

Bernie's Socialist America

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Bernie Sanders, a self-described socialist, has a significant fan base called the millennials – the 1980s- and 1990s-born Generation Y.

Many of them say they are pro-socialism. The problem is the millennials don't know what socialism is. The few who are confronted and asked are stunted for an informed answer. Once their minds pass the thought of "free" stuff being provided without work on their part, they're vacuous.

Merriam-Webster defines socialism as "a way of organizing a society in which major industries are owned and controlled by the government rather than by individual people and companies."

There is about a hair's difference between socialism and communism. Both hold the theory that assets are owned and controlled by the "community" or the "state," i.e. the government. There's no critical thinking occurring to wonder exactly who will be in control of the "state" or "government." Who gets to be the totalitarian, the autocrat?

Socialism and communism are presented as "all are equal." The bad joke is that factually some are more equal than others – and that person or party will be the authoritarian.

To those with the mindset of refusing responsibility or being unmotivated to work for their wants, Bernie is and should be very popular. He's dangling the piñata of free offerings to the takers while not admitting that the rest of us will be mandated to pay for the candy. Bernie's not on the hook. He has a cushy "job" financed by workers, and his future is guaranteed an income with life-long perks.

It would take a real loser not to succeed in popularity when you are endlessly offering someone else's stuff.

Almost exactly one year ago, June 4, 2015, the Investors Business Times published an article recognizing a report by Emily Ekins, a research fellow at the Washington, D.C.-based Cato Institute.

Ekins states that young people are unable to define socialism; they simply do not understand it.

IBT then quoted a survey from a 2010 CBS-New York Times poll finding that a mere "16 percent of millennials could define socialism" as contrasted to about one-third of people over age 30.

Reason-Rupe conducted a separate poll in July 2014 showing “64 percent of millennials said a free market system was best for the U.S. Only 32 percent wanted a government-managed economy.”

The latter statistic is frightening. Nearly one-third of this group wants a “government-managed economy.”

Ekins concluded that millennials “just like the idea of a social safety net,” yet they do not “want the government to run Amazon, to run Google, to run Facebook or Uber.”

Ekins’ conclusion is glaring. It appears the targeted groups reject a national authoritarian body ruling over things they are familiar with.

Digesting the political vote-getting chatter by Hillary Clinton and Bernie Sanders asserting Wall Street and big business need to be diminished under the control of their kind of government, the core challenge is rarely presented: Name a country where socialism or communism have ever succeeded. What land has bettered its people under such tyranny?

It’s appalling that the candidates are not challenged with that query.

Coincidentally, the L.A. Times ran a story last Monday on the deplorable conditions in Venezuela.

Former President Hugo Chavez avidly imposed Venezuela’s socialist revolution. He was the president for 14 years before dying and identified with the United Socialist Party of Venezuela including serving as its president in 2012.

Chavez’ death brought no changes to Venezuela with the “election” of Nicolas Maduro, a former multiple Chavez-appointee and understudy of Chavez.

The Times article tells of the lack of electricity, potable water, food; in other words, all of the necessities for survival.

The people are forced to la cola — the lines.

Citizens travel many hours beginning in early morning to stand in line for another seven to 10 hours to find the store shelves empty of rice, bread, milk, flour and sugar. Meat and dairy sections are nonexistent.

Armed national guardsmen control the sites. Shoppers must show government-issued IDs to buy goods. Their purchases are limited; no hoarding allowed.

Many shoppers are single mothers with multiple children. Mothers must show their children’s birth certificates to buy the restricted number of diapers.

Crime and corruption are rampant.

Venezuela's largest-denomination note is the 100-Bolivar bill. It's now worth one U.S. cent. Inflation is predicted at 1,200 percent next year.

While the poor and working classes are the prevalent victims, the wealthier have access to U.S. dollars, allowing a much different standard of living.

All are not equal after all.

Thus is daily life under Bernie Sanders' and his followers' socialism. It's Bernie's "future we can believe in."

Believe it.