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Walter Russell Mead on the president's big miscalculation.

President Obama's new initiative is unlikely to succeed politically—in part because Democrats are overconfident that rising Hispanic immigration will deliver them a permanent, left-leaning majority.

Frank Fukuyama, no howling partisan, has tagged President Obama's decision to circumvent Congress on immigration as a "bad call," and while the President's limited offer of a three-year temporary work authorization for people in the country illegally was not the worst or the most radical step he could have taken, Frank is right. This was the wrong step at the wrong time. At the very minimum, the President should have given the new Congress ninety days to act before going it alone. Failing to do so isn't just a slap in the face of his Republican opponents; it is a slap in the face of the voters who no longer trust the President and his party on the big issues of national life.

If the new Congress proved unable or unwilling to act, the President's step would have had at least an element of political legitimacy to it. As it is, this half-hearted, hobbled amnesty will likely join President Obama's flawed health care law as a toxic legacy that will haunt the Democratic Party for years to come. Just as the President's poor reputation was a millstone around the neck of many Democratic candidates in 2014, future Democratic candidates are going to run away from Obama's memory, and their opponents will work to tag them with the heavy burden of a presidency that most Americans will want to forget. As a political brand, the name "Barack Obama" now risks drifting into Jimmy Carter territory and becoming a label that blights the prospects of the Democratic party and its candidates for years. ...

An example of how badly the move was miscalculated, the opening skit on last week's Saturday Night Live made fun of the president. Huffington Post has the story and next we'll have a link so you can see the skit.

"Saturday Night Live" transported everyone back to their childhoods last night when it took on the classic educational program "Schoolhouse Rock!" for its cold open.

The show spoofed the favorite "I'm Just A Bill" segment (because who doesn't love that song?) to comment on President Obama's immigration reform. Keenan Thompson played the titular bill and explained that he's an immigration bill that "one day might become a law." But then Obama showed up and shoved poor Bill down the steps of Capital Hill. In walked a new part of the kids' segment: the Executive Order.

Bobby Moynihan's Executive Order, or as Obama says, an "easier way to get things done around here," had no idea that he's granting "legal status" to five million immigrants. "Oh my god, I didn't have time to read myself!" Moynihan said in shock. ...

[Click here to see the video.](#)

And David Harsanyi says obama put the republic out of its misery.

"This is how democracy works," Barack Obama lectured the country before giving everyone the specifics of his expansive one-man executive overreach on immigration. If you enjoy platitudinous straw men but are turned off by open debate and constitutional order, this speech was for you.

Modern Democrats aren't the first political party to abuse power – far from it. Obama isn't the first president to abuse executive power – not by a longshot. But he has to be the first president in American history to overtly and consistently argue that he's empowered to legislate if Congress doesn't pass the laws he favors. It's an argument that's been mainstreamed by partisans and cheered on by those in media desperate to find a morsel of triumph in this presidency.

Obama acknowledges his overreach openly every time he argues that he intends to do the job of an obstinate Republican congress. In his speech, Obama scolded those who question whether he has the authority to change the legal status of millions of people, offering this: "I have one answer: Pass a bill."

Pass a bill?

1) Congress has no obligation to pass a bill. Ever. Who knows? Maybe immigration ranks 50th on the GOP's to-do list. Maybe the GOP is dysfunctional and incapable of pulling together comprehensive legislation. Maybe the Republicans are nothing more than irrational nativists. And maybe all of that threatens the GOP's future. That's why we have elections for presidents to ignore.

2) If Congress passed a bill, Obama would veto it, anyway. So what Obama meant to say was, "I have one answer: Pass a bill I like." No bill will pass, especially after this cynical ploy to prod clumsy GOPers into reactions that might benefit him politically. ...

Joel Kotkin writes on the dire economic consequences of the immigration moves. *With his questionably Constitutional move to protect America's vast undocumented population, President Obama has provided at least five million immigrants, and likely many more, with new hope for the future. But at the same time, his economic policies, and those of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, may guarantee that many of these newly legalized Americans will face huge obstacles trying to move up in a society creating too few opportunities already for its own citizens, much less millions of the largely ill-educated and unskilled newcomers.*

Democratic Party operatives, and their media allies, no doubt see in the legalization move a step not only to address legitimate human needs, but their own political future. With the bulk of the country's white population migrating rapidly to the GOP, arguably the best insurance for the Democrats is to accelerate the racial polarization of the electorate. It might be good politics but we need to ask: what is the fate awaiting these new, and prospective, Americans?

