

Words Poorly Used #8 — Accountability

Think, in 10 words or less, what the word “accountable” means to you — no fair looking in a dictionary, because politicians who promise accountability don’t. Politicians say “someone should be accountable.” This means an unnamed, later to be determined person might be singled out to take the blame for something. If we look at this in a real world scenario, here is an example, police conduct a SWAT raid at the wrong address and shoot the resident’s dog. The police brass promise a full review (perhaps leading the unwary to believe there will be an accounting). Months later some review commission reports that the officers followed procedure (the report may even detail the procedure but I will be fried for an oyster if that procedure says anything about assuring that the address is correct or that the dog poses any threat). There will be no review of whether the procedure itself is inadequate. There will be no admission that raiding the wrong address or shooting dogs, in general, are bottom-line wrongs. No results will be examined at all.

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