

IMPLICATURES IN PRESIDENT GOODLUCK JONATHAN'S ELECTION CAMPAIGN SPEECH

Adamma M. Amadi

University Putra Malaysia

Federal University Lokoja

adammaamadi@gmail.com

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Abstract

Politicians are generally known to make utterances embedded with underlying meanings. Considering the fact that politicians often mean more than they say, I look at implicatures in the 2015 presidential election campaign speech of Goodluck Jonathan in order to determine its pragmatic significance. I observed that previous studies on political discourse have not sufficiently accounted for the implicatures embedded in the speeches of Nigerian politicians. Using Grice's (1975) Theory of Conversational Implicature, I analyze various utterances made in the speech to reveal the maxims flouted by examining the role of context in deriving the implicatures and their pragmatic import. The analysis and its elucidation reveal that there are more implicatures relating to corruption, security, development and electioneering, and the maxim of manner was more frequently flouted to derive these implicatures. Consequently, I unveil the linguistic strategies that Goodluck Jonathan manipulates in order to secure the votes of the masses. It is, thus, concluded that Goodluck Jonathan employs "linguistic manoeuvres" of indirectness in order not to be perceived as incompetent in tackling issues of concern in the country.

Key Words: Implicature, political discourse, Goodluck Jonathan, pragmatic significance

Introduction

Politics is the aggregate of power by persons or groups so as to exert influence on the polity. The ability of political figures or political parties to use language well defines their essence. Joseph (2006:2) asserts in this regard that language is political in all ramifications. He argues that politics and language interact in such a way that they can be said to be dependent on each other. This corroborates the Aristotelian assertion that "man by nature is a political being". Joseph (2006:2) adds that human language originated to address a concrete political human need which is to be able to discern between friends and foes and to create alliances.

A thorough understanding of the role of language in politics is not unconnected to the meaning of political discourse. The term political

discourse has been dealt with differently by scholars. According to Orwell (1946), the main reason for vagueness in political speeches is the unwillingness of politicians to apply themselves to the proper use of language. In essence, they communicate indirectly. He argues that political language "is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable, and to give an appearance of solidity to pure wind". According to him, language as used by politicians is made vague because it is intended to hide the truth rather than express it, agreeing with Korta and Perry's (2006) assertion that "A diplomat who says 'yes' means 'maybe'; a diplomat who says 'maybe' means 'no'; and a diplomat who says 'no' is no diplomat". This means that in political discourse there is always more than the ordinary message, and the ability to interpret this message depends on one's pragmatic competence which transcends grammatical competence. It results from the background knowledge and personal beliefs in the interpretation of utterances in a given language based on the context of use.

Since politicians often mean far more than they say, this study provides an understanding of the pragmatic interpretation of the speech. It attempts to fill this gap by accounting for the pragmatic import of implicatures in the campaign speech of Goodluck Jonathan.

Pragmatics

Pragmatics is a subfield of Linguistics that studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning. The term, Pragmatics, can be attributed to the British philosopher Charles Morris (1946) who outlines the science of Semiotics as the science of signs. He opines that "pragmatics studies whatever relations there are between signs and the sign users or interpreters" (Verschueren, 2003). According to Oisanwo (2008), the scope of pragmatics is partly summed up in Yule's (1996:3) definition of Pragmatics. Yule (1996:3) asserts that pragmatics is "the study of speaker meaning, contextual meaning, how more gets communicated than is said, and the study of the expression of relative distance". In addition to the delimitation of pragmatics mentioned above, Oisanwo (2008) adds that the scope of pragmatics also includes the message being communicated; the participants involved in the message; the knowledge of the world which they share; the deductions to be made from the text on the basis of the context; the implications of what is said or what is left unsaid and the impact of the non-verbal, aspect of interaction on meaning.

The political consciousness of Nigerians stems from their ethnic background or their religious affiliations. Therefore, political discourses by Nigerian politicians are structured to appeal to the ethnic or religious sentiments of the

people. The context of situation of political discourses in Nigeria is a mix of anxiety and hostility. Politicians use abusive words on their opponents to water down their opponents' integrity. They also use persuasive tools to get the votes of the people. According to De Wet (2010), "politicians rise to power mainly because they can talk persuasively to voters...politicians are endlessly geared to persuading voters to their own or party's point of view".

