Energy Directions, Inc.

Energy Market Assessment

Michael D. Smolinski

Wednesday, November 11, 2026

Doing/Having/Being More/Better Have Consensus-Beating Growth Happening And More Prosperity Producing Ingredients Needed: Employees & Fossil Fuel.

Figure 1
Number of people employed in America, total nonfarm seasonally adjusted, from the Establishment (CES) Survey (Src: U.S. Department of Labor, Labor Stats)
Millions

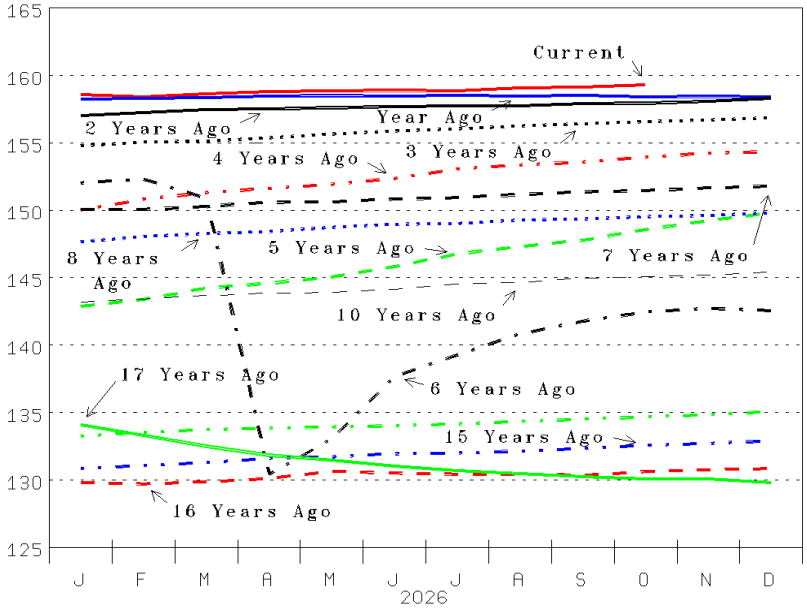
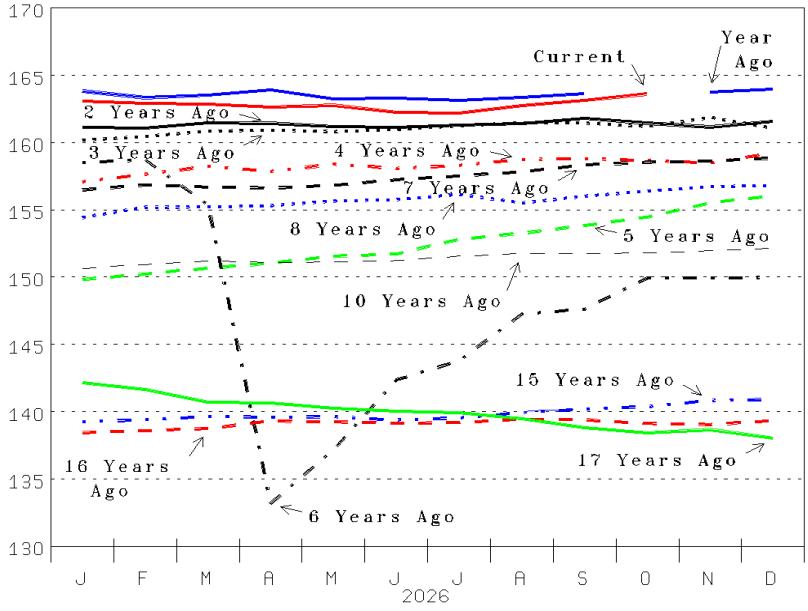


Figure 2
Number of people employed in America, 16 years and over Seasonally adjusted, from the Current Population (CPS) Survey (Src: U.S. Department of Labor, Labor Stats)
Millions



Much needing to be done had nonfarm employers hire a notably more than expected 165,000 employees in October.

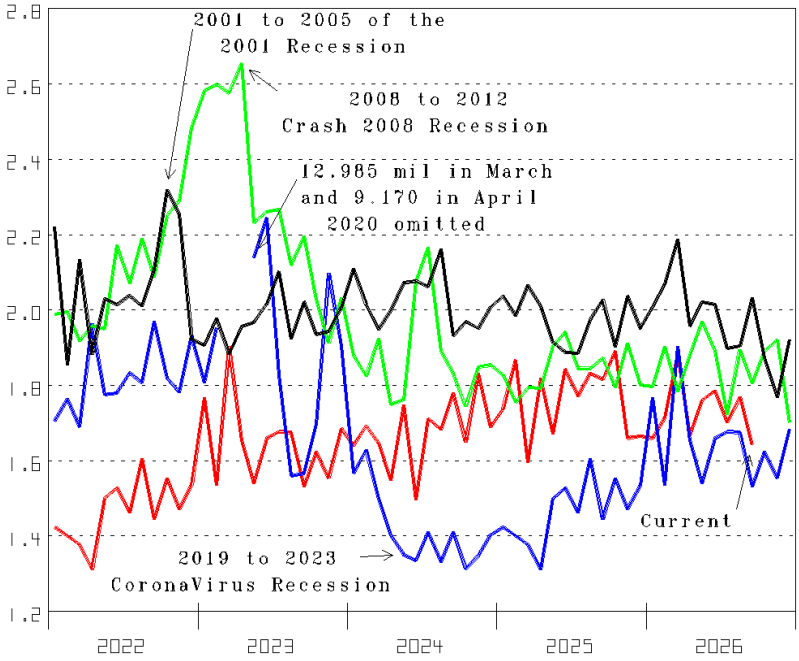
While the Mid-Term election results suggest a dissatisfied consensus, what people are doing highlights much being achieved, UP the direction we head. Employers seeing much needing to be done and doing increased nonfarm, seasonally adjusted employment 165,000 in October to 159.293 million (Figure 1, red line). Another new record high. Plus, September's increase revised up 31,000 and August up 53,000 has October 2026, 885,000 more than 158.408 million last year (blue line), a 0.6% year-over-year (YOY) employment increase.

The U.S. still a culture of Freedom, having more Doing producing prosperity is especially evident in 16-years-and-over employment increasing 744,000 in October.

While establishments reporting to the Department of Labor showed a 165,000 increase in October, the Department of Labor's Population Survey shows seasonally adjusted employment of those 16 years and over increased 744,000 in October to 164.183 million (Figure 2, red line). We find this to be a good measure of more prosperity being produced. It back up to where it probably was last year, not shown because the Government shutdown (blue line), supports our sense that government employment down a couple of hundred thousand no longer producing only rules/regulations and dictates, is good.

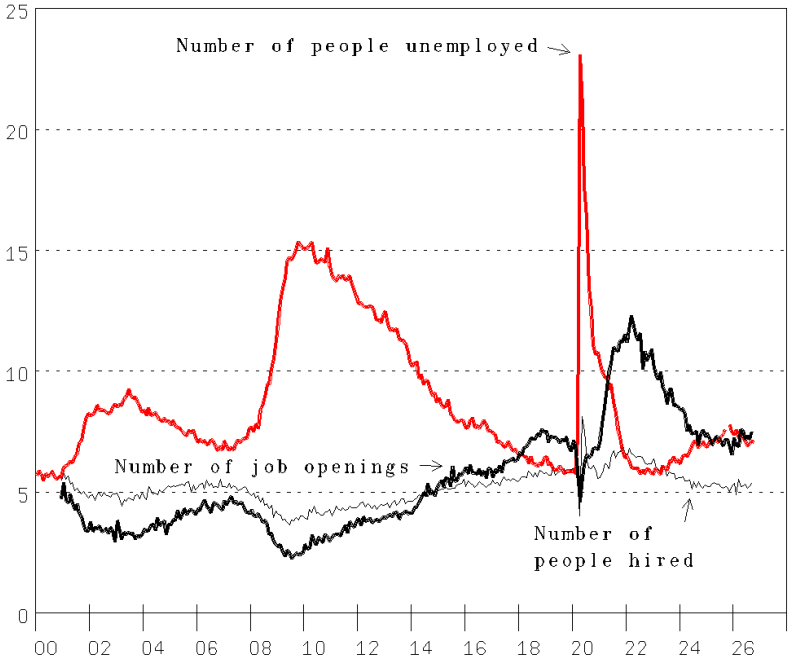
Phone: 781-979-9415 **Email: mikes@energydirections.com**

