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a small price to pay for knowing the extent to which industries are shaping participation and policy.

Despite these political uncertainties, industry-driven grassroots campaigns are deeply entwined with broader changes in American civic and political life. Civil society underwent considerable changes in the 1970s and 80s, as the field of political and civic organizations in the U.S. experienced staggering growth. My own research has shown that this expansion had a significant influence on the founding of firms that provide grassroots mobilization services to elite clients, suggesting that professionalized civic and business groups turned to these firms for help in generating activism. It appears that the expansion of industry-driven public participation reflects a society in which civic and political ties are increasingly indirect and, perhaps as importantly, mediated by communications technologies like email, texting, and social networking websites.

These realities must be tempered by the understanding that much of our civic landscape remains unchanged. Even though it's tempting to conclude that face-to-face recruitment into political activity has been replaced by televised advocacy advertisements, targeted phone calls to likely activists, or mass-emailed "action alerts," there's little evidence to date that such campaigns are displacing the efforts of traditional community organizations or civic groups. In fact, many of these industry campaigns cooperate with community groups when it makes strategic sense to do so, and many public affairs professionals have career or personal ties to local civic organizations.

In the end, the growth of industry efforts to mobilize public participation—whether on health reform or on any other issue—is both shaping and shaped by our changing civic life and the social capital that sustains it. It also reminds us that sometimes even established insiders benefit by taking an outsider strategy.

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The Cuban Diet

BILL MCKIBBIN

Invention born of necessity might explain what is happening throughout the United States. There is an emerging social movement around food: what is grown, how it is grown, and by whom it is grown, processed, transported, and marketed. Michael Pollan (reading 12) gives voice to this, as do many others who promote food coops, farmers markets, organic farms, and locally produced food. With the continuing U.S. embargo, coupled with the disappearance of support by the Soviet Union following its collapse, Cuba's people faced many crises, not the least of which was the provision of food. Their response, definitely born of necessity, looks very much like the social movement about food now growing in the United States.

The pictures hanging in Havana's Museum of the Revolution document the rise (or, depending on your perspective, the fall) of Cuba in the years after Castro's revolt, in 1959. On my visit there last summer, I walked through gallery after gallery, gazing upon the stock images of socialist glory: "anti-imperialist volunteers" fighting in Angola, Cuban boxers winning Olympic medals, five patients at a time undergoing eye surgery using a "method created by Soviet academician Fyodorov." Mostly, though, I saw pictures of farm equipment. "Manual operation is replaced by mechanized processes," read the caption under a picture of some heavy Marxist metal cruising a vast field. Another caption boasted that by 1990, seven bulk sugar terminals had been built, each with a shipping capacity of 75,000 tons a day. In true Soviet style, the Cubans were demonstrating a deeply held (and to our eyes now almost kitschy) socialist belief that salvation lay in the size of harvests, in the number of tractors, and in the glorious heroic machinery that would straighten the tired backs of an oppressed peasantry—and so I learned that day that within thirty years of the people's uprising, the sugarcane industry alone employed 2,850 sugarcane lifting machines, 12,278 tractors, 29,857 carts, and 4,277 combines.

Such was communism. But then I turned a corner and the pictures changed. The sharply focused shots of combines and Olympians now were muddied, as if Cubans had forgotten how to print photos or, as was more likely the case, had run short of darkroom chemicals. I had reached the gallery of the "Special Period." That is to say, I had reached the point in Cuban history where everything came undone. With the sudden collapse of the Soviet Union, Cuba fell off a cliff of its own. All those carts and combines had been the products of

an insane "economics" underwritten by the Eastern bloc for ideological purposes. Castro spent three decades growing sugar and shipping it to Russia and East Germany, both of which paid a price well above the world level, and both of which sent the ships back to Havana filled with wheat, rice, and more tractors. When all that disappeared, literally almost overnight, Cuba had nowhere to turn. The United States, Cuba's closest neighbor, enforced a strict trade embargo (which it strengthened in 1992, and again in 1996) and Cuba had next to no foreign exchange with anyone else—certainly the new Russia no longer wanted to pay a premium on Cuban sugar for the simple glory of supporting a tropical version of its Leninist past.

