Essay Bank 1, Question 2

The trolley problem can be seen as an objection to utilitarianism, because despite it being objectively good according to utilitarianism, most people still think that it is ethically unjust to pull the lever. When using the utilitarianism point of view, to pull the lever and save 5 people at the cost of 1 person, there is a very clear answer to the problem. However, it raises many other ethical issues.

Such issues include being involved vs uninvolved with the trolley. By pulling the lever, not only have you saved people, you have also killed someone. Whereas, if you didn’t pull the lever to begin with, you haven’t killed anyone at all, rather you let them die. This may seem minor to a utilitarian perspective, but to most people it’s a big dilemma since not too many people are okay with killing.

Essay Bank 2

From the perspective of a sophisticated utilitarianist, the right decision would be to ignore these concerns and proceed with the construction of the water source. While it would be a good idea to pay for the further testing to be done, the downsides of the construction are miniscule in comparison to the benefits that would come from all the new construction.

To begin, the new water source would not only allow the company to improve its factory in order to produce more efficient and environmentally friendly aircraft, but it would also allow decrease emissions and power usage during development. Aside from this, the new facility would bring over 200 new jobs to the local area, as well as allow the city itself to grow and provide a better living environment for low-income families. These benefits are all undeniably great for the people, the city, and the company itself.

On the other hand, the concerns with the safety of the new water source include the risk of harming local farms, which could contaminate food and cause lower crop yield. It is also said that it could potentially lower the water level in the nearby lakes and ponds, which would cause aquatic wildlife in the area to wither in population, or potentially even disappear completely.

When comparing good to bad, a sophisticated utilitarianist would likely not care much about the local wildlife and farms being harmed if it means hundreds of people will be allowed jobs and better living conditions, as well as the future benefits of aircraft that cause less pollution and use less energy to produce. In the eyes of a sophisticated utilitarianist, it is a worthwhile risk to take.