In previous waves of immigration, particularly during the early 20th Century, there were clear benefits for both newcomers and the economy. A nation rapidly industrializing needed labor, including the relatively unskilled, and, with the help of the New Deal and the growth of unions, many of these newcomers (including my own maternal grandparents) achieved a standard of living, which, if hardly affluent, was at least comfortable and moderately secure.

Demand for labor remained strong during the big immigrant wave of the 1980s until the Great Recession. The country was building houses at a rapid clip, which required a large amount of immigrant labor. Service industries, particularly before the onset of digital systems, such as ipads for ordering, that replace human staff in fast-food restaurants, tend to hotels and provide personal services, although often at low wages.

More recently, this wave of undocumented migration has diminished, as economic prospects, particularly for the low-skilled, have weakened. Yet the undocumented population remains upwards eleven million. Largely unskilled and undereducated, roughly half of adults 25 to 64 in this population have less than a high-school education compared to only 8 percent of the native born. Barely ten percent have any college, one third the national rate. ...

Instapundit highlights Deroy Murdock's post on the NAACP. Proof the NAACP is just a race based arm of the Dems.

"Voters on Election Day chose Tim Scott as South Carolina's U.S. senator. They also sent Utah's Mia Love and Texas' Will Hurd to the U.S. House of Representatives. Thus, the 114th Congress will include three black Republicans. This is a new high-water mark for black Americans.

Too bad the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People couldn't care less. (America's oldest civil-rights organization still plasters that retrograde expression all over its logo and website.)

NAACP has yet to congratulate, acknowledge, or even attack Scott, Love, and Hurd — now America's three most powerful elected black Republicans. What you hear is the silence of the Colored People. Despite 10 separate requests for comment on this "advancement of colored people," I could not squeeze a consonant out of NAACP's Baltimore headquarters, its Washington, D.C. office, or even its Hollywood bureau. . . .

NAACP did issue a November 14 press release expressing its "strong support of the new Qualified Residential Mortgage rule" under the behemoth Dodd-Frank financial services law. The group praised the rejection of new down-payment rules for home loans. Who needs strong credit standards? What could go wrong?

NAACP has offered communiqués praising Obama's new draconian carbon-dioxide regulations and even applauding LaJune Montgomery Tabron for becoming president of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. As for three black Republicans getting elected to Congress? Crickets."

American Interest

Obama's Big Miscalculation

by Walter Russell Mead

President Obama's new initiative is unlikely to succeed politically—in part because Democrats are overconfident that rising Hispanic immigration will deliver them a permanent, left-leaning majority.

Frank Fukuyama, no howling partisan, has tagged President Obama's decision to circumvent Congress on immigration as a "[bad call](#)," and while the President's limited offer of a three-year temporary work authorization for people in the country illegally was not the worst or the most radical step he could have taken, Frank is right. This was the wrong step at the wrong time. At the very minimum, the President should have given the new Congress ninety days to act before going

it alone. Failing to do so isn't just a slap in the face of his Republican opponents; it is a slap in the face of the voters who no longer trust the President and his party on the big issues of national life.

If the new Congress proved unable or unwilling to act, the President's step would have had at least an element of political legitimacy to it. As it is, this half-hearted, hobbled amnesty will likely join President Obama's flawed health care law as a toxic legacy that will haunt the Democratic Party for years to come. Just as the President's poor reputation was a millstone around the neck of many Democratic candidates in 2014, future Democratic candidates are going to run away from Obama's memory, and their opponents will work to tag them with the heavy burden of a presidency that most Americans will want to forget. As a political brand, the name "Barack Obama" now risks drifting into Jimmy Carter territory and becoming a label that blights the prospects of the Democratic party and its candidates for years.

Moreover, as with the health care law, the President's immigration policy doesn't solve the underlying problems it addresses and makes the task of real reform more difficult. As often happens with our careful and deliberative President, he's balanced so many concerns so nicely and split so many hairs so finely that the final product doesn't get much done.

That said, I cannot help but sympathize with the President's intentions. Through a combination of bad policy (such as the Reagan amnesty), poor enforcement of our border controls, and the existence of a large underground economy, millions of foreigners have been living, working, marrying, and having children among us for decades outside of the law. As a human problem, this demands a response. The development of a class of illegal alien workers who lack the full and equal protection of the law is an affront to the ideal of human equality and undermines the well-being of the legal workers who have to compete with underpaid illegals in the marketplace. The children of such people who are born in the United States have committed no crime and both common decency and our own laws demand that such people receive education, health care, and the basic services that government provides. President Obama did not create the tangled morass of the failed American system of managing and regulating immigration, and both as President of the United States and as a human being under the judgment of a just God he has unavoidable obligations to seek a humane solution to the problems we face. The solution he chose may be a poor one, and it exposes both the nation and future immigrants to more trouble, but the situation is real and no perfect solution to a problem this messy exists.

