

Republican Perspective
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Obama Edict's Suburb Transformation

"In general, the art of government consists of taking as much money as possible from one class of citizens to give to another." Voltaire

Despite the repudiation of his policies during the mid-term elections, despite 65% in a recent Wall St. Journal/NBC poll saying the country is on the wrong track, our narcissist President continues his iron-fisted ways. Last month, the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) issued its directive entitled "Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing" (AFFH) which is intended to re-engineer nearly every American neighborhood.

HUD will now act like the National Security Agency and collect vast amounts of data on every community in the country - its racial makeup, its poverty rate, quality of public schools, quality of public transit, its use of federal/state housing vouchers and the amount of public housing available.

What will be the Fed's use of this massive treasure trove of data? You can rest assured that bureaucrats will use it to browbeat or litigate local communities into submission of its innocuous rule. They will attack the suburbs as bastions of segregation.

HUD offers little evidence of why its rule is necessary. A study by the Manhattan Institute of Public Policy showed 1) the most standard segregation measure shows that American cities are now more integrated than they've been since 1910; 2) all-white neighborhoods are effectively extinct (black residents can be found in 199 out of 200 neighborhoods nationwide); 3) gentrification and immigration have made a dent in segregation; 4) ghetto neighborhoods exist but most are in decline.

Don't bother a community organizer with facts. He knows that federal government central planning is the magic elixir to cure any perceived ills. He knows that Congress will never approve of his radical transformation of the nation's neighborhoods. Therefore, he ends runs and leaves it to rules and regulations from the leviathan.

Under AFFH, communities nationwide will be required to analyze their housing patterns for racial bias and publicly report results every three to five years. Communities will have to set goals that promote racially integrated neighborhoods. HUD stated that it wants to work with communities to achieve its goals. However, HUD's track record is one of contentious litigation.

You might ask what political party is in power over neighborhoods and cities with significant minority populations? Why are so many of these communities struggling with poor schools and lack of decent jobs? Because of the Left's failures, social central

planners now insinuate that the nation's communities engage in racist practices. They fail to accept that Americans of all races want to live in neighborhoods of their own choosing.

The AFFH is an attempt to economically integrate the nation's cities and neighborhoods. 83% of respondents in a recent Rasmussen poll said it was not the job of the federal government to diversify neighborhoods by income level. Remember Obamacare consultant Dr. Jonathan Gruber's words: "Call it the stupidity of the American voter". Many voters did not comprehend Obama's vision of "fundamentally transforming" the nation meant local communities and neighborhoods.

In another assault on liberty, the Supreme Court just ruled (5-4) that "disparate impact" claims can be brought under the Fair Housing Act (FHA). The FHA was passed in 1968 and makes it unlawful to discriminate on the basis of race in the sale or lease of housing. The question before the Court was: can you be guilty of racial discrimination if you engaged in policies that never had any intent to discriminate?

Texas Housing Authority argued to no avail that the purpose of federal tax credits is to help residents in rundown areas in an effort to improve their status. No evidence was presented that Texas officials were trying to discriminate. It was determined that any disproportionate effect on minorities represents a "disparate impact" with no consideration of intent.

Martin Luther King Jr. looked forward to the day when his children would be judged not by the color of their skin but by the content of their character. The disparate impact concept requires people to think about race in every decision. Houston has over 43,000 families on its affordable housing waiting list, almost all of them black. Now they will have to wait longer to get a better place to live.