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March 21, 2020: The Age of Evasion

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Title: The Age of Evasion

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3/21/2020--In the book I am working on, I am planning on a chapter entitled The Age of Evasion. The idea is that after the Death of God and the collapse of values, people don't necessarily embrace materialism. We may, instead, embrace deadlock. That is, faced with an unacceptable view of reality--that it is composed of indifferent forces and matter--humans may just stop inquiring and deciding about important matters. I am reminded of this because of the curious irresponsibility being shown by political leaders during the current virus crisis. It is a form of irresponsibility not to make the tough decisions. Closing everything down for an uncertain period of time, without any assurance that it will work any better than something more limited, is irresponsible. It will bankrupt and impoverish many people. How many? It depends on how long it goes on. It would take a gutsy person to say out loud that a couple of thousand deaths of mostly already sick people is not worth causing that amount of suffering. How many people will die within the next two years because of decisions that are being taken now? Then, having decided that it is worth it to impoverish people, it is proposed to add trillions to the already swollen debt by sending \$1200 checks out that don't change the fundamental situation anyway. Better to allow some level of business activity that would put a lot more than \$1200 in people's pockets. Brett Stephens has it right today in the New York Times.