

The Refusal of Democrats and Republicans to Face Political Reality

By [Eric Zuesse](#)

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Almost all of America's Democratic and Republican voters are simply closed-minded, and refuse to acknowledge that each of this nation's two political Parties is controlled by its billionaires and is profoundly corrupt, not allowing any progressive legislation (but only conservative and liberal legislation, which is backed by billionaires) to get through, nor any progressive jurist to receive a high court appointment, nor any progressive Presidential candidate to win the Party's nomination — such as Bernie Sanders [in 2016, and in 2020](#).

It's a [dictatorship](#) by America's Republican and Democratic billionaires, [no democracy, at all](#), and the vast majority of voters in each Party refuse to recognize this core reality about today's America. To them, it's Democrats versus Republicans, instead of billionaires versus the public. They are wrong, and they don't even care that they are wrong.

For example, on the Republican side, the fact that Donald Trump's coronavirus leadership has been a catastrophic failure and is [recognized throughout the world to be so](#), is ignored by some and denied by others, but it's not recognized by Republican voters — they are in reality-denial about it. Also, for another example, these voters are in reality-denial about [Trump's racism and race-baiting](#). They deny the clear evidence of it.

However, on the Democratic side, the fact that Joe Biden [is profoundly corrupt](#) is simply ignored, as is the fact that [he stole the nomination from Sanders by lying through his teeth](#).

As is the fact that Biden [was the U.S. Senate's leading advocate in the Democratic Party for continuing segregation](#) ('separate but equal'). He was a [stealthy bigot](#), not only on segregation, but [on criminal justice](#). Also, the fact that Biden is [an ardent proponent of U.S. imperialism and of the privatization of infrastructure in the conquered countries so as to sell them off to U.S.-and-allied investors](#), is likewise totally ignored by Democrats. (The main difference between Biden and Trump on foreign policy is over which country is the most important to conquer: for Trump it's China; for Biden it's Russia; but both want to conquer also Syria, Iran, Venezuela, and a few others.)

Perhaps the truth that both Republican and Democratic voters resist more strongly than any other is that the Republicans' leadership regarding coronavirus-policy has been disastrously myth-laden and bad, and that Democrats are better [only](#) in that they are not leading this disaster, but Democrats have actually gone along with Trump on it wherever the polls were showing that a majority of the public were supporting his policy on the given matter. In other words: Biden's policy has been simply to gloat over Trump's getting all of the blame, and to [avoid crucial specifics on what his own policy and priorities would be](#). But a choice

between two evils is still evil — it's an evil system. What is evil there is not *merely* the options, but the corrupt system that restricts those options to only ones that are acceptable to the actual rulers, to the very few — the aristocracy — that benefit from, and control, the corruption. That's what's more evil than *either* of the two nominees is. It is the people who are financing their political careers. And this is the reality that the vast majority of America's voters, in both Parties, *refuse* to recognize. They refuse to recognize the more-fundamental problem, which problem is the trap that the country has degenerated into. Without recognizing that more-fundamental problem, there is no way out of it — not even possibly a way out of it.

Here is how disastrous it is, as reflected in the coronavirus results:

Great leadership on this matter was recognized right at the very start of the soaring pandemic:

On 5 April 2020, Suze Wilson, of Massey University, headlined [“Three reasons why Jacinda Ardern’s coronavirus response has been a masterclass in crisis leadership”](#), and she wrote of New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern:

Imagine, if you can, what it's like to make decisions on which the lives of tens of thousands of other people depend. If you get things wrong, or delay deciding, [they die](#).

Your decisions affect the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people, resulting in huge [economic disruption](#), mass layoffs and business closures. Imagine you must act quickly, without having complete certainty your decisions will achieve what you hope.

Now imagine that turning your decisions into effective action depends on winning the support of millions of people.

Yes, you do have enforcement capacity at your disposal. But success or failure hinges on getting most people to choose to [follow your leadership](#) – even though it demands sudden, unsettling, unprecedented changes to their daily lives.

This is the harsh reality political leaders around the world have faced in responding to COVID-19.

As someone who researches and teaches leadership – and has also worked in senior public sector roles under both National and Labour-led governments – I'd argue New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern is giving most Western politicians a masterclass in crisis leadership.

Three communication skills every leader needs

When it comes to assessing New Zealand's public health response, we should all be listening to epidemiologists like Professor Michael Baker [Otago U., [“Overjoyed’: a leading health expert on New Zealand’s coronavirus shutdown \[announced 23 March 2020\], and the challenging weeks ahead”](#) March 23, 2020]. On Friday, [Baker said \[“Coronavirus: NZ with a chance to be only Western nation to eradicate COVID-19 – expert”](#), 3 April 2020]. New Zealand had the “most decisive and strongest lockdown in the world at the moment” – and New Zealand is “a huge standout as the only Western country that's got an elimination goal” for COVID-19. ...

What has been the result of that policy?

At the moment, as I write, the definitive website tracking the Covid-19 cases and deaths around the world, which is <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/#countries>, shows that the United States has had 26,860 cases per million residents, and 695 deaths per million residents. By contrast: New Zealand has had 388 cases per million residents, and 5 deaths per million residents. Per million people, America has 69 cases for each coronavirus case in N.Z., and 139 deaths for each such death in N.Z. That's the difference between a society that serves its population, and a society that doesn't. The difference is huge multiples, not merely a few percent.

