

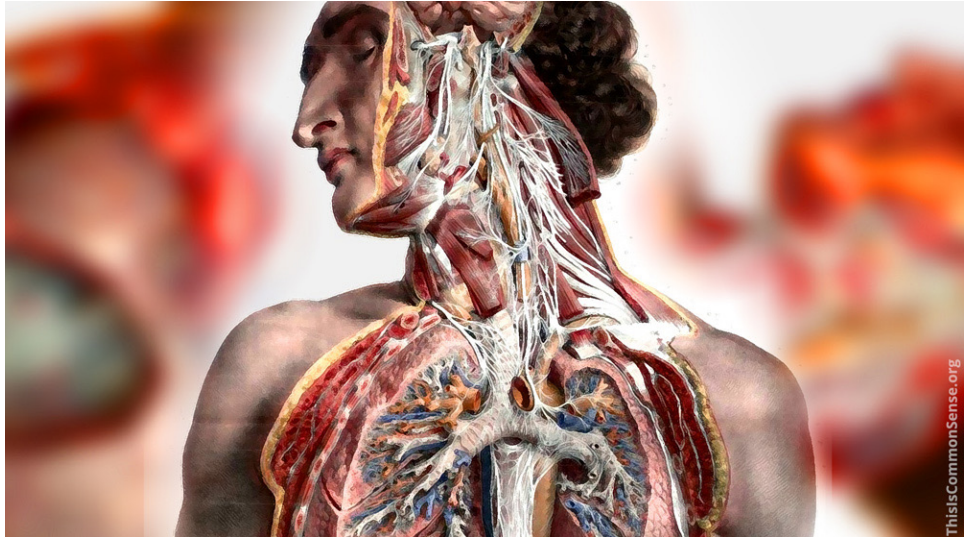
## Cure and Consequences

May 14, 2020

“As the nation enters a third month of economic devastation, the coronavirus is proving ruinous to state budgets,” the Associated Press reports, “forcing many governments to consider deep cuts to schools, universities, health care and other basic functions that would have been unthinkable just a few months ago.”

Notice the breezy attribution to the pandemic of the devastation caused by governments' *reactions* to the pandemic.

Official tallies have it that COVID-19 has killed over 80,000 Americans. And it will kill more. But state government revenue is nose-diving



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“because government-ordered lockdowns have wiped out much of the economy and caused tax collections to evaporate.”

Why make much of this fine distinction between the disease and the response?

*Because it is easier to control our response than*

*it is a disease.*

The people we elect are supposed to understand such things.

But, do they?

The fact that this is a political as opposed to medical predicament is clear: “Now state finances are in peril *regardless of the actual number of infections.*”

And note: a few states aren't going to experience the problem nearly so badly: Arkansas, Iowa, Nebraska and the Dakotas. Why? These states have done pretty much what Sweden has done: avoided lockdown orders and treated the disease like a health problem and not a political opportunity to flex their “leader” complexes.

No matter how we reacted, the pandemic was going to be devastating. But generally cures shouldn't be worse than the disease, and we should wonder whether our politicians' lack of understanding here is indicative of a co-morbidity . . . of the “body politic.”

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.