Subject: Non one will like this post
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 15:18:13 GMT
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I am watching the "Buena Vista Social Club", on TV. All those guys playing are in their 70's-90's. They look contented and happy and they make beautifull music together. Throughout the movie many musical paople appear and reflect the same attributes.Last week I read an article in Harpers concerning the concept of Greenfarming or the manipulation of agriculture using natural means. No fertilizer/insecticides etc. It is called permaculture and is a worldwide movement especially in poorer third world nations.Cuba has raised this concept to such a high point of scientific success that first world land managers from all of the first world economies come there to study their methods.After the Soviet abandonement of Cuba in the early 90's they suffered terribly from the U.S. lead embargo. Many small children perished of malnutrition and so the Cubans went to work and devised these methods of growing that increased the viability and yields of crop harvests to a spectacular extent.They are now one of the most self-sufficient countries in the world. True they lack certain medicines but the facts are their infant mortality rates are, as of 2004 better than those of the U.S. Their life-expectancy is also higher. And many of their Hospitals and the quality of their health care is first rate.And they make beautiful music and play great baseball.As we watch the film we see a country that is obviously very poor and the most frequent retort is that if they are doing so good why are they building rafts and dying to cross over to our side everyday. Well except for those who are seeking to re-unite with relatives lost long ago since the embargo and those who seek to get wealth and power in a new land; and of course that dirty trick Castro played of letting all his convicted felons out to escape to America, there really isn't many people attempting this crossing. Certainly less than the average group from Mexico.My point? They don't have any material things like boats and hyper-powerful cars and 20k$ stereo's and ski chalets; but they laugh and make music that is exceptionally beautiful and they live a very long time on average. And the same number of kids survive there as do here. And they are considered one of the most healthy sample populations on average in the world. And geuss what;..no Wal-Marts.

Subject: Re: Non one will like this post
Posted by colinhester on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 15:57:33 GMT
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You forgot something: they make one hell of a cigar. I've only had a couple in my time, but damn they were good.....Colin

Subject: Re: Non one will like this post
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 17:13:16 GMT
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Hell; I don't even smoke cigars and I like them.

Subject: I like it :-)
Posted by Damir on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 17:34:21 GMT
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Well, I wrote some "dark" description of politics/economics over here, but today morning I was on coffee break in the center of the town. Many cafes, well-dressed people drinking coffee on the streets, everyone has a cell-phone and a new car, good looking wife or girlfriend, kids everywhere, half-dressed girls, peace and small talk - just as if everything is perfectly allright...

Subject: Re: I like it :-)
Posted by Manualblock on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 17:56:55 GMT
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Is that your dinghy Damir; the white one? Parked in front of your summer home my good friend? Best buddy.

Subject: Re: I like it :-)
Posted by Damir on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 18:20:08 GMT
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Well, no... I took this picture on summer vacation three years ago. It is Cavtat, old little city south of Dubrovnik...(Well, the former ambassador W. Montgomery lives here, and those people know what`s good :-)). I noticed many Russians, Americans, even Israel-citizens, from various European countries, etc.But, unfortunately - I live so far away that I used the plane to get there...:-)

Subject: Re: Non one will like this post
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sat, 20 Aug 2005 21:25:44 GMT
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You're right in my case - I don't like it. You're buying into another happy-happy piece of

propaganda - images concocted to sell records.Cuba is no paradise – it's hell. I base that statement on the relationships I established with many Cuban exiles while working in Miami several years ago. These weren't politicos – they were just regular people; barbers, toll collectors, system administrators.They told me stories about being sent to East Germany to school, then told to leave their wives and children behind when the were forced to return to Cuba.They told me about near starvation after losing their "jobs" when they were accused of being insufficiently revolutionary and effectively shunned by the entire society, fearful that they too would be accused through guilt-by-association.They told me about sex tourism – Europeans going there on cheap tropical vacations to fuck underage girls pimped out by their mothers (and boys probably too, but nobody said so).They told me about how each and every person they knew would head for Miami except for the fact that the US patrols are so effective, and the result on the families left behind so awful, that only the strongest and most desperate dared try.They told me about all the people who just disappeared in the water trying to get away, attempting to cross 90 miles of ocean hanging onto anything that would float – literally any damn thing.Don't buy the happy-happy crap – in the US black slaves invented recipes that define Southern cuisine to this day and sang spirituals that ultimately transformed religious worship over wide swaths of this country – I don't remember hearing any contemporary blacks longing for the "good old days".

Subject: Re: Non one will like this post
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 21 Aug 2005 01:20:03 GMT
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Hi Charley; the propoganda thing; that wasn't the intention of the post or the film and in fact the film if you see it is strictly a music video, there is almost no conversation and absolutely none of a political or social nature. Any impression of the country in my post comes from me and upon re-reading I really don't see any positive imnpression of the country at all. I make sure to say it is dirt poor and that Castro is a sneaky lying snake. But that is neither here nor there because I have failed to make my point and that has no excuse.First up people pimping young girls goes on everywhere. I can show, based upon the testimony of my friends who are police officers plenty of such goings on right here in NYC. So thats a non issue in terms of national character.During the Soviet yrs the country was basically farmed out to the Communists and that explains the East German situation.Losing a job and near starvation due to political beliefes; and where does this thing not happen?The Cuban people here have a hatred so intense for the government their witness satements are suspect, not to mention personal agendas that come along with their expatriation.No; I posted as a sequence of thoughts about how these people who were abandoned by the Soviets and embargoed by the U.S. to the point were there were no sources of food or mechanical means to grow or raise anything to eat. Lost their children as a result of U.S. refusal to allow food deliveries during the famine; rose up and created an economy with nothing but their bare hands and brains. I talk about the Cuban people; and what they did when confronted by certain starvation.And my point was; they didn't need Wal-Marts to survive. The country; and you did not reference this issue in your reply; has returned to one of a safer and healthier country than our own. Better infant mortality statistics than we have and longer lifespans. And health care available to all citizens. Thats really the only point I meant to make.

Subject: I'm sorry
Posted by wunhuanglo on Sun, 21 Aug 2005 13:37:15 GMT
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It was late - I guess I was off kilter. I have vivid memories of those people and their stories; they were very upsetting.

Subject: Re: I'm sorry
Posted by Manualblock on Sun, 21 Aug 2005 14:17:37 GMT
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Oh I understand; I live across the street from a refugee. He coaches college baseball now but he tells some stories also.