Context

Context is the circumstance that forms the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of which it can be fully understood. The context of an utterance plays a paramount role in determining the meaning of the language used. The context determines the meaning(s) that can be deduced from an utterance. The factors that influence context are participants, place and time. Spencer-Oatey and Zegarac (2002:83) opine that context is the "set of assumptions that have a bearing on the production and the interpretation of particular communicative acts". Pragmatic analysis can be said to be impossible without context. Malinowski (1923) opines that "Exactly as in the reality of spoken or written language, a word without linguistic context is a mere figment and stands for nothing itself, so in the reality of a spoken written tongue, the utterance has no meaning except in the context of situation" (Verschueren 2003:75).

Implicature

Implicature is that which is inferred from an utterance but is not a condition for the truth of the utterance. According to Crystal (2008:238), implicature is "a term derived from the work of the philosopher H. P. Grice (1975:88) and now frequently used in linguistics as part of the study of conversational structure". Peter Grundy (2008) opines that "[i]mplicature is a meaning that is conveyed but not explicitly stated". As identified by Grice, there are two types of implicature - Conventional Implicature and Conversational Implicature. Although, Gricean and neo-Gricean scholars like Levinson (2000) and Carston (1998) have identified other types of implicature to include scalar implicature, short-circuted implicature, politeness implicature, speaker implicature, sentence implicature, etc. However, this study seeks to use just the conversational implicature in the analysis because, according to Grice (1975), the conversational implicature is pragmatic unlike the conventional implicature that is concerned with grammar. According to Mey (2002), "a conversational implicature is something which is implied in conversation, that is something which is left in actual language use". To work out an implicature is to infer in a specific way from the Cooperative Principle using particular

facts about the meaning of the sentence uttered and the context of the utterance.

According to Yule (1996:45), "Conventional implicatures are not based on the cooperative principle, don't have to occur in conversation, don't depend on special contexts for their interpretation, are associated with specific words and result in additional conveyed meanings when those words are used". Conventional implicature is not pragmatic. Meaning is not dependent upon the context of use of an utterance. The meaning of an utterance can be gotten from its relationship with other utterances in the text and this involves the literal interpretation of the text. One does not need to look beyond what has been said. Crystal (2008:238) submits that, "Conversational implicatures refer to the implications which can be deduced from the form of an utterance, on the basis of certain co-operative principles".

Grice's theory of conversational implicature provides a clear distinction between what someone says and what he implicates by conveying this utterance. The utterance that someone conveys is elaborated by the conventional meaning of the sentence as well as the processes of disambiguation of context and fixing the reference. The literal content of the utterance has been broadly identified as the direct interpretation of the utterance without reference to any other contextual implications. The implicature can be deciphered to be different from what the speaker intentionally communicates. Grice suggests that speakers and hearers share a co-operative principle within a conversation. He proposes four maxims that control the efficient co-operative use of language. Conversational implicatures arise when the conversational maxims are flouted. These maxims are:

1) Maxim of quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the purpose of the current exchange); do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

2) Maxim of quality (Be truthful): Do not say what you believe to be false; do not say that which for which you lack adequate evidence.

3) Maxim of relevance: Be relevant

4) Maxim of manner (Be perspicuous): Avoid obscurity of expression; avoid ambiguity; be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity); be orderly.

Although a number of criticisms have been raised against meeting up with the standards of these maxims in every conversation like Levinson (1983) observes that an attempt to meet the Gricean standards may be illusory. It is

no gainsaying that these maxims have been able to provide a guide for conversations. Osisanwo (2008) opines that “there is no doubt that Grice’s maxims have clearly spelt out how conversations can run smoothly, cooperatively and rationally”.

