THE BENT LEDGER

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February Issue 2022

Unicus Research

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Founder's Notes

Welcome to our monthly "Bent" Ledger.

The pandemic has dramatically changed the way we live, consume and invest. The actual human lives lost on account of pandemic is hard to calculate (mostly because the numbers reported by State, we expect, are fudged). The reality for those who survived the pandemic is filled with constant "anxiety" – mostly due to financial instability, and trust (whether the information consumed via media is authentic or erroneous).

The pandemic continues to present unique challenges worldwide for people, economy and the healthcare systems. It is almost impossible to make rational decisions under emotional duress. Institutional and retail investors are not an exception to constant psychological stress. Here lies the challenge.

The psychological pressure negatively impacts the behavior of investors and eventually their investing decisions; as the corporations' struggle to use "creative marketing" strategies to increase their bottom-line, newly minted "pandemic" SPACs and IPOs entered the market to 'cash in' on the confusion.

The epidemic, in a nutshell, is a fast-track course on psychological endurance for everyone – for a PRICE

Here is what's new this month:

1. Unicus Research in the news
2. Investment Insights
3. Contrarian view – The War and the awakening of the "hibernating" bear
4. Inflation

Unicus In the News

Unicus Research & ProChain Capital; *Episode 2*; **Coherra**; January 15

Investment Insights – Contrarian Corner

According to a new study from financial services firm Edward Jones and Morning Consult, Americans are at crossroads with how they view the current state of the US economy. While 45% are optimistic in the US economy's direction, nearly as many Americans are pessimistic (42%). Top concerns about the economy include the rate of inflation (83%), supply chain disruptions (77%), the employment rate (71%), and interest rates (71%).[1]

The statistics are not least bit surprising. We have been faced with disruptive conditions since 2020 from economic uncertainty, including supply chain disruption: inflation, and the potential for raising interest rates. Moreover, the level of stress, fear, and anxiety is widespread worldwide, and this is a pressing challenge. As a result, it is impossible to expect investors and asset managers to make rational investing decisions.

When an investment is more emotional than analytical, there is always an invisible 'price' to be paid. As we enter into month two of 2022, the Focus is more on SPACs, IPOs, cryptocurrencies, blockchain, EV, net-zero, and ESG. As the pandemic slowly fades out, fear and anxiety dominate the market leaving significant debris in its aftermath.

Trading in a headline-driven market is not for everyone; it requires dedication to being in front of the screens, understanding what is noise and what is a signal, and an ability to keep emotions in check. Here are some pitfalls and list of stocks that investors need to watch.

The Death Cross

It is absurd to look at technical chart at this point; however, let us address the *death cross* scenario on February 18 2022. The Nasdaq Composite Index tumbled into an ominous "death cross" technical formation Friday for the first time since April 2020. The death cross is a pattern used by some investors (if not all) as an indication of a bear market. Case in point: the formation occurred mid 2000 right around when the dot com bubble burst and again in 2008 before the "inauguration" of the global financial crisis.[2]

[1] https://www.cherokeephoenix.org/money/americans-are-split-on-state-of-the-economy-edward-jones-survey-finds/article_a56ccd42-94e2-11ec-83fa-a73cedc45696.html

[2] **Death cross scenarios are not in itself a doomsday scenario. It is a warning sign that the market will face a huge sell off. There have been cases of the Golden cross right after the death cross. Please research at your leisure for more clarity on the technical aspects of death cross and golden cross*

The Dangers of Emotional Investing: FOMO*[3]

"When people become worried about their finances, their natural desire is to want to do something – anything - to make that worry go away. Unfortunately, people often make changes to their portfolios that are not in their best interest just to satisfy that need to do something," - Laurel Newman, behavioral scientist at Edward Jones.

Emotional investing is a concern for institutional as well as for retail investors. It includes investing in a sector or an individual stock purely based on personal belief/feelings, faith in the management of a company, FOMO, news headlines, and tweets.

Our history has been littered with (misplaced) investments made on the above emotions. It is almost a guarantee on human nature that no investor will agree that the investments were based on emotions than facts. Here is a sample list of sectors, and stocks that trapped investors based on one of the above emotional triggers.

SPACs

eToro is expected to IPO via a special purpose acquisition company (SPAC) via a special purpose acquisition company (SPAC) deal in **the first half of 2022**. The deal with FinTech Acquisition Corp V (FTCV) was expected to be completed by December 31 2021, but the deadline has now been extended to June 30, 2022.

[3] FOMO- Fear Of Missing Out

Electric Vehicles:

Amid a climate crisis, the EV began to gain traction.

Our self-imposed distraction to EV instead of taking steps to tackle the almost irreversible climate crisis is a dangerous way to avoid the actual problem. We are determined to make the world all-electric by 2030, but we are not ready (as we have been saying in our detailed EV report).

The Real Challenges – a 2030 view:

It is time that investors need to shift their Focus from the prototype and projections to realistic analysis. The investors need to invest in the infrastructure required to support the all-electric future. Here are the dire challenges we are facing:

1. The grid is not ready to help the all-electric future
2. We need to focus on infrastructure before concentrating on building electric cars
3. Our electric grid will be challenged to deliver clean power
4. By 2030, according to one study, the nation will need to invest as much as $125 billion in the grid to allow it to handle electric vehicles.[4]
5. By 2050, the state projects, electric cars, trucks, and buses will use 14 percent of New York's total output.[5]

The pandemic fueled the urgency to build electric cars that our grids can't support; start SPACs to acquire the newly minted EV companies, all the while the present administration boasts getting nearly a trillion-dollar infrastructure bill approved.

Here is the reality:

Over the next five years, makers of mufflers, fuel injection systems, and other parts could potentially go out of business. But, according to an investment firm, *Wedbush Securities,* the auto industry is on track to invest half a trillion dollars in the next five years to make the transition to electric vehicles.

"It's one of the biggest industrial transformations probably in the history of capitalism," Scott Keogh, chief executive of Volkswagen Group of America, said in an interview. "The investments are massive, and the mission is massive."

Here is the challenge that corporations, consumers, and investors are facing as we pour trillions into the "all-electric" dream

[4] https://www.brattle.com/insights-events/publications/electric-power-sector-investments-of-75-125-billion-needed-to-support-projected-20-million-evs-by-2030-according-to-brattle-economists/
[5] https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2021/10/13/electric-vehicles-grid-upgrade/

The current infrastructure bill puts about $5 billion toward constructing transmission lines. However, the infrastructure bill[6] has reported that it contains $73 billion for power grid upgrades and transmission, drawn from a July 28 White House fact sheet. "The deal's $73 billion investment is the single largest investment in clean energy transmission in American history," the fact sheet states.

An updated fact sheet released by the White House on August 2 reduced that number to $65 billion yet retained the description of its impact in "building thousands of miles of new, resilient transmission lines to facilitate the expansion of renewable energy."

But a close look at the bill's specifics reveals that very little of that $65 billion is dedicated to building the high-voltage transmission lines that experts say the US must have to enable the level of wind and solar power deployment necessary to decarbonize the grid.

Instead, much of the "power infrastructure" funding is dedicated to[7]

1. Research and demonstration of batteries: ~ $6 B
2. Carbon capture and storage: ~ $8 B
3. Clean hydrogen production: ~$ 9.5 B
4. Nuclear power: ~$6 B
5. Of the funding dedicated to the power grid: between $11 B and $14 B aims to make the existing grid more resilient – not building new power lines.
6. Transmission grid expansion: $2.5 B (explicitly targeted transmission grid expansion).

[6] Infrastructure Bill H.R. 3684
[7] https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/transmission/infrastructure-bill-contains-less-transmission-funding-than-advertised

Contrarian view – The War and the awakening of the "hibernating" bear

We started 2020 with a pandemic, and in 2022, we are morphing into a World War III. Technological advancement made us an interconnected economy, and with that comes its challenges.