The President, like many Democrats, has reached his position on immigration out of political calculation as well as humanitarian concern. For many liberal Democrats (as well as for some of their Republican opponents) two key beliefs about immigration shape their political strategies. The first is that Latinos are the new blacks: a permanent racial minority or subgroup in the American political system that will always feel separate from the country's white population and, like African-Americans, will vote Democratic. On this assumption, the Democratic approach to Hispanic Americans should be clear: the more the merrier. That is a particularly popular view on the more leftish side of the Democratic coalition, where there's a deep and instinctive fear and loathing of Jacksonian America (those "bitterly clinging" to their guns, their Bibles, and their individualistic economic and social beliefs). The great shining hope of the American left is that a demographic transition through immigration and birthrates will finally make all those tiresome white people largely irrelevant in a new, post-American America that will forget all that exceptionalism nonsense and ditch "Anglo-Saxon" cultural and economic ideas ranging from evangelical religion to libertarian social theory.

Hispanic immigration in this view is merely the largest and most promising of a broader program of planned social engineering through immigration law: "globalizing" the American population by

raising the number of immigrants and ensuring that, unlike 19th-century U.S. immigration, late 20th and 21st century immigrants come from non-European societies.

The second key belief about immigration driving the vision of much of the American left today is that immigration is unstoppable. The borders cannot be controlled, and even if they could be, they won't be. The more immigrants there are in the United States, the more they influence the vote. And the more immigrants influence the vote, the more support for immigration there will be in our politics. There is thus little fear of a backlash; if, Democratic lefties reason, Republicans are so angry about the President's steps to ease conditions for illegal immigrants that they push for tougher immigration laws, the GOP will merely accelerate its demographic death spiral into irrelevance.

For Democratic lefties, these are comfortable ideas that reinforce an idea of inevitable historic progress toward the kind of America they would like to see—a country that in its values and institutions would look more and more like the rest of the world and less and less like some kind of exceptional maverick. Both ideas could well prove to be true, but if American historical experience is any guide, both will turn out to be false. The current wave of immigrants will follow an ethnic rather than a racial path toward growing assimilation into American society and culture, and if and as immigration passes a certain threshold level, opposition to further immigration will rise—even and in some cases especially among recent migrants—and at some point the political system will mandate dramatic cuts in the rate of new migrants.

The great wave of European immigrants that came between 1880 and 1924 was once seen both by liberals and conservatives as something very like the wave of Hispanic immigrants we've had in the last generation. Unlike earlier waves of immigrants from countries like Germany, England, Scotland, and (even) Ireland, the turn of the century immigrants came predominantly from countries like Russia, Italy, Greece, the Balkans and Syria. (Many Arab-Americans came to the United States during this era.) With Jews, Poles, Sicilians, Hungarians, Russians, and Czechs pouring into American ports, there was a sense among many descendants of earlier waves that the new arrivals were both racially and culturally alien. "Swarthy" immigrants from countries like Greece, Italy, and the Ottoman Empire were not considered "white" by many native-born Americans. Eastern Jews from the Russian Empire and the Austro-Hungarian Empire were feared as alien, unassimilables. Well into the 1930s and 1940s, the American hard left believed that the new immigrants would lead American society away from the antiquated individualism of earlier generations into the brave new world of socialist collectivism they saw rising in the future.

Those hopes fizzled out. The European immigrants may have voted for the New Deal, but many went for Eisenhower in the 1950s and Nixon in 1968, and their children and grandchildren became the "Reagan Democrats" of the 1980s. The United States did not become a socialist or even a social democratic utopia, and the descendants of the immigrants blended into the American people at large.

It seems more likely than not that Hispanic immigrants and their kids will follow a similar path. In many ways Latinos face less prejudice than Jews or Italians did in the 1880s, and have more opportunities to integrate into American society at large than those earlier generations of immigrants did. The evidence if anything suggests that Hispanic immigrants are more open to the cultural influences of American political and social ideas than were earlier waves. While very few Italian, Jewish or Greek immigrants, for example, converted to evangelical Protestantism, 24% of hispanic adults in America are now former Catholics. Hispanics are a large and varied group, but by and large they are learning English, starting businesses, joining Protestant churches and voting Republican at levels that suggest that they are anything but a permanently alienated racial underclass in formation.

