

Leadership Of The Responsible.

Reference blog post "[Does Democracy Make A Nation Strong?](#)" published 22 Apr 2011.

The Character First! definition of **responsibility** is simple:

Knowing and doing what is expected of me.



That seemingly simple definition incorporates the adage "To whom much is given, much is required." We all receive one thing in common as we journey along in life. That common thing is wisdom. Like it or not, our minds have great capacity to absorb, assimilate and integrate all the information pouring in through our five senses. That implies that everyone ought to become wiser as we get older. The fact that "the masses" are generally devoid of wisdom does not mean that most people lack the ability to be wise. The masses are devoid of wisdom largely of their own device. Much of it has to do with the fact that many people have chosen to abdicate responsibility. A true democracy will elect as leaders people who display a consistent dedication to the constant betterment of the society they serve. These are people who truly put others before self. One gratifying aspect of choosing to live at such a level of existence is that the manifestation of returned value is often very tangible. Sadly, people are such that we see the tangible benefits and covet them for ourselves. We tend to forget the undergirding intangible values which are the roots of the tangible rewards. This causes many selfish people to seek leadership positions, the attainment of which promises great potential for [Prolonged Instant Gratification \(PIG\)](#). You know the results.

Responsibility is not the only quality required of leaders, particularly leaders of businesses, leaders of organizations and leaders of nations. It is, however, a very basic one. It is the quality that will make up for others that a great leader may lack. A responsible leader will seek to acquire or enhance skills and competencies he may not have in sufficient quantity, in order that he may serve more effectively. A responsible leader will seek to be coached in relationship-building skills if that is what he needs. Yes, we all have a dire shortage of responsible leaders. Yet, sensing all the talk and all the expressions around me, everyone seems to think that they are responsible people. If the people of a nation are characterized as being responsible, should they not also have responsible leaders in their government? Reason would have it so. Yet, the record seems gloomy when the level of responsibility regarding many leaders is taken into account. What has been happening? Obviously, that the appearance of being a responsible leader does not mean the presence of a responsible leader. To manifest responsibility, the following two sets of behaviours must be clearly identifiable.

1. Leaders Must Grow Themselves.

The most basic form of leadership is self leadership, and the most basic responsibility of self leadership is self growth. That ought to be focused on growing in

knowledge and wisdom. It is true that one cannot know everything, but too many have used that notion to abdicate responsibility for continuous learning. That is why wisdom is in such short supply. Simply put, wisdom is applied and internalized knowledge. If the storehouse of knowledge is not constantly stocked, refreshed and grown, whither wisdom?

2. Leaders Must Grow Others.

The “Greater Than Yourself” movement has much to be said for it. A big reason why leaders do not grow others is because they are not secure in themselves and fear being ousted by others. Indeed, the more a leader assumes leadership for personal gain, the more fears that leader would have. Such leaders would naturally devolve into surrounding themselves with sycophants, feeding their egos and pockets while the business, organization or nation falls into ruin all around them.

On Sunday, 11 Aug 2013, the Jakarta Post carried an article written by Warren Fernandez. The title was “When Singapore Had A Dream”, and asked whether the dream of Singapore’s Founding Fathers was in danger of turning into a nightmare, as I paraphrase it. It struck me that the Founding Fathers of Singapore had indeed grown the next generation as best as they could, but that their best was not enough. The new generation seems to be as spoilt as a nest of pack rats.

If Singapore is to continue to even exist, let alone thrive, it cannot do so by the leadership of the proletariat. It cannot do so by the leadership of the masses. It must continue to exist, thriving as a valued global city, because of the Leadership Of The Responsible (LOTR). No magic rings can be counted upon for that.

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When Singapore had a dream

Warren Fernandez, The Straits Times/ANN, Singapore | World | Sun, August 11 2013, 11:31 AM

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Unexpectedly, Lee Kuan Yew rose to speak. He insisted on making his way, somewhat unsteadily, to the rostrum, waving away the microphones that were brought to him.

Once there, he stood silently for a moment, gazing into the crowd gathered at the Istana.

"Old friends," he said, finally. "Thank you for coming. Thank you for making time to attend my book launch."

He went on to talk about the book, "One Man's View Of The World", a collection of his thoughts on world affairs.

In an earlier interview, he had said his main reason for the book was to make this point: that the world does not remain static, and every

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