Pandemic exposed the structural problems of interconnected global supply chain

Supply chains have become increasingly global and complex, using a "just in time" production process to keep the investors happy and costs low. However, COVID-19 has exposed the structural flaw in the complex, interconnected supply chain. The result?

1. The increased cost of raw materials
2. Shortage of critical raw materials (chip shortages)
3. The increased cost of energy and shipping
4. Delayed delivery to the manufacturers

Trickled down consequences including but not limited to

1. Inflation
2. Reduced consumer spending
3. Hoarding

The impact of the supply chain crisis is not only on short-term delays and is limited to the world's ports. Sectors that rely heavily on the "just in time" model with a finely balanced supply chain may experience severe shortages, notably in the case of automobile industry components. Industries reliant on goods in short supply – such as lithium, rare earth, and wood supplies – are also vulnerable to delays and increased costs. The global price for a container shipment has increased by 547%; as vessels are awaiting outside ports, bringing a new container in for shipping is more expensive, often passed on to consumer goods. Second-order consequences of increased costs may include inflationary pressure, reduced consumer spending, and delayed economic recovery.

According to one of our sources in *Whole Foods*, the supply chain issues are here to stay – because people do not want to work. The source is seen rationing list of products that the store needs because of the worker shortages in the warehouse "they only give us the necessary products. That is why you see a lot of stores with empty shelves."

The unprovoked Russia-Ukraine war is causing another layer of the struggle for an already fractured supply chain. Importers from London to Warsaw will soon face higher shipping costs, longer delays, and an obstacle course of sanctions to navigate as Russia's widening assault on Ukraine complicates the movement of cargo between Europe and Asia. On Tuesday, Mediterranean Shipping Co. and A.P. Moller-Maersk A/S, the world's biggest container carriers, halted bookings for Russian freight, with Maersk seeing "ripple effects" and "significant delays" across the region. Not a good signal for European economies already facing energy spikes, product shortages, clogged ports, and the highest inflation since the common currency's inception more than two decades ago.[8]

Aside from their commodity exports, Russia and Ukraine aren't big global traders. Russia is the world's 16th-largest goods exporter, led by petroleum, coal, and gas. Ukraine ranks 48th, led by shipments of grain and iron ore, according to 2020 data from the World Trade Organization.

But they are situated along with one of the world's oldest trade lanes, one that China has sought to use for its Belt-and-Road initiative and a route where much of the airspace is now restricted. Meanwhile, container ships can't access Ukrainian ports, and many are trying to avoid Russia's.

Gone are the *Just In Time* days. Globally, consumers will understand the enormous costs and inconvenience to satisfy their "immediate" demands.

Russia-Ukraine war immediate effects are apparent while the ripple effects of the war will be felt globally for years to come.

According to *Financial Times, Ukraine* supplies about 50 percent of the world's neon gas, a byproduct of Russia's steel industry purified in the former Soviet republic and is indispensable in chip production. Manufacturers have already been reeling from shortages of components, late deliveries, and rising material costs, with companies that rely on chips, such as carmakers, facing production delays as a result.

Nothing will get back to pre-pandemic "normal."

<u>Long & Short of 2022</u>

Over the following few issues, we will cover the below sectors that drastically changed since the beginning of the pandemic.

1. Supply chain: While supply chain woes aren't expected to disappear in 2022
2. Commercial REITs
3. Transportation
4. Infrastructure
5. Cybersecurity - Technology

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[8] https://www.supplychainbrain.com/articles/34668-war-shocks-ripple-across-one-of-the-worlds-busiest-trade-lanes

Shorts in Focus

RIVN, GOEV, FSR and more

Companies like Rivian (RIVN) became public on November 10, 2021, at an initial offering price of $78 (the stock presently trades at $47). At the time of the IPO, Rivian's overall valuation was $80 billion. Companies like RIVN, FSR, GOEV, and other EV firms struggle to breathe in an overcrowded market. We have recommended the mentioned EV stocks as a short since they became public.

iPad-based POS company, Revel, is one of the many companies struggling to meet the growing EV demands. Last summer, in NY. City, the utility Con Edison appealed to customers to cut back on their electricity usage during the strain of five separate heat waves. In contrast, Tropical Storms Elsa, Henri, and Ida cut power to thousands.