In other words, Cuba became an island. Not just a real island, surrounded by water, but something much rarer: an island outside the international economic system, a moon base whose supply ships had suddenly stopped coming. There were other deeply isolated places on the planet—North Korea, say, or Burma—but not many. And so most observers waited impatiently for the country to collapse. No island is an island, after all, not in a global world. The *New York Times* ran a story in its Sunday magazine titled "The Last Days of Castro's Cuba"; in its editorial column, the paper opined that "the Cuban dictator has painted himself into his own corner. Fidel Castro's reign deserves to end in homegrown failure." Without oil, even public transportation shut down—for many, going to work meant a two-hour bike trip. Television shut off early in the evening to save electricity; movie theaters went dark. People tried to improvise their ways around shortages. "For drinking glasses we'd get beer bottles and cut the necks off with wire," one professor told me. "We didn't have razor blades, till someone in the city came up with a way to resharpen old ones."

But it's hard to improvise food. So much of what Cubans had eaten had come straight from Eastern Europe, and most of the rest was grown industrial-style on big state farms. All those combines needed fuel and spare parts, and all those big rows of grain and vegetables needed pesticides and fertilizer—none of which were available. In 1989, according to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the average Cuban was eating 3,000 calories per day. Four years later that figure had fallen to 1,900. It was as if they suddenly had to skip one meal a day, every day, week after month after year. The host of one cooking show on the shortened TV schedule urged Cubans to fry up "steaks" made from grapefruit peels covered in bread crumbs. "I lost twenty pounds myself," said Fernando Funes, a government agronomist.

Now, just by looking across the table, I saw that Fernando Funes had since gained the twenty pounds back. In fact, he had a little paunch, as do many Cuban men of a certain age. What happened was simple, if unexpected. Cuba had learned to stop exporting sugar and instead started growing its own food again, growing it on small private farms and thousands of pocket-sized urban market gardens—and, lacking chemicals and fertilizers, much of that food became de facto organic. Somehow, the combination worked. Cubans have as much food as they did before the Soviet Union collapsed. They're still short of meat, and the milk supply remains a real problem, but their caloric intake has returned to normal—they've gotten that meal back.

In so doing they have created what may be the world's largest working model of a semi-sustainable agriculture, one that doesn't rely nearly as heavily as the rest of the world does on oil, on chemicals, on shipping vast quantities of food back and forth. They import some of their food from abroad—a certain amount of rice from Vietnam, even some apples and beef and such from the United States. But mostly they grow their own, and with less ecological disruption than in most places. In recent years organic farmers have visited the island in increasing numbers and celebrated its accomplishment. As early as 1999 the Swedish parliament awarded the Organic Farming Group its Right Livelihood Award, often styled the "alternative Nobel," and Peter Rosset, the former executive director of the American advocacy group Food First, heralded the "potentially enormous implications" of Cuba's new agricultural system.

The island's success may not carry any larger lesson. Cuban agriculture isn't economically competitive with the industrial farming exemplified by a massive food producer across the Caribbean, mostly because it is highly labor-intensive. Moreover, Cuba is a one-party police state filled with political prisons, which may have some slight effect on its ability to mobilize its people—in any case, hardly an "advantage" one would want to emulate elsewhere.

There's always at least the possibility, however, that larger sections of the world might be in for "Special Periods" of their own. Climate change, or the end of cheap oil, or the depletion of irrigation water, or the chaos of really widespread terrorism, or some other malign force might begin to make us pay more attention to the absolute bottom-line question of how we get our dinner (a question that only a very few people, for a very short period of time, have ever been able to ignore). No one's predicting a collapse like the one Cuba endured—probably no modern economy has ever undergone such a shock. But if things got gradually harder? After all, our planet is an island, too. It's somehow useful to know that someone has already run the experiment.

Villa Alamar was a planned community built outside Havana at the height of the Soviet glory days; its crumbling, precast-concrete apartments would look at home (though less mildewed) in Ljubljana or Omsk. Even the names there speak of the past: a central square, for instance, is called Parque Hanoi. But right next to the Parque Hanoi is the Vivero Organopónico Alamar.

Organopónico is the Cuban term for any urban garden. (It seems that before the special period began, the country had a few demonstration hydroponic gardens, much bragged about in official propaganda and quickly abandoned when the crisis hit. The high-tech-sounding name stuck, however, recycled to reflect the new, humbler reality.) There are thousands of *organopónicos* in Cuba, more than 200 in the Havana area alone, but the Vivero Organopónico

Alamar is especially beautiful: a few acres of vegetables attached to a shady yard packed with potted plants for sale, birds in wicker cages, a cafeteria, and a small market where a steady line of local people come to buy tomatoes, lettuce, oregano, potatoes—twenty-five crops were listed on the blackboard the day I visited—for their supper. Sixty-four people farm this tiny spread. Their chief is Miguel Salcines López, a tall, middle-aged, intense, and quite delightful man.

