

Fallacy of responsibility and beacons of hope  
Tony E. Hansen  
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The fallacy of responsibility is ever more present in our society today. We do not expect consequences to occur when we do anything. Spending into credit card limits, invading sovereign countries, eating too much, or even drinking too much are among examples of this. There are plenty of examples of where we go beyond moderate. Today, we have the grace of being able to avoid the consequences by declaring bankruptcy, taking contracts to enrich oil companies, getting gastro-bypass surgery or even just talking to a counselor. These all help us to feel more at ease with the growing gluttonous appetite of feed me because I want more.

No discipline or resolve to a strategic approach is possible for companies and countries with only today in mind and yesterday forgotten. We are bombarded with information from various sources that claim authenticity and accuracy without ever showing shred of evidence or credentials relevant to the issue. We forget what happened yesterday and the supposed lessons learned due to the barrage of information today (especially when one side of the issue wants to forget that something occurred). Whether the issue is slighted right or to the left, we have no true facts anymore.

Someone started this propaganda thing and called the process marketing. Today, we are marketed policy as a consumer rather than given true pros and cons as educated citizens. Maybe WALL-e is not too broad of reach for a society that is so interested in the latest trend of fashion rather than teaching common sense to children. When we fail to teach one child that stealing is wrong or that destruction of property is wrong encourages more to think that laws are guidelines rather than real rules and standards to live. The rule of law no longer applies to communities that no longer recognize the rule.

The broken window theory has empirical evidence of truth since we can find any examples of abandoned items that get destroyed over time. If the same applies to public policy, then little white lies from one person will ripple throughout the government and cause a cascade into bigger more aggressive problems. There are group theorists (like Henri Tajfel) who believe that leadership influence the organization in these ways where non-management witness poor management ethics and then consider such behavior to be acceptable or when people observe that another was able to avoid punishment and then proceed to un-acceptable behaviors.

Leadership is about setting examples and standards for the rest to follow. Ethics are principles that have to be clear and involve accountability and responsibility to organization goals. In terms of public policy, ethics has to follow standards to align with the goals of ethical citizenship, and the ASPA provides excellent conduct rules here. As well, ethics has to be more focused upon performance rather than short term profit. Not all bad values are illegal; not everything legal is ethical, and unethical choices affect the stakeholders around the decision makers. We must also be wary of continuing poor

choices when we realize that such has occurred. We just can not accept a poor “way of things” and continue to make poor unethical decisions.

Leadership and management will be wise to instill a sense of pride in the mission and the organization or country as well as to follow a course of ethical practices that everyone must adhere.

In some ways, mathematical Hobbes ethics or Machiavelli’s suggestions undermines the concept of ethics as a “rule of law” by calculating what is best for “me”. Economics and “calculation of good” can not be the rule of the government since the profit motive is rooted in greed, and profit can be obtained by any means necessary. This is contrary to the idea of “rule of law” (Huehn, 2008). Bias can also hinder or regress the moral incentive to be lawful, and besides, we just know when something is not right. Ethics are a standard that help guide proper procedure of economics, but again can not be ruled by economics. We do not need to govern our policies based upon those whom can pay the most.

There is always a heckler in the crowd and a pessimist.

Look at the persona around Barack Obama. This guy inspires people in ways that we have not seen in many years and this inspiration can help people look more towards following the rule of law than disobeying civil constructs that have been maintained in our society. He brings hope to those whom have forgotten hope or thought the society was in complete decay. He gives a horizon to look forward to seeing. He may change positions but one should question a leader who does not change positions (especially when research or evidence suggests a change in position). We can not be so embedded in our own self righteousness that we forget that there are consequences to actions.

Like Mr. Obama says, we have a responsibility to take care of our posterity. We have to realize that our decisions today with foreign powers and domestic policy has consequences tomorrow and beyond. We can not continue to make short-sighted, politically-minded goals without realizing those consequences in the future and taking responsibility for those consequences. For example, energy policy can not be solely focused upon limited natural resources and burning of fossil fuels if we intend to maintain a thriving economy based upon energy levels and prices. As well, what is cost-effective today may not be tomorrow, and what is not cost-effective today may be because the resources have not been focused to make them more cost-effective.

Economic policy can not be focused upon consumption since the various marketing departments do plenty to encourage this by themselves and enriching a few. We cannot continue to believe that spending is curbed by more deficit spending. We can not continue to believe that debt can be ignored. Sooner or later, the financiers want to be paid back instead of given IOUs. The priority of spending has to be focused to help encourage public development like schools and public infrastructures rather than entertainment or stadiums. Security has to be enforced but security does not mean to sacrifice our liberty.

Immigration laws have to be enforced and companies should not be encouraged to participate in illegal immigration scams. Illegal aliens inherently are unlawful and need to be prosecuted as well as those whom help to subvert the law. If an alien can subvert the law getting here or to freely use identity theft, what else is the person able to subvert without prosecution? Too many have paid the price of lawful entry to this country. Illegal immigration avoids the responsibility of going through the proper procedures. As well, the pervasiveness of illegal immigration suggests severe security leaks in our border protections.

What is experience and what experience is relevant for leadership? Mr McCain has had to endure for his country what few have had. No one should diminish or cheapen his honorable efforts for our country during that unpopular war. He has as well talked about leaving a good world for our children. He has not been able to raise the inspirations of large crowds like Obama. In his more subtle approach, he may be able to inspire. Both, McCain and Obama, have served in the Senate but have not had public executive responsibilities. Obama worked his way to getting a Harvard degree and teaching law, and McCain worked his way through the US Naval Academy and a subsequent military career.

With an office that has the world's attention, do we want subtle or do we want grandeur? We need goals and we need a long term strategy instead of short-term politics.

We have to realize an image of hope, freedom and prosperity to people in need of hope here and abroad. We have a great history and many struggles in our past. We can not escape our history and some horrible policies therein, but we do not need to sow the seeds of despair, misfortune, and fear anymore if we abide by good ethical treatment of neighbors both inside and outside our country. We can only achieve the beacon of hope when we, individually and as a society, behave ethically, behave as good neighbors, and are an example to others in our community and around the world. Only then can we be beacon of hope. Only then will we have done our duty. Does the world have to be an example to us? Let the promise of America shine again.

## References

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