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Don't let Democrats downplay Bernie Sanders's radicalism

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It looks increasingly likely that Democrats will march into the 2020 election under the *Red Flag*.

After Sen. Bernie Sanders's landslide win in Saturday's Nevada caucuses, the elderly socialist's front-runner status is cemented. This spells electoral nightmare for the party, so it's perfectly reasonable that the Democratic establishment and liberal media are up in arms over the Vermont independent's remarkable rise. But their actual responses are far from reasonable and range from emotionally unhinged to intellectually dishonest.

The most dangerous response has been from those establishment Democrats, so united in their hatred for President Trump and partisan loyalty, that they are already beginning to downplay the radicalism posed by Sanders's candidacy.

The *New York Times*'s Paul Krugman, for instance, has carried water with a newfound fervor for Sanders over the last few weeks. Krugman wrote an entire column about why, even though Sanders openly calls himself a socialist, has praised socialist and communist dictators his entire career, and is running on a socialist agenda, he is somehow not actually a socialist. Now, Krugman has another article out dismissing concerns over Sanders's economic agenda, and saying backing him over Trump is easy because "freedom is on the line."

(Remember: Krugman is the same Nobel Prize-winning economist who predicted the internet wouldn't significantly effect the economy and warned that the stock market would "never recover" if Trump won.)

This kind of left-of-center media coverage, downplaying Sanders's radicalism, has ratcheted up recently, as evidenced by Krugman's column, similar pieces in *Vox*, *Quartz*, *Newsweek*, and too many other examples to count. So, too, Sanders's rise has spawned an entire genre of social media commentary where glib liberals minimize Sanders's extremism and make it sound like backing him over Trump would be a no-brainer.

Don't fall for it.

Sanders is an open, self-described socialist whose proposals would destroy the economy, crush free enterprise, and frankly, put us on the same path that Venezuela went down when they elected Hugo Chavez.

It is dishonest to say Sanders is “just a social democrat” or “just wants the U.S. to be like Denmark.” Social Democracy is not the same as “democratic socialism.” The former is a free-market system with a welfare state. The latter is Bolshevism, an existential threat to societal wealth and human life.

The policy platform Sanders is running on is not just some modest expansion of the welfare state to cover more people. He has openly professed support for nationalizing or de-facto nationalizing entire industries, such as healthcare, banking, and even the internet.

Sanders’s total proposed government spending would have the government account for 70% of the economy. In fact, according to the Cato Institute’s Ryan Bourne, Sanders’s agenda is even more radical than that of the Labour Party in the United Kingdom, which is considered a very left-wing socialist party in its own right.

So Sanders's agenda is about as socialist as you can get without going full communist. Not that Sanders would necessarily be opposed to that, seeing as he has a long history of defending communist dictators. He even honeymooned in the Soviet Union.

And it’s simply false to claim the socialist presidential aspirant simply wants to turn the United States into a “social democracy” similar to Denmark.

The Danes actually have a somewhat lightly-regulated, market-based economy. Denmark’s former prime minister himself rejected Sanders's assertion that his country was “socialist.” Sanders’s platform on issues such as healthcare and taxation much more closely resembles communist Cuba than Denmark.

As for the argument that he’d be tied back by the legislative branch, well, Sanders openly touts his plans to circumvent constitutional constraints to enact his agenda via executive order if the Senate won’t go along with it. So much for that.

The Democratic establishment and the liberal media’s nascent effort to downplay Sanders’s radicalism truly is alarming. If voters are going to elect the socialist senator, they at least need to know what they’re getting us all into.