"This land was slated for a hospital and sports complex," he said, leading me quickly through his tiny empire. "But when the food crisis came, the government decided this was more important," and they let Salcines begin his cooperative. "I was an agronomic engineer before that," he said. "I was fat, a functionary. I was a bureaucrat." Now he is not. Most of his farm is what we would call organic—indeed, Salcines showed off a pyramidal minigreenhouse in which he raises seedlings, in the belief that its shape "focuses energy." Magnets on his irrigation lines, he believes, help "reduce the surface tension" of the water—give him a ponytail and he'd fit right in at the Marin farmers' market. Taking a more "traditional" organic approach, Salcines has also planted basil and marigolds at the row ends to attract beneficial insects, and he rotates sweet potato through the rows every few plantings to cleanse the soil; he's even got neem trees to supply natural pesticides. But Salcines is not obsessive even about organicity. Like gardeners everywhere, he has trouble with potato bugs, and he doesn't hesitate to use man-made pesticide to fight them. He doesn't use artificial fertilizer, both because it is expensive and because he doesn't need it—indeed, the garden makes money selling its own compost, produced with the help of millions of worms ("California Reds") in a long series of shaded trenches.

While we ate rice and beans and salad and a little chicken, Salcines laid out the finances of his cooperative farm. For the last six months, he said, the government demanded that the *organopónico* produce 835,000 pesos' worth of food. They actually produced more than a million pesos' worth. Writing quickly on a piece of scrap paper, Salcines predicted that the profit for the whole year would be 393,000 pesos. Half of that he would reinvest in enlarging the farm; the rest would go into a profit-sharing plan. It's not an immense sum when divided among sixty-four workers—about $150—but for Cuban workers this is considered a good job indeed. A blackboard above the lunch line reminded employees what their monthly share of the profit would be: depending on how long they'd been at the farm, and how well they produced, they would get 291 pesos this month, almost doubling their base salary. The people worked hard, and if they didn't their colleagues didn't tolerate them.

What is happening at the Vivero Organopónico Alamar certainly isn't unfettered capitalism, but it's not exactly collective farming either. Mostly it's incredibly productive—sixty-four people earn a reasonable living on this small site, and the surrounding neighbors get an awful lot of their diet from its carefully tended rows. You see the same kind of production all over the

city—every formerly vacant lot in Havana seems to be a small farm. The city grew 300,000 tons of food last year, nearly its entire vegetable supply and more than a token amount of its rice and meat, said Egidio Páez Medina, who oversees the *organopónicos* from a small office on a highway at the edge of town. "Tens of thousands of people are employed. And they get good money, as much as a thousand pesos a month. When I'm done with this job I'm going to start farming myself—my pay will double." On average, Páez said, each square meter of urban farm produces five kilograms of food a year. That's a lot. (And it's not just cabbage and spinach; each farm also seems to have at least one row of spearmint, an essential ingredient for the mojito.)

So Cuba—happy healthy miracle. Of course, Human Rights Watch, in its most recent report, notes that the government "restricts nearly all avenues of political dissent," "severely curtails basic rights to free expression," and that "the government's intolerance of dissenting voices intensified considerably in 2003." It's as if you went to Whole Foods and noticed a guy over by the soymilk with a truncheon. Cuba is a weird political system all its own, one that's been headed by the same guy for forty-five years. And the nature of that system, and that guy, had something to do with the way the country responded to its crisis.

For one thing, Castro's Cuba was so rigidly (and unproductively) socialist that simply by slightly loosening the screws on free enterprise it was able to liberate all kinds of pent-up energy. Philip Peters, a Cuba analyst at the conservative Lexington Institute, has documented how the country redistributed as much as two thirds of state lands to cooperatives and individual farmers and, as with the *organopónico* in Alamar, let them sell their surplus above a certain quota. There's no obvious name for this system. It's a lot like sharecropping, and it shares certain key features with, say, serfdom, not to mention high feudalism. It is not free in any of the ways we use the word—who the hell wants to say thank you to the government for "allowing" you to sell your "surplus"? But it's also different from monolithic state communism.

