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Breaking News!

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In 2018 the United States of America remains the land of the free and the home of the brave. But who would have thought that:

1. President Donald J. Trump remained anything other than controversial in style and accomplishment (Exhibits 1 & 2 attached).
2. The 2017 Tax Reform Act is bad (Yahoo News: Meet some victims of Trump's tax bill; Washington Post columnist Robert Samuelson: Trump's 1.5 trillion bribe: New York Times: In Tax Overhaul Trump defies economic odds: Nancy Pelosi: wholesale robbery of the middle class), or, a great accomplishment that will create jobs, new wealth and have America grow again (Every Republican politician).
3. The Dow Jones Average (+25%) and the S&P 500 (+20%) had spectacular 2017 returns, notwithstanding Wall Street seers' prediction of about 5%. The S&P 500 hit record highs 53 times while the Dow had 70 record closes, the most ever in one year.
4. In the preceding three decades there have been 1% drops in the S&P 500 every six or seven trading days and 2% drops about ten times a year. In 2017 there were four days of 1% declines and no 2% declines at all.
5. In 2017 the number of market indices exceeded the number of traded stocks. Many new benchmarks repackage active management strategies into indices, including ETF strategies.
6. Trump's National Security Strategy is attacked by Susan Rice, President's Obama National Security Advisor as a terrible document and strategy, or, welcomed by Dov Zakeim of the Philadelphia Foreign Policy Research Institute and the conservative columnists of Commentary magazine.
7. The FBI, an administrative agency responsible to the Department of Justice in the Executive branch of the government, now has a Department of Justice appointed

special counsel, investigating whether the Trump campaign colluded with Russia to win the 2016 election, while the FBI is itself now being investigated by Congress concerning its personnel and conduct.

8. Warren Buffett of Berkshire-Hathaway fame predicts that the Dow Jones will be a thousand in a hundred years with a 3.9% return as compared to the past 100 year return of 5.7%. "Being short on America has been a loser's game and will continue to be a loser's game" he said.
9. The "media", whether the propagandists of the right, such as Fox's Hannity and Laura Ingraham, or, the cartoon-like Fox Five, to the mindless MSNBC and CNN, whose endless repetition of anti-Trump and end of western civilization tirades are not analyzed through the use of reason or judged according to the aesthetic standards developed over centuries; rather are viewed through political prisms and check lists.

My partner and friend of over 35 years, Dr. Marshall E Blume a co-founder of PMA has previously written:

PMA's investment strategy assumes that market expectations...are almost always wrong. It also assumes, however, that it is impossible to consistently predict which way these expectations are wrong. That said, PMA has shown that it is possible to predict the amount of uncertainty or risk in market prices and to construct risk-controlled portfolios for clients driven by those predictions. So, while we can't know whether or not equity prices will drop further, we can balance that risk against the prospect of further gains and construct risk-controlled portfolios to reflect that.

This process has rewarded PMA clients since 1982, a performance which has given us much satisfaction for over 35 years. We will celebrate that success at a gala event on April 25th, 2018.

Finally, the Wall Street Journal on October 31, 2017 published an article by Michael Meyer, a writer and father of a five year old son, Benji Meyer.

Benji was born of a Manchurian mother and a Caucasian American father. Benji was born in Hong Kong, lived two years in Singapore and was brought to America to grow up. He's fluent in Mandarin and English along with a smattering of Hebrew which he learned at a summer Jewish day camp, although his parents are not Jewish.

Benji has been constantly asked "what are you" because he is bi-racial. At first he answered "I'm a boy", which didn't satisfy his inquisitors.

Michael Meyer wrote that he tensed up when people asked him what Benji is.

He wrote further that "kids are smart. On his own, Benji has decided how to answer people anywhere in the world, who ask him what he is.

He says with finality: "I am an American".

So are we all.

God Bless the United States of America, still and forever the land of the free and the home of the brave.