How to Be a Beacon

From Peggy Noonan's "Patriotic Grace"

It would be good to have the most visible symbols of our country, the President and the Congress, be clean. So often they seem not to be. They seem scandal-ridden, or an embarrassment, or seem in the eyes of the world to be bought and paid for by special interests or unions or industries or professions. Whether you are a liberal or conservative, you agree it is important that the world be impressed by America's leaders, by their high mindedness and integrity. Leaders who are not dragged through the mud because they actually don't bring much mud with them.

To be a beacon is to speak softly to the world, with dignity, with elegance if you can manage it, or simply good natured courtesy if you can't. A superpower should never shout , never bray, "We're number one!" If you're number one, you don't have to .

To be a beacon is to have a democracy in which issues of actual import are regularly debated.