

Hugo Chavez's Spirit is Alive in 2020 America

Venezuela has the world's [highest](#) murder rate because the police there don't stop murder unless it helps politics. So long as homicide doesn't threaten the power or wealth of the governing party, murders are largely unsolved and are often committed by the very police who should be preventing them.

As *Business Insider* [reports](#), in Venezuela murders happen with "widespread impunity" because of "the complete [dysfunction] of the judicial system that allows for a significant degree of impunity for some, usually high-profile, offenders, and, as a result, disregard for the law, because it's selectively applied."

Homicide is the [leading cause of death](#) among Venezuelan youth. To add to the misery, in 2012 Venezuela [banned](#) the private ownership of firearms.

These are the bitter fruits of a system in which criminal law is simply another tool in the arsenal of power. A politicized law enforcement and judiciary combined with a relentless gun confiscation program leave citizens at the mercy of criminal gangs and extra-judicial police violence. Venezuelans sacrificed these rights in exchange for a hoped-for socialist utopia. In the end, they lost their rights and didn't get the bargain for which they pined.

That's what happens in every socialist revolution.

Hugo Chavez didn't promise violence and oppression when he was swept into power. In 1999, he succeeded in amending the [constitution](#) to add "rights" to healthcare (Article 83), dignified work and a safe workplace (Article 87), education (Article 102) including free higher education (Article 103), the right to private property (Article 115), a clean

environment (Article 127-129) and free speech (Article 57).

There were hints even then that the new rights were empty promises. The right to free speech, for example, came with the caution that, "Anyone making use of this right assumes full responsibility for everything expressed. Anonymity . . . discriminatory messages or those promoting religious intolerance are not permitted." It's a lot like America today. You have an absolute right to free speech, as long as you agree with the Left.

At the time, Chavez's authoritarian powers seemed a necessary evil for bringing about the utopia he promised. That utopia never materialized.

Chavez [invented](#) the slogan "defund the police." He took away their guns when the police failed to oppress his political opponents.

But in America, our leaders promise to follow the same recipe while insisting we will get a true utopian result. This time it will work differently. We can [recognize](#) promises of expanding subsidized healthcare, free community college, clean environmental technology. Would an American Left in control of all centers of power and information keep those promises?

In Venezuela, as in the United States, the Left [promised](#) that banning or sharply reducing private ownership of guns would reduce crime. Chicago allows private gun ownership but places so many [restrictions](#) on the possession and transportation of firearms that there is effectively a legal ban on using a firearm for defense in almost any location but one's own home. Like the gun ban in Venezuela, it has simply transformed the general public into a softer target for armed criminals.

In both Chicago and Venezuela, the elite and powerful have plenty of armed protection while their subjects are mowed down by criminal lawlessness.

Moreover, the selective prosecution in Venezuela that eventually led to a total breakdown in the rule of law seems to mirror the way every American criminal law is enforced unequally depending on politics these days. A black man killed by a police officer engenders one response. But a black Trump supporter [gunned down](#) for his political beliefs results in yawns.

Pastors are [arrested](#) for holding church services. But mobs can riot and loot with impunity. Private homeowners must [endure](#) trespassing mobs. Calls to 911 are ignored and a self-help attempt to repel the trespassers infringes on *their* rights to use private property to terrify our citizenry.

The FBI can send [15 agents](#) to investigate a hoax hate crime (one that should have been obvious from the start) but they seem totally subservient to the mobs terrorizing our cities. Chavez loved using [street mobs to intimidate](#) his political rivals. The tactic has [come to America](#).

In the spirit of Hugo Chavez, the American Left has moved past trying to defeat its political opposition and onto banning it instead. Fifty percent of “strong liberals” now [support](#) firing somebody for simply donating to the Trump campaign. One [study](#) found broad support among liberals for official censorship of any speech (true or not) that contradicted their socio-economic views.

Liberal Chavez supporters justified the total eradication of Chavez’s effective political opposition as a necessary means to fulfill his pie-in-the-sky promises. In the end, the suppression of his political opponents freed him from keeping any of those promises. In cities across the United States which eliminated all effective political opposition, little islands of Chavista misery have emerged. For the Left, the problem is that there are still places within the United States to which people can [escape](#).

Chavez died a [billionaire](#). In the end, he not only failed to keep the promises of free social programs, he made Venezuela unbearable for everybody but especially for the poor. [Censorship](#), a politicized criminal law, disarming legitimate police, and rounding up guns are not milestones on the way to a utopia, not even in America.

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