

THE QUARTER BILLIONAIRE'S \$9 JOBS

Fairly early in Mitt's speech last night he said this:

But today, four years from the excitement of the last election, for the first time, the majority of Americans now doubt that our children will have a better future.

It is not what we were promised.

[snip]

It's not just what we wanted. It's not just what we expected.

It's what Americans deserved.

You deserved it because during these years, you worked harder than ever before. You deserved it because when it cost more to fill up your car, you cut out movie nights and put in longer hours. Or when you lost that job that paid \$22.50 an hour with benefits, you took two jobs at 9 bucks an hour and fewer benefits. You did it because your family depended on you. You did it because you're an American and you don't quit. You did it because it was what you had to do.

But driving home late from that second job, or standing there watching the gas pump hit 50 dollars and still going, when the realtor told you that to sell your house you'd have to take a big loss, in those moments you knew that this just wasn't right.

But what could you do? Except work harder, do with less, try to stay optimistic. Hug your kids a little longer; maybe spend a little more time praying that tomorrow would be a better

day. [my emphasis]

The passage is fundamentally important to the logic of the speech—and indeed, Mitt’s entire campaign—both because it pretends Mitt understands the struggles of average people and because it suggests Obama failed to deliver on Hope and Change.

And at the core of the passage are \$9 jobs that don’t pay enough to live on.

Which is funny, because just a few hours earlier, the Founder of Staples, Thomas Stemberg, bragged about Mitt’s role in this:

The truth is Mitt was not a typical investor. He was a true partner. Where some saw an unproven new business, he saw a store that could save people money. He recognized that efficiency creates consumer value. He never looked at Staples as merely a financial investment. He saw the engine of prosperity it could become.

Today Staples employs nearly 90,000 people. It has over 2,000 stores. Over 50 distribution centers.

The average self-reported hourly wage of a Staples EasyTech Associate is \$8.89. The average self-reported hourly wage of a Staples Sales Associate is \$8.54.

Those jobs Mitt talked about as a symbol of America’s failed promise, the ones that don’t pay a living wage? That’s what Mitt’s campaign boasted about last night as his idea of an “engine of prosperity.”

And it was an engine of prosperity, for Mitt, for Stemberg. Mitt’s worth at least \$250 million. Stemberg is reportedly worth \$202 million. And they got that money by running an engine of prosperity that relies on workers who are Mitt’s own example of the failure of the American dream. “This just wasn’t right,” Mitt

said himself. (Not to mention that some of the steel jobs Mitt destroyed probably were \$22.50 an hour jobs, with benefits.)

And look at the solution Mitt imagines for these Americans in the dead-end jobs he created. Not joining a union, the historically proven way to improve dead-end jobs. But work harder, cut back on expenses.

Pray.

And, vote for Mitt Romney, the guy who destroyed those \$22.50 an hour jobs and replaced them with \$9 an hour ones.

The RNC spent a lot of time this week appealing to small business owners. Indeed, those small business owners are the customers whose prosperity Stenberg imagines Staples serving.

But to a large and increasing number of American people, Mitt's actually arguing that he should be President so he can solve the problem he got phenomenally rich by causing in the first place.