

Mike Rowe on Tariffs, Slaughterhouses, and Facing Hard Truths

13 MIN · YOUTUBE · [HTTPS://WWW.YOUTUBE.COM/WATCH?V=RFFBD08QQZU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RFFBD08QQZU)

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SUMMARY

The discussion revolves around the complexities of trade, economic priorities, and moral considerations in society, particularly in relation to tariffs and reliance on countries with questionable ethical practices. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding the implications of our economic choices, drawing parallels to historical moral decisions and the realities of food production.

- The economy is vital but not always the most important factor in national decisions.*
- Historical examples, like the abolition of slavery, show that moral imperatives can outweigh economic concerns.*
- Current reliance on countries with unethical practices, such as organ harvesting in China, raises questions about trade policies.*
- Understanding the origins of our food, including the realities of animal slaughter, is crucial for informed consumer choices.*
- The speaker shares personal experiences from a show about the realities of meat production, highlighting the emotional complexities involved.*
- There is a call for greater awareness and honesty about the processes behind food production and economic decisions.*
- The conversation critiques the tendency to avoid uncomfortable truths in favor of convenience or ignorance.*

What's your take? What's your take on the trade situation? Do you have a take? Yeah, sure. Great. Great. Here, here's a plank to walk out on an end for Mike. Yay. He said it was a podcast. Turns out it's a TV show and he mouthed off pretty good. Uh my take is um I don't know of any economists uh who who think it's a good idea, but um I know lots of people who aren't economists who believe that from time to time the economy is not the most important thing to the country. It's always important and it's rarely out of the top two.

But I think there are times certainly in history when you can look back and say okay well that's something we did in spite of the economy not because of it. I mean I think every smart economist if there was such a thing in 1860 was saying that look if we abolish slavery the economy is going to collapse. There's no way we can withstand that kind of gutting of the labor force. It might even lead to a civil war. So, sorry, we can't talk about eliminating slavery. It would be suicidal to the to the economy. But the country said, "Well, maybe not. Maybe right now this thing is more important than whatever short-term, midterm, or even long-term chaos getting rid of slavery will do.

Now, I know in fairness to the older school economists like David Hume and Adam Smith, they were both pro abolitionists. So, the the sort of early the early what would be called liberal economists. That's right. But they

weren't making an economic argument to get rid of slavery. They were making it a moral argument. They were making a moral argument. So, it's different. So, is there something today that would justify, and I'm not sure the administration has made this argument, but when I have a couple of pops and sit down with my buddies, what I typically say is if we're going to talk about the economic impacts of tariffs, fine. I'll show you the last three interviews I've done with CEOs of companies who who run organizations that make things in America because you we need to hear from them, too. Josh Smith, Montana Knife, Bayard Winthre, American Giant. These guys are not experiencing any supply chain issues. And and I think that it's instructive to hear from them. But um if you're not going to have if you're not willing to have a conversation outside of the economic impacts of tariffs, then whatever. You're just stuck in that box. But what if our identity as a as a country, our our our our willingness to make things, our ability to make things, what if our um what if our reliance on countries who don't love us needs to be reckoned with, right? I talked to Yan Yakelnik. You know him over at Epoch Times? Uh I think I've I think I've read some of his pieces. He's uh it's it's an amazing story and it's finally got some some traction. But you know there are a lot of hospitals in China that have been built right next to prisons. And last year somewhere between 70,000 and 100,000 uh organs have been harvested from political prisoners. people routinely schedule uh liver transplants and heart transplants. You're not supposed to be able to schedule those things. You go on a list in this country and you wait for some calamity to occur. And so, right, you get in line. There isn't a stock of human organs currently inside of a human, but soon to be not if necessary.

But there is over there. There is. and the Fulong Gong and the political persecution of that particular sect. It's close to 70 million people. It's been going on for 20 years. It makes the Weaguer thing look kind of small. But the point is, if you're going to have a conversation about whether or not it makes sense to be relying on a country who is running a \$9 billion organ harvesting operation, then okay. But it's better to know, right? Like if you're if you're if you're going to argue for the for the for the institution of slavery, then you ought to visit a plantation and you ought to see the conditions and you ought to be familiar with the middle passage. And if you're going to if you're going to eat meat, as I do every day, you should visit a slaughter house. You should help in the butchering of a cow. It's better to know, right? And you can fill in that blank. If you believe in capital punishment, I think you should absolutely bear witness to an execution.

And if you want to argue for or against Well, if you want to argue for abortion, why not? Why not understand? Why not look at the thing? So, look, that's my hot take on it. Our head is in the sand and it's comfortable down there. We don't have to look at these things all of the time, but it's better to know. I uh I think that the like eating let's because I spent some time with this issue when it comes to like eating meat animal products. The thing that is weird about that and there's never been a vegan society. John Mackey who's a friend of the show dear personal friend co-ound co-founder of Whole Foods Market he is vegan and he will say there has never been a vegan society. So, it's not um natural to never eat any animal products. But most people can't tolerate seeing the process. they can't tolerate knowing that the way you get milk, the thing that was so striking to me and when we made this film and screened it and stuff is there's a moment in it where a calf is separated from the mother, you know, the baby calf and and put into a cage that's going to go off to be either ve or hamburger meat. And it and it has been without fail that every audience this is they are struck viscerally by this. And it doesn't occur to them that cows are mammals and mammals produce milk in the aftermath of pregnancy. They don't produce milk all the time. So if you want to have largecale milk production, you need to have cows constantly bearing children. And then you have to do something with them. Technically calves.

