

Honest graft essays examples

[Economics](#), [Money](#)



1. Honest graft means taking advantage of the money making opportunities that come during the line of work, while holding a public office. In this case Plunkitt's definition of honest graft is pursuing personal interests and pursuing public interests at the same time (Magleby 2004 p 85). He describes it as, " I saw my opportunities and took em" (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011). Plunkitt's land dealings show the opportunities he grabbed while in office, where he made most of his money through purchasing land, which he knew would be needed for public projects. He would later sell these parcels of land at inflated prices. He even says " Ain't it perfectly honest to charge a good price and make a profit on my investment and foresight? Of course, it is. Well, that's honest graft" (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011). According to Plunkitt, politicians try to get rich, in the same way, by taking available opportunities. He gives an example of Tammany that raised the salary of the clerks; therefore raising salaries is another form of honest graft.

Dishonest graft is taking money from the treasury or actual theft from the treasury and receiving money for making certain decisions while holding office. Dishonest graft in Plunkitt's opinion means gaining money by dishonest means. He says he has does not own a dishonest dollar. According to his views, it can be construed that, dishonest graft includes gambling, saloonkeepers, being disorderly and blackmailing. I agree with Plunkitt's opinions regarding honest graft, there is no actual theft of money, but just taking advantage of the opportunities as foreseen by him. There are no dishonest dealings by him (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011, chapter 1).

2. According to George Washington, one cannot have a lasting success in politics if one is an alcoholic. He even favors and places a lot of value on

people who don't take alcohol. By taking them to his lieutenant as a matter of business; he says " as a matter of business, I take to my lieutenants my District men who don't drink" (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011). He also believes that drink is the greatest curse of the day; which has ruined the lives of many young men. According to him, a drinking man would not last two weeks as a leader in the Tammany hall. He even observes that most Tammany leaders are not drinkers (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011, Chapter 19). He justifies this by saying that it is hard to manage the assemblies if a person drinks. According to him, one has to have a clear head all the time. He further justifies this by showing that he has seen leaders who lost grip amidst their work because they begun to drink. Plunkitt sees politics just like any other career, or business, where a person has to keep sober to succeed, just like any other business.

3. According to George, political party bosses built up Tammany organization, which in turn built up New York; hence the role of political bosses is to build New York. Also, the role of political party bosses is to ensure there is order. He cites that when there was no boss during the strong low administrations. The heads of departments were at odds with each other all the time, and also the mayor was at odds with a lot of them too. During that time, the interests of the city were forgotten as they were always fighting and arguing. Therefore, the role of the political party bosses is to protect the interest of the citizens. Also, the role of political bosses is to direct or foresee the running of daily activities in the government; as he puts it " with so-called boss direction the whole shooting match" . He thinks the political party bosses play a huge role in bringing back the old times, and

that it is dangerous to leave the administration to the primaries as it used to be. He thinks that the District leaders are better judges of democracy and at better position to keep off undesirable voters. He also thinks that the political party bosses are in a better position to judge. In essence, they can judge what is best for the people, and they have been approved as good democrats (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011, chapter 20).

4. George Washington thinks that Tammany is the most patriotic group in the world. He thinks so because they have to assemble in the Fourth of July and at the Wingman, regardless of the weather and listen to patriotic speeches and the reading of the declaration of independence (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011). During this day, they sit themselves for four hours without turning as they listen to orators and the declaration of independence.

Accordingly, their patriotism involves wearing a five-pound silk hat and staying in a floor full of five thousand people filled with smoke. Performing this four-hour act differentiates the degree of patriotism between the Tammany's group and other people. Additionally, the Tammany originated the flag giving to every man who entered the July celebrations. The flags looked like wildfire, and the men later gave the flags to the kids who became patriotic, according to George. However, this view may not be true as the kids will not necessarily become patriotic. Also, according to him patriotism is starving you for four long hours with perched lips and gnawing stomachs while knowing that two flights downstairs there are the delights of the oasis. Suffering and endurance is the highest form of patriotism according to him (chapter 17)

I would say that Tammany is patriotic. According to Nathanson, patriotism

involves four attitudes. “ Sense of personal identification with the country, a special affection towards the country, willingness to sacrifice to promote the good of the country. And special affection for the well- being of the country” (Primoratz, 2007 p. 64). I think the actions of the Tammany reflect these four aspects, hence classifies them as patriotic.

5. According to George Washington, the reformers did not last because they learned how to put a good bluff, and they do not last in politics, but within a short time they come down like rockets. According to him, reformers were not trained in politics, and lack of training led to a mess that made them tumble down. He believes that such reformers should have been trained in politics as one needs to be trained to be a good reformer. The need to be trained is crucial as he says, “ I’ve been studying’ the political game for forty-five years, and! Don’t know it all yet. I’m learning’ something’ all the time” (Plunkitt & Riordon, 2011). Therefore, the reformers were engaging in business they had no idea of, and they were doomed to fail. Therefore, the reformer failed because of lack of training before going to the fight while the politician knows the fine points in the game (chapter 4).

References

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