Previous Studies on Political Discourse

Several research works have been carried out on political speeches. These works, as mentioned earlier, are either on the linguistic-stylistic features, pragma-stylistic features, or on their ideological significance. Ayeomoni (2005) carried out a study on the language of politics in Nigeria and their preponderant features which include the use of simple declarative sentence typology, the use of figurative or metaphoric language and the use of coercion. Balogun (2011) examines the stylistic features in a selected Campaign Speech of Goodluck Jonathan. These are phonological features, morphological features, graphological features, lexico-syntactic features and cohesive devices present in the speech. The research reveals that words must be properly chosen to achieve the desired purpose. Abuya (2012) focuses on the speech act types (locution, illocution and perlocution) in an Inaugural speech of Goodluck Jonathan. The study identified the fact that Goodluck Jonathan relied more on sentences that performed commissive acts than other speech acts. Kamalu and Agangan (2011) carried out a study on the ideological and persuasive strategies employed in Goodluck Jonathan’s Declaration of Interest in the PDP Presidential Primaries. The study reveals a conscious deployment of diverse rhetorical strategies by Goodluck Jonathan to articulate an alternative ideology for the Nigerian Nation.

These studies have not accounted for the implicatures present in the analysed texts. It becomes pertinent to account for the implicatures in political speeches considering the fact that politicians often mean more than what they utter. It is therefore necessary to bring meanings inherent in political speeches. The importance of this study is further strengthened by this.

Text Analysis

This text is a 2015 presidential election campaign speech of Goodluck Jonathan. This speech was the first the president gave during the period of campaign in Lagos, Nigeria. Goodluck Jonathan had to dissuade the people from voting for the APC presidential candidate, Muhammadu Buhari. He needed to put in the best of his persuasive skills to enable the people vote for him. In doing this, he presents the candidate of the opposition party as incapable of taking over power at the time.

Table 1: Utterances and Implicatures

S/N	UTTERANCE	IMPLICATURE	ISSUE
1	I do not want to address old people like me, because we are spent already.	The speaker is not as old as the opposition candidate and will be as efficient as the youth in the forthcoming elections.	Election
2	And I will repeat it, those of you who are voting for the first time, your decision to vote could mean you vote for a Nigerian youth to be important, to be relevant in this country or be a Nigerian person to be treated as a nonsense person.	Voting for the speaker's party is a guarantee to be treated well but ill-treatment will be the order of the day for the people if they vote for other parties.	Election
3	And somebody who wakes up and tells young people of 23 years old that he wants to fight insecurity, ask him when he was the head of government did he buy one rifle for a Nigerian soldier.	The opposition party's candidate did nothing during his administration as Military Head of State and will do nothing in the area of insecurity.	Security
4	We believe that you people will take us to the moon. My generation has failed we couldn't take Nigeria to the moon.	The speaker's generation can no longer effect tangible developmental plans in Nigeria like the younger generation.	Development
5	This is a government that introduced for the first	In the history of Nigeria, there has never been a	Development

	time what we call the Sovereign Wealth Fund.	Sovereign Wealth Fund and this was introduced because of the great plans the speaker has for Nigeria.	
6	They have been getting these monies back but we do not know how they are spending it.	Those in charge of the public funds that have been recovered are not being transparent as to how it is being spent.	Corruption
7	Before 2011 no Nigerian complained that he had no voters' card. People voted themselves into office.	The Nigerian democratic system before 2011 was in disarray. Nigerians were not involved in deciding who governs them.	Election
8	Already you have been told from intelligence reports that some people are already cloning cards so that your voter's card will no longer be relevant. Is that the kind of people you want to take over government? (Crowd shouts NO...!)	The candidates of the other political parties are involved in the cloning of cards.	Election
9	Can somebody who has no plan for the future of the country do that thing? (Crowd shouts NO!)	The speaker's decisions and actions show that he has good plans for the country.	Development
10	They want to take us to the old days when nobody saw voter's cards but results were announced.	There was a time in Nigeria when elections were rigged and the people's votes did not count.	Election
11	Now all those countries have left us behind and now some people want to	Nigeria can no longer rub shoulders with certain countries that	Development

	take us backward. Do you want to go backwards? (Crowd shouts NO...!)	were her equals. The candidates of the other political parties will only succeed in taking Nigeria backward.	
12	Young Nigerians were doing things fantastically well, they were acting films and these very people were snubbing them, they were playing music and these very people were abusing them.	The candidates of the opposition parties were not in support of Nigerian youths in the music and movie industry.	Entertainment
13	Are the Nigerians in the Armed Forces weak? If we have problems what is the cause – equipment.	The Armed Forces in Nigeria are capable of handling any situation once they have the required equipment.	Security
14	Ask them what they did with the defence budget for the whole time they were in office.	The opposition party's candidate failed to use judiciously the budget for defence when he was the head of government.	Corruption
15	If they had succeeded in fighting corruption, corruption would not have been with us here today.	Corruption has been in Nigeria for a long time and has not lent itself to an easy elimination.	Corruption
16	If somebody tells you that the best way to fight corruption is to arrest your uncle or father and show him on television, well, you won't stop corruption.	The approach on fighting corruption being proposed by the opposition party is counterproductive.	Corruption
17	Since we came on board, have you suffered? Do you need to bribe someone before you get fuel?	Nigerians have not had problems with getting fuel for their use since the speaker assumed	Funding

