

Why Won't Politicians Comment on Venezuelan Socialism?

Sen. Bernie Sanders (D-VT), a leading presidential candidate, was asked to comment on several populist governments in South America believed to be in “serious trouble” economically.

The question was put forward by Univision reporter León Krauze.

“The socialist model in Venezuela has the country near collapse,” Krauze said. “Argentina, also Brazil. How do you explain that failure?”

Sanders declined to answer. He responded that he was “very interested” in the question “but right now I’m running for president of the United States.”

It’s worth noting that candidate Sanders hasn’t been shy about using the experiences of other nations to make policy points when he felt it buttressed his economic case.

For example, [Sanders last year asserted](#) that the U.S. “should look to countries like Denmark, like Sweden and Norway” to see what these governments have “accomplished for their working people.”

Is there a reason Americans should look at the experiences of Nordic states but not South American states?

I don’t see why. (But I’m willing to listen.) If anything, one could argue that the South American states would be more relevant.

For one, these nations are more socialist than the Scandinavian states cited by Sanders, which have opened up during the last few decades. (Denmark, Sweden, and Finland all score very close to the U.S. in [the area of economic](#)

[freedom.](#))

Second, the U.S. has a highly heterogeneous makeup in terms of race and culture. This is closer to that found in the aforementioned South American nations than that of the Nordic states, which are much more ethnically homogenous.

Are there other reasons Sanders declined to address Krauze's question, perhaps legitimate ones?

Or was he simply dodging a potentially difficult question during a tight campaign?