



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on May 23, 2017

## Venezuela Entering Final Stages

After eight weeks of protests, 49 deaths, 13,000 injured, and 1,500 arrests, Venezuela's citizens [are turning violent](#). In the town where Hugo Chávez spent his early years, termed the "cradle" of his socialist revolution, protesters not only burned down his childhood home but also several government buildings, including the regional office of the National Electoral Council. This led one observer of the violence to remark that at least the protesters know whom to blame for their current troubles. Said Eric Farnsworth, vice president of the Council of the Americas, "It is pretty symbolic that the citizens are venting their frustrations on the author of the Bolivarian revolution."



And well they might. That socialist revolution has turned one of South America's most prosperous countries into a cauldron of violence over lack of food and basic necessities, caused by government interference in the economy. That interference controls nearly every aspect of the economy: production, transportation, and pricing, all operated in the most inefficient manner possible: by government bureaucrats rather than free market entrepreneurs, farmers, ranchers, and shopkeepers.

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Nikki Haley, the newly minted U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, said, "We're starting to see serious instability in Venezuela," adding that "we've been down this road with Syria, North Korea, South Sudan, Burundi, Myanmar [and other failed states]."

The protesters have begun to organize themselves so that while some are protesting, others may return home to rest and take care of their families. On one day, for example, thousands of women marched through the streets of Caracas, the nation's capital, dressed all in white as a symbol of peace. On another day students took their place, followed by musicians on still another day.

On one particular day, an event went viral. Grandparents and older people staged a protest that became violent when Maduro's police pushed them back. Social media covering the event outraged millions, turning the event into another tool of dissent.

And then there's the rumor that some of Maduro's security people are training as snipers, according to a conversation between some of his generals that was secretly recorded. In that recording General Jose Rafael Torrealba, Maduro's top military official in the country, said they shortly would be needing sharpshooters to fend off the increasing violence. Said Torrealba on the recording: "The time will come in which we'll have to deploy them, and I want us to be ready for that moment."

General Torrealba may just get his wish, and it just might be sooner than he'd like.

Image of burning Venezuelan police vehicle: Screenshot of [YouTube video released by NTD.tv](#)



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