		office as President of Nigeria.	
18	You must prevent people from touching money, you don't give them the opportunity or test them with money.	Humans can easily be tempted to steal public funds, so his proposed approach to fight corruption is more effective.	Corruption
19	Immediately I suspect you that you have done something wrong I just ask the police or army to arrest you and throw you into jail. Is that the country you want? (Crowd shouts NO!)	The speaker will adopt a more humane civilized approach to curbing crime and ensuring justice than the proposed approach of the opposition.	Corruption
20	I believe in young Nigerians, not people who are spent and finished, not people of my age, we are gone...	The future of Nigeria lies in the hands of the youths, and he is a youth (younger than the opposition candidate who will not factor the youths in his program).	Youth empowerment
21	The same mouth says something from the right, and from the left just to be elected.	The candidate of the opposition party is not truthful.	Election
22	So Nigerian women, you cast your votes and go back to the kitchen and die there or you cast your votes to liberate yourself.	Voting for the speaker's party will bring freedom to the women but voting for other parties will make them subjugated.	Women Liberation

23	You must vote for your liberation, you must vote for your development.	Liberation and development will be the lot of the people if they vote for the speaker in the forthcoming Presidential elections.	Election
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Discussion of Findings

To make the analysis systematic, the twenty-three implicatures contained in the analysis are grouped into six (6) on the basis of the issues they focus on. These groups are 1) corruption 2) security 3) electioneering and rigging of elections 4) development 5) women liberation and youth empowerment, and 6) entertainment. The discussion is done by examining the role of context in deriving the implicatures and their pragmatic import.

Corruption

The first set of implicatures to be discussed are the six (6) implicatures that focus on the issue of corruption. The maxims flouted are the maxim of manner and the maxim of quantity. In flouting the maxim of manner, the speaker's expressions are indirect. He uses words like 'they', 'us', 'somebody', 'them', and 'we' (see no 6, 15, 14 and 16). The speaker fails to state exactly who these deixis refer to. The speaker uses these words because he is aware of the "Us-Them" ideology in politics. In politics, it is better to align yourself with the group that promotes or can help achieve your aims. So, politicians in their speeches articulate the particular group they belong to or on whose side they are on. These decisions may change in the course of their political life, since in politics there are no permanent friends, what we have are permanent interests. The speaker makes himself part of the "us" in order to get the votes of the people. There is a group of "them" whose administration would not better the lot of the people. So, the speaker affiliates himself with the group of people he addresses such that they feel the need to vote for "their own" during the election. For instance, the speaker says,

They have been getting these monies back but we do not know how they are spending it.

The implicature resulting from these is that corruption has been in Nigeria for a long time especially during the administration of his political opponent. Since Nigeria has been battling with corruption, it will bring joy to the citizens that looted funds are recovered and properly accounted for. Therefore, there is an attempt by the speaker to dissociate himself from those who have failed to properly account for the recovered stolen funds. This would also mean that

he has no intention whatsoever to embezzle the nation's money and that makes him credible enough to be voted for. In flouting the maxim of quantity, the speaker says,

You must prevent people from touching money, you don't give them the opportunity or test them with money.

Here, the speaker fails to provide enough information on how he has prevented people from "touching" the nation's money. He should have stated the exact means employed to ensure that people are not "tested" with money.

Security

There are four implicatures on the issue of security. A careful study of the analysis shows that the maxim of manner and the maxim of relevance are flouted. In flouting the maxim of manner, the speaker makes his utterances wordy and indirect. Indirectness in the text is brought about by the use of such pronouns as "somebody" (see no 3). The speaker fails to specify the antecedent of the word, which however is discernible within the context of the socio-political situation in Nigeria at the time of the speech. This speech was delivered at a campaign ground and there was tense competition between the speaker and the opposition party. The use of "somebody", therefore, is an indirect reference to the speaker's main political opponent. When this is situated within the linguistic context of the utterance, especially where reference is made to the past "head of government", the pragmatic relevance of this utterance is unveiled.