Figure 3
Monthly, seasonally-adjusted number of non-farm layoffs and discharges in the US at the end of the month (Src: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Dept of Labor)
Millions



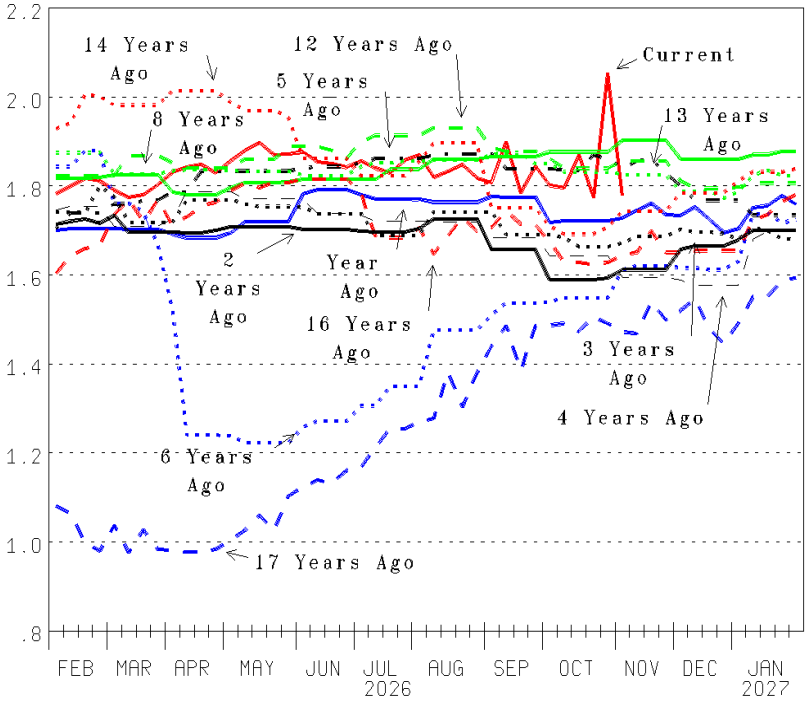
Layoffs and discharges in economic growth territory is another "economy-growing" indication: Freedom having employers working at Doing the much they see needing to be done. UP, not recession, is the direction we head. Recessions all about many losing jobs is evident in the number laid off and discharged each month (Figure 3). The number increased to 2.3 million with the 2001 recession (bold line). To over 2.6 million with Crash 2008 (green line). It leaped to almost 13 million with the Coronavirus Recession dictated in 2020 (blue line). Down 199,000 to only 1.774 million in September (red line) highlights growth. It now is less than it was with the economic growth following the 2001 and Crash 2008 recessions.

Figure 4
Monthly, seasonally adjusted number of non-farm employees hired in the U.S. vs Jobs Outstanding & Unemployed (Src: Bureau of Labor Statistics)
Millions



The number of job openings, people hired and unemployed all continuing to be steady are other data points indicating UP is the direction we head. The number of Americans unemployed jumps in recessions (Figurer 4, red line). And the number of job openings (bold line) and people hired (line) decline. Growth now is evident by 7.109 million unemployed in September little above 6.920 in December of 2024. 7.523 million job openings in September more than 7.295 million in December of 2024. And 5.402 million hired in September more than 5.292 in December of 2024.

