

# WILL KYOTO TURN EUROPE INTO CUBA?

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The EU steel industry is terrified that Europe's new cap-and-trade system of penalizing steel-plant emissions will cost 50,000 of its 300,000 steel-industry jobs. But don't worry, if the EU gets serious about cap-and-trade, it will simply violate the rules of the World Trade Organization and start taxing imported steel for the CO2 emissions from Indian and Chinese steel plants.

The problem won't be lost jobs in Europe's steel or plastics industries. The problem will be that virtually nothing new will be manufactured for Europe.

- \* No new appliances or autos. They take too much steel.
- \* No new concrete roads or brick buildings. Cement-making produces about 7 percent of the human-emitted CO2 emissions. Bricks must be fired in CO2-producing kilns.
- \* No nitrogen fertilizer. Nitrogen fertilizer currently uses 5 percent of the world's fossil fuels. If Farmers are forced to go all-organic, their yields will fall by half. There will either be wide-spread hunger and/or Europe's remaining wildlife will be crowded off the continent by the need to plant more low-yield crops.
- \* Factories will turn back to water wheels to save electricity.

In fact, the model for Europe low-emission future is-Cuba! Under Castro, especially since the Soviets stopped gifting the Cubans with free oil and fertilizer, Cuba has developed the closest thing on the planet to a "modern low-energy society."

Instead of making new cars in emission-prone factories, Cuba's workers spend their time machining new parts for the island's few 1950s relics on elderly lathes left over from its sugar-exporting days. Castro originally sold clothing through the food rationing system, but now most of the clothing comes from antique sewing machines run by Cuba's women.

The women also produce much of their families' food in urban gardens, since the ration system doesn't deliver much. Cuba's ration cards are good for 6 pounds of rice per capita per month, 20 ounces of beans, six pounds of sugar, and 15 pounds of potatoes or bananas. Cubans get less than one quart of milk for each kid under 7 per month, but cool, rainy Europe may offer its consumers a bit more milk and cheese and a lot fewer bananas.

Cubans get a pound of beef per month, and two pounds of chicken-though often the "meat" is hamburger mixed with soy flour, or "chicken tenders" made partly with chicken and mostly with "other." Europe's per capita food supply will plummet to similar levels when fertilizer plants consume too many "energy points."

The official Cuban transport system is energy-efficient hitch-hiking. With so few vehicles, and little gasoline, cars and trucks that refuse to pick up hitch-hikers on the highway are fined for a "crime against society."

Tourism is Cuba's biggest industry now, but that won't work for a Kyoto-driven Europe. The EU won't have any fuel for airplanes, and precious little for buses. Nor is Cuba building big rental houses on the beaches any more to attract their tourists. In fact, one of Cuba's big problems is that Hurricane Michelle in 2001 destroyed or damaged 100,000 homes, which the Castro economy has been largely unable to rebuild. There isn't much heavy equipment for such projects.

As a Kyoto bonus, Michelle's damage to Cuba's electric grid was severe.

Best of all, 90 percent of the jobs are with the Cuban government. No complaints allowed, even if your wife has to sew your shirts and hoe the garden in the hot sun. Kids over 11 owe 45 days per summer working on the farms, which teaches them how to control weeds and bugs without any nasty pesticides.

What a perfect post-fossil Green society!

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