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Venezuela - Foreign Aid, Conflict

The Moral Dilemma of Intervention in Venezuela

Venezuela is failing, has failed and will fail as long as they practice socialism. With a whole country starving, we have a moral question to ask ourselves; should we provide humanitarian relief efforts to the Venezuelan people, or do we let people starve and suffer? You must keep in mind that we could possibly prop up and extend the suffering of citizens by dropping in relief efforts with no assurances that they will actually get to those that are suffering. Dropping in relief could lower the pressure on President Maduro, the current dictator style President, to give up control of the state that would potentially end the suffering. If we provide relief aid for citizens, we could be potentially funding the Venezuelan military with food and medicine. At what point do we need to step in? At what point do we lose our moral high ground? We have the resources to feed the citizens and stage a revolution, but we do neither. The US has the ability to help bring back capitalism and democracy to Venezuela. (Schoeningh, "Giving Children Hope," n.d., paragraph 1)

Let me provide some background on the current state of the country. Venezuela resides over one of the largest oil fields in the world. (Trading Economics, "Trading Economics Update," June 2019.)

It has built its economy on the oil production for the past 30 years. Venezuela is also in the top 10 countries for having the most biodiversity. (Butler, Rhett, "Top 10 Most Biodiverse Countries," 2017)

Its rainforests are losing ground to deforestation from economic and political factors with no regard for long term conservation. Venezuela is also known for its rich plant life. Exporting coffee and orchids for years before the oil reserves were discovered. The long-term impact of political turmoil and resource plundering have had huge impacts on the biodiversity. Practices must be put into place to protect the land. ((Humberto Marquez) June 13, 2011)

Since Hugo Chavez's socialist revolution in the late 90's and early 2000's, there has been a slight increase in quality of life, but that diminished shortly after foreign monetary support dwindled. Chavez also removed all the guns and arms from any non-military citizen, leaving the people unable to defend themselves and in a weak position. Directly after Chavez's death in 2013, Maduro (then VP), assumed the role of president. Maduro has still continues the socialistic reign. <https://www.louderwithcrowder.com/top-5-lessons-from-venezuelas-socialism/>

Economic Definitions as cited by Webster's and Market Business News:

Capitalism: An economic and political system in which a country's trade and industry are controlled owners for profit, rather than by the state. (Webster's Dictionary, 2015)

Socialism: a political and economic THEORY of social organization which advocates that the means of distribution and exchange should be owned or regulated by the community as a whole. (Webster's Dictionary, 2015)

Our society in the U.S. is one of mixed economies. In other words, they have a combined system of markets and centralized economic planning. (Market Business News, "Pure Capitalism vs. Mixed Economics," 2018)

This current plight of oppression mainly affects urban populations. The city of Caracas is the capital of Venezuela and where Maduro resides. It is the most dangerous city in the west hemisphere according to the UK's Foreign and Commonwealth Office. The streets are run with drug traffickers, illegal armed guards, and attackers. Most first world countries recommend "no travel" to any part of the country if possible. The rural populations are in a slightly better situation, as they can subsistence farm, so they have food stability. Venezuela has 32 million people and a large average family size at 4.05 people (World Meters, "Populations," July, 2019). With no food, this is clearly an issue as there eating zoo animals to survive. (Tancer, Alistair. "Zoos are forced to slaughter zoo animals to feed others in Venezuela, where bone thin pumas have become the face of the crisis". March 1, 2018)

This affects all races and people not under the employment of Maduro. We have little information on Venezuela's environmental effect caused from neglect and resource stripping, as no data from that country should be considered reliable. (Benzaquen, Mercy, "How Food in Venezuela Went

From Subsidized to Scarce," July 2017).

Families get food from government stores and have almost no stocked food meaning there's shopping every day. There is little to no health care available for Venezuelan citizens and most of the doctors have fled to countries that will pay them instead of holding them at gunpoint. There are almost no non-government jobs available and no average wage as their inflation rates are too inconsistent to measure wage and data is not available. Jobs are scarce, government jobs are not available, taxes on gas were just raised again and the inflation rate is over 1,000,000%. There is little to no access to clean water, toilet telephones, electricity or local markets. (Sepuluva, Edgardo. "Income Inequality and Redistribution in Venexuela," February 2019.)

As sited by Mongabay, a not-for-profit conservation news service on February 1, 2018: Venezuela is fast becoming a failed state, with 11.4 percent of its children malnourished, 10.5 percent of its workforce unemployed, and an annual inflation rate of roughly 2,700 percent for 2017.

Serious food, fuel and medicine shortages have in recent months resulted in mobs raiding stores and shops, fishing boats, even the stoning of a cow to death where it stood in a field, in order for people to be able to provide for their families.

In 2018 the situation has only gotten worse. Inflation rates are now over 1,000,000 %. The Mongabay article goes on to describe terrible situations of looting, stealing livestock and taking over businesses by the Maduro troops. The people there are powerless.

