

Bad for business... Good for business...

by Rev. Joe Dirt - Thursday, April 17, 2014

<http://www.curmudgeon-alley.com/bad-for-business-good-for-business/>

Bad for business... Good for business... Two terms that one hears quite often. We apparently need business to some extent to meet our daily needs. The unfortunate aspect of business is that to a large extent it is based on the profit motive which often translates into unbridled greed. The way businesses and corporations are structured in this country it tends to shield individuals from most responsibility for less than desirable actions. A familiar buzz phrase is “corporate citizen” which in my mind is the paradigm for explaining what an oxymoron is.

When I hear something is bad for business it generally grates on my nerves. It frequently is a case of the tail wagging the dog. In this country, businesses and corporations have garnered more than their fair share of wealth. This wealth has bought politicians and who knows whom else. This wealth has managed to change the laws to shield and benefit these legal fictions. It has reached the point that if Lincoln was giving the Gettysburg Address today, his closing would read *“and that government of the corporations, by the corporations, for the corporations, shall not perish from the Congress.”*

What started me down this well trodden path again was a news story this morning on NPR. It was reported that “Louisiana’s coast is disappearing at the rate of about a football field an hour. Since the 1930s, the Gulf of Mexico has swallowed up an area the size of Delaware.”

Many folks allege that this erosion of the wetlands that provide a buffer between hurricanes and New Orleans is the responsibility of the various oil companies operating in the area. For mysterious reason some of these folks feel that the entities that caused the erosion due to their business activities should pay to restore the land. It is costing local authorities and communities millions of dollars a year to create and maintain the new levees required.

There are lawsuits underway to force these companies to pay for the restoration. Several prominent individuals including the governor of Louisiana, Bobby Jindal, are outraged by these lawsuits and are trying to pass retroactive laws to prevent them. The lawsuits are ‘bad’ for business. And apparently we should not be holding creators of environmental disasters responsible for their actions.

If I burn down my neighbor’s barn I am going to pay either civilly, criminally or both. I personally feel like corporate officers should be legally responsible for the misconduct of the businesses they control. They should be fully responsible to the extent of jail time and/or personal resources. That just might force them to be “good” corporate citizens. If these companies and their executives knew for a certainty that they could not get away with shoddy practices and destruction of environment they would approach their activities differently.

In my Utopian universe people come first and corporations somewhere down the line. Undoubtedly we need businesses and jobs, but the number one priority should be what is good for the most folks. To put business ahead of individuals and local communities is morally and ethically wrong. Somehow,

someway, we must wrench control of our country away from corporations and the greedy.

Link to the NPR article mentioned above:

<http://www.npr.org/2014/04/16/303367684/as-la-coast-recedes-battle-rages-over-who-should-pay>

Share this:

- [Share](#)
-

Like this:

Like Loading...