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# DAILY NEWS

## Government could, and should, beat cancer via research

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My mother died of colon cancer in 2009. My dad is currently dying from prostate cancer.

Recently, I watched a series on PBS, "Cancer: The Emperor of All Maladies." In this Ken Burns documentary, two things were made abundantly clear.

First, cancer is an extremely complicated and challenging disease. Second, we are capable of unraveling its mysteries if we devote sufficient resources to the cause.

After listening to several Nobel Prize winners describe the abysmal state of funding for cancer research, however, I am not optimistic this devastating illness will be conquered during my lifetime.

One of the most divisive issues we face these days concerns what constitutes the appropriate role of government. I'd like to suggest eradicating cancer be immediately moved to the top of the list.

To reiterate: The ongoing effort to stamp out cancer should be fully funded by the government and, once a cure is found, it should be available for free to all citizens.

Why is it when I make this assertion many of my colleagues feel the need to lecture me on free market capitalism? This is not an economic issue, it is a moral imperative.

Moreover, I am not "thinking with my heart instead of my head" as some suggest – to me, these are not mutually exclusive alternatives.

Our quest to overcome this horrendous malady should not be left in the hands of the pharmaceutical companies or the for-profit health care providers.

We now have a drug combination potentially capable of curing hepatitis C; unfortunately, it costs around \$100,000 for the recommended 12-week treatment. Most of the people afflicted with this chronic condition can't afford the therapy.

The bottom line is irrelevant when people are dying. Your net worth should not determine whether you live or die.

Let's wipe out humanity's most enduring scourge.

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