

# GANNETT

It's all within reach.

## **Promised entitlements are killing this nation**

**By: Ron House - September 13, 2013**

Socialism is creating a boom year for American Rice farmers, according to the Wall Street Journal. Socialism in Venezuela, that is.

Deceased President Hugo Chavez deplored American capitalism. He nationalized large farms, confiscated the land and controlled food prices as part of a strategy to redistribute income. His policies have turned Venezuela from a net exporter of rice to the fourth largest importer from the U.S. this year, up 62 percent over last year. The country was once self-sufficient in coffee, sugar and beef. It is now forced to import a portion of its needs.

Detroit, once the fourth largest city in the U.S., is now bankrupt, due primarily to 50 years of rule by Democratic and Progressive administrations who promised the mostly unionized work force huge government benefits, a massive model city and higher guaranteed wages. The workers were told that all it would cost them was their vote, that the rich were going to pay for everything with higher taxes.

In five years the model city was a complete disaster, torn by over-spending, centralized planning and corruption and losing 60 percent of its population. Michigan workers can produce cars just as good as the southern states, but they are saddled with legacy costs and structures like the "jobs bank" which communicates a message of futility and dependence.

When you tax people at high rates to pay for socialist benefits, when you tell them where to live and what school to attend, and when you give jobs away based on race and not ability, you kill human freedom which stymies productivity.

In 1887, Alexander Tyler, a Scottish professor at the University of Edinburgh, stated that a democracy is always temporary in nature. "A democracy will exist up until the time that voters discover they can vote themselves generous benefits from the public treasury.

From that moment on, the majority always votes for the candidate that promised the most benefits from the public treasury, with the result that every democracy will finally collapse over loose fiscal policy," he said.

America, the land of the free, is becoming the land of "free stuff." In fact, our current president was elected by promising to spread the wealth around, and enlarge the role of government in our daily lives. There is a growing attraction to not working. A Cato Institute study recently showed that total welfare

benefits — food stamps, housing assistance, Medicaid, and others — can equate to more than \$12 an hour in many states, so why work for minimum wages. Government intrusion is growing in the banking sector, national health care, a majority of the media, and in the \$1 trillion student-loan business where lower government loan rates have forced 85percent of the private bankers out of the business. If Obama is able to push through his Cap and Trade program government will eventually control a large portion of the energy sector. Last month — with little fanfare — the Department of Housing and Urban Development released its new proposals on land use regulations which would give it the power to dismantle local zoning if communities don't have what it considers the right mix of racial, economic and ethnic diversity.

After mentioning all of the above, it has to be a huge source of irritation to Washington's Progressives that one of the most beneficial windfalls for poor home owners in the last year has been the capitalistic practice of fracking for natural gas and oil. Before fracking began in 2008, natural gas prices averaged \$8 per million BTUs. By 2012 after the new drilling practices exploded across the U.S., prices were below \$3.00. In 2012 government subsidized approximately 9 million low income households \$3.5 billion for their heating costs. With the lower prices provided by fracking in 2012, 40 million poor households saved roughly \$10 billion. But the higher wages, secure energy supplies and lower manufacturing costs of the new processes are still being disputed by most green groups and affluent environmentalists.

Enslavement, perpetuated by an addiction to "free" entitlements, is a giant Democratic Progressive vote-buying political hoax on especially the poor and is just as nauseating as the ball and chain enslavement of the Civil War era.