In 1995, as the program geared up, the markets were selling 390 million pounds of produce; sales volume tripled in the next three years. Now the markets bustle, stacked deep with shiny heaps of bananas and dried beans, mangos and tomatoes. But the prices, though they've dropped over the years, are still beyond the reach of the poorest Cubans. And the government, which still sells every citizen a basic monthly food ration for just a few pesos, has also tried to reregulate some of the trade at the farmers' markets, fearing they were creating a two-tier system. "It's not reform like you've seen in China, where they're devolving a lot of economic decision making out to the private sector," Peters said. "They made a decision to graft some market mechanisms onto what remains a fairly statist model. It could work better. But it has worked."

Fidel Castro, as even his fiercest opponents would admit, has almost from the day he took power spent lavishly on the country's educational system. Cuba's

ratio of teachers to students is akin to Sweden's; people who want to go to college go to college. Which turns out to be important, because farming, especially organic farming, especially when you're not used to doing it, is no simple task. You don't just tear down the fence around the vacant lot and hand someone a hoe, quoting him some Maoist couplet about the inevitable victory of the worker. The soil's no good at first, the bugs can't wait to attack. You need information to make a go of it. To a very large extent, the rise of Cuba's semi-organic agriculture is almost as much an invention of science and technology as the high-input tractor farming it replaced, which is another thing that makes this story so odd.

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One afternoon, near an *organopónico* in central Havana, I knocked on the door of a small two-room office, the local Center for Reproduction of Entomophages and Entomopathogens. There are 280 such offices spread around the country, each manned by one or two agronomists. Here, Jorge Padrón, a heavyset and earnest fellow, was working with an ancient Soviet refrigerator and autoclave (the writing on the gauges was in Cyrillic) and perhaps three hundred glass beakers with cotton gauze stoppers. Farmers and backyard gardeners from around the district would bring him sick plants, and he'd look at them under the microscope and tell them what to do. Perhaps he'd hand them a test tube full of a *trichoderma* fungus, which he'd grown on a medium of residue from sugarcane processing, and tell them to germinate the seed in a dilute solution; maybe he'd pull a vial of some natural bacteria—*verticillium lecanii* or *beauveria bassiana*—from a rusty coffee can. "It is easier to use chemicals. You see some trouble in your tomatoes, and chemicals take care of it right away," he said. Over the long run, though, thinking about the whole system yields real benefits. "Our work is really about preparing the fields so plants will be stronger. But it works." It is the reverse, that is, of the Green Revolution that spread across the globe in the 1960s, an industrialization of the food system that relied on irrigation, oil (both for shipping and fertilization), and the massive application of chemicals to counter every problem.

The localized application of research practiced in Cuba has fallen by the wayside in countries where corporate agriculture holds sway. I remember visiting a man in New Hampshire who was raising organic apples for his cider mill. Apples are host to a wide variety of pests and blights, and if you want advice about what chemical to spray on them, the local agricultural extension agent has one pamphlet after another with the answers, at least in part, because pesticide companies like Monsanto fund huge amounts of the research that goes on at the land-grant universities. But no one could tell my poor orchardist anything about how to organically control the pests on his apples, even though there must have been a huge body of such knowledge once upon a time, and he ended up relying on a beautifully illustrated volume published in the 1890s. In Cuba, however, all the equivalents of Texas A&M or the University of Nebraska are filled with students looking at antagonist

fungi, lion-ant production for sweet potato weevil control, how to intercrop tomatoes and sesame to control the tobacco whitefly, how much yield grows when you mix green beans and cassava in the same rows (60 percent), what happens to plantain production when you cut back on the fertilizer and substitute a natural bacterium called *A. chroococcum* (it stays the same), how much you can reduce fertilizer on potatoes if you grow a rotation of jack beans to fix nitrogen (75 percent), and on and on and on. "At first we had all kinds of problems," said a Japanese-Cuban organoponicist named Olga Oye Gómez, who grows two acres of specialty crops that Cubans are only now starting to eat: broccoli, cauliflower, and the like. "We lost lots of harvests. But the engineers came and showed us the right biopesticides. Every year we get a little better."