DCFC – Another SPAC bites the dust (short). The stock presently trades at $7.24

The year 2020 and 2021 has been a SPAC mania. A Brisbane-based developer and producer of direct current fast EV chargers, Tritium finalized a SPAC merger with Decarbonization Plus Acquisition Corporation II ($DCRN) in January. The deal valued the company at $1.2 billion. This particular SPAC deal is unusual because it does not include private investment in public equity or PIPE. Instead, this fundraising round typically occurs at the merger and injects more capital into the company.[9]

Despite being a fresh SPAC in the public market, this company has been around for a while and has an operating history. So far, the results are not encouraging in terms of profitability with negative net income. Like our other recommendations (GOEV, Fisker, etc.….), DCFC has more ways to go down.

DCFC is in a highly competitive market with no revenue future. Therefore, there is nothing more to add to the analysis. The stock presently trades at $7 with no future for the upside.

[9] https://techcrunch.com/2021/05/26/ev-fast-charger-developer-tritium-to-go-public-via-spac-merger-at-1-2b-valuation/

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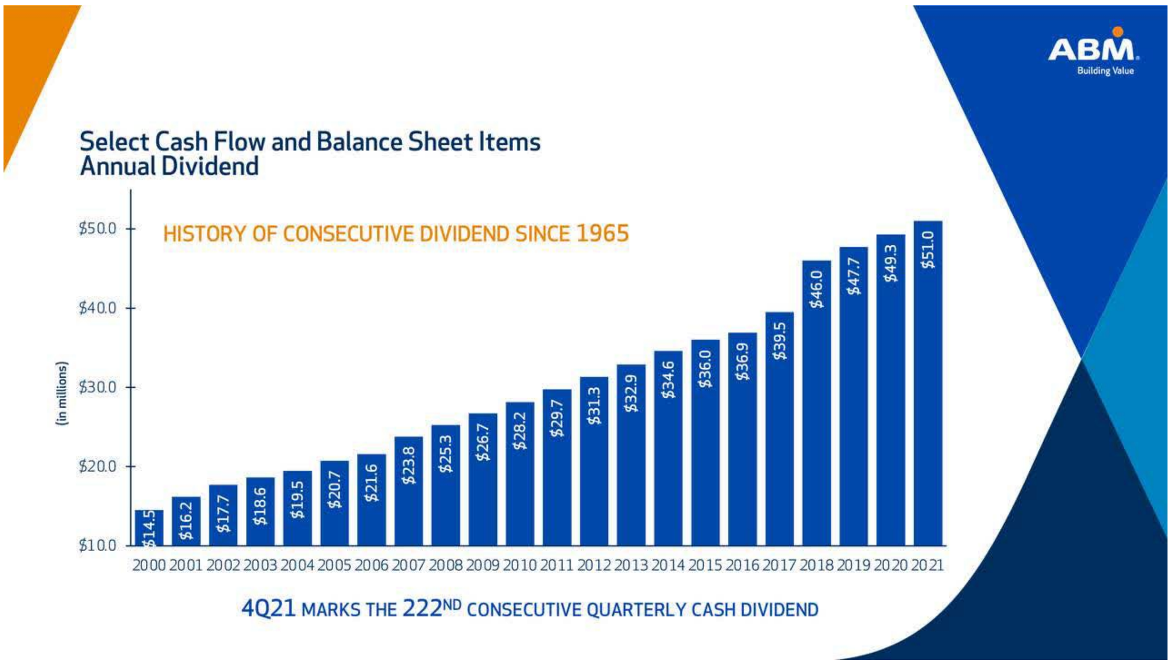
Longs in Focus – due to our dependence on Russia and China for critical raw materials – the longs have the potential to be a short due dependence.

