

For WHO the Toll

October 15, 2020

When the World Health Organization did an about-face, last week, advising *against* the lockdowns that have constituted the most-touted and most common extreme pandemic response around the world, many wondered: what could the WHO be up to?

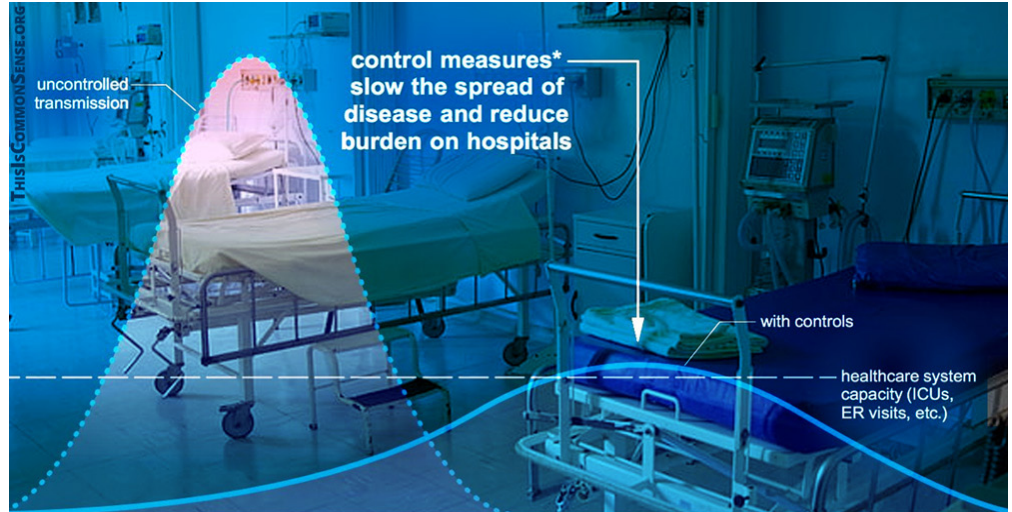
David Nabarro, the organization's special envoy for Covid-19, explains that lockdowns are useful only to buy time "to reorganize, regroup, rebalance" health care resources, and that we are obviously not in such emergency conditions now.

J.D. Tuccille, writing at *Reason*, provided us with the most astute news angle from the WHO's

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apparent turnabout: "At long last, months into the pandemic, the debates over the proper response to COVID-19 have begun."

We can *hope* so, anyway. Enough with bullying by government edict or inane "follow the



science" rhetoric!

But what the WHO's new clue should highlight is how we got here. The lockdowns were first offered as a way to do precisely what Mr. Nabarro said, buy time to reorganize medical resources so as not to induce chaos — you know, "flatten the curve."

It did not take long, however, before a very different rationale for harsh "mitigation efforts" became the rule: buy time *for a vaccine*.

This plan was strenuously argued against by a trio of doctors in their eyebrow-raising "Great Barrington Declaration." Continuing the lockdowns until a vaccine emerges "will cause irreparable damage, with the underprivileged disproportionately harmed."

The lockdown obsession may misdirect our attention from actual *treatments* for the disease — which President Trump has touted from the beginning. Indeed, Trump's quick exit from his own bout with the malady may serve as an effective reminder that our options are not limited to (a) quivering in sequestration till vaccinations roll out or (b) mass death.

There is hope.

This is Common Sense. I'm Paul Jacob.