Not every problem requires a Ph.D. I visited Olga's farm in midsummer when her rows were under siege from slugs, a problem for which the Cuban solution is the same as in my own New England tomato patch: a saucer full of beer. In fact, since the pressure is always on to reduce the use of expensive techniques, there's a premium on old-fashioned answers. Consider the question of how you plow a field when the tractor that you used to use requires oil you can't afford and spare parts you can't obtain. Cuba—which in the 1980s had more tractors per hectare than California, according to Nilda Pérez—suddenly found itself relying on the very oxen it once had scorned as emblems of its peasant past. There were perhaps 50,000 teams of the animals left in Cuba in 1990, and maybe that many farmers who still knew how to use them. "None of the large state farms or even the mechanized cooperatives had the necessary infrastructure to incorporate animal traction," wrote Arcadi Ríos, of the Agricultural Mechanization Research Institute, in a volume titled *Sustainable Agriculture and Resistance.* "Pasture and feed production did not exist on site; and at first there were problems of feed transportation." Veterinarians were not up on their oxen therapy.

But that changed. Rios's institute developed a new multi-plow for plowing, barrowing, riding, and tilling, specially designed not "to invert the top-soil layer" and decrease fertility. Harness shops were set up to start producing reins and yokes, and the number of blacksmith shops quintupled. The ministry of agriculture stopped slaughtering oxen for food, and "essentially all the bulls in good physical condition were selected and delivered to cooperatives and state farms." Oxen demonstrations were held across the country. (The socialist love of exact statistics has not waned, so it can be said that in 1995 alone, 2,344 oxen events took place, drawing 64,279 participants.) By the millennium there were 400,000 oxen teams plying the country's fields. And one big result, according to a score of Ph.D. theses, is a dramatic reduction in soil compaction, as hooves replaced tires. "Across the country we see dry soil turning healthier, loamier," Professor Pérez said. Soon an ambitious young Cuban will be able to get a master's degree in oxen management.

One question is: How resilient is the new Cuban agriculture? Despite even tougher restrictions on U.S. travel and remittances from relatives, the

country has managed to patch together a pretty robust tourist industry in recent years: Havana's private restaurants fill nightly with Canadians and Germans. The government's investment in the pharmaceutical industry appears to be paying off, too, and now people who are fed by ox teams are producing genetically engineered medicines at some of the world's more advanced labs. Foreign exchange is beginning to flow once more; already many of the bicycles in the streets have been replaced by buses and motorbikes and Renaults. Cuba is still the most unconsumer place I've ever been—there's even less to buy than in the old Soviet Union—but sooner or later Castro will die. What then?

Most of the farmers and agronomists I interviewed professed conviction that the agricultural changes ran so deep they would never be eroded. Pérez, however, did allow that there were a lot of younger oxen drivers who yearned to return to the cockpits of big tractors, and according to news reports some of the country's genetic engineers are trying to clone White Udder herself from leftover tissue. If Cuba simply opens to the world economy—if Castro gets his professed wish and the U.S. embargo simply disappears, replaced by a free-trade regime—it's very hard to see how the sustainable farming would survive for long. We use pesticides and fertilizers because they make for incredibly cheap food. None of that dipping the seedling roots in some *bacillus* solution, or creeping along the tomato rows looking for aphids, or taking the oxen off to be shoed. Our industrial agriculture—at least as heavily subsidized by Washington as Cuba's farming once was subsidized by Moscow—simply overwhelms its neighbors.

* * *

You can also ask the question in reverse, though: Does the Cuban experiment mean anything for the rest of the world? An agronomist would call the country's farming "low-input," the reverse of the Green Revolution model, with its reliance on irrigation, oil, and chemistry. If we're running out of water in lots of places (the water table beneath China and India's grain-growing plains is reportedly dropping by meters every year), and if the oil and natural gas used to make fertilizer and run our megafarms are changing the climate (or running out), and if the pesticides are poisoning farmers and killing other organisms, and if everything at the Stop & Shop has traveled across a continent to get there and tastes pretty much like crap, might there be some real future for low-input farming for the rest of us? Or are its yields simply too low? Would we all starve without the supermarket and the corporate farm?

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[S]trict organic agriculture isn't what the Cubans practice (remember those pesticides for the potato bugs). "If you're going to grow irrigated rice, you'll almost always need some fertilizer," said Jules Pretty, a professor at the University of Essex's Department of Biological Sciences, who has looked at sustainable agriculture in fields around the world. "The problem is being

judicious and careful." It's very clear, he added, "that Cuba is not an anomaly. All around the world small-scale successes are being scaled up to regional level." Farmers in northeast Thailand, for instance, suffered when their rice markets disappeared in the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s. "They'd borrowed money to invest in 'modern agriculture,' but they couldn't get the price they needed. A movement emerged, farmers saying, 'Maybe we should just concentrate on local markets, and not grow for Bangkok, not for other countries.' They've started using a wide range of sustainability approaches—polyculture, tree crops and agroforestry, fish ponds. One hundred and fifty thousand farmers have made the shift in the last three years."

