



Written by [William F. Jasper](#) on March 10, 2013

Hugo Chávez's Funeral: Jesse Jackson, Sean Penn, Iran's Ahmadinejad

Jesse Jackson (shown), Sean Penn, and Mahmoud Ahmadinejad joined dozens of world leaders to mourn the passing of Hugo Chávez at the former Venezuelan dictator's funeral in Caracas on March 8. The Reverend Jackson, a longtime friend and defender of the virulently anti-United States, Marxist Chávez, delivered a prayer/eulogy (see video below) praising Chávez as a "great leader" and "mourning" his passing.



Jackson's prayer was simultaneously translated into Spanish for the assembled dignitaries and the millions who watched worldwide via television. Although Jackson's participation in the funeral ceremonies did not receive major U.S. coverage, the full prayer was broadcast over many international news channels, including Al Jazeera, the Arabic satellite TV channel.

In his eulogy, Rev. Jackson said:

Life is uncertain. A life of service is what matters.... We measure a great leader by how he treats the least of these. Hugo fed the hungry. He lifted the poor. He raised their hopes. He helped them realize their dreams. And so, today we do mourn because we lost a life....

CNN's Wolf Blitzer interviewed Jackson by satellite while he was still in Caracas. The CNN host asked Jackson how he would respond to critics who would fault him for his participation in the funeral of a dictator. Jackson responded by taking a sharp jab at the United States' first presidents for owning slaves.

"Well you know, democracies mature ... our first 15 presidents owned people, they owned slaves," [Jackson said](#). Blitzer seemed surprised. "Are you really comparing Hugo Chávez to George Washington or Thomas Jefferson or James Madison?" he asked. "That's what I was hearing. But I want you to explain."

Jackson not only didn't back off his remark, he repeated it. "Well, democracies evolve," he said. "My point is that our first 15 presidents owned slaves and called it democracy for [about 200] years. We've come a mighty long way."

Now, if Jesse Jackson were a Republican, a conservative, a constitutionalist, a Tea Partier, or a libertarian and had made a similarly false statement, we can be certain that Wolf or Candy Crowley or some other CNN pundit would have called him on it and done an on-air "fact check." For the record, of the first 15 U.S. presidents, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, Millard Fillmore, and Franklin Pierce did not own slaves. James Buchanan purchased two slaves, but apparently only for the purpose of setting them free. Martin Van Buren and William Henry Harrison had owned slaves earlier in their lives, but not while they were president.

Hollywood Left Loves Chávez — and Castro, Mao, Che', Ho, Vietcong, etc.

Actor Sean Penn did not make any statements at Chávez's funeral, but in a statement after Chávez's



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death he said: "The people of the United States lost a friend it never knew it had. And poor people around the world lost a champion. I lost a friend I was blessed to have." The veteran Hollywood leftist let it be known that he supports Nicolas Maduro, Chávez's chosen successor, a fiery disciple who is expected to continue pushing militant socialism of Chávez's "Bolivarian Revolution."

"Venezuela and its revolution will endure under the proven leadership of Vice President Maduro," said Penn.

Danny Glover did not attend the funeral but issued a lengthy statement in which he said: "I join with millions of Venezuelans, Latin Americans, Caribbeans (and) freedom-loving people around the world who embraced (him) as a social champion of people-centered democracy."

Director Oliver Stone, infamous for his nihilistic and anti-American activism and films (*Platoon*, *Born on the Fourth of July*, *JFK*, *Natural Born Killers*) glorified Chávez in his 2009 documentary, *South of the Border*.

"Hated by the entrenched classes, Hugo Chávez will live forever in history," Stone proclaimed in a statement released after the dictator's death, adding: "My friend, rest finally in a peace long earned."

Former U.S. [Rep. Joseph Kennedy II](#), a son of the late Sen. Robert Kennedy and nephew of President John F. Kennedy, was one of several politicians who had worked closely with Chávez and mourned him as a fallen comrade. Kennedy did not attend the Chávez funeral but especially praised Chávez for supplying free heating oil to low-income Americans.

U.S. Rep. Gregory Meeks (D-N.Y.), a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and former Rep. William Delahunt (D-Mass.), two of the pro-Castro lobby in the House of Representatives, went to Venezuela to honor their deceased hero.

"I am honored to be a part of a delegation that will represent the United States at the Funeral of Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez on Friday, March 8," Rep. [Meeks said](#) before leaving for Caracas. "I will be joined on this delegation by former U.S. Representative William Delahunt, and U.S. Embassy Caracas Chargé d'Affaires James Derham."

Among the other notables who celebrated Chávez's "spirit and soul" were Cuban President Raul Castro, Nicaragua's Daniel Ortega, and Iran's President Ahmadinejad. "It is a great pain for us because we have lost a friend," Ahmadinejad said upon his arrival in Caracas. "I feel like I have lost myself, but I am sure that he still lives. Chávez will never die. His spirit and soul live on in each of our hearts."

One of the most florid tributes to Chávez came from his longtime propagandist at the BBC Television, Greg Palast. In his March 6 column for Truth-out.org, a far-left Soros-funded organization, Palast fondly reminisced on his many personal encounters with Chávez and praised the despot as a Robin Hood who stole from the rich to give to the poor. Apropos to the tone and content of his column, Palast entitled it, ["Vaya con Dios, Hugo Chávez, Miá Amigo."](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rmLMlaBy3LU>

Photo of Jesse Jackson waving after attending Chávez funeral ceremony: AP Images

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