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Faced with a food and energetic crisis how can society improve its well-being?

Summary

In my essay I have focused on possible “defensive” attitudes towards the crisis. I am also discussing some of the proposed technical solutions to the situation. In the concluding part of the text I propose a solution that is based not only on technologies of the 21st century, but also and mainly on sociological factors such as altering the average scale of values in favour of the nature. My solution is meant as a vital help to gain time for developing and improving the present promising but not optimal state of the technical solution of the problem.

Some people tend to reject the very idea of a crisis coming. They say that some crazy scientists are trying to bamboozle us. We can but suspect and guess what makes this group of people deny the existence of ecological problems as such. Those who back up the idea that no search for alternative solutions is needed might be afraid of seriously harming the prosperous economy. That might motivate them to reject the “green question” in times as severe as we live in.

On the other hand their counterparts insist on radical change to be carried out before it is too late. Their fear makes them to support radical solutions. Such solutions are probably not to gain much popularity with the average population that constitutes the vast majority of people pollution- producers. Another drawback of the radical solutions is that they tend to require substantial technological support. Literarily heaps of modern equipment is needed to replace the nowadays used technologies. You might say that this is no drawback, because it can only help to start up progressive methods in industries of all kinds and we are to have the problem solved at once. But of course there is a snag to this ideal view of our future. The snag lies in the fact that we do not have technologies to gain so much energy and raw materials we need.

Of course there are some proposals concerning possible ways of satisfying our energy needs using non- fossil sources. Some European countries – it might be said the lucky ones can cover their demand of energy from wind plants. To be top exact I must state that these countries may be referred to as “the lucky ones” only on condition that they have a reliable direction of winds to cross their wind plant planted areas quite regularly. Some other countries can trust themselves into the hands of their A- plants. To the

advantages of these energy sources belongs above all the fact that they do not produce carbon dioxide and that the uranium used is in a way “recyclable.” The most striking disadvantage is that many people are afraid of an accident that might kill or seriously affect many people even at a considerable distance from the plant itself. And it is also true that searching for a suitable place to store the used uranium usually causes disturbances in all regions that appear on the scientists’ short list.

I have to mention a solution that is meant to be suitable for countries that have neither windy weather nor A- plants enough to support their inhabitants with energy. According to the green policy for example of the Green party of the Czech Republic these countries can plant some of their arable land with species such as wheat, sweet corn or sunflower. The carbohydrates gained from these plants should according to the proposal be mixed up with petrol to create so called ecological fuel. Burning the biomass gained from the plants is intended to lessen our demand for petrol of fossil origin. The one and only problem of this conception is that the efficiency of this kind of fuel is in comparison with fossil fuels several times lower. As a result of this we would need large quantities of biomass to satisfy our need of fuels purely from this source. This would in my humble opinion inevitably lead to another serious problem. Our demand for energy being equal with the present state- in case of an optimistic view of the near future- we would have to sacrifice considerable percentage of our arable land to growing our energy. In that case it would be necessary to look for a source of food to support the people. It is true that the vegetables, fruit and cereals needed can be grown anywhere in the world / or at least almost anywhere within the European Union / but we must not forget that the agricultural products would have to be transported to the country. The transport costs would then not only make the price of food increase but it would also increase the call for petrol that would be guzzled by all the vehicles the transport would be carried with.

I propose to use a completely different way of getting out of the energetic trap. What we need is to change our attitude to our own personal demand of energies. Above all I beg you do not get scared I do not propose to form a fraternity living according to the standards of the Middle Ages. I am aware that most Europeans would be neither able nor willing to join it. My solution is not radical enough to be sufficient by itself but it can help us to gain time for finding a working and satisfactory solution for future generations.

A worldwide campaign should be held through media that would make people consider their own attitude to energy sources. Thinking of “painless” sparing the energy would help to lessen both energy and financial crises the greatest pains of nowadays “developed world.” The campaign should focus on every day wide spread mistakes

people – consciously or unconsciously make while dealing with energy in their homes. The ordinary people are the key to the whole situation because if they do spare money as a reward for their ecological behaviour they will be motivated for further steps towards ecological life. If we learn to understand what really is important in our lives and if we manage to prefer quality to quantity we still have a chance to find ourselves members of a prosperous and happy society. Reaching at least some degree of accord with our natural habitus of mankind for thousands of years we can become less harmful to the nature and it might thus be possible that we succeed to lessen the number and severity of natural disasters we are exposed to.

Let's give it a try.