Another pragmatic implication is the "us-them" ideology which is captured in the use of this pronoun. When a person is referred to as "somebody", it means that the person is not one of "us". The speaker refers to the candidate of the opposition party as "somebody", meaning that he is not, and should not be seen as one of "them". This also means that he should not be voted for.

The speaker also flouts the maxim of relevance by giving that which has no connection to the discourse at the time. The speaker says,

Are the Nigerians in the Armed Forces weak? If we have problems what is the cause – equipment.

This utterance implies that the Armed Forces in Nigeria are capable of handling any situation once they have the required equipment. However, there is no logical connection between this expression and the preceding expressions (see no 13). The context that backgrounds this utterance is the prolonged havoc suffered by the nation as a result of the Boko Haram

insurgence. Nigeria has been having security challenges especially with the emergence of the Islamic group, Boko Haram. Nigerians, undoubtedly, are concerned about this and the speaker pragmatically brings in this issue to show that he is aware of this matter of concern. Goodluck Jonathan makes the people see reasons with him on his inability to end the Boko Haram menace.

Electioneering/Rigging of elections

An observation of the table of analysis shows that there are four (4) implicatures on the issue of electioneering and the rigging of elections. In arriving at these implicatures, only the maxim of manner is flouted. The speaker uses certain words without clarifications. These words include “people”, “some people”, “important”, “moon”, “they”, and “nobody” (see nos 2, 7, 8, and 10).

For instance, the speaker says,

Already you have been told from intelligence reports that some people are already cloning cards so that your voter’s card will no longer be relevant. Is that the kind of people you want to take over government? (Crowd shouts NO...!)

The use of “some people” in the utterance above is indirect as the speaker is not specific on which people are cloning cards. This seems to be deliberately intended by the speaker as a way of accusing the opposition party of intended electoral practices, without actually stating the accusation in clear terms. The sensitivity of election matters in the country is responsible for this. In casting the opposition in such light, the speaker discourages his audience from voting for the opposition party. The response of the crowd to this utterance shows that they do not want a “card-cloning party” in power, hence, the pragmatic intention of this utterance can be said to have been achieved.

Development

There are six (6) implicatures on the issue of development. Here, only the maxim of manner is flouted. The maxim of manner was flouted in the speaker’s inability to give prior or later information on certain words used such as “somebody”, “some people”, and “us” (see nos 9 and 11). For instance, the speaker says,

Now all those countries have left us behind and now some people want to take us backward. Do you want to go backwards? (Crowd shouts NO...!)

The speaker implies that Nigeria can no longer rub shoulders with certain countries that were her equals and that the candidates of the other political parties will only succeed in taking Nigeria backward. This implicature is hinged on a mutual assumption between the speaker and his audience that Nigerians do not want to be backward in the area of development. Based on this assumption, the speaker presents the candidate of the opposition party as being capable of taking Nigeria backward. He does this by asking if his audience "will want to go backwards". In response, they shout "No" and this shows their desire to vote for the speaker's party since it will invariably make Nigeria develop greatly.

Women Liberation and Youth Empowerment

Another set of implicatures in the study focus on Women liberation and youth empowerment. The maxims flouted in relation to these issues are the maxim of manner, quantity and quality. For instance, the speaker says,

So Nigerian women, you cast your votes and go back to the kitchen and die there or you cast your votes to liberate yourself.

The speaker fails to tell the women which party to vote for in order to be liberated. His use of "liberate yourself" in relation to casting of votes is vague (see no 22). The pragmatic import of this utterance has been discussed earlier. The speaker also flouts the maxim of quantity when he encouraged the women to vote for their "liberation" and "development". His information on how voting will gain them liberation and development is insufficient (see no 23). The maxim of quality is flouted when the speaker groups himself with a part of the Nigerian populace but does not truly see himself as that. Rather, he believes he is young and this is the reason he chose to contest in the election (see no 20). The speaker upholds the policy of "the younger, the better" for the Nigerian government. He implies that it is young and not old people like the candidate of the opposition party that should be in governance. Consequently, the candidate of the opposition party should not be voted for.