Caracas is one of the most dangerous major cities in the western hemisphere, so a family's typical challenge are staying safe and finding food. The education system is struggling as they cannot afford rice, let alone school. (VIU, "Caracas World's Most Violent City: Report," January 2016.)

The number of kids attending schools is decreasing daily. This will have long term impacts on the next generations. This country is falling apart because of nationalism, corruption and socialism. This is a perfect example of how socialism can take a thriving country with loads of natural resources (petroleum, mining, and logging), and turn it into a place where people hunt stray dogs to survive. There are long spurts of power outages, sparse health care, few schools, scarce food, and a wealth of natural resources funding the corrupt government officials who ceased them from oil companies. This is why there are very little non-government jobs. Everything is state run and as more and more countries put in sanctions against Venezuela, it hurts the citizens ability to make money not working for the government. (Martel, Francis. "Venezuelans Eating Dogs, Zoo Animals as Economy Collapses," September, 2017)

Maduro currently has the backing of Russia, China and Cuba. All three countries have recently been supporting Maduro's efforts with military troops, weapons, and medical personnel in exchange for oil. These actions have reportedly depleted the reserves. (Antonopoulos, Paul. "Russia Ups Military Support to Venezuela," October 2018.)

Venezuela was the global leader for many years in oil reserves. With the latest plummet in oil prices and the exchange with foreign countries, this has greatly contributed to the country's hyperinflation. The actions between the three communist countries and Venezuela is being closely watched by the US and other non-communist countries. The US and other powerhouses currently have sanctions against Venezuela also contributing to the out of control economy. (Cohen, Luke. "New Venezuela sanctions protect Citgo, encourage debt talks: opposition" August, 2019.)

On January 23, 2019, the president of the Venezuelan National Assembly, Juan Guaidó, declared that he was assuming the office of the presidency on an interim basis on the basis of article 233 of the Venezuelan Constitution. Even though Maduro was re-elected in May of 2018, that election is being called fraudulent based on voter fraud and militia involvement. (Hernandez, Jose. "RIGGED ELECTIONS: VENEZUELA'S FAILED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION," May 2018.) Guaidó is claiming self-appointed presidency. The US does support Guaidó in his effort. Even though Guaidó has the US approval, he has no military backing by his own country currently. The US has been working with Guaidó on ways to lift the sanctions

without giving more control to Maduro. As you can see, the dual presidency is causing incredible diplomatic strife.

So, the question still remains, how to best support Venezuela. If we were to airdrop supplies, should we give them actual fruit or seeds to grow the fruit, similarly, do we give them temporary relief, or do we liberate them by giving them guns and military support? Venezuela is extremely oil rich. If we were to liberate Venezuela from socialism, we could make them a temporary protected U.S. territory. Give back some of the state seized oil companies to their original owners and properly utilize the funds we would get off oil and taxes. By getting revenue producing assets back into the citizens hands, the tax base would help run the potential democratic country. (Rapier, Robert. **“Venezuela’s Key Refineries At Risk Of Seizure, “ Aug 2018.**) Essentially it would be a redistribution of the wealth back to people who know how to manage it and enhance the economic state. In doing so, we would create more jobs and a self-sustaining economy. I personally believe we should give relief efforts of seeds, humanitarian assistance, military support and money, but I would make it extremely evident that the Americans had to step in and feed the country of Venezuela. In doing so we would publicly shame Maduro and hopefully show the Venezuelan people the propaganda they are receiving about the US is wrong.

These people will die if we don’t step in. The US would need to allocate funds and military troops to help support their efforts. Even though the country is rich with resources, and has money, that money is in the wrong hands. Maduro has control over all of the natural resources and no reason to step down. We need to assist these people and take Maduro out of power. If Maduro is not going to step down willingly any time soon, should we give them the long-term resources to fight hunger or do we focus our efforts on revolution or a combination of both? The question is how do we help the people on a large scale without having our efforts falling into the current socialist government hands? This is the problem with socialism, the government becomes an over inflated corrupt institution that cares nothing about the people.

My Proposal: A three step process with a twist

Support Juan Guaidó as the new president.

Support the democratic process and support a country constitution that will protect the people, the land and its use of the resources.

Humanitarian aid for the people that are suffering.

My twist – Make Venezuela a temporary US Territory until it can get on its feet again.

One of the perceived weaknesses of this support is the constant question “Why would we support them?” Years ago, when the US was dependent of foreign oil, the US would have been in there to help much sooner. Now that the US is less dependent on foreign oil, motivations to help Venezuela are much smaller. This is mostly a humanitarian effort. The end goal is to move people out of socialism and into capitalism, helping Venezuela become a thriving country again with order and safety for its citizens.

