



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on January 30, 2019

## Howard Schultz: Democrats Are Too Far Left

Former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, who is considering an independent presidential bid, said today's Democratic Party has moved too far to the left, a position hardly likely to win over leading Democrats who already fear that a Schultz candidacy could throw the election to President Donald Trump.



In a spate of interviews Tuesday, Schultz, a lifelong Democrat, took shots at several policies promoted by Democrats' leading lights.

"I respect the Democratic Party. I no longer feel affiliated because I don't know their views represent the majority of Americans. I don't think we want a 70-percent income tax in America," [the billionaire told CNBC's Andrew Ross Sorkin](#), referencing Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez's (D-N.Y.) [proposed marginal tax rate on incomes over \\$10 million](#).

According to CNBC:

Schultz said the nation cannot afford the priorities of far-left Democrats, including full government-paid health insurance and college tuition. "We are sitting right now with a national debt of \$21.5 trillion on the balance sheet of our country," he said. "And if we were a company, if America was a company, at \$21.5 trillion of debt, adding \$1 trillion a year, we would be facing insolvency."

In an interview on CBS' *This Morning*, Schultz took issue with Senator (and presidential candidate) Kamala Harris' (D-Calif.) plan to [replace private health insurance with "Medicare for All."](#)

"You just played Senator Harris as saying she wants to abolish the insurance industry. That's not correct. That's not American," [Schultz said](#).

"What's next?" Schultz asked. "What industry are we going to abolish next? The coffee industry?"

Schultz also started a row with Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), who is likewise considering a run for the White House and who has [proposed](#) a tax on the wealth — not just the income — of households with a net worth of \$50 million or more.

"When I see Elizabeth Warren come out with a ridiculous plan of taxing wealthy people a surtax of 2 percent because it makes a good headline, or sends out a tweet, when she knows for a fact that is not something that's ever going to be passed, this is what's wrong," Schultz told NPR. "You can't just attack these things in a punitive way by punishing people."

"What's 'ridiculous' is billionaires who think they can buy the presidency to keep the system rigged for themselves while opportunity slips away for everyone else," Warren [tweeted](#) in response.

Asked about Schultz's remarks by [Talking Points Memo](#), Warren said, "We have a billionaire who says he wants to jump into the race and the first issue he's raised is 'no new taxes on billionaires.' Let's see where that goes."



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Schultz took pains to distance himself from Republicans as well. He told CBS that while he disagreed with single-payer health insurance, “the Affordable Care Act should stay and it should be refined.” He has also been a frequent Trump critic.

“This is exactly the situation, it’s far too extreme on both sides, and the silent majority of America does not have a voice,” Schultz told CBS. “That’s the voice I want to give.”

Top Democrats, however, [worry](#) that an independent Schultz candidacy — Schultz refuses to run as a Democrat, saying he would have to be “disingenuous” — would split the Democratic vote and bring about Trump’s reelection.

Former President Barack Obama’s chief strategist, David Axelrod, [tweeted](#): “If Schultz decides to run as an independent, [Trump] should give Starbucks their Trump Tower space rent free! It would be a gift.”

Neera Tanden, president of the left-wing Center for American Progress, [called for](#) a boycott of Starbucks, in which Schultz retains a large stake, saying his candidacy would “destroy democracy,” which apparently consists of giving voters the choice of only those candidates who have been approved by the Washington elites.

Schultz ignored the attacks, arguing that he stands a good chance of winning the votes of the [42 percent of Americans who consider themselves independents](#).

“Who’s to say that lifelong Republicans, given the choice between Donald Trump and a far-left liberal, progressive Democrat — if they had a better choice, where are they going to go?” he told the [Associated Press](#). “My views are squarely in the middle.” Which just goes to show how far left the middle has moved.

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