Past history also suggests that liberal Democrats may be misreading the politics of immigration. In American history, opposition to immigration (including opposition among relatively recent arrivals) tends to rise in response to large waves of immigrants. The Know Nothing movement (nativist, anti-Irish, anti-Catholic) rose in response to the surge in Irish immigration at the time of the Potato Famine. The KKK revival of the 1920s as an anti-immigrant rather than just an anti-black movement came in response to the post 1880 immigrant tsunami.

More to the point, the successful anti-immigration movements (first aimed at Chinese and Japanese immigrants and then, in 1923–24, at dramatically reducing immigration of all kinds) came as the foreign born surged as a percentage of all adults. Instead of sparking the formation of a powerful lobby that kept the gates of immigration permanently open wide, the migration surges of the late 19th and early 20th century led to a forty-year immigration hiatus. Not until the late 1960s did the country begin to reopen the door to significant flows of new immigrants.

Far from being a losing political issue for its advocates, immigration restriction was one of the most popular political initiatives of its day. The anti-immigration Republican Party swept from one landslide to another until the Great Depression, and polls showed intense and widespread popular opposition to more immigration all through the 1930s and 1940s. Many of those who opposed new immigrants were the sons and daughters of immigrants themselves; with U.S. wages and job opportunities under pressure during the Depression, workers did not want competition from desperate migrants willing to undercut U.S. wage levels.

Again, history would suggest that instead of playing catch-up with Democrats on immigration, Republicans would do better to reach out to new immigrants on economic grounds. Fighting the green/NIMBY nexus, for example, that makes single family home construction prohibitively expensive in states like California, locking new immigrants out of both jobs and homes, might be a smarter strategy than shouting “Me too!” on immigration reform.

Today’s public concern about the rate of immigration, including but not limited to illegal immigration, is coming after a long period of rapid immigration, and it comes when working class Americans are increasingly worried about wages and jobs. It may pass away, like the Know Nothings, or it may build into the kind of national political consensus that kept immigration to a trickle for much of the 20th century. But whatever happens, the Democratic confidence that an ever rising tide of Hispanic immigration will create a permanently left-leaning America is likely misplaced. As a piece of political engineering, President Obama’s immigration initiative is unlikely to succeed.

The President, however, is absolutely right that our current immigration system is broken with too many domestic workers facing low wages and reduced job opportunities, too many employers unable to attract the skilled labor they seek, and too many immigrants condemned to a shadow life on the fringes of legality. Better border enforcement, smarter policy, and a more focused concern for the well-being of working Americans are the keys to a more sustainable immigration regime than what we now have. If Republicans are smart they won’t let themselves be goaded into a frenzy of opposition and reaction by the President’s actions; they will advance a smarter agenda on their own.

Either way, most recent immigrants, like most of their predecessors, have come to this country because they believe that, flawed as they may be, our institutions and our way of life offer more hope and more opportunity than the countries they have left. The best way to support our new neighbors and help them become valuable, contributing members of American society is to prove them right.

Huffington Post

['SNL' Spoofs Obama Immigration With 'Schoolhouse Rock!' Cold Open](#)

by Erin Whitney

"Saturday Night Live" transported everyone back to their childhoods last night when it took on the classic educational program "Schoolhouse Rock!" for its cold open.

The show spoofed the favorite "I'm Just A Bill" segment (because who doesn't love that song?) to comment on [President Obama's immigration reform](#). Keenan Thompson played the titular bill and explained that he's an immigration bill that "one day might become a law." But then Obama showed up and shoved poor Bill down the steps of Capital Hill. In walked a new part of the kids' segment: the Executive Order.

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It should be noted that the sketch's portrayal of the executive action wasn't entirely accurate. The change [doesn't offer "legal status"](#) to beneficiaries. It only provides that they won't be deported for a renewable, three-year period, during which time they may apply for work authorization.

Also, the change was carried out [through executive action](#), rather than an executive order, though the [two types of measure differ little](#) in practice.

Check out the full sketch above and feel nostalgic for the days a substitute teacher would pop "Schoolhouse" into the VHS player.

[Click here to see the SNL skit.](#)

The Federalist

[Obama Puts The Republic Out Of Its Misery](#)

All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress – unless the President says otherwise

by David Harsanyi

"This is how democracy works," Barack Obama [lectured the country](#) before giving everyone the specifics of his *expansive one-man executive overreach* on immigration. If you enjoy platitudinous straw men but are turned off by open debate and constitutional order, this speech was for you.

Modern Democrats aren't the first political party to abuse power – far from it. Obama isn't the first president to abuse executive power – not by a longshot. But he has to be the first president in American history to overtly and consistently argue that he's empowered to legislate if Congress doesn't pass the laws he favors. It's an argument that's been mainstreamed by partisans and cheered on by those in media desperate to find a morsel of triumph in this presidency.