Venezuela has the natural resources to become an economic superpower in the west. With endless resources, the current president has in my opinion no reason to make the change to a democratic state. This approach will continue to have significant impacts on all people that are not current members of the Maduro party. Women, children, elderly and immigrants all fall under this terrible oppression and currently are experiencing food issues, access to clean water or any medical help. Since Maduro also controls the media, the people of Venezuela believe that he is doing all he can to help them and that the other countries are trying to hurt them. (Guevera, Cristina. "Censorship in Venezuela Fuels Social Media Growth," January 2018.) If we are to give Venezuela the resources to be self-sustaining on food production, why would Nicolas Maduro step down if there is no humanitarian crisis, there is no reason to give up your power?

The U.S. government should help end socialism in Venezuela. An anti-socialist revolution would take very little effort as they have very little military resources as they show in propaganda videos meant to scare the US where there seen firing guns with no magazine. (Naim, Moises. "Nicolas Maduro doesn't Really Control Venezuela," May, 2017.) Simply put, the current Venezuelan government doesn't work and people are starving. We need to take the risk of supplying a socialist dictatorship with relief efforts in order to assure resources to secure food for the people. If we airdrop supplies into Venezuela it will be distributed so fast the military couldn't take it nor do they need it nearly as bad as their brothers and sisters who are starving in the streets.

With a weak military starving people and unlimited natural resources, Venezuela is in need of U.S. support. That may be in the form of military support of Guaidó, humanitarian efforts, feeding the people and making sure they can sustain themselves, or even the idea of making them a US Territory. I think it would be a historical victory for capitalism (mixed markets) and America along with a financially beneficial revolution. With the inflation rate in Venezuela estimated to be around 250,000%. (Trading Economics, " Trading Economics Update," June 2019.) with this much inflation it would make more sense for Venezuela to burn money and take it out of circulation.

This is definitely an increasingly urgent crisis though as literally 31 million people are essentially eating garbage to stay alive and have been doing so for months. It is not even a moral dilemma it's a moral obligation to help the people of Venezuela. They are major cocaine manufactures as well so this would also help with the war on drugs.

I want to make this clear though, I support U.S. intervention in Venezuela I am not a globalist, this would be in an investment on the Part of the united states. Venezuela has vast oil reserves if the U.S. Were to overthrow Nicholas Maduro we could redistribute the government owned oil fields back to the original owners and collect interest forever. The current socialist government in Venezuela is simply too corrupt to manage resources like that therefore they need "capitalism" it's the willing exchange of goods not government control over all private enterprise. (Rand, Ayn. "Why Socialism is Always Oppressive, Dictatorial and Corrupt," May 2016.)

We have a question to ask ourselves, how do we want America to be remembered in history books? I would like us to be remembered as the liberators of Venezuela and the country who finally ended socialism in the west. I simply don't understand how anyone is talking about anything else in the world of humanitarian relief efforts this is hands down the biggest humanitarian crisis in the world 31 million starving people how can you focus on anything else. The way I see it, America has done a lot more for a lot less and this could end up helping the US financially but only if we can truly end corruption and socialism in Venezuela. (Hine, Thompson. "Trump Administration Expands Economic Sanctions on Venezuela," August 2019.)

Venezuela is not an oddity and it's not even Venezuela's fault socialism and collectivism are to blame socialism doesn't work and will never work. It brings starvation, corruption, economic collapse, and in the most extreme cases genocide. Make no mistake globalism, collectivism, and socialism go hand in hand it's the consolidation of power and the restriction of people's rights we have the moral obligation to end socialism and starvation in Venezuela. I believe the sanctions recently put into action by President Trump are a step in the right direction in removing Maduro from power. Economic collapse is inevitable in any government based around the redistribution of wealth to those "affected by systemic racism" or whatever victim group is deemed fit. (Prager, Dennis. "Socialism Makes People Selfish," July, 2018.)

If you want to solve income inequality there's a simple solution work harder. Capitalism (Mixed Markets) is the greatest economic system in the history of the world it is the willing exchange of goods by the citizens themselves it allows growth if you're willing to work for it. Whereas socialism there is no achievement no competition no reason to try because you will never make more than your neighbor no matter if you're a doctor, plumber, or electrician because that wouldn't be "fair". There is no reason to go to medical school because you won't make more than the guy who lays pipe in the union equality of outcome is an evil lazy idea. (Prager, Dennis. "Socialism Makes People Selfish," July, 2018.)

I want to make more money than anyone else, I don't know about you, but I support the economic system that has lifted billions from poverty and allows limitless achievement rather than a steady income for everyone whether they can provide skilled labor or not. Socialism doesn't consider human capital a doctor has way more human capital than an assembly line worker, a doctor has put his/herself through college gained knowledge and applicable skills there for their time is worth way more money.

Socialists see this as a selfish ideal they believe wealth should be redistributed evenly whether you're willing to work for it or not wealth is always "seized" or stolen by bloated governments and redistributed to victim groups who are supposedly more deserving of the hard earned money of people with human capital. This has happened in every socialist country and this is why socialism is a failure, poor people are poor because they don't know how to spend money not because racism.

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