



## Letters To The Editor

### Venezuelan Socialism

The images we see of what's happening on the streets of Venezuela are heart-rending. I had supposed this type of chaos and destruction took many years — but it's only been 21 years. Twenty-five years ago Venezuela was the fourth-richest economy in the world. Socialism vastly expanded in Venezuela in 1998 (21 years ago) with the election of Hugo Chávez. He brought in a new constitution, and, with it, redistribution of wealth and land. He took control of oil projects and nationalized banks and took control of fuel distributors. In 2014, the inflation rate hit 63 percent, and the country went into a recession.

Chávez passed away in 2013, but he had already hand-picked another socialist to continue his regime: Nicolás Maduro. The country has since gone into total economic failure. The unemployment rate in 2014 was 17 percent. As a result of government control of businesses and prices, today there is anarchy — with citizens taking to the streets in protest. The people are starving. They have broken into the Caracas Zoo to steal the animals to eat them (and the animals are starving too). Daily, thousands cross into Colombia to buy toilet paper and other essentials. People don't go to the hospitals because there are no medicines. Electric power is sporadic — even in hospitals.

There was an election, and Maduro won, but the results are highly suspect. Tampering is not new to elections held in socialist countries. At any rate, Maduro refuses to leave.

Socialism brings poverty, chaos, and harm. In our country, we must not let the pledges of “free stuff,” such as free college, free healthcare, and forgiveness of debt, trick us into believing that socialism is our friend.

Roberta Sutton  
Evergreen, Colorado

### Carbon Dioxide Is Essential

Carbon dioxide provides the carbon that is the building block of all life. Plants consume carbon dioxide to grow and animals consume plants to obtain the necessary carbon for existence. If the level of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere were to dip below 150 ppm (parts per million), there would be a mass extinction of plant life, per Gregory Wrightstone (a geologist with 35 years experience) in his book, *Inconvenient Facts: The Science Al Gore Doesn't Want You to Know About*. Carbon dioxide in the atmosphere during the last 140 million years dipped to a dangerously low level of 182 ppm. Carbon dioxide emissions during the Industrial Revolution saved plants from mass extinction and saved animals from mass starvation.

A graph in Wrightstone's book shows that carbon dioxide in the atmosphere over the past 140 million years has declined in nearly a straight line from 2,500 ppm 140 million years ago, to a dangerously low level of 182 ppm just 20,000 years ago. Carbon dioxide emissions during the Industrial Revolution hiked the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to about 400 ppm, replenishing the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere so as to save plants.

Why does the graph show a continuous decline in the carbon dioxide in our atmosphere? All plants and



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animals die. When living things die, carbon goes into the ground, and much of it becomes coal, natural gas, and crude petroleum locked inside the Earth. Therefore, plants have been depleting carbon from the atmosphere at a faster rate than Earth processes, such as volcanic activity, can recycle the carbon back into the atmosphere — until man reversed the adverse trend. Man's use of fossil fuels recycles the carbon dioxide into the atmosphere for the benefit and survival of plants and animals.

Gregory Wrightstone notes that carbon dioxide comprises a minuscule .04 percent of the atmosphere and has a negligible effect on temperature. In fact, a summary of 270 lab studies in the book shows increasing carbon dioxide by 300 ppm would increase average production of crops by 46 percent with minuscule effect on temperature. So why are we hearing the nonsense that man is destroying the planet by using fossil fuels?

Gary Woodburn  
*Sent via e-mail*



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