Almost certainly, he said, such schemes are as productive as the monocultures they replaced. "Rice production goes down, but the production of all sorts of other things, like leafy vegetables, goes up." And simply cutting way down on the costs of pesticides turns many bankrupt peasants solvent. "The farmer field schools began in Indonesia, with rice growers showing one another how to manage their paddies to look after beneficial insects," just the kinds of predators the Cubans were growing in their low-tech labs. "There's been a huge decrease in costs and not much of a change in yields."

And what about the heartlands of industrial agriculture, the U.S. plains, for instance? "So much depends on how you measure efficiency," Pretty said. "You don't get something for nothing." Cheap fertilizer and pesticide displace more expensive labor and knowledge—that's why 219 American farms have gone under every day for the last fifty years and yet we're producing ever more grain and a loaf of bread might as well be free. On the other hand, there are those bereft Midwest counties. And the plumes of pesticide poison spreading through groundwater. And the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico into which the tide of nitrogen washes each planting season. And the cloud of carbon dioxide that puffs out from the top of the fertilizer factories. If you took those things seriously, you might decide that having one percent of your population farming was not such a wondrous feat after all.

The American model of agriculture is pretty much what people mean when they talk about the Green Revolution: high-yielding crop varieties, planted in large monocultures, bathed in the nurturing flow of petrochemicals, often supported by government subsidy, designed to offer low-priced food in sufficient quantity to feed billions. Despite its friendly moniker, many environmentalists and development activists around the planet have grown to despair about everything the Green Revolution stands for. Like Pretty, they propose a lowercase greener counterrevolution: endlessly diverse, employing the insights of ecology instead of the brute force of chemistry, designed to feed people but also keep them on the land. And they have some allies even in the rich countries—that's who fills the stalls at the farmers' markets blooming across North America.

But those farmers' markets are still a minuscule leaf on the giant stalk of corporate agribusiness, and it's not clear that, for all the paeans to the savor

of a local tomato, they'll ever amount to much more. Such efforts are easily co-opted—when organic produce started to take off, for instance, industrial growers soon took over much of the business, planting endless monoculture rows of organic lettuce that in every respect, save the lack of pesticides, mirrored all the flaws of conventional agriculture. (By some calculations, the average bite of organic food at your supermarket has traveled even farther than the 1,500-mile journey taken by the average bite of conventional produce.) That is to say, in a world where we're eager for the lowest possible price, it's extremely difficult to do anything unconventional on a scale large enough to matter.

And it might be just as hard in Cuba were Cuba free. I mean, would Salcines be able to pay sixty-four people to man his farm or would he have to replace most of them with chemicals? If he didn't, would his customers pay higher prices for his produce or would they prefer lower-cost lettuce arriving from California's Imperial Valley? Would he be able to hold on to his land or would there be some more profitable use for it? For that matter, would many people want to work on his farm if they had a real range of options? In a free political system, would the power of, say, pesticide suppliers endanger the government subsidy for producing predatory insects in local labs? Would Cuba not, in a matter of several growing seasons, look a lot like the rest of the world? Does an *organopónico* depend on a fixed ballot?

There's clearly something inherently destructive about an authoritarian society—it's soul-destroying, if nothing else. Although many of the Cubans I met were in some sense proud of having stood up to the Yanquis for four decades, Cuba was not an overwhelmingly happy place. Weary, I'd say. Waiting for a more normal place in the world. And poor, much too poor. Is it also possible, though, that there's something inherently destructive about a globalized free-market society—that the eternal race for efficiency, when raised to a planetary scale, damages the environment, and perhaps the community, and perhaps even the taste of a carrot? Is it possible that markets, at least for food, may work better when they're smaller and more isolated? The next few decades may be about answering that question. It's already been engaged in Europe, where people are really debating subsidies for small farmers, and whether or not they want the next, genetically modified, stage of the Green Revolution, and how much it's worth paying for Slow Food. It's been engaged in parts of the Third World, where in India peasants threw out the country's most aggressive free-marketeers in the last election, sensing that the shape of their lives was under assault. Not everyone is happy with the set of possibilities that the multinational corporate world provides. People are beginning to feel around for other choices. The world isn't going to look like Cuba—Cuba won't look like Cuba once Cubans have some say in the matter. But it may not necessarily look like Nebraska either.

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