



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on September 16, 2019

Beto's Bull-in-China-Shop Policies: Rich Must Be "Forced" to Live With Poor

"Government is not reason, it is not eloquence; it is force" goes the apocryphal saying — and, apparently, presidential contender Robert Francis O'Rourke's philosophy of governance. Fresh off his insistence that if elected he'll seize Americans' AR-15s and AK-47s, the ex-Texas congressman now says that to combat "climate change" and create "smarter" cities, wealthy people must be forced to live with poor ones.



"'Living close to work shouldn't be a luxury for the rich. It's a right for everyone,' O'Rourke wrote on Twitter accompanied with a video showing the candidate speaking at a campaign stop," [reports](#) the *Federalist*.

"In the video, O'Rourke made the case for federal spending on mixed-income housing and better public transportation to enable people to live closer to work and reduce their carbon footprint," the site continues.

"Living wherever one wants, however, is not a right protected in the Constitution," the *Federalist* points out. "Similar to health care, living close to one's work is a convenience and sometimes a need, but it is not a 'right' that warrants government infringing on the rights of others to secure it."

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O'Rourke further argued, Fox News [adds](#), "that living closer to one's work would not only 'reduce our impact on climate change and greenhouse emissions' but would also 'improve the quality of life' for people."

That is, whether they like it or not. Schemes contrary to man's nature and the free market shaped by it won't be voluntarily embraced by the people. O'Rourke has a solution for that, however. "Here's a tough thing to talk about, though we must," he stated. "Rich people are going to have to allow — or be forced to allow — lower-income people to live near them."

Perhaps realizing how this sounded and feeling the need to justify it, O'Rourke then said a sentence later, "We force lower-income, working Americans to drive one, two, three hours in either direction to get to their jobs, very often minimum wage jobs," as if free-market phenomena constitute "force" and are the equivalent of government application of such. (O'Rourke's tweet, with the embedded video, is below).

Living close to work shouldn't be a luxury for the rich. It's a right for everyone.

pic.twitter.com/lohRdoFGrH

— Beto O'Rourke (@BetoORourke) [September 10, 2019](#)



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Not surprisingly, critