

Today in the Department of FFS.

The Wall Street Journal breathlessly reports, Trump Wants to Build Homes on Federal Land. Here's What That Would Look Like. And then, not content with a series of graphics about where this housing could be, it also put out a big op-ed from Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and HUD Secretary Scott Turner entitled Federal Land Can Be Home Sweet Home.

Can we just stop this? I expect the Journal's op-ed page to run propaganda for the administration, and in fairness, the news article is somewhat better, but this shows a deep disease affecting large chunks of the mainstream media both under Trump 1 and now under Trump-Musk-Putin.

This administration has absolute contempt for low-income and working people. Just two days ago, Trump literally wrote an Executive Order destroying the Interagency Task Force on Homelessness and purporting to end the Community Development Financial Institutions Fund, one of the principal main street lending institutions out there. Turner himself is one of the least qualified HUD Secretaries in history – which is quite a high bar in light of his former boss, Ben Carson, and Reagan's infamously corrupt Secretary Samuel Pierce (whom Reagan did not even recognize). In the meantime, Elon Musk's DOGE is wilding through the federal government, destroying agency after agency. Does anyone think that much will be left of, say, the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program, which is the principal funder of actually *building* affordable housing in this country? Given the administration's to drying up funding streams for affordable housing, who cares whether there is land to build it

on?

And at least under the rules of Trump 1, that would be the end of it. After all, this is an administration that so repeatedly promised "Infrastructure Week" with nothing to show for it that the phrase became an internet joke.

But there is something more sinister here, I fear. In best Straussian style, we should read between the lines. And sure enough, here it is:

> The land might occasionally be sold to private developers, according to a HUD representative. The federal agencies would determine that on a "case-by-case basis" incoordination with the local government.

Bingo. To the extent that this proposal is anything more than public relations, it represents one more opportunity for corruption in an administration that is already the most corrupt in US history only 60 days in. Already, those seeking to curry favor with the administration are paying millions for meetings at Mar-a-Lago, buying his favored crypto offerings, and of course staying in his hotels. This is just one more way in which Trump can sell off public assets to enrich himself. And we should fully expect the Supreme Court to immunize him while he does it.

And of course we can also see the standard GOP policy here. The program "could achieve even more supply if some environmental and appraisal reviews were streamlined, said Bureau of Land Management Acting Director Jon Raby." From an administration that is already taking a wrecking ball to the planet, this would be part of a piece.

I actually expect not much to come from this. Whatever one could say about him, Donald Trump is certainly the laziest President in American history, mainly because he really doesn't care about doing the job. He simply has no appetite to actually knock the bureaucratic heads together to actually get them to do anything.

That said, OMB head Russ Vought is *not* lazy, and since Project 2025 already wants to destroy national monuments and allow unlimited mining on public lands, this could be a variant of that. It is certainly possible.

But as much as anything else, this story is really about the media. Last year, many warned about how the mainstream media was "normalizing" Trump. This is a

perfect example. Policy in the way in which we normally might think about it – identify a problem or opportunity, consider ways to solve the problem or take advantage of the opportunity, assess costs and benefits, think about legislative and administrative processes etc. – is simply a category error under Trump, and especially under the current Trump-Musk-Putin Regime. Trump and Musk simply want to enrich and/or aggrandize themselves, and every action should be seen in that light. To consider what might be in the interest of the country – well, that is ***so*** yesterday. As is doing anything about affordable housing.

Maybe after several more years of Trump, even reporters will begin to see it.