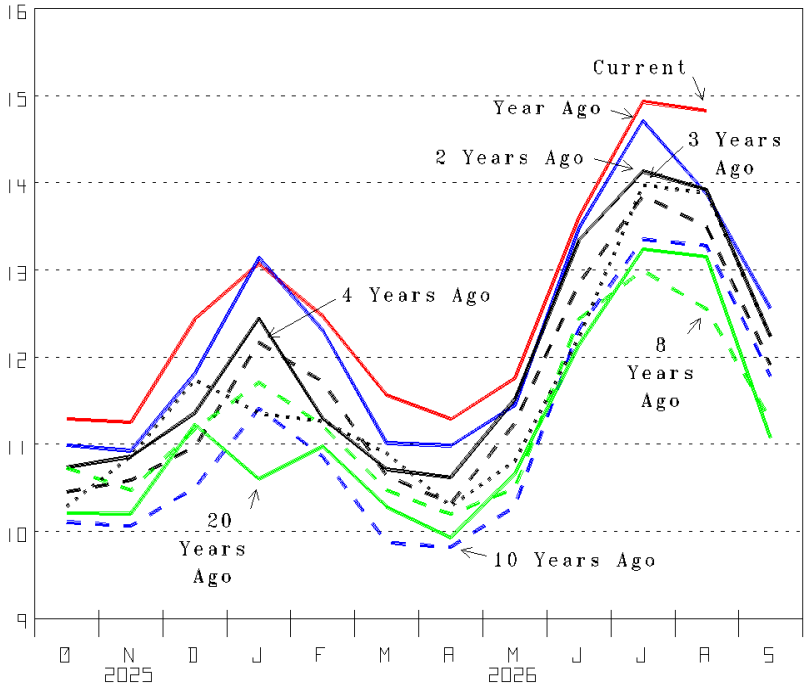
Figure 5
Weekly Raw Steel Production – United States
(Src: American Iron & Steel Institute data)
Million tons per week



More Doing/Being/Having happening is evident in U.S. raw steel production with the new Administration.

Producing prosperity requires ingredients. Employers employing is one clear sign (Figures 1-4). Steel is another. YOY raw steel production growth resumed in June of 2025 (Figure 5, blue line versus bold). It continuing (red line versus blue) has 1.869 million tons per week the average the last four weeks, 0.145 (8.45%) YOY growth.

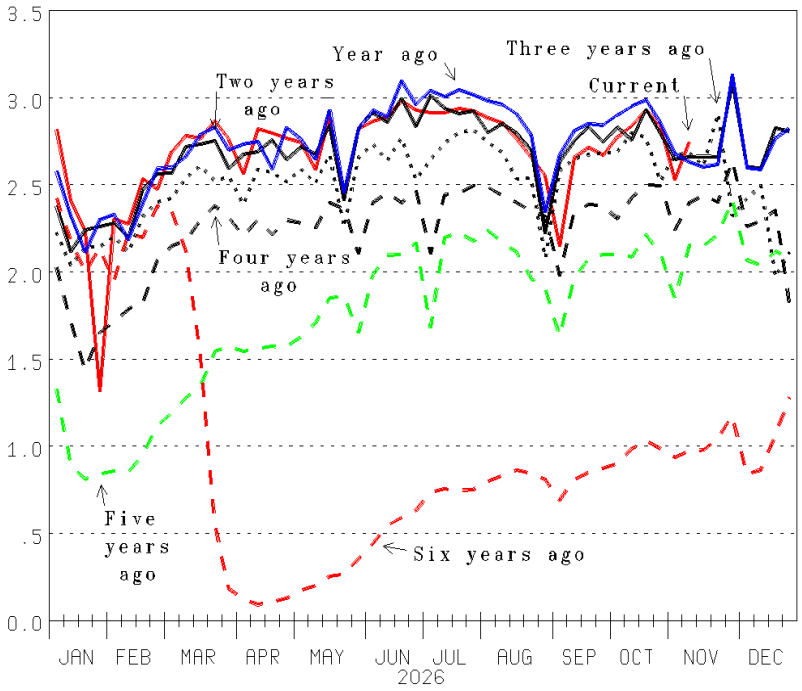
Figure 6
U.S. Monthly Electricity Production
Small scale solar plus total generation at utility scale facilities
(Src: Calculated from U.S. Department of Energy data)
Billion kilowatt hours per day



