



Written by [Ralph R. Reiland](#) on October 29, 2012

## Bad Lunches Cooked Up by the Central Planners

The big news out of Sweden is that lunch lady Annika Eriksson has been shut down.

Eriksson was an exceptionally creative and hardworking head cook at a school in central Sweden — too creative and too resourceful as it turns out.

Uniquely motivated to offer the school kids a wide array of tasty, healthy and attractive foods, Eriksson baked her own fresh breads and changed the daily vegetable into something more than corn in a steam table by turning an assortment of 15 vegetables each day into an ever-changing, colorful, appetizing, and innovative vegetable buffet.



Eriksson also did some fancy culinary footwork for the kids with chicken, shrimp, and beef patties. The kids had no complaints and nothing busted the school's food budget.

Well, that was all too good, too yummy, and too unequal for Sweden's overstocked supply of bureaucrats, central planners, food monitors, and equity cops.

The talented and enthused lunch lady was "told to stop baking fresh bread and to cut back on her wide-ranging veggie buffets because it was 'unfair' that students at other schools didn't have access to the unusually tasty offering," reported The Local: Sweden's News in English website.

"The municipality had ordered Eriksson to bring it down a notch since other schools do not receive the same caliber of food — and that's unfair," explained The Local. "Moreover, the food on offer at the school doesn't comply with the directives of a local healthy diet scheme which was initiated in 2011, according to the municipality."

Katarina Lindberg, the head planner of the government unit responsible for coming up with the school diet scheme, told the local *Falukuriren* newspaper that the diet scheme's mandatory and uniform menu is "about making a collective effort on quality, to improve school meals overall and ensure everyone does the same."

The "same," even if everyone is worse off. Or as Winston Churchill put it, "socialism is the equal sharing of misery."

What's reportedly next up is a government investigation of Eriksson's special and unequal smorgasbords for Easter and Christmas.

After that, a consistent next step might be a mandated switch at Sweden's fast-food outlets from quarter-pound cheeseburgers to a more centrally planned healthy choice of small-bite soy balls.

Sending a hopeful sign, the fourth-graders at Ms. Eriksson's school, apparently not yet pounded into full obedience and conformity, have launched a protest petition.

Closer to home and reacting to another top-down, one-size-fits-all mandate on school foods, a group of



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American high school students has produced a You Tube parody turning the song “We Are Young” into “We Are Hungry.”

Masked students in the video, hungry and frantic, are shown robbing classroom refrigerators, sneaking off school grounds to buy junk food, and collapsing to the floor during gym class due to a lack of energy and nutrition.

Emanating from a campaign by Michelle Obama to tackle childhood obesity, we now have federal “calorie maximums” for grades K-5, grades 6-8 and grades 9-12.

For a sixth grader, the recommended maximum amount of calories per lunch is dropped to 700 calories this year. For high school students, the new lunch target is 850 calories, whether the student is fat or thin or whether he’s sitting around all day or on the track team.

The problem is that the kids are getting tired of the federally prescribed lima beans and tossing lots of food away. Responding to charges that the “Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act” is causing hunger, a USDA spokesperson said, “One thing I think we need to keep in mind as kids say they’re still hungry is that many children aren’t used to eating fruits and vegetables.”

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