



Friday, January 29, 2021

Week in Review, January 29, 2021

Special Focus: A Series of Executive Orders

U.S. markets continue to experience volatility on Friday after a tumultuous trading event mid-week. The trading war that broke out between hedge funds and individual day traders on a few heavily shorted stocks had some hedge funds losing billions ([NYTimes](#), [WSJ](#)). Some trading platforms have had a wide array of issues managing the fallout. At first they stopped or limited trading in certain stocks, causing some backlash from retail investors who criticized the platforms of having bowed to Wall Street pressure. They then re-opened trading, in some cases with continued limitations. By the end of the week, one of the platforms needed to raise \$1 billion in loans from banks to meet surging cash demands, and the SEC said it was reviewing actions by brokerages which had restricted trading in stocks and was monitoring the ensuing volatility ([WSJ](#)). With the U.S. and the world surpassing new highs on confirmed cases of the coronavirus this week, the grim news added some downside effect on the outlook of the U.S. economy ([CNN](#)). The Federal Reserve held monetary policy steady as Fed Chairman Jerome Powell said in a press conference that the pace of the recovery has slowed in recent months ([WSJ](#)). Although Democrats are keeping all options open to get the \$1.9 trillion stimulus package through Congress and last week's seasonally adjusted initial jobless claims saw a significant decrease, both had little effect in turning markets in positive territory ([CNBC](#), [Newsweek](#)). For the week, markets ended with the S&P 500 down 3.3%, the DJIA down 3.3%, and the NASDAQ down 3.5%.

Newly inaugurated President Biden wasted no time in signing another series of executive orders in his first full week as President of the U.S. ([WH](#), [WH2](#), [NYTimes](#), [BFN](#)) We highlighted some last week and have updated that list here, with a continued focus on those orders related to climate change and gender & racial equality:

1. Suspended issuance of new oil and gas drilling permits on federal lands and ordering a review of fossil fuel subsidies
2. Take steps to double offshore wind power by 2030, replace a fleet of federal cars with battery powered vehicles, and net-zero emissions by 2050
3. Advance racial equity, support underserved communities, and end federal use of private prisons
4. Oppose discrimination in the military on the basis of gender identity or sexual orientation, including for transgender individuals

To see the running list of President Biden's executive orders, click [here](#).

Not only is the U.S. federal government (finally) taking an aggressive stance in fighting climate change by moving away from fossil fuels, several others, including a predominately-gas powered [automaker](#), an [asset manager](#), a [hedge fund](#), a [foundation](#),

pension plans in [NY](#) and [Ontario](#), a [software company](#), a [university](#), and countries like [China](#), [et. al.](#) have all pledged to do just that.

RBC reached a Diversity & Inclusion milestone this week by being honored the 2021 Catalyst Award for initiatives that have accelerated progress for women and elevated inclusion within our organization. The advancement of women at RBC is a business imperative. Since 2015, RBC has increased the representation of women executives from 38% to 46%. Women represented 51% of the new hires in senior-level executive roles and 52% of advancement in 2020. The Catalyst Award winner presentation and celebration will take place virtually on March 17-18 ([Catalyst](#)).

Other recent notable milestones this week were:

- Former Chair of the Federal Reserve, Janet Yellen, assumed office on Tuesday as U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. She is the first woman to hold either role. [Who's Yellen Now?](#);
- Webster's dictionary had finally met their criteria for "second gentleman" which is an equivalent title to second lady and added it to their books. The new title add is the first ever in U.S. history for the husband of the highest-ranking female official ([The List](#));
- On Sunday, a private aerospace company set a new world record for carrying 143 satellites into space on a single rocket vehicle ([CNN](#)).

As always, please reach out to us with any market questions or commentary.

Weekend Reads

RBC [Global Insight Monthly January 2021](#)

RBC [Global Insight Weekly January 28, 2021](#)

Bloomberg [Norway Wealth Fund Dumps Oil Stocks Amid \\$10 Billion Loss](#)

Business Insider [Rating agency warns several big oil firms it may cut their credit ratings thanks to the push to zero-carbon](#)

CNN [Why some food brands want you to know their climate impact](#)

Futurism [Electric cars are about to become cheaper than gas ones](#)

NPR [Americans Are Moving To Escape Climate Impacts. Towns Expect More To Come](#)

NY Times [The Talk of the Super Bowl Is Quarterbacks, Except One](#)

Reuters [Heavy industry, transport sectors to align on net-zero climate plans](#)

Reuters [Big Oil hits brakes on search for new fossil fuels](#)

Reuters [U.S. to 'make good' on climate finance pledges, Kerry tells leaders](#)

The Blaze [Kerry: Oil and gas workers put out of work will have 'better choices' like making solar panels](#)

Recommended Events

IEN [Why Consider Biodiversity Conservation when Building Your Portfolio](#)

Webinar | February 3

Confluence Philanthropy [RESET 2021 - Advisors Forum & Climate Solutions Summit](#)

Virtual | March 2-4

Catalyst [2021 Catalyst Award Program and Celebration](#)
Virtual | March 17-18

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