

The Washington Post

Liberal use of ‘far right’

December 8, 2023

Post reporters frequently use the term “far right.” But I wonder whether they might be more discriminating.

Take the Nov. 26 news article “Dutch vote shows far right rising, transforming Europe.” It called both Argentine President-elect Javier Milei and Dutch Party for Freedom leader Geert Wilders “far right.” But Milei is a free-trader who wants to downsize a bloated Peronist government that has brought Argentina 80 years of economic decline. He wants to legalize organ markets and supports same-sex marriage. True, he’s antiabortion, but it’s not exactly extreme to hold a position that almost half of Americans hold (if you include both no abortions and some restrictions). Meanwhile, Wilders’s party says this: “The Netherlands is not an Islamic country: no Islamic schools, Qurans or mosques.” He has shown no interest in smaller government. In fact, given what I can see, I might call Milei liberal and Wilders illiberal. Are those candidates and parties really the same movement?

The Post has sophisticated readers. They can make distinctions if reporters will lay them out. It seems facile to lump every challenge to the social democratic establishment as “far right.”

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