

Cuban Irony

The Communist dictator of Cuba is, naturally enough, **opposed to free markets**.

The Cuban president went on to condemn free market neoliberalism as creating what he called "savage societies," where people are not taken into account.

In particular, he has been at the forefront of **opposition** to free trade. Today he **urged** nations to seek their own alternatives to free trade. Not necessarily Cuban communism, he generously conceded. After all:

"One should not be dogmatic; that is one of the secrets of revolution," said Castro, who led the Cuban revolution that brought him to power in 1959.

Ah yes, lack of dogmatism: the invariable hallmark of blood-soaked tyrants throughout the ages. Of course if any *Cubans* should seek any such alternatives they'll encounter something **a little worse** than mere dogmatism.

"Every one of the movements will have different things. There will be things that are similar but not exactly the same," he said.

And what might the common thread be between these similar-but-not-exactly-the-same alternatives to freedom? Why, **hatred for America** of course:

If Latin American opponents of Washington's free trade policies join forces, they could deal the United States a blow as serious as its loss in the Vietnam War, Bolivian opposition leader Evo Morales said on Thursday.

[...]

"Very soon we could celebrate in Latin America another Vietnam for the United States"

Given this visceral hatred of free trade, isn't it ironic that Castro's chief complaint against the United States is its **trade embargo** against his regime?

And more ironic is the US doe...

And more ironic is the US doesn't realize the embargo is making Cuba people miserable and Castro more powerful.

by a reader on Thu, 11/06/2003 - 10:00 | [reply](#)

No, it's less ironic

Yes, it's ironic that a nation founded on the principle of economic freedom should impose a trade embargo. But it's not *that* ironic. And the more you think about it, the less ironic it gets. After all, it's ironic that a nation founded on the values of peace may sometimes be compelled to go to war in self-defense, yet sometimes that is necessary and it's not inconsistent.

For a regime founded on the principle of outlawing free trade, not just in special circumstances but as an absolute philosophical conviction worth killing, dying, and being poor for, to complain about trade barriers *that's* irony.

As for it making Castro more powerful, he could not be more powerful, he is an absolute dictator. However, you may have a point that it makes him more secure in power. Perhaps that's what you meant. Yes, trade sanctions rarely seem to do any good - see Saddam as an example - especially compared with the only moral alternative: righteous violence. Is that what you are advocating?

by a reader on Thu, 11/06/2003 - 23:48 | [reply](#)