Increasing Prosperity growth is also evident in the amount of electricity needed.

While we find electricity (Figure 6) is much taken for granted, it is a major factor in the lifestyles Americans live. More Doing/Being/Having is clear in YOY growth last year (blue line versus bold) and this year (red line versus blue). 14.832 billion kilowatt hours per day (Bkwh/d) in August (red line) is 0.962 more than 13.870 in August last year (blue line). 6.9% YOY growth. The peak of last Winter delightfully mild had what was needed essentially the same as the Winter before. With natural gas the major energy source generating electricity, the coming Winter more normally cold is highly likely to need much more gas and catch many natural gas short.

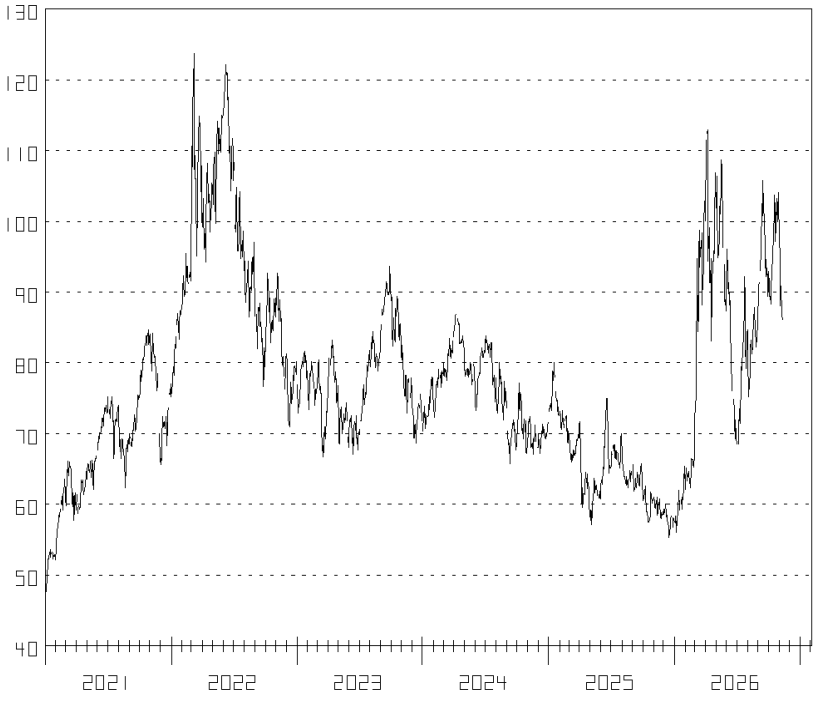
Figure 7
United States Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
Check Point, Total Traveler By Air Throughput on Sundays
(Source: Department of Homeland Security)
Millions Traveling On Sundays



Much Doing happening, needing ingredients, is evident in air travel—the number of passengers TSA is counting.

Although billions of people alive today have never and will never fly in an airplane, air travel is common in America. We find oil, that fuels all commercial air travel, is another very taken for granted prosperity-producing ingredient. Despite the high oil prices from the effort to finally end the rulers of Iran's war with so many, 2,749,897 passengers were counted last Sunday (Figure 7, red line). Last Sunday a new high for the day is 118,109 (4.5%) more than last year (blue line). Desire and ability to benefit from flying has the number counted the last several weeks essentially the same as the record-high count of last year and two years ago (bold line). That despite air travel high cost.

