Should we Transfer Money from the Top 1%?

Are you ready to forcibly redistribute income from the top 1% of income earners to the other less fortunate 99%? Don’t answer too quickly. An income of [just $32,400](http://www.globalrichlist.com/) places you in the top 1% of the world’s population. For $32,400 a year you can be richer than seven billion other people.

World’s Top Income

1% $ 32,400

10% $ 13,745

20% $ 6,715

50% $ 1,305

The average income for people in the world is $1,305 a year. Redistributing income from the rich to the poor would actually mean taking money from people who earn more than $1,305 a year to give it to the world’s poor. If we define “rich” as the top 20% of world income earners, we will only start taking money from those who make more than $6,715 a year to give it to the poor. Is there anyone advocating taking money from people in the US who earn less than $10,000 a year? If not, why not?

A person making the federal minimum wage of $7.25 an hour working 40 hours a week for 50 weeks a year earns $14,500 . This is enough to place them in the top 10% of income earners in the world. Maybe instead of debating an increase in the minimum wage we should be debating increasing taxes on these “wealthy” people to help out the poor.

Let’s say that two minimum wage workers who have strong work ethics get married and pool their incomes. If each partner worked 60 hours a week 52 weeks a year, their family income would be $45,240 which would place them in the richest .41% of the world’s population. That’s right; you can flip burgers in the US and still be in the richest .41% of the world’s population! Surely if redistribution from the rich to the poor is moral, we should be taking more money from affluent Americans to help the truly needy around the world. We don’t do so either because we don’t care about non-Americans or we don’t actually think that income redistribution is just.

In the US a married family with three kids qualifies for food assistance (SNAP) from the federal government if their income does not exceed $35,844. Said family lives within the world’s top 1% of income earners. That means that someone feels there is a moral imperative to transfer money from the top half of the top 1% in order to give it to people in the bottom half of the top 1%. At the same time there is no sense of moral urgency to transfer money from the bottom half of the top 1% to the bottom half of the bottom 1% of the world’s income earners. Does that make any moral sense? Of course not.

Shame on politicians who pander to the world’s bottom half of the top 1% telling them they are morally entitled to income transfers from the few people richer than themselves while they simultaneously have no moral claim on their income from the bottom 99%.