



The Focused Fire Newsletter - Copyright © Affinity Systems LLC, March, 2014 Issue 9

Do the Means Justify the End?

Last month's Focused Fire Newsletter pursued the definition of quality, and found the subject more complicated than it would outwardly appear. In comparison, defining what the word truth means is even more complicated, but relates absolutely to the essence of our personal relationships, social fabric, and our position in a competitive world.

Upon discovery, lying and/or deceiving potentially results in angry consequences, with reaction often proportionately more severe than the lie itself. The greatest casualty is a loss of trust and respect. There will be accountability in some form, perhaps severe. The best resolution is taking responsibility, admission, and accountability. Regaining trust requires investment in the relationship, and honest actions, not words. This presumes others are considered to be worthy of an apology, and continuing relationship.

Match this private reaction to the public tolerance of near pathological lying by our elected officials on both sides, even after the lie is irrefutable. President Lyndon Johnson lied about sending troops to Vietnam. President Nixon lied about the Watergate break-in and later resigned. The electorate held President George H. Bush accountable for raising taxes after he promised, "Read my lips: no new taxes." President Clinton lied when he said, "I did not have sex with that woman," and was impeached, but not convicted.

Accusations often have an impact similar to exposure. For example, many think that President George W. Bush lied about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. History must sort out the facts, and if true, the lie was certainly significant.

Few lies reach the magnitude or frequency of President Obama's "If you like your health care plan, you can keep your health care plan, period." It was a deception constructed to sell the Affordable Care Act, a massive governmental takeover of health care, to legislators and the public. Future generations will judge the value gained/lost from reengineering one-sixth of the American economy through subterfuge.

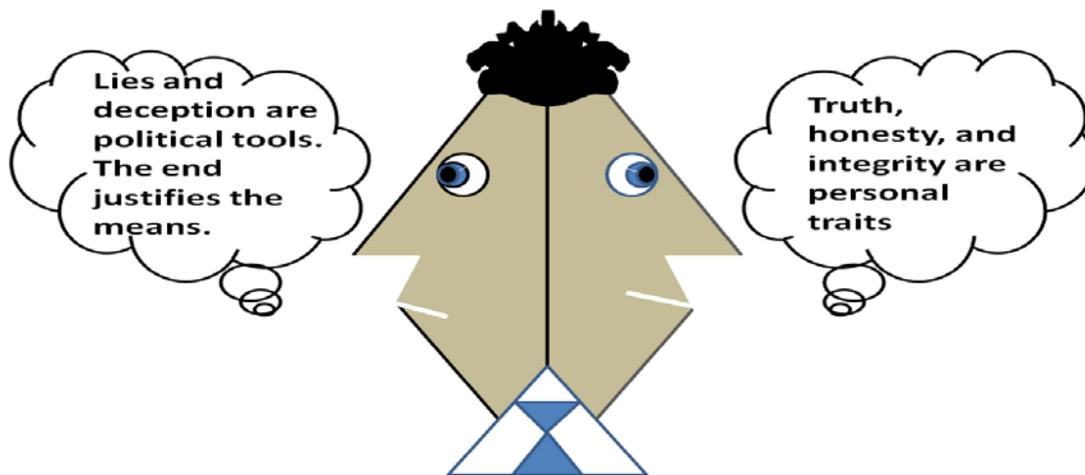


The polls show a substantial drop in President Obama's trustworthiness, yet he continues to compound the problem. In an interview with Bill O'Reilly on FOX news, he stated there is "not a smidgen of corruption," on the part of the IRS, even as evidence to the contrary continues to build.

Obviously, there is something missing in all of this besides the truth.

In May 2001, former CBS News anchor Dan Rather stated, when asked about President Clintons' honesty, "Well, because I think he is. I think at core he's an honest person. I know that you have a different view. I know that you consider it sort of astonishing anybody would say so, but I think you can be an honest person and lie about any number of things."

In a CNN interview, Ed Urvic, author of "Lying Cheating Scum" said "Every president has not only lied at some time, but needs to lie to be effective,"



The core perspective is how we perceive truth and consequences.