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Pass a bill?

1) Congress has no obligation to pass a bill. Ever. Who knows? Maybe immigration ranks 50th on the GOP’s to-do list. Maybe the GOP is dysfunctional and incapable of pulling together comprehensive legislation. Maybe the Republicans are nothing more than irrational nativists. And maybe all of that threatens the GOP’s future. That’s why we have elections for presidents to ignore.

2) If Congress passed a bill, Obama would veto it, anyway. So what Obama meant to say was, “I have one answer: Pass a bill I like.” No bill will pass, especially after this cynical ploy to prod clumsy GOPers into reactions that might benefit him politically.

The president’s entire argument is predicated on the idea that a “broken” immigration system gives him dispensation from engaging in the process. Authoritarians, great and minor, always claim more powers to fix some unprecedented emergency. He’s not the first around these parts to do it. The thing is, our education system is also broken. Our foreign policy is broken. Our welfare system is broken, too.

I basically support most of Obama’s fixes— conceptually, at least. But what amazed me about the speech wasn’t just the hubris, or even how he shoehorned every cliché about immigration known to mankind into half an hour speech. It was that even after making it clear he answers to no one, Obama still couldn’t be honest about his intentions:

I know some of the critics of this action call it amnesty. Well, it’s not. Amnesty is the immigration system we have today — millions of people who live here without paying their taxes or playing by the rules, while politicians use the issue to scare people and whip up votes at election time.

There is a difference between indifference and amnesty. [From the Oxford dictionary](#): Amnesty: “An undertaking by the authorities to take no action against specified offenses or offenders during a fixed period.” Nowhere in the description does it add, “well, it’s not amnesty if the offenders pay back taxes” or “if the offenders go through vigorous background checks, aren’t felons and are really sorry.” Amnesty is precisely what Obama is talking about.

And let’s concede that all this will be found legal. It’s difficult to believe any honest person believes that using prosecutorial discretion to exempt five million people from law (probably in perpetuity) is the sort of job the Founders had in mind for the president.

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It’s true that The Annenberg Public Policy Center [found](#) that only 36 percent of Americans could actually name the three branches of government, anyway. And now we’ll be adding a few million immigrants who believe that “democracy” is the same as a presidential edict. But of the 36 percent that understand checks and balances, most probably aren’t particularly idealistic about procedure. We’re idealistic about issues. To a progressive Democrat, permitting immigrants to come “out of the shadows” trumps constitutional stability. A shame. Because process is basically the only constant in American politics. It’s the one thing Americans *should* be inflexible about.

Needless to say, many in the media took time to sneer about these sorts of concerns on Twitter and TV. After all the griping about King George, it's the George part that was the real problem of the last administration.

It was when Democrats passed one of the broadest reforms in American history, which included an unprecedented provision coercing every citizen to participate in a private marketplace, via a one-party vote. It's been implemented piecemeal in whatever timeframe pleases Obama most. And when Dems failed to pass cap-and-trade, Obama deputized the EPA to implement it instead. When they failed to push through immigration reform, Obama led. When Democrats couldn't pass new gun restrictions, Obama [signed](#) 23 executive orders. No recess appointments? Watch. Not crazy about Clinton-era welfare reforms? Obama's [got your back](#). Libya? Obama takes care of business. Syria? Why not use a decade-old war power? Everything rationalized. All of it fine.

No, the president didn't kill the process all by himself. Bush did it! Reagan did it! [True or not](#), twenty years from now, the minions of some Republican Napoleon will be screaming 'Obama did it!' And they'll have a sad story or a chilling warning that will justify why it's ok. Because all legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States – unless the president says it's super important. Then anything goes.

Daily Beast

[Legal but Still Poor: The Economic Consequences of Amnesty](#)

Expanding amnesty to undocumented immigrants without creating new jobs is a recipe for keeping new Americans poor and dependent on social services.

by Joel Kotkin

With his questionably Constitutional move to protect America's vast undocumented population, President Obama has provided at least five million immigrants, and likely many more, with new hope for the future. But at the same time, his economic policies, and those of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party, may guarantee that many of these newly legalized Americans will face huge obstacles trying to move up in a society creating too few opportunities already for its own citizens, much less millions of the largely ill-educated and unskilled newcomers.

Democratic Party operatives, and their media allies, no doubt see in the legalization move a step not only to address legitimate human needs, but their own political future. With the bulk of the country's white population [migrating rapidly](#) to the GOP, arguably the best insurance for the Democrats is to accelerate the racial polarization of the electorate. It might be good politics but we need to ask: what is the fate awaiting these new, and prospective, Americans?

In previous waves of immigration, particularly during the early 20th Century, there were clear benefits for both newcomers and the economy. A nation rapidly industrializing needed labor, including the relatively unskilled, and, with the help of the New Deal and the growth of unions, many of these newcomers (including my own maternal grandparents) achieved a standard of living, which, if hardly affluent, was at least comfortable and moderately secure.

Demand for labor remained strong during the big immigrant wave of the 1980s until the Great Recession. The country was building houses at a rapid clip, which required a large amount of immigrant labor. Service industries, particularly before the onset of digital systems, such as ipads

for ordering, that replace human staff in fast-food restaurants, tend to hotels and provide personal services, although often at low wages.

More recently, this wave of [undocumented migration](#) has diminished, as economic prospects, particularly for the low-skilled, have weakened. Yet the undocumented population remains upwards eleven million. Largely unskilled and undereducated, roughly half of adults 25 to 64 in this population have less than a [high-school education](#) compared to only 8 percent of the native born. Barely ten percent have any college, one third the national rate.

This workforce is being legalized at a time of unusual economic distress for the working class. Well into the post-2008 recovery, the country suffers from rates of [labor participation](#) at a 36 year low. Many jobs that were once full-time are, in part due to the [Affordable Care Act](#), now part-time, and thus unable to support families. Finally there are increasingly few well-paying positions—including in industry—that don't require some sort of post-college accreditation.

Sadly, the legalization of millions of new immigrants could make all these problems worse, particularly for Latinos already here and millions of African-Americans.

African-American unemployment is now [twice that of whites](#). The black middle class, understandably proud of Obama's elevation, has been [losing the economic gains](#) made over the past thirty years.

Latino-Americans have made huge strides in previous decades, but now are also falling behind, with a gradual loss of income relative to whites. Poverty among Latino children in America has risen from 27.5 percent in 2007 to 33.7 percent in 2012, an increase of 1.7 million minors.

Logically, many Latinos and African-Americans might suspect that amnesty won't be a great deal for them. There are occasional signs of disquiet. A recent [Pew survey](#) found that not only half of all whites, but nearly two-fifths of African Americans and roughly even a third of Hispanics approved of increased deportations of the undocumented. A Wall Street Journal-NBC poll found that well less than half of Latinos supported the President's action.

This ambivalence may reflect the reality that legalization of the undocumented may be felt hardest in those places, such as California, that have attracted the most newcomers, and also have highly developed welfare states. Today public agencies in Los Angeles, with an estimated one million undocumented immigrants, are bracing for [large increases](#) in the demand for state provided services.

One LA Supervisor estimates the County, facing "an already impossible fiscal dilemma," will need to spend an additional \$190 million, without hope of federal compensation, on the newly legalized population. Ultimately, the newest migrants will be competing with existing residents—particularly poorer ones—not only for jobs but also social services.

The President's action on immigration requires a profound shift in economic policy, particularly in the large urban centers where most undocumented are clustered, to avoid creating a squeeze on scarce jobs and services. But Obama's other big agenda—addressing climate change—has slowed the expansion of [fossil fuel development](#). Meanwhile, it's the energy sector that creates precisely the kinds of high-paying blue collar jobs, [averaging upwards](#) of \$100,000 annually, that immigrants might be eager to fill and could give low unskilled workers a foothold into the middle class.

Similarly, efforts by Obama's allies at Federal agencies like [HUD](#) to encourage dense housing and discourage suburban growth means far less construction employment, one of the largest generators of good blue collar jobs and opportunities.

Ironically, the places where the cry for amnesty has been the loudest—New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago—also tend to be those places that have created the least opportunity for the urban poor. This is in part due to the fact that these areas have tended to de-industrialize the most rapidly, discourage fledgling grassroots businesses through high taxes, environmental and housing, regulations.

Whatever their noble intentions, these cities generally suffer the largest degree of income inequality, notes a recent [Brookings study](#). In fact, according to an analysis by Mark Schill at the [Praxis Strategy Group](#), African-American incomes in New York are barely half those of whites and, in San Francisco somewhat below half. In contrast, cities with broader economies like Dallas and Houston, have black populations earning sixty five percent of white incomes. Similarly, Latinos in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco do far worse, relative to incomes, than their Sunbelt counterparts, compared to whites.

These trends could worsen in precisely those areas with the biggest concentrations of undocumented immigrants covered by Obama's executive order.

