

NON-ACCOUNTABILITY DEFINES OUR CULTURE

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Many children enjoy testing adults, whether at home or in school; they like to see what they can get away with. If there are few consequences for acting out, it's a sure bet they will continue. Adults are no different: when criminals are not held accountable—when they are caught and released—they have no reason not to offend again.

This was apparent when President Biden intentionally allowed 15-20 million illegal aliens to crash our borders. They kept on coming because the Biden administration all but invited them to break the law. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Minneapolis was recently in a state of crisis. It is a "sanctuary city," the effect of which allows local law enforcement not to cooperate with ICE agents seeking to deport illegal aliens, two-thirds of whom have a criminal record. Left-wing agitators capitalized on this state of lawlessness by obstructing federal agents from doing their job, putting them and their doxxed families in harms way. There are no consequences for their behavior.

Not long ago, during the "Summer of Love" in Portland, portions of neighborhoods were seized by domestic terrorists, creating so-called autonomous zones. There were no consequences for their behavior. In New York City, thugs shoved innocent persons into subway tracks, and they did so repeatedly. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Occasionally, there are attempts to rein in this culture of non-accountability, but it is hard to put the toothpaste back in the tube.

In 2023, New York Assemblyman Zohran Mamdani, now Mayor of New York City, lobbied for free bus fare along certain routes. A pilot program was launched, one in each of the five boroughs, for low-income people. When they discontinued the program a year later, half the riders still refused to pay. Why should they? There were no consequences for their behavior.

Mamdani plans to reinstitute the program, but not right now. Reportedly, he is upset that currently more than half of all bus riders refuse to pay—sometimes whole groups barge in without paying. They are not acting irrationally: they are just getting a jump on his upcoming no-fare policy. There are no consequences for their behavior.

Under the Biden administration, there was a moratorium on student debt. Under Trump, they have reversed this rule, but it is too late. Fully three-in-four with student debt refuse to pay. Why should they? There are no consequences for their behavior.

The student debt crisis was started by President Obama with his signature ObamaCare legislation, the Affordable Care Act of 2010. He wanted to cut out the “middleman,” meaning the banks which were underwriting the loans; the government would now provide loans directly to students. Not only did this gambit not save money, rapacious colleges saw an opportunity to bleed students and hiked tuition to record highs, knowing Uncle Sam would come to their rescue when they defaulted. Student debt skyrocketed. There were no consequences for their behavior.

Many other examples could be made, but the point is the same. A country that does not hold its citizens responsible for their behavior cannot survive, not if it covets liberty. Civility depends on citizens who internalize proper codes of conduct, and when the elites who govern no longer insist that these strictures be observed, they threaten the social order.

This should be common sense. Unfortunately, we need to relearn why it is important to abide by elementary rules of civility. But this will come to naught unless those in positions of authority hold everyone accountable. A norm, or a law, that is not enforced, is virtually useless.