But not all of the blame for this goes to Donald Trump, and not all of the credit for this goes to Jacinda Ardern. A dysfunctional society, such as America, has far lower levels of public trust in its leaders, because it has far less reason than New Zealanders do to trust their leaders. Even if Trump had been trying to do what Ardern did, Americans would have been vastly more resistant to it, than New Zealanders were. New Zealanders love their country, and don't hate each other trying to grab control of it, out of fear that 'the other side' might win, as the case is in America. In America, the *actual* other side — the behind-the-scenes rulers — already have control, no matter which of their two Parties dominates, and so the only real solution for that dictatorship is for the public to take the country back from them. But this can't be done if the voters are in denial of that reality. The head-in-the-sand approach can't do it. But that's the approach in America.

If Michael Baker was able to recognize as early as March 23rd that N.Z. was "looking like the only Western country with a chance of eradicating COVID-19," then maybe his prediction's coming true (to the extent that it has) wasn't *only* luck.

But how well have the best *non*-Western countries been doing on this matter?

Here are the best coronavirus-performers among them (and, for the most part, they are countries that Americans have been taught to despise): Vietnam (12 & 0.4), Cambodia (17 & 0), Taiwan (23 & 0.3), Burundi (46 & 0.08), Niger (50 & 3), Thailand (54 & 0.8), China (60 & 3), Papua (65 & 0.8), Yemen (69 & 20), Chad (87 & 6), Burkina Faso (117 & 3), DRC (124 & 3). Mali (171 & 7), Benin (209 & 3), Somalia (246 & 6), Uganda (250 & 2), South Sudan (257 & 5), Togo (264 & 6), Liberia (278 & 16), Angola (283 & 8), Nigeria (298 & 5), Malawi (306 & 9), Syria (310 & 15), Sudan (311 & 19), Mozambique (386 & 3). And all of those can be compared to N.Z. (388 & 5).

Above those were: Rwanda (389 & 3), Sri Lanka (392 & 0.7), South Korea (506 & 9), Zimbabwe (554 & 16), Cuba (582 & 11), Madagascar (608 & 9), Hong Kong (which is China's richest city: 706 & 14), and Japan (768 & 14).

The next-lowest Western country is Australia (1,076 & 35). Therefore, the two best-performers in the West were N.Z. and Australia, which suggests that one of the common factors for their shared remarkable success is simply their being geographically isolated in the same region, which is predominantly *non*-Western, more Asian.

Then, the next-best Western country is Finland (2,700 & 64). Then Greece (3,027 & 56). Then Venezuela (3,153 & 27). Then Norway (3,332 & 51). Then Estonia (3,337 & 64). Then Lithuania (4,040 & 50). Then Germany (5,359 & 121).

America isn't the world's worst coronavirus-country, at 26,860 & 695, but it's certainly the worst *large* country, because it is the world's 12th-worst, and its population is 331.6 million, whereas the *second*-largest of the worst 12 has only 11.6 million: Belgium (27,661 & 931). The third-largest of them, Israel, has 9.2 million (33,770 & 265). The 4th-largest, Panama, has 4.3 million (29,796 & 607). Five of the worst 12 countries have under 1 million population. America is the unchallengeable giant of the baddies, but Brazil has 213 million population, and its figures, which place it as the 16th-worst country (25,328 & 738), are very close to America's.

So: both of the bad giants, America and Brazil, have Governments that are diametrically the opposite of N.Z.'s Government. Whereas N.Z.'s is democratic socialist, America's and Brazil's are fascist libertarian (otherwise called authoritarian neoliberal). Of course virtually all countries *call themselves* "democratic," but most (actually) are not — it's just PR, propaganda, for them. An [international survey in 53 countries](#) asked residents "Yes" or "No" on "*My country is democratic,*" and America ranked #38 out of the 53, with the top 10 countries, in order, being: Taiwan, Denmark, Switzerland, S. Korea, China, Austria, Vietnam, India, Norway, and Argentina. At the very bottom, #53, was Venezuela.

It's therefore obvious that, even if America was, at some former time, a great country, it isn't any longer. But, if it used to be, then it has declined enormously. Surveys show that Americans don't think that the country is improving, but instead that it's ["on the wrong track."](#)

Obviously, America is getting worse, not better. Also obviously, neither of the two billionaire-controlled Parties even has any sincere intention of *reversing* that decades-long trend into the abyss. The people who control it won't let go of it. And the public don't want to take control of it.

They don't even want to *recognize* how dire America's condition, and direction, are. More of the same is acceptable to them; and, so, control of the country gyrates from Democratic billionaires to Republican billionaires and then back again, ad infinitum, but being the billionaires all the time, no *real* change. The billionaires face no effective resistance, in America, because the voters for each of the two Parties think that their "them" ("not us") is the other Party, instead of being the nation's billionaires. In such a circumstance, what group will even *try* to take the country back from the few hundred individuals who have controlled it, now, for decades — at least ever since 1981, if not since 1945? It's going from bad to worse, but how bad will it get? Is there *anything* to reverse that decades-long trend? Certainly, a prerequisite would be for Democrats and Republicans to face, no longer to deny, the political reality in America. Nothing indicates any such tendency, as of yet. Therefore, lots worse seems likely.

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Investigative historian Eric Zuesse is the author, most recently, of [They're Not Even Close: The Democratic vs. Republican Economic Records, 1910-2010](#), and of [CHRIST'S VENTRILOQUISTS: The Event that Created Christianity](#).

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About the author:

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