Figure 8
Near Month Closing Futures Contract Price of WTI Crude Oil
(Src: Wall Street Journal)
$'s per barrel



High desire to Do/Be/Have happening and needing prosperity-producing ingredients is evident in the high price/value of crude oil with the supply disruptions of Russia invading Ukraine and the U.S. effort to finally end the decades long war, by those who have been/still are the Rulers of Iran.

The near-month closing futures contract price of West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude oil jumped from less than $70 per barrel to over $120 (Figure 8) when world supply was disrupted by Russia invading Ukraine. Word supply recovering deflated it back to $70. The new Administration's emphasis on increasing Freedom and supply deflated it down toward $55. Demand increasing tugged it back toward $70 when Operation Epic Fury jumped it above $110.

Figure 9
Gasoline-New York RBOB daily, near-month closing futures price (Src: Wall Street Journal)
Dollars per gallon

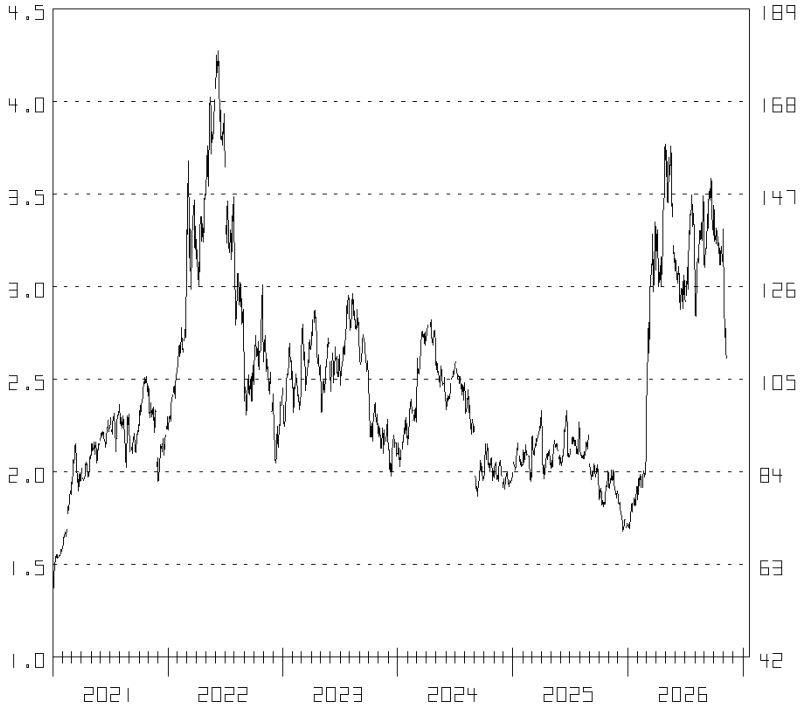
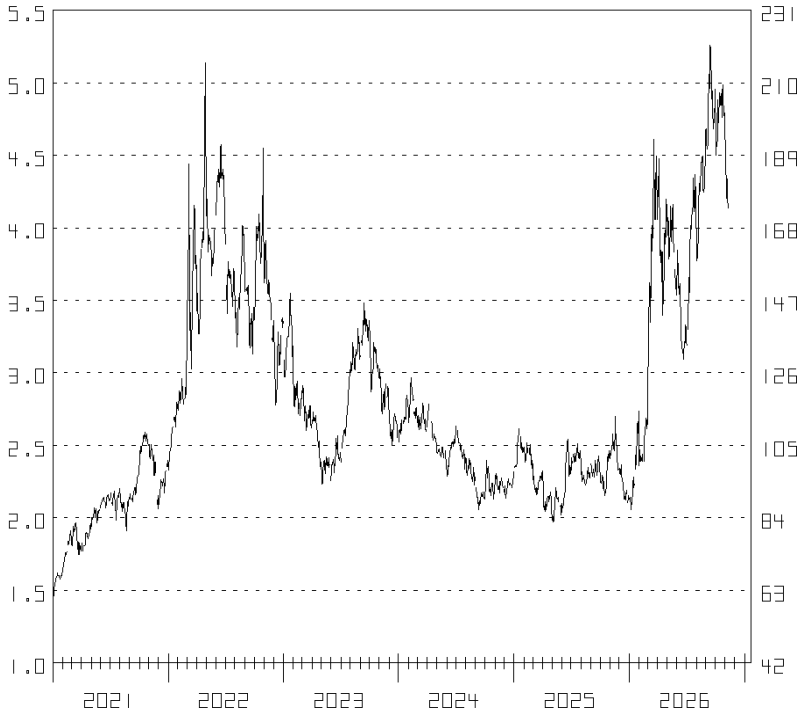