Take, for example, the borough of the Bronx in New York City. The most Latino of all New York's counties, in the Bronx, roughly one in three households live in poverty, the [highest rate of any large urban county](#).

In the country. It's doubtful that legalization absent job growth will improve conditions, as it adds more potential claimants for local benefits without creating new income sources.

For reasons that can't be purely economic, most Latino political leaders, and much of the group's electorate, are in favor of policies that, over time, could doom prospects for Those who receive amnesty. Of course, there are other factors that play into support for these policies, like the emotional pull to reunite families, but whatever their appeal such measures could leave the very people they are meant to help as legal paupers.

My adopted home region of Southern California has seen an almost 14% drop in high-wage blue-collar jobs since 2007. Deindustrialization has continued, and construction employment lagged, even while the country as a whole, sparked by more secure and now cheaper energy supplies, has seen industrial production improve since 2010.

Herein lies the great dilemma then for the advocates of amnesty. In much of the country, and particularly the blue regions, they will find very few decent jobs but often a host of programs designed to ease their poverty. The temptation to increase the rolls of the dependent—and perhaps boost Democratic turnouts—may prove irresistible for the local political class.

So what should we do under these circumstances? Constitutional arguments aside, there do seem to be some better ways to create conditions for upward mobility among newcomers.

Higher minimum wages may help some of the legal residents, but arguably at the cost of new jobs for others including the newly amnestied. However popular with most voters, such redistributive measures will not address the fundamental economic challenge posed by amnesty.

Perhaps a sounder strategy would be to adopt policies that encourage broad-based economic growth, including energy, manufacturing, logistics and home construction. This would, of course, require some moderation of regulatory standards, particularly in reference to climate change.

The President's [recent deal with China](#), which essentially allows the Chinese to keep boosting emissions until 2030 while we reduce ours steeply, could make things worse. In some states like California, where the global warming consensus is beheld with theological rigidity, "green," anti-suburban policies largely guarantee that most of the urban poor will never enter the middle class. In San Francisco, Boston and New York, the percentage of Latino and black homeowners is roughly one-third to one-half that seen in redder regions like Houston, Dallas, Phoenix and Atlanta.

In essence, the deepest blue states have created the worst of all conditions for the urban poor, and will be particularly tough on undocumented residents granted amnesty.

All this suggests that, if we are to make new Americans economically successful, we need to concentrate not on racial redress but find ways to spark broad based economic growth. Increasing use of inexpensive natural gas, for example, would not only help continue to [reduce emissions](#) but would spark an industrial expansion that would create more blue collar jobs. Similarly, policies that allowed for affordable, energy efficient new homes could create not only more blue collar employment possibilities, but a brighter future for young families, many of whom are themselves immigrants or their children.

The current amnesty could benefit both the country overall as well as recent immigrants if it is tacked to a broad based economic growth strategy. But that doesn't seem to be in the cards. Instead, continuing policies that inhibit broad-based economic growth are increasing the numbers of Americans who must depend on government, not the economy, to take care of themselves and their families.

Instapundit

[DEROY MURDOCK: The Silence Of The Colored People.](#)

Voters on Election Day chose Tim Scott as South Carolina's U.S. senator. They also sent Utah's Mia Love and Texas' Will Hurd to the U.S. House of Representatives. Thus, the 114th Congress will include three black Republicans. This is a new high-water mark for black Americans.

