

## **How Much Do You REALLY Love That New iPhone?**

**by Rev. Joe Dirt - Wednesday, January 11, 2012**

<http://www.curmudgeon-alley.com/vvv/>

Another sad account of Foxconn and Apple and the high human cost of your iPhone: [iEmpire: Apple's Sordid Business Practices Are Even Worse Than You Think](#)

Someone please tell what is right about unfettered capitalism be practiced globally with US in the lead.

Here is a link to a Forbes article listing the top [400 richest people in America](#). Number 400 has a net worth of \$1 billion. Number 1 on the list, Bill Gates, has a worth of 59 billion. Six of the folks on this list made their wealth from Wal\*Mart. Steve Jobs is number 39 with a paltry \$7 billion. Michael Dell is number 18 with a worth of \$15 billion.

Go to the top of the list and find the "source" heading. Click on it. The list is now ordered based on where their wealth came from. Ten percent or so have made their wealth from retail/electronics/consumer products. Just as an aside approximately 20% of these folks made their money from banking/hedge funds/investing/etc.

Personally, I am totally clueless as to why anyone needs this much money. I'm going back to my trite and tried analogy, "if someone takes a larger piece of pie, someone else is left with a smaller piece". In the U.S. 400 people have as much wealth as 1/2 of the total US population. Mind boggling that is one huge piece of pie. Just recently in the news the new president of Apple, Tim Cook, received a \$400 million stock bonus.

You have got wonder what sort of world this would be if more of the money going to CEOs and other executives were going to workers...no matter where these workers are.

I grew with the myth that this country was a shining example to the rest of world. We somehow feel we are morally superior to the rest of the world. When corporations and ourselves, as the ultimate consumer, support sweatshops around the world where is the moral superiority. We supposedly value life and the individual in this country. Why would we participate in a market that does just the opposite?

There is a huge push in this country to totally deregulate business, to let the market decide. China as detailed in this pod-cast paints the picture of this dystopia.

Ira Glass mentioned editorials by Paul Krugman and Nicholas Kristoff. These two men repeatedly detail a world that I would want to live in. It is an ethical world where we care for each other, a world where greed does not always win. They both wrote editorials more or less defending the sweatshops in these countries. Their feeling was that even if it was a sweatshop, it was better than what they had before. I read these editorials when they first came out. I strongly disagreed with them then, and I still do. What they are

speaking to is an Obama compromise where we just settle and the other side gets 95% of what they wanted. We should be holding ourselves up to a higher standard.

As want-to-be-Buddhist, I am striving to live an ethical life. I gave up eating meat. I did so not because I do not like meat or have an issue with killing to eat. My issue is with factory farming and sweatshops that are our meatpacking operations in this country. I did not want to participate. But how do I run from the sweatshops of China and other 3rd world countries when practically every product I can buy comes from one? How do I run from corporations that have shipped our jobs overseas and the middle class with it? I keep hoping for world where everyone matters, where we do care for each other. I hope for world where we are stewards of the land and environment. I keep dreaming.

Sigh.

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