Figure 10
New York Harbor, Ultra Low Sulfur Distillate (ULSD) daily, Near-month closing futures price (Src: Wall Street Journal)
Dollars per gallon **Dollars per barrel**



Oil's high value and the oil industry working at meeting needs is evident in the price of gasoline down much from fighting-driven highs.

Russia invading Ukraine jumped the near-month futures price of RBOB gasoline from $2 per gallon to $4.25 (Figure 9). Operation Epic Fury jumped it from $1.70 to $3.70. While down at $2.609 yesterday is $109.57 per barrel, it is down to 70% of the Epic Fury high and 61% of the Russia invasion high. Because having a car or access to a car has Americans dramatically Blessed by movement, gasoline is the nation's major oil, prosperity-producing ingredient. Most of the billions alive today having little to no car transportation has distillate oil Over There's major oil, prosperity-producing ingredient. Americans are benefitting from gasoline being over produced and its supply also increased from the switch to Winter grade from Summer grade.

Diesel being noted as a cost-of-living problem reflects oil's very-high, prosperity-producing value, oil very much taken for granted and how/why oil markets work very poorly understood.

Affordability a major problem helped the Democrat Party take control in last week's elections of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives. The average retail gasoline price up to $4.60 a gallon, eating costing much more plus much emphasis on Republicans "starting" a war with Iran helped voting decisions. We credit almost all not knowing that very much of what they Do/Be/Have comes their way diesel fuel moved. Ukraine greatly damaging Russia's ability to produce oil deserves credit for the price peak for low-sulfur distillate now (Figure 10), from striving to end the decades-long war by those Ruling Iran, being higher than its year 2022 Russia invasion high.

Figure 11
U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) Crude Oil Inventory
(Src: Department of Energy)
Million barrels