Most of us live by deontological ethics, or judge the truth by the act/deed itself. The opposite viewpoint is consequentialism, where the end consequence determines the merits/truth of the deed/action. Stated a different way, consequentialism translates to "the end justifies the means."

One example of the latter paradigm is the Affordable Health Care Act (ACA).

In his sales pitch for the ACA, President Obama repeated a litany of promises.

- If you like your health care you can keep you health care
- If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor
- Obamacare won't add 'one dime to our deficits'
- Premiums will fall by as much as \$2,500 per family



The Affordable Care Act, passed in 2010, is the signature legislation of the Obama administration, passed entirely along party lines using deceit, lies, and strong-arm tactics. To get the last needed vote from Sen. Bart Stupak and the Pro-life Senatorial vote, President Obama signed an Executive Order barring federal funding of abortion through the Affordable Care Act.

Several years later Mr. Stupak said, "I am perplexed and disappointed that, having negotiated the Executive Order with the President, not only does that HHS mandate violate the Executive Order but it also violates statutory law I think it is illegal."

(Note: The ACA allows abortions, and the Executive order stands in direct contradiction).

Every one of the above promises proved to be falsehoods, some to sell the program, and others as deceit to keep 2012 voters from finding out the negative ramifications of the legislation. The troubling question is whether, in his mind, they are lies or just necessary deceit to achieve his vision.

Sold under the premises of "the means justifies the end" philosophy, the result of the ACA will be unknown until well after President Obama is out of office. It raises a greater question; do the American people call this a truthful process deserving a reward?

Yet, President Obama did not act alone, and the authors of the bill were a combination of business and political people. Every Democratic Senator and Representative voted for the Bill without reading it, an astonishing display of arrogance and irresponsibility to the people empowering them. Obviously, by default or intent, they practiced the philosophy of "any means justifies the end," hoping the end result would be positive, and constituents reward them with additional terms in office. In my opinion, voters need to oust politicians violating the public's trust.

The press upon which the public once relied for honest reporting apparently abdicated responsibility in reporting the ACA, either buying the "any means" argument, or were so deeply bias the truth was invisible. Frequently, dishonesty in the press is omission, sitting on information needed by the public to make evidence-based decisions. While researching our book "Crunch Time for Health Care," Jon Bingol and I had little difficulty finding and anticipating the major flaws in the ACA, and extrapolating the considerable consequences. Largely ignored, the issues still must approach the crisis stage before coverage by the mainstream press. In defense of the press, no one wants to listen to the problems, including family and friends. Sadly, the worst features of the law have received little attention. In my personal bias, the modern press was absorbed into, and then abdicated to the political process, failing its role to keep the public honestly informed. In our rewrite, "Productivity Prescriptions for Health Care," scheduled for publication in April, Jon and I focus on actions that health care must take to brunt the effects of the ACA.

Voters may be blind to the deceptions because they trusted Obama to seize the opportunity and achieve positive change. That luster has not entirely rubbed off. Others looked past the dishonesties of the politician to the man, apparently an honest husband and good father. By their votes, all accepted the "any means to an end" argument. The end game for this administration remains unclear, and the rules



constantly change, by obvious intent and deception. The key analogy is an iceberg, where the tip represents known lies, but hidden beneath the waves floats a mass of negative consequences.

The "any means justifies the end" philosophy breaks down quickly at the personal level. Telling ones spouse "I'm having an affair for the good of the marriage" will fly for one nanosecond. Why then, do we allow our elected officials to lie without accountability? Often failing to perform due diligence, the result is what we deserve.

Citizens need to fight for a truthful, honest, and accountable government. When officials establish their own agenda and use deception to achieve it, they eventually lose the confidence of the people and become irrelevant. Without a democratic process, we are enslaved and our freedoms lost. Meanwhile, the country will drift without leadership, from one crisis to another, exerting little influence over world events.

America needs a rebirth of truth and honesty, restoring our integrity and providing a common purpose, to build a competitive America.

Wayne L Staley
Owner/Systems Consultant/Author
Affinity Systems LLC
Rothschild, WI 54474
715-573-8911
wstaley@affinitysystemsllc.com

