be – the political machines of each nation will have to devise something else to distract the public from their domestic troubles.
- A new British PM
- [Strange incidents that cause furrowed brows](#) in Western halls of power
- Further fracturing of NATO and Europe. Europeans are finally starting to wake up to realities instead of worrying about being woke. Being without heat and lights can do that, if it comes to that.
- Nation by nation within the EU making individual deals with Russia, China and other otherwise ‘enemy states’.
- The JCPOA finally being put to rest. Washington has no intention of re-entering. But stranger things have happened.
- [Major infrastructure projects getting underway between Iran, Russia and neighboring nations, a revival of interest](#) (machine translate) in [the Nicaragua Canal](#) and [Russian river upgrades](#), speaking of ‘Water’ Tigers.
- Sudden turns of events in the war in Yemen. [The UAE is now a target](#). That is part of the reason for all the Western focus on Ukraine and Russia, too. The West wants those Yemeni ports, but if the news is showing the bombing of Yemen the public will call for it to stop.
- Tensions to build in the Caribbean, with increasing visits by the Russians to the region
- Serious work to begin on [the Power of Siberia 2 pipeline](#)
- Pfizer-gate. Yes, there is a coming scandal about the vaccines, and there has been a cover-up. Think back to the key phrases of this Tiger.

In all, stay calm, make due diligence on information and do try to read widely, staying away from echo chambers. Take absolutely everything you see on social media with a grain of salt. The changes in the world order are coming fast and thick now, and the voices in the corporate media will become increasingly shrill as a result. Most of all, build your community. That is where all

lasting change starts. We all need each other, no matter our persuasions, now more than ever. The international order has been shifting all along, but this year it will be out for all to see.

Enjoy your New Year celebrations!

Malvin

1 Feb 2022

malvin@malvinartly.com

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[Shoigu's other workshop](#): a little history of Ukraine and a look at tensions there in the first half of last year.

[The demise of NATO](#): a closer look at what is really going on with NATO

Famous Black Tigers: (hyperlinked people are not otherwise known worldwide or recently)

1962: Axl Rose (Guns 'n Roses), Garth Brooks, Cheryl Crow, Steve Irwin, John Bon Jovi, Matthew Broderick, Anthony Blinken, Emilio Estevez, Craig Ferguson, [Princess Astrid of Belgium](#), Ally Sheedy, Paula Abdul, Tom Cruise, Pam Shriver, [Shaun Micallef](#), Wesley Snipes, [Felipe Calderón](#), Alexander Litvinenko, Mark L. Walberg, Kier Starmer, Chris Christie, Baz Luhrmann, Tommy Lee, Joan Cusack, Flea, Anthony Kiedis, Demi Moore, Naomi Wolf, Jodie Foster, Nicolas Maduro, Jon Stewart, Bo Jackson, Tracy Austin, Steven Mnuchin, Ralph Fiennes, [Alessandra Mussolini](#), Jeff Flake, Rand Paul, [John Bercow](#)

1902: [John Steinbeck](#), [Ansel Adams](#), [Eddie Peabody](#), [Will Geer](#), [Siegfried Westphal](#), [Thomas Dewey](#), [Brooke Astor](#), [Richard J. Daley](#), [David O. Selznick](#), [Li Ziming](#), [Richard Rogers](#), [Meyer Lansky](#), [Gwendolyn Bennett](#), [Chill Wills](#), [Karl Popper](#), [Paul Dirac](#), [Felix Wankel](#), [Ogden Nash](#), [Carlo Gambino](#), [Larry Fine](#), [Ray Kroc](#), [Frances Bavier](#),

1842: [A. Viola Neblett](#), [Carl von Linde](#), [Ambrose Bierce](#), [Sir James Dewar](#), [Peter Kropotkin](#), [John Strutt](#),

1782: [John C. Calhoun](#), [María Antonia Santos Plata](#), [Nicolò Paganini](#), [Martin Van Buren](#)

1722: [Jean-Baptiste Chappe d'Auteroche](#), [Pietro Nardini](#), [Samuel Adams](#)