

Faced with today's food and energy crisis, how can society improve its well-being?

Summary

In the following essay I introduced the problem with food and energy and I tried to identify the main problems associated with this issue today. Moreover, I outlined how to cope with it in order to improve society's well-being. Because the theme is a rather complex one I also presented a complex set of ideas. I demonstrated new types of alternative resources of energy and some ways of solving food problems in poor countries. Finally, I put food and energy zero-hour in the context with other crises and highlighted that what we see as a crisis is just the tip of the iceberg – the problem is much deeper and complicated – and much more urgent to solve.

Essay

To begin with, the fact is that there have always been food and energy problems and over the last years the situation has just escalated. It is more or less because our fast-moving world is gaining speed and people live quickly - with lots of needs, expectations and wishes as well. Consequently, it is not any surprise that we demand more and more, not only food or energy.

It goes without saying that food and energy are essential for every country and human beings all over the world. It is also the reason why it should be solved once and for all. Unfortunately, it looks like (and history proves it) that there will never be enough food and energy for everybody. What is crucial about it is the fact that we simply can not stop trying to minimize the impact of the crisis and problems that arise from the lack of these two commodities.

One wise man said: "It is impossible to reach perfection. However, it does not mean we should not try."

As for me, I think the ultimate solution is a long-run and progressive process with a lot of factors that will never be easy. Therefore, I believe the key for every society to maintain and improve its well-being is to never stop, to be active and work on any project that is able to move the world just a little closer to reach ideal living. I also believe that not a single idea may solve these crises, but a complex set of ideas, sensible and effective.

In terms of energy it seems to me there is no other way than investing in alternative resources. Besides making the best of flowing rivers, tides and sun as much as possible, another option is to utilize roads and railways. Nowadays there are so many cars, lorries and trains that use roadways or railways very frequently. By applying a sophisticated system of very flat metal plates (or small rolls) to the surface of frequently-used parts of roads (city centres, freeways or crossroads) could produce energy every time vehicle wheels touch these plates. This system would then transform generated (wheel) energy into power people can utilize. Although it may be more complicated with railways this "touch-based" systems ought to be tested also on pavements with frequent movement of people.

When it comes to food, the preservation, protection and use of fertile lands are of the highest priority. It is quite typical of international corporations (at least in Slovakia there are more occurrences of that kind) to build factories in places which had been previously used as fruitful soil for growing corn and grain. By turning these important lands into engineering plants or works might make a profit in medium-term period, but in short-term and mainly long-term epoch it can also pose a threat. That is why I surmise that every factory or a branch establishment needs to be built on infertile lands so as not to harm or

destroy croplands and, consequently, not to reduce the ability of using them if another food crisis comes.

Another decisive step towards food sufficiency is to give particular attention to regions with long-term lack of food, especially in poor parts of Africa. A lot of people living there are almost completely tapped out.

It seems to me these folks could get by themselves if they started to try a little harder. In spite of the fact that death caused by malnutrition is quite common, many people have got used to food and medical aid from richer non-African western and northern countries, international organizations or foundations as well. These corporations and associations provide miserable numerous families with life-sustaining needs. The more supplies are given the more are needed next time. It is logical that poor folks expect their more or less regular supplies from the rest of the world and that it is better for them not to work at all. However, cross-national organizations, mostly European Union, United Nations or Red Cross and so on should organize their help in terms of subsidiarity.

As far as I am concerned, every country in need is able to fight its way out of poverty and backwardness with reasonable foreign help, for instance: supporting creating jobs, education at schools, hospitals, democracy and building infrastructure, too. When it comes just to injecting a great deal of money into a lot of reluctant poor and irresponsible people, the aim of economic stabilization of the regions is unreachable. In my view, every person needs to be motivated in order to do his/her best. And if we do not succeed in this sensible supportive process, poverty will kill more and more people and richer states will just send more and more food and medical supplies. Food might be a useful means of encouraging activity in impoverished regions. Therefore, it would be better to use it this way than scattering it for free, even though we mean it well.

It looks like nowadays the world is full of critical times. We are living not only in food or energy depression, but also in financial zero-hour. From time to time, a new one draws attention, such as gas or Middle-East crisis. As a matter of fact, all these crises do not appear all of a sudden, but a multiple number of circumstances precede them (it is not seen as a crisis) before the disaster finally shows. And the crisis we see, read and hear in the media and in social life is just the tip of the iceberg. To understand (and solve) it completely we have to go very deep to the roots of the problem.

What deserves consideration is that cure or treatment of any big crisis has never been cheaper or easier than its prevention. And if we are only to follow mistaken steps of our ancestors and not to apply new perspective and promising ideas such as I put forward, society will be far from improving its well-being.