

Vinyl 2010 Essay Competition

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Summary:

With the growing population and growing requirements we have to rethink our consuming habits. Maybe my vision about vegetarianism, sharing, economy and alternative energy is not the best and easily accepted by most people, moreover, I don't claim that any of them might be a panacea but I strongly believe that they could help us in struggling with the two emerging threatens of our century. As a foreword, let me cite Albert Einstein: "Nothing will benefit human health and increase chances for survival of life on Earth as much as the evolution to a vegetarian diet."

Essay:

Consumption of plant-based food – turning to vegetarianism perhaps can be the way to the new millenary. Mankind should realize that it would be better for itself, if it reduced animal products and grew the ratio of whole plant based food. The consumption of too much animal-based food is squandering – by the way, overconsuming animal products can be the initiative of the most diseases of affluence, claims Dr. Colin T. Campbell in his book, *The China Study*. According Dr. Rudolph Ballentine, a famous physician, it should be the next step of evolution of humans: the gradual, generation by generation change to vegetarian diet. It may sound crazy to most people but the reason of this is understandable: we live according well habituated customs, which have never ever questioned or supervised. Never forget, that the two third of the planet lives on almost pure plant based diet...

Growing plants for direct human consumption instead of fodder for domestic animals might help avoid the emerging and obvious crisis. There are a group of unfairly unheeded plants we should grow in abundant quantity – even though, the continuously decreasing productive area. Amongst this, being rich in nutriments several nuts have essential importance in this diet. Forestation should start with the planting of the nut-trees for the appropriate climatic relation, by individuals in gardens and organized by governments worldwide. We could have the double beneficial effect: delicious food and bigger green surface, which can bind more CO₂, not to speak about the sight of the emerald foliage over the fields... It is important for us, human beings to enjoy the plentiful of nature, to have liveable free areas. We know, that our Earth could support more than 11 billion people, if everybody lived in a little parcel, like domestic animals in farms: no trees, no meadows, no crystal creeks, no sunshine, no blue vault to see or feel at all, just live in a cage without fresh air and open room – but if this were not enough to be frightened, there is an other issue: price is too big, the dramatically decreased biodiversity itself, which would lead to complete perish of mankind in the end... Nowadays we produce food enough for 10 billion, and this quantity is consumed by 5 billion, while 1.7 billion are starving...

Any effort and scientific, technical or technological revolution or innovation is in vain if we forget a very simple, but obvious magic word: sharing. Sharing, like the probably most perfect man ever lived on Earth, called Jesus of Nazareth taught it and did it. Making people sit down in groups, and share the food - a simple recipe but works. No doubt, we, the people of the XXI century should follow his example! The developed countries are so rich, that from less of 1% of their GDP the education and medical care of the children of the Third World could be financed – said Dr, Jeffrey Sachs, professor of Columbia University. Mankind should learn the ability of solidarity, moreover, fraternity... Never forget that just with the application of a better sharing system, poverty could almost totally be eliminated.

Producing more energy or consciously reduce our need? The less human kind needs, the less it consumes. The predominant ratio of our ecological footprint is derived from the energy producing. How can we decrease our economical footprints?

The most important keyword could be education, which cannot start early enough – we could practically start it at nurseries: how to economize energy? Learning by actions; example of the parents and the kindergarten teachers is principal at this age. Education must continue at elementary school and, of course, high schools and universities – appropriate for the given level of students.

That's education. And how does it look in practice? We have to acknowledge the principle: the cheapest energy is the non-used energy. We have to form our way-of life according this obvious rule. Which are the most efficient areas of our life to spare energy?

Most of energy is squandered because of the lack of good insulation of our homes and other buildings, public facilities. We just should look at the Norway sample, and apply the appropriate insulation material, of course, environment-friendly, e.g. cellulose based insulation. This material should be made available for the more people, so they could be motivated using of them instead of turning on the heating...

Other serious problem is the transport. Airplanes, cars used by mostly the people of the affluent world emit huge quantity of CO₂. We have to re-discover the feeling of travelling by train and bicycles. There are good examples, especially in the Netherlands: a lot of people use bicycles instead of motored vehicles.

Energy saver equipments are the next group of energy-saving practices. There is a good aim to forbid the use of traditional bulbs; the new compact light tubes consume just the fragment energy quantity. Unfortunately, energy saving machines cost more than "normal" equipments so the task of governments is to support them.

What about the growing of the ratio of renewable energy sources, e.g. biomass, geothermal- solar- wind energy? Though they have more respect, these energy-sources aren't a solution for the growing energy-hunger. Yes, we can look at energy as a kind of food as well, and we have the same relation with it, too: we consume 2-3 times more than it could be enough. We have to see that our over-consuming way-of-life can't be sustainable any more.

As closing my train of thought I have to mention another important issue: our personal, human energy. Most of our energy lavishes on work which is needed to get the not definitely necessary goods of the consuming society. We have to learn from the inhabitants of Vanuatu. Though the people in this country live in poverty, they are considered to be the most happy and pleased people of our planet – according a survey completed in our days. We have to learn the concept of 'Enough' in the end...