Yeah. Yeah. Small small small cows. Yes. I guess children can be used in a general, right? That would be something. Human children. Human child out of a cow. Now, now we've got They're working on that in Silicon Valley, I'm sure. Some kind of nightmarish chimera with a chip in its head. But u um but so what? It's uncomfortable. So what? Eat your peas. Look at it. Look at it. Or don't eat it. Now, I I know that sounds a little glib and I I realize it's sensitive, but I took it back to my guy who talked about mining and farming. Yeah. You know, I spent a lot of time with a lot of farmers and their biggest frustration, aside from just being generally unappreciated, I think, is the the the the genuine mystery held by most people as to where their food comes from. It comes from the grocery store. Comes from the meat tree. It comes from whatever it is.

We just don't know. It comes from something that produces a wrapped thing. I did a story of a guy called Earl, the mobile butcher, Western Michigan. This is rough, but I'm I'm just going to tell you because it's better to know. All right. I And and the fact that I got this on the air is is one of a dozen miracles from those days. But I rode with Earl one day because I wanted people to see where their meat came from. and Earl took me to a small I can't even call it a farm. They they had a couple cows, but the family raised the cows for their own meat and they had kids, you know, and uh and the kids and the parents, they they love the cow.

They get attached to the cow. The cows there for two days. Did they name the cows that they would slaughter? Cuz that's that's usually the no no. This is another story, but it has to do with rabbits. I'll tell you if you want, but let's stay on the cow track and maybe It did have a name. It did have a name, but I but I've forgotten what the name was because it was eclipsed by by what happened. Uh, spoiler alert, I I shoot the cow on on TV and then we and then we butcher it. Uh, and we learn at the end of the segment exactly the difference between a sirloin and a t-bone and a rump roast and a top and all of it. It's it's very instructive. It's very honest and it's very real. But as I'm standing there, so the family's over here, kids are there, mom and dad are there, Earl Le, the Butcher, he's over here panel van, and the cow is in the stall behind me, and the camera's right here. And I look to the camera and say, "Uh, okay.

Uh, here we are. Uh, the cow is going to be, uh, humanely dispatched and then we're going to walk." And as as I'm describing what's going to happen, the cow walks up to me and puts its head on my shoulder. Mhm. And starts to lick my neck. Son of a What is this? A living creature that loves its young and will actually traverse miles to be reunited with its young, which is a thing that's happened.

I am not sentimental about the ways of the world and and Dirty Jobs certainly wasn't either. But I'll tell you something, man. It was one of the more difficult things really. Uh and and Earl handed me the rifle and I stepped back and I shot the cow. And 15 minutes later, every organ, all the fat, all the inedible parts were in a giant barrel. And the remaining quarters were on hooks in the back of the van. So that part over there is going to end up going to public school lunches, maybe. What is this? Is this grade F? Okay, off to public school lunches you go. But h how are we to think about all this? You know, I mean, my bosses were livid. the a lot of viewers were upset. How many how many pea What was the PETA situation with that that at that point I was um I was better than halfway through what we called the uh the assault of the the AAA the army of angry acronyms. So I had PETA, I had HSUS, I had OSHA, I had the EPA. Yep. I even had the FBI at everybody who works for an for an agency with an acronym could find something on Dirty Jobs on any given day to that did not comply or

comport with their understanding of how the work should be done or something. So, of course, Peter was was outraged and um and and all I could say really was look the if you watch the footage, it there wasn't a ton of of joy in it, but there was an awful lot of honesty. And if if you actually think it's better for people not to know what what go this family ate for the better part of a year as a result of of that cow and they I was going to say they ate what they killed but they they they didn't want to kill the animal but they bore witness to it. Earl well I did it and Earl did what he did. Everybody did their job. In other words, to really bring it back to my earlier example of production, like everybody, there's hair, there's makeup, there's camera, there's audio, everybody does their job.

And at the end of the day, poof, you get a TV show. Well, it's not so different on the farm. Everybody does their job. And at the end of the day, you eat or you don't. And so that that really um look, Dirty Jobs was an entertainment proposition first and foremost, but under it was always that idea that you know, you know what? You you you owe it to the minor and you owe it to the farmer to tell the truth of their industry, but you also owe it to the cow. you if you're going to eat it, the least you can do is acknowledge its life and its death and how it works. If you like this clip, you should check out the full video and all the other great content we've got at Dad Saves America. So, be sure to hit the like button, subscribe, and ring that bell so you won't miss our new stuff as it drops each week.