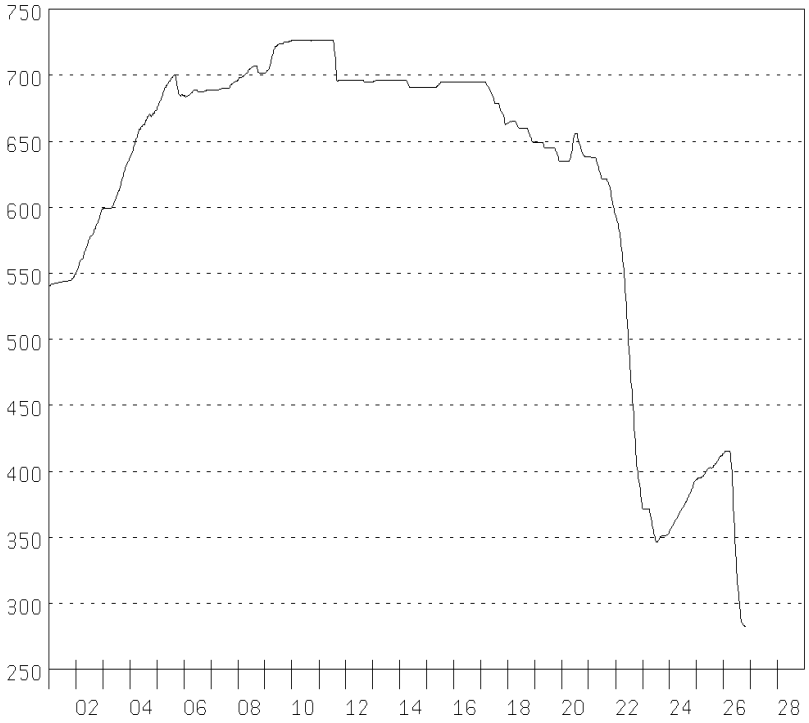
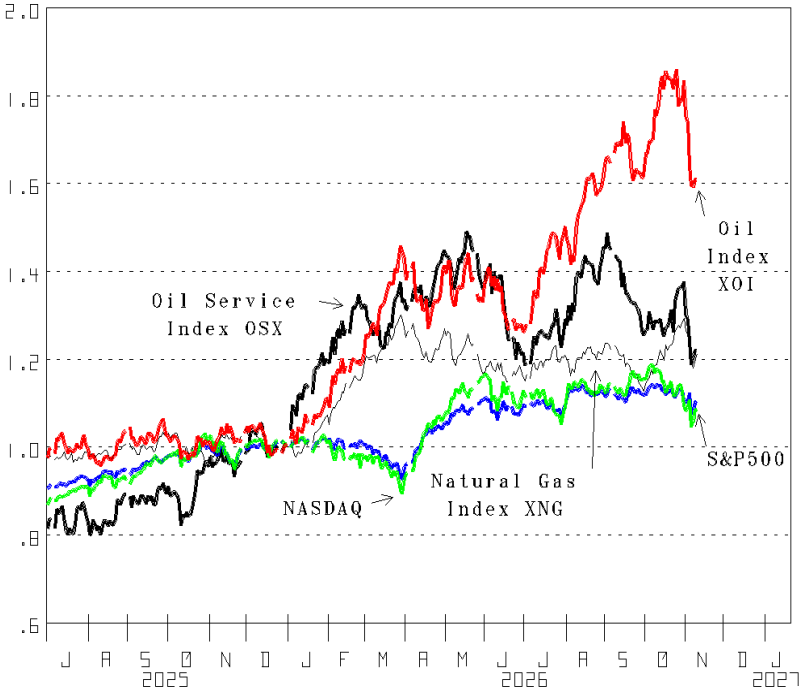


Figure 12
Stock Price Index (*) Comparisons
(Indexed to 1.0 12/31/2025, last trading day of 2025)
Index



Much taken for granted and poorly understood includes little appreciation for how using SPR supply has notably limited oil prices and inflation. And doing more is now notably limited. Government officials decades ago knowing oil's high value increased the quantity of crude oil in the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) to 726 million barrels (mmb) in 2010 (Figure 11). This available had more than 210 mmb used to make up for lost supply with Russia invading Ukraine and reduce the WTI price from its $124 per barrel invasion high to $80 as 2022 ended. 133 mmb used this year, reducing the total to 282.2 mmb supports our bullish oil outlook: a multi-year, nicely profitable, Drilling Boom needed is the direction we head.

Also, for how Strategic Oil Reserves all over the world greatly depleted as most in the world head to being Winter fueled makes now another buy oil and natural gas low opportunity. True peace being pursued, mild temperatures persisting and the oil industry working hard to increase supply have oil and natural gas prices and stock prices (Figure 12) declining again. Nevertheless, everything still up year to date highlights the many working hard Doing/Being/Having more/better. **Much of late minimizing, infrastructure trends, AI activity increasing, Over There growing too with work to end/restore war destruction, conventional energy expectations low, + much poorly understood has conventional-energy-Bullish happening. We rate natural gas, crude oil, oil-focused E&P, Oil Refining and Drilling & Oil Service Overweight Strong Buy.**