Fuel and Entertainment

Other implicatures present in the study are on the issue of fuel and entertainment where the maxim of relevance is flouted. In flouting the maxim of relevance in this set of implicatures, the speaker brings in issues that are not relevant to the communicative event. The issues of fuel and entertainment are mentioned without linking them to the utterances before or after. For example, when commenting on the issue of entertainment, the speaker says,

Young Nigerians were doing things fantastically well, they were acting films and these very people were snubbing them, they were playing music and these very people were abusing them.

There is no logical connection between the above utterance and the preceding utterances (see nos 12 and 17). The speaker's portrayal of his political opponent as being against the entertainment industry is pragmatically intended for two reasons. The first is to depict his opponent as a hater of what the youths love. Second, the speaker does this to cast his opponent as being inconsistent with global developments since entertainment is a universal phenomenon. The overall pragmatic significance of this is to discourage the youth from voting for his political opponent. Also, the speaker says,

Since we came on board, have you suffered? Do you need to bribe someone before you get fuel?

This statement is made in order to present the speaker as being able to attend to the basic needs of the people. Since the people get fuel easily, they should consider voting for his party in order to continue benefitting from his administration.

Conclusion

This study has identified twenty-three (23) implicatures in the texts. The implicatures were discussed on the basis of the issues that they focus on. The study has also examined the nature of the language of politics in Nigeria. Specifically, the study focused on implicatures as contained in the interviews and the 2015 presidential election campaign speech of Goodluck Jonathan. The implicatures were derived solely on the basis of the maxims flouted. In arriving at the implicatures, it was observed that the four maxims were flouted although with varying degrees of frequency. The frequency of occurrence of the maxims is represented below.

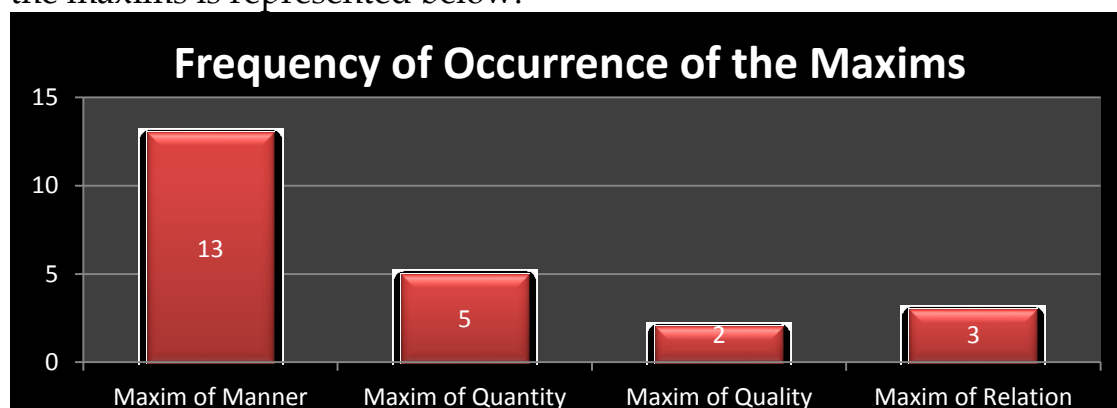


Figure 1: Frequency of Occurrence of the maxims

An evaluation of the above diagram shows that among the four conversational maxims outlined by Grice, the maxim of manner was more frequently flouted by Goodluck Jonathan. This means that Goodluck Jonathan

exhibits the tendency towards vagueness, ambiguity and circumlocution in his political speeches and interviews.

In conclusion, therefore, considering his ranking status on the Nigerian political climate, the above feature of his political discourse is a reflection of some prominent Nigerian politicians who employ indirectness when discussing certain issues. Indirectness helps them to shy away from sensitive issues such as corruption, security, electioneering, development under which a good number of the implicatures found in the study were classified. These are topical issues in Nigeria's political discourse because they constitute the bane of Nigeria's underdevelopment. Resort to "linguistic manouverings" of indirectness is upheld whenever it is necessary to comment on these issues in order not to be perceived by the masses as being incompetent in these areas.

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