



## Big Ideas: On global warming, flexible hours, cheese and Egypt

By Joseph Lawler – July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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Benjamin Zycher for AEI's *The American*: No crisis should go to waste, an eternal truth highlighted in bold by a purported climate change apocalypse that is now the target of actions newly proposed by President Obama. This so-called "crisis" will flood not various coastlines, but instead the front pages, replacing other, less flattering political headlines for the administration.

And if the proposed actions offer the potential of sizeable wealth transfers to political allies? That is far more than mere icing on the cake. Whatever the weakness of the evidence on greenhouse gases ... and climate effects, the real goal of carbon policy is a regional redistribution of wealth, a reality that explains the inability of Congress to enact such policies since the Clinton administration, when a "Sense of the Senate" resolution rejecting the Kyoto Protocol was approved by a margin of 95-0. President Obama too was unable to convince even a fully Democratic Congress to adopt such policies, and so he now proposes that his Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Energy implement regulations reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

### FLEXIBLE SCHEDULING IS GREAT FOR EMPLOYERS, BUT NOT FOR PARENTS

David Callahan at Demos' Policy Shop blog: If you're part of the 9-to-5 crowd, chances are you wish you had more flexibility. But many low-income workers have the exact opposite problem: Their hours vary wildly and they rarely know if they will get a full 40 hours of work in a given week. Or even get work at all.

This problem is growing as businesses get more sophisticated at using just-in-time labor strategies. In the same way that corporations have boosted their bottom line through just-in-time production and stocking strategies ... so too have they added to profits by applying this approach to workers.

The one hitch is that we're talking about human beings. I have written here often on the destructive effects of just-in-time work scheduling by employers, who try to have the exact number of workers they need, and no more, at any given time to respond to the ebbs and flows of business. Or to make sure that workers don't log more than 30 hours a week and then qualify for benefits. New software programs have greatly aided just-in-time scheduling. But the result is to create havoc for workers, who have a hard time organizing their lives when they can never be certain of their hours.

## THE FDA IS COMING FOR YOUR FRENCH CHEESE

Walter Olson for the Cato Institute's Cato at Liberty blog: Mimolette is a beloved French cheese produced for hundreds of years around the city of Lille. It looks somewhat like a ripe cantaloupe and tastes not unlike classic Dutch Gouda, to which it is related. Its distinctively pitted rind and hard-to-pin-down taste both arise from the action of microscopic cheese mites that are deliberately introduced to its surface as part of its production.

Mimolette has been imported to specialty cheese shops in the United States for many years without incident, but now it's come to the attention of the federal Food and Drug Administration, which is afraid that someone might have an allergic reaction to lingering remnants of the insect helpers (which are mostly removed in processing before final shipment). Now a large quantity of the expensive cheese is sitting in a warehouse in New Jersey, legally frozen, while its American fanciers prepare to go without.

## LET THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD FAIL

Michael Rubin for the American Enterprise Institute's AEIdeas blog: Rather than subsidize the Muslim Brotherhood, the United States should stand back and let them fail. American taxpayer money is not an entitlement and should never subsidize hateful or anti-American regimes. The harder they fall, the better. Let the Muslim Brotherhood be discredited in the eyes not only of Egyptians, but all Arabs and Turks and, indeed, the world. Perhaps then the region can begin its long climb to recovery. And more liberal movements can finally get the domestic attention in the Middle East they deserve.