2-22-2003

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Editor

Recommended Citation

Title: The "Politically Motivated" Defense: An Example from Paraguay
Author: Editor
Volume: 14
Issue: 6
Date: 2003-02-22
Keywords: Leadership, Paraguay, Political Motivation, Social Cognition

Abstract. This article describes and analyzes the construct of a specific defense strategy employed by political leaders against allegations of wrongdoing.

A stranger to the human political world might believe that the only two responses by a political leader to allegations of wrongdoing would be an assertion of innocence or an admission of guilt. However, a common response is that the allegations are politically motivated. An analysis of this defense quickly shows that the it's popularity is based upon the ease to which it can generate a host of associations and attributions--even concurrently.

As an example, note the recent impeachment trial of the Paraguayan president, Luis Gonzalez Macchi. According to Mayra Pertossi of the Associated Press, President Macchi was accused by members of his own political party of misusing $16 million in state funds and of using a stolen luxury car. (Here it might be at least entertaining to engage in the moral and ethical calculus of contemplating whether one can use as opposed to misuse a stolen car.) In any case, he both denied the allegations and called them and the resulting impeachment trial "politically motivated."

Politically motivated may be taken in the literal sense that those making the allegations were impelled by political intentions. This literal sense might be construed as always being correct, because all people may always be politically motivated in a human phenomenal world of finite resources and infinite needs--viz., a political world. In the example of the Paraguayan president, party members making and supporting the allegations surely are aware of the possibility of positive political consequences for themselves. These consequences comprise aspects of greater political power such as more money, greater social and formal political position, more persuasive influence, and the intrapsychic pleasures of (1) being able to hurt someone who--at least overtly--seems to have more power than oneself or (2) affecting the world in a manner consonant with one's ideologies. Even allegers who are free from moral and ethical taint-- allegers self-nominated or identified through the nominations of others--would still be politically motivated.

There are many associations and attributions from this literal sense that can be helpful for the target of allegations. The fact that the target is right about the political motives of the allegers might give more credence to the target's putative fact--viz., the denial of wrongdoing as indicating no wrongdoing. Even if there are smoking gun data supporting the allegations of wrongdoing, the political intentions of the allegers may imbue them with an aura of wrongdoing--e.g., the common stance of asserting one's motives to be for the collective welfare imploding by the obviousness or transparency of the allegers' self-interest. In fact, the

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target's emphasis on the politics of the allegations can even achieve a re-labeling of obvious wrongdoing as politics as usual. As well, and most ironically, the target's emphasis on the politics of the allegations may actually serve to distract attention away from the target's own political motivations as well as the salience of that target's personal responsibility for wrongdoing (cf. Hamilton, 1986). Moreover, one might ponder on the frequency with which political motivation helps induce a belief within the target that either the wrongdoing is not wrong or did not occur (cf. Arluke & Hafferty, 1996). Finally, one might consider whether the effectiveness of the politically motivated defense may hinder the possibility of rehabilitation of a wrongdoer and reconciliation with those who are aggrieved (cf. Chamarette, 2000).

In conclusion, politically motivated as a defense against allegations may be a defense of choice by saints and sinners, scions and scoundrels alike. This conclusion further reinforces the defense's value in that it precludes using it as a distinguisher between Good and Evil. (See Arluke, A., & Hafferty, F. (1996). From apprehension to fascination with "dog lab": The use of absolutions by medical students. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 25, 201-225; Chamarette, C. (2000). Terra nullius then and now: Mabo, native Title and reconciliation in 2000. Australian Psychologist, 35, 167-172; Hamilton, V.L. (1986). Chains of command: Responsibility attribution in hierarchies. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 16, 118-138; Pertossi, M. (February 10, 2003). Paraguay Senators Deliberate Impeachment. http://news.findlaw.com/ap_stories/i/1102/2-10-2003/20030210183004_14.html; Pertossi, M. (February 12, 2003). Paraguay president survives impeachment. http://www.newsday.com/news/nationworld/world/wire/sns-ap-paraguay-politics0212feb12,0,3165413.story?coll=sns-ap-world-headlines.) (Keywords: Leadership, Paraguay, Political Motivation, Social Cognition.)

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