Here are a couple of companies that are "power charging" the all-electric dream and companies that are worth long-term investments:

ABM: The stock presently trades at $46.59 **(Long)**



A got to stock to risk-averse investors who prefer consistent returns even during turbulent times.

Starting as a window cleaning business, ABM now provides facility services in electrical and lighting, energy, facility engineering, HVAC and mechanical, janitorial services, landscape and grounds, parking, and transportation.

ABM is also a leading provider of integrated facility solutions in the US and the international markets. As an installer of **electric vehicle** charging ports, **ABM** has the scope to design, self-perform, and manage implementation. **It is a long investment** that passes under the radar of most investors because of its "not so fancy" business model. Here are the top reasons to not ignore this stock:

1. A cheaply valued stock that will offer a cushion to the portfolio
2. The stock goes unnoticed by most investors as it is not a high-growth stock but shows exceptional consistency.
3. Pandemic boosted the business, thanks to its core business model
4. ABM has grown its dividend for 54 consecutive years.

5. In the most recent quarter, ABM's revenue grew to 14% over the prior year's quarter (7.4% organic growth and 6.8% growth from the recent acquisition of Able Services).[10]
6. A significant portion of future growth will come from the recent acquisition of Able Services, as the deal value of $900 million was approximately 30% of the current market capitalization of ABM

Our detailed analysis on this company will be published on our March 2022 Bent Ledger.

Lam Research Corporation (LRCX) The stock presently trades at $496.77

Lam Research Corporation is an American company dominated by semiconductor manufacturing, engaging in the design, manufacturing, marketing, and service of semiconductor processing equipment used in integrated circuit manufacturing. Its products are used primarily in front-end wafer processing, which involves the steps that create the active components of semiconductor devices and their wiring.[11]

Our detailed analysis on this company will be published on our March 2022 Bent Ledger.

ASML Holding NV (ASML) The stock presently trades at $600.07

ASML is a linchpin of the global semiconductor market. The Dutch company is the world's largest manufacturer of lithography systems, which are used to etch circuit patterns onto silicon wafers. It's also the only supplier of high-end extreme ultraviolet (EUV) lithography systems, which are used to produce the world's smallest and densest chips.

ASML is facing headwinds from Russia's invasion of Ukraine:

1. Disruption of global supply of neon gas , which ASML uses in small quantities for the gas-phase lasers in its DUV systems. Ukraine is the world's largest producer of neon gas, and ASML gets roughly a fifth of its supply from Ukraine and Russia. ASML has been seeking out alternative sources to maintain a stable supply of neon, but the soaring price of the gas could squeeze its gross margins until the conflict ends.[12]
2. ASML is one of the most valuable tech companies in Europe. Therefore, any escalation of tensions between Europe and Russia will likely drag down ASML along with the broader European indexes.

Our detailed analysis on this company will be published on our March 2022 Bent Ledger.

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[10] Financial statements
[11] 10-K
[12] https://bit.ly/unicusresearch

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Inflation: The Federal Fund Rate and the Need for Section.11

Inflation Fires Are Everywhere.

The news coverage from Good Morning America on February 11, 2022.

Mary Bruce, Senior White

House Correspondent

Of course, these rising costs are driven by supply chain issues caused by the pandemic, and the Americans who have been saving during the pandemic are now outspending, driving up prices, and driving up demand. It is another one of the reasons why the Fed may take steps to raise interest rates to slow demand and tamp down these soaring prices.

