Obama Is Still Transforming America

By Phyllis Schlafly

August 23, 2016

"Never let a crisis go to waste" was the pithy advice of Rahm Emanuel, who has since gone on to become the mayor of America's most violent large city. "And what I mean by that is an opportunity to do things you think you could not do before."

Rahm was speaking in November 2008 about the newly elected president, Barack Obama. That was three weeks after Obama had told a campaign rally: "We are five days away from fundamentally transforming the United States of America."

With only five months left in the White House, Obama is still hard at work "fundamentally transforming" our country into something much different from the nation we all grew up in. Here are recent examples of how he is determined to transform America by undermining our common culture and language.

This month's catastrophic flooding in Louisiana is said to be America's worst national disaster not caused by an earthquake or a hurricane. While Obama continued playing golf on the exclusive island of Martha's Vineyard, his federal bureaucrats are making sure that the crisis won't go to waste.

On August 16, five federal agencies issued an incredible 16-page, single-spaced "Guidance" warning relief agencies not to discriminate in the use of disaster funds. Agencies receiving funds must "post a statement of nondiscrimination" on all public notices and "should also identify a point of contact for the public to submit complaints of discrimination."

The Guidance refers to "unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin" which is prohibited by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but it doesn't stop there. It also tries to ban discrimination on account of "limited English proficiency," which Congress has never prohibited.

The sneaky part is the way the federal Guidance includes the phrase "limited English proficiency," as if the language you speak is part of your "national origin." In fact, people from every country can and do learn English, and there is no good reason for our government to conduct official business in any other language.

The document was issued jointly by the Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services.

The Guidance goes on at great length to require agencies to serve "LEP persons" and "LEP populations" in their own languages. Agencies are told to "provide translated materials," "translation services," and even "monolingual communication in the LEP person's language."

The idea that federal grant recipients must provide services to "LEP persons" in their native languages other than English originated exactly 16 years ago when Bill Clinton issued Executive Order 13166 in the waning days of his administration. Federal agencies have continued to enforce that executive order by regulation, even though the Supreme Court ruled in 2001 that Clinton's order was not justified by any law passed by Congress.

Congress had a chance to stop this nonsense last month when Rep. Steve King (R-IA) introduced an amendment to prohibit funds from being used to enforce EO 13166. King's amendment fell short by 21 votes because 50 House Republicans voted no, along with all the Democrats.

Don't assume that the only other language is Spanish. The vast wave of over 100,000 illegal immigrants who came here from Central America in the last three years includes tens of thousands of people who do not speak or understand either English or Spanish.

A recent article in the Los Angeles Times reported that "ancient Mayan languages are creating problems" because there are so few qualified interpreters. With so many new arrivals from Guatemala and Honduras, the primitive languages spoken in those countries are now more common than French in U.S. immigration courts.

Don't assume that the Obama administration is merely responding to a genuine need for services by recent immigrants who have not yet learned English. In the name of multiculturalism, the administration is actively discouraging the transition to English by immigrants and their children, and promoting other languages instead.

The $9.2 billion federal Head Start program has published Multicultural Principles for Children Ages Birth to Five which says immigrant children have a right to be taught

in their native languages. A 32-page policy statement from the Departments of Education and Health and Human Services promotes Dual Language Learning and even warns immigrant families not to “prioritize the learning of English” because “children may inadvertently lose their home language.”

We should have a national policy requiring immigrants and their children to become proficient in English. Even if they “lose their home language,” that’s a small price to pay for the far greater benefit of English proficiency, and the importance of a common language for all Americans.

As Theodore Roosevelt said a century ago, “We cannot tolerate any attempt to oppose or supplant the language and culture that has come down to us from the builders of this Republic.”

Phyllis Schlafly is a lawyer, conservative political analyst and author. Her most recent books are "The Conservative Case for Trump", "How the Republican Party Became Pro-Life" and the 50th anniversary edition of "A Choice Not An Echo." She can be contacted by email at phyllis@eagleforum.org. To find out more about Phyllis Schlafly and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate website at www.creators.com.