

CRUNCHING the NUMBERS... #1

The Zephyr LIST by Tonya Morton



America vs Cuba...Good vs Bad?

What the Numbers tell us about our Assumptions.

If you're craving a double cheeseburger, don't go to Cuba. The entire nation of 110,860 sq kilometers houses only ONE McDonalds, located at Guantanamo Bay, and the fast food joint is inaccessible to Cuban citizens. Such a restriction would shock the average American's sensibilities.

What sort of evil country, Joe American may ask, would want to restrict its citizens' ability to "Super Size"?

Apparently a pretty smart one. For the past fifty-one years, Cuban leaders Fidel and Raul Castro have ensured that the "Americanization" transforming much of the rest of the world didn't take hold of their country. To keep out the cult of the unholy dollar, the Castro brothers have restricted speech and access to the internet in addition to mandating strict economic policies, leading to American claims that the country is repressive, backwards, and out of touch. The result of this half-century of repression:

A nation that matches, and often exceeds, the United States in looking after the welfare of its poor, protecting its environment, and maintaining a stable economy....

HEALTHCARE: In the **United States**, the ratio of physicians to patients is **1 to 385**.

In **Cuba**, it's **1 to 168**. And, with Universal Health Care, there's no question of affordability.

Further, while, in the United States, only 7 or 8 percent of physicians go into Primary Care, in Cuba, 100 percent do.

And, in the mid-80's, the government set up a network of neighborhood healthcare, where each doctor serves a client base of a few city blocks. So, not only can Cubans afford health care, they also have easy access.

The average life expectancy for both countries is 78 years.

EDUCATION: In both America and Cuba, in 2006, the average length of schooling (for both sexes) was 16 years.

But, in **Cuba**, all education is paid for by the government, which means that college students graduate with NO DEBT.

In 2005, the **U.S. annual expenditure** on education (as a percentage of the GDP) was 5.3 percent, ranked **56th** in the world for education spending.

Cuba, at 9.1 percent, was ranked **9th**.

The result of **Cuba's** education spending? A literacy rate of 99.8%, **tied for 1st place in the world**.

America, with a literacy rate of 99.0%, tied for **19th**.

CLIMATE CHANGE: Carbon Dioxide

In 2005, **each American released an average of 19.87 tons** of Carbon Dioxide into the atmosphere.

Each Cuban released 2.2 tons.

And, while **American homes released 1,264.9 kilograms of CO2 per person** in 2003, (6.2 fewer kilograms than they did in 1990,)

Cuban homes released 93.6 per person, (140.8 fewer than in 1990.)

ENERGY CONSUMPTION

In 2005, the **average American consumed 13,635.7 kilowatt hours (kwh) of electricity**.

That number was **UP 1,948.5 kwh** from 1990.

In that same year, the **average Cuban consumed 1,150.9 kwh of electricity**. That number was **DOWN 68.4 kwh** from 1990.

As far as **Total energy consumption**, in 2005, the average American consumed **7,885.9 kilograms of an oil equivalent (kgoe)**,

UP 186.4 kgoe from 1990.

In the same year, the average Cuban consumed **905 kgoe**,

DOWN 692 kgoe from 1990.

ECONOMICS: In 2009, the **U.S. unemployment rate** was an estimated **9.3%**

Cuba, which seemed far less affected by the "Global Economic Crisis," had an estimated **unemployment rate of 1.6%**

And, while **Cuba's** accounts were \$1.18 Billion in debt, with an **external debt ranked 67th in the world**,

America's were \$380.1 Billion in debt. For **external debt, we ranked 1st**.

*Cuba isn't a panacea. But the effect of its half-century of Communism isn't nearly the calamity US leaders would suggest. Some might even argue *gasp* that McAmerica has something to learn from our neighbors across the water.*

For example: perhaps some things are more important than the ability to Super Size...TM

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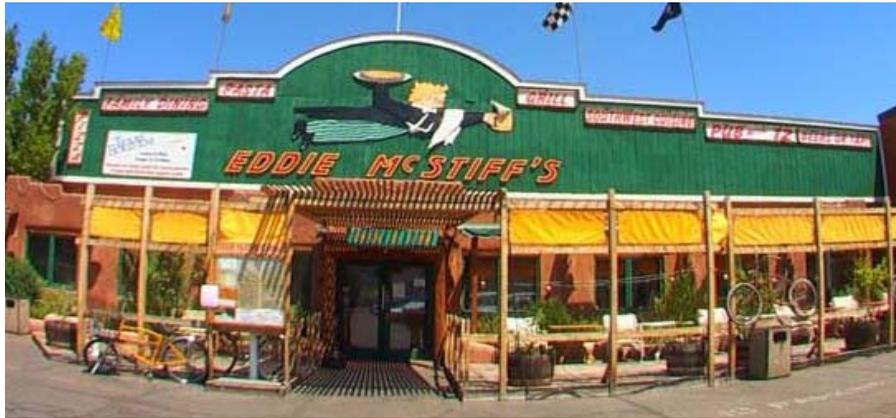
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TONYA MORTON still struggles to reconcile her contradictory affection for both socialism and double cheeseburgers.



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