This is a genuine political liability for this President, especially if Americans still feel this pinch comes to the midterms. Now Biden is trying to project optimism and expects prices to taper over this year, and most economists agree, But the President admits that these prices are causing natural stress at the kitchen table. The White House official also notes that wages are up but not enough to make up for these rising costs. Still, the President is now promising an all-hands-on deck approach and is continuing to push for their social speeding plans of his and to bring down the cost of things such as prescription drugs and child care, so George, as you well know, these policies face a real uphill battle on the hill especially as we see prices continue to go up.[i]

We are sure she is reporting honestly and sharing the White House talking notes with the public. We have no idea how reigning the Federal Reserve Discount Rate will help with:

1. Prescription Drug
2. Childcare costs
3. Supply chain issues
4. Restrict spending my Americans

Over in the Senate, there is the poorly informed Senator Warren. In her own Twitter words on February 10, 2022 - "One clear explanation for higher inflation? Giant corporations are exploiting their market power to raise prices further. And corporate executives are bragging about their higher profits. We need to boost competition and break up these monopolies to bring down prices." True to her word, she has enlisted the US Department of Justice. In a recent press release, the DOJ stated that it would paraphrase, deter, detect and prosecute those who would exploit supply chain disruptions to earn illicit profit and use their market position for overcharging customers under the guise of supply chain disruptions. This economic deception is accurate, and it is dangerous. But, like any conman, Congress is trying to blame everyone but Congress for the inflation.

All of the talks about corporate greed, supply chain problems, and illicit profits is a tawdry side showing to Washington's real spending circus.

Let's look at a little economic inflationary history.

In December 2021, Jerome Powell, Chair of the Federal Reserve Board, told a House committee that the once-strong link between the money supply and inflation "ended about 40 years ago." Financial deregulation and innovations such as interest-bearing checking accounts and mutual funds meant that traditional money supply measures no longer provide reliable signals of future price trends. This was a resounding echo of Arthur Burns when he was Chair of The Federal Reserve from 1970 to 1978. He argued that inflation had nothing to do with the money supply and thus argued for President Richard Nixon to put in place the tremendous wage-price freeze controls. It was not until Paul Volker was appointed Chairman of the Federal Reserve that the Federal Funds rate rose to such a point that the government could dry up the excess money in the money supply. As a result, inflation was reduced and ceased to be a problem. Nevertheless, the wage and price controls damaged the economy to the extent that it took almost two decades to recover.

Others have argued that if you look at the time from 2010 to 2015, the money supply expanded a great deal, and there was no inflation. The Fed's broadest money supply measure rose by about 45percent during this time, significantly faster than the growth in economic output. Yet consumer price inflation began that period at 2.6 percent and ended it at 0.7 percent - the opposite of what monetarism would have predicted. Yes, this is a good point, but the expansion of the money supply did not reach the business community or consumers as a whole.

In July 2013, the Federal Reserve Board finalized a rule to implement Basel III capital rules in the United States, a package of regulatory reforms developed by the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision. The original capital accords were first seen in 2011 in the draft. The comprehensive reform package was designed to help ensure that banks maintain strong capital positions that will enable them to continue lending to creditworthy households and businesses even after unforeseen losses and during severe economic downturns of 2007-2009. Basel III increases the quantity and quality of capital held by US banking organizations. While Basel III was proposed in 2011, many banks understood that as a matter of treaty obligation, Basel III requirements would, in time, become part of the regulatory framework in the United States and began to adjust their balance sheets in advance of the impending changes. As a result, the banks booked the extra liquidity.

The expansion of free trade and the low shipping rates allowed the business to import goods rather than manufacture them in the US. This kept a lid, so to speak, on the price impacts of a labor shortage or a tight labor market. Work could be shifted overseas if the costs or other US-based costs went too high. From 2016 to the beginning of 2020, the average cost per FEU (Forty-Foot Equivalent Unit or a forty-foot container) from China to the US was around $2,000 per FEU. Today the rates range from $10,000 to $20,000 per FEU.

Consequently, the cost of buying goods from overseas has become less attractive because of the shipping costs. The reason for the price increases is many. First, too many containers of PPE were sent to countries that had no return freight, causing a shortage of containers. Second, the total shut down of factories and ports in China prompted US importers to absorb the pain of high shipping rates and pass on the cost increases to the consumer. Third, the supply chain issues are compounded once a container hits the US ports. Finally, many truck drivers retired to take other jobs during the government-imposed shutdowns. As a result, insufficient truckers moved the freight from the port to the customer, thus causing a backup at US port facilities.

