

## Opinion | The ‘Evil’ Plastic Straw

Opinion / **Published On February 22, 2020 07:03 AM /**

Staff Consortium **February 22, 2020**

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The ‘rocket scientists’ in our Legislature and executive branch have demonized yet another inanimate object... the plastic straw. Humans sucking fluid from cups via the plastic straw is a vitally important issue which required official governmental action. A law. You’d think that we have bigger issues to tackle and resolve such as fixing pothole-ridden bad roads, paying tax refunds, auditing WAPA, efficiently dealing with garbage, crime, or investigating why politicians enter office with a certain level of net worth, then leave office very well off, all on a government salary. You know, things that really matter to us simple folk... But nope, plastic straws are evil and have been duly targeted and banished from our various eateries in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Now you would think that these plastic straws, given the bad press, are sentient, bloodthirsty beings bent on planetary conquest in their sinister plan to pollute our environment. Our politicians sprang into action in a nick of time to save us from these evil inanimate tubes of polymer. Meanwhile, back at the ranch, the criminals are on the loose while these same politicians consider

enacting a 'stop & frisk' policy of stomping on the rights of we law abiding, taxpaying citizens. I feel safer already with these big 'ol brains running the show... not.

Why stop at plastic straws? If the scourge of plastic is truly evil, why not ban all forms of polymers altogether? I mean if these politicians are serious about plastic being evil, why are they only targeting plastic bags and plastic straws? Why not ban plastic hubcaps? Those evil plastic hubcaps come flying off when you hit one of the many potholes our government cultivates in the territory and become eyesores just like the plastic bags and straws. If these politicians are serious about controlling our lives through restricting plastic, why not ban plastic lids and plastic cups? Heck, why not ban plastic spoons, forks, knives and garbage bags? I mean if we're really, truly serious about the heinous evil that is plastic, then much more draconian measures must be imposed and piled upon the backs of we mere law abiding taxpayers who are sorely in need of guidance by government.

Perhaps a life sentence for merely saying the word "plastic" should be considered, if these politicians really, truly believe in this utterly stupid cause. Furthermore, polymer manufacturers and vermin plastic dealers should be prosecuted with extreme prejudice; throw the book at 'em... if these politicians really, truly believe in the monstrous menace to humankind that is plastic.

I personally think these politicians are discriminating against the plastic straw, and via the Law of Unintended Consequences are causing other forms of danger in our everyday lives. For instance, after leaving the drive thru with your favorite fast food meal, since you can't suck from a straw, because these establishments now simply don't give you one as essentially a forced cost saving measure. You lift the entire extra large cup of soda to your face temporarily blocking your view of the road as you drive. Wonder how many accidents could have been avoided, or how much dry cleaning bills prevented, all for the want of a plastic straw.

The problem isn't the plastic, it's the inconsiderate people and nanny politicians. No inanimate object of any kind, made from any material, turns itself into litter, either on our beaches, in our neighborhoods, or alongside our roads without inconsiderate human interaction. If we take that as a given, then the solution is to condition inconsiderate people to become considerate and place trash, garbage, or any other unwanted inanimate object into the proper disposal place.

Call me crazy, but rather than coming up with dumb ideas to fleece the public via fines because government can't think its way out of a wet paper bag, perhaps a simple act of encouraging and rewarding personal responsibility for one's actions from a young age and cultivating an environment where a lack of consideration is frowned upon. Maybe, just maybe, saner, more reasonable heads will someday prevail. Until then, the plastic straw is officially 'evil' and the soda slurping public must suffer through this flawed 'logic'. Just saying...

**Submitted by Vince Danet from St. Thomas**

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