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The coronavirus as opportunity

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The effect of the coronavirus has revealed glaring weaknesses in the global supply chain. Chief among them is the lack of a stockpile of necessary medical supplies, caused by the reliance on one or two countries (e.g., China) for the vast majority of manufacturing, which has become untenable.

Several multinational companies, including 3M and Ford Motors, have declared their intention to retool their manufacturing facilities in order to help meet the demand, but these efforts are a reaction to a situation that has already spiraled out of control in most areas of the world. A global recession—and, perhaps, a depression—is unavoidable. How bad the downturn is, as well as how quickly companies can rebound, depends on what changes are made to the global supply chain in the near future. The incredible effect of this pandemic on a globalized, interconnected world highlights the things we need to fix before we face something even worse.

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