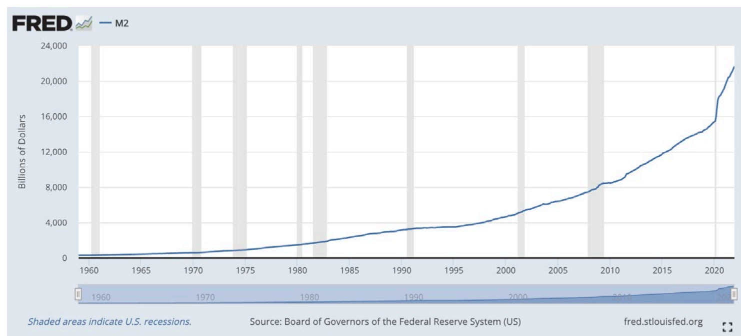
The current shipping cost means that it may now make more economic sense to produce goods domestically instead of importing those goods. Since the US currently has near full employment, labor rates put upward pressure. The tight US labor market is driving wages higher. While exploring the causes is a fun speculative exercise, the cost of the FEU and US labor rates is what matters.

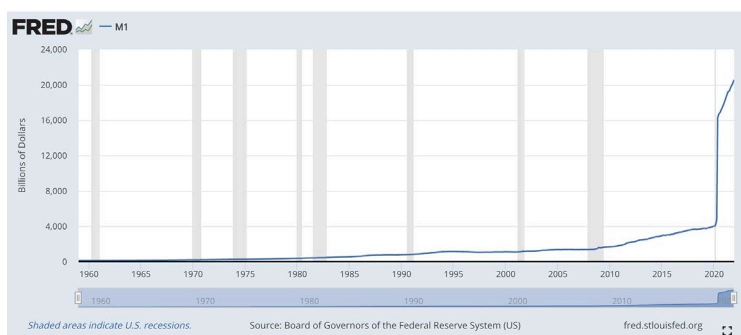
As Milton Friedman has famously said, "Inflation is always and everywhere a monetary phenomenon in the sense that it is and can be produced only by a more rapid increase in the quantity of money than in output." MV = PY. That's money times velocity equals the price *level* times GDP, or income, represented by Y.

If you increase M, and the US has increased M a lot, and the velocity doesn't change (though it looks like it too has increased), and output doesn't change, the only thing that happens is inflation rises!

So, what is the Federal Reserve to do? How high does the Federal Reserve need to raise the Federal Funds rate to tamp down inflation?

Enter The Taylor Rule. The Taylor rule was invented and published by John Taylor, a Stanford economist who outlined the Rule in his precedent-setting 1993 study "Discretion vs. Policy Rules in Practice. "Taylor continued to adjust the Rule and made amendments to the formula in 1999.





The Taylor Rule is an econometric model that describes the relationship between Federal Reserve operating targets, inflation rates, and gross domestic product growth. The Taylor rule has been interpreted both as a way to forecast Fed monetary policy and as a fixed rule policy to guide monetary policy in response to changes in economic conditions. The Rule consists of a formula that relates the Fed's operating target for short-term interest rates to two factors: the deviation between actual and desired inflation rates and the deviation between real GDP growth and the desired GDP growth rates. The shortcoming of the Rule is it does not address shocks to an economy, such as the economic shocks caused by COVID-19 and the lockdowns.

The Taylor Rule is a forecasting model used to determine the Fed Discount rate to shift the economy toward stable prices and full employment. Taylor's Rule suggests the Federal Reserve should raise interest rates when inflation is high or when employment exceeds full employment levels. Conversely, when inflation and employment levels are low, the Taylor rule implies that interest rates should be decreased.

A 4% to 5% unemployment rate is considered full employment. The natural unemployment rate represents the lowest unemployment rate whereby inflation is stable or the unemployment rate with non-accelerating inflation. We are at full employment.