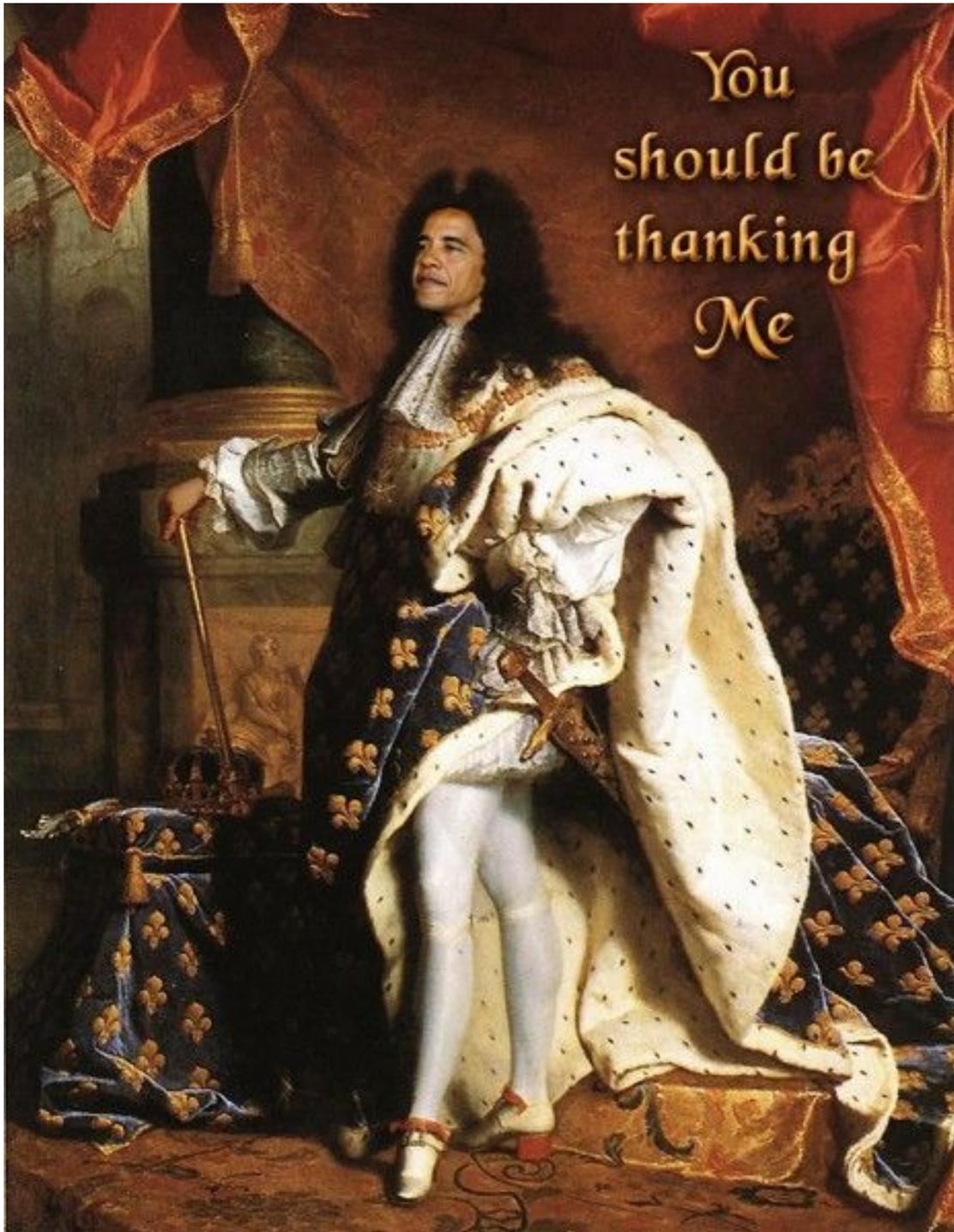
Too bad the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People couldn't care less. (America's oldest civil-rights organization still plasters that retrograde expression all over its logo and website.)

NAACP has yet to congratulate, acknowledge, or even attack Scott, Love, and Hurd — now America's three most powerful elected black Republicans. What you hear is the silence of the Colored People. Despite 10 separate requests for comment on this "advancement of colored people," I could not squeeze a consonant out of NAACP's Baltimore headquarters, its Washington, D.C. office, or even its Hollywood bureau. . . .

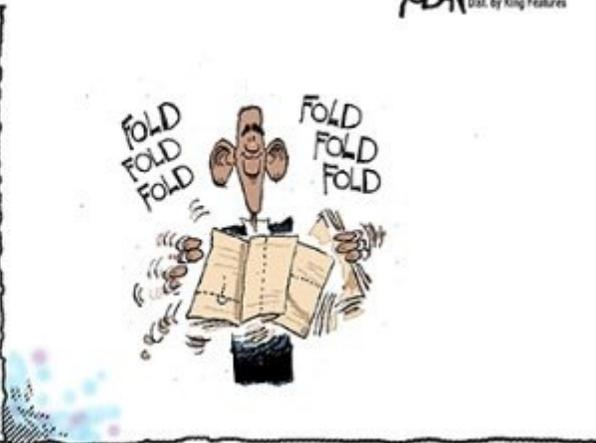
NAACP did issue a November 14 press release expressing its "strong support of the new Qualified Residential Mortgage rule" under the behemoth Dodd-Frank financial services law. The group praised the rejection of new down-payment rules for home loans. Who needs strong credit standards? What could go wrong?

NAACP has offered communiqués praising Obama's new draconian carbon-dioxide regulations and even applauding LaJune Montgomery Tabron for becoming president of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. As for three black Republicans getting elected to Congress? Crickets.

The NAACP is just a race-based arm of the Democratic Party. Since nothing it says about these winners can help the Democrats, it says nothing.







Then

Now