The Taylor Rule. - $r = p + 0.5y + 0.5(p - 2) + 2$

Where:

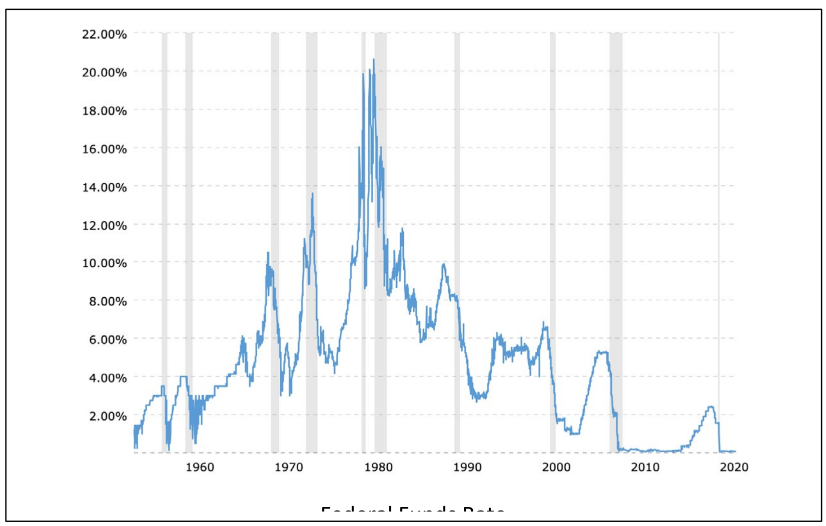
r = nominal Federal Funds rate

p = the rate of inflation over time, Median Consumer Price Index, Percent Change at Annual Rate, Monthly, Seasonally Adjusted

y = the percent deviation between current real GDP and the long-term linear trend in GDP. Real Gross Domestic Product, Billions of Chained 2012 Dollars, Quarterly, Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate

- January Unemployment is 4%[ii]
- US Inflation Rate is 6.131%[iii]
- GDP Growth Rate last was 6.9% - Annualized 5.5%
- GDP Growth average since 2000 is 2.26%

r = 11.328% This is what the nominal Federal Funds rate should be.



We'll not bore you to death with other versions of the equation and using some smoothing trends on inflation and employment – but all actions trying to smooth "r" over even a more extended time renders a suggested Federal Funds Rate of over 9.5%

The current Fed funds rate is 0.1 %, and according to what we have read in the note from the Federal Open Markets Commission, their current guidelines are the expectation of raising the rate to 0.9% toward the end of 2022.

The numbers indicate persistent long-term inflation with a possible recession. The fiscal irresponsibility of the US Congress for the last 12 years is having its impact. One can blame the Obama administration for social excess, the Trump administration for excess spending before COIVD, and the Biden administration for continuing to seek more and more stimulus money for this that and the other. The presidents do not have the purse strings, that rest with Congress.

If the Federal Funds rise to 4 to 6 percent by the 3rd quarter of 2022, that may put the brakes on inflation. But, it was also causing a great deal of pain. Dragging out the cure over a more extended period (the rise in the Federal Funds rate) will increase the cure's pain or the acceptance of the cure? That's when we could have a recession. With the current administration exhibiting a complete lack of understanding and seeking more stimulus for the economy under the Build Back Better Act when the inflation rate is 7.5%, and the US is at full employment, this spending adds gas to the inflation fires. It is a bit like trying to drink oneself sober.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine and the reactions of the west will increase the complexity of the choices to be made, or that can be made, by the US and EU. This article was penned on February 21, 2022.

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We offer macro insights into the socio-economic and geo-political landscape so that you can make better-informed investment decisions.

The Bent Ledger is Unicus Research's take on trends in specific sectors. It is not investment advice. More detailed analysis of specific stocks and sectors is available to clients of Unicus Research. Email info@unicusresearch.com to find out about our rates.

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[i] https://www.goodmorningamerica.com/news/video/inflation-rate-climbs-75-40-year-high-82822304
[ii] https://www.bls.gov/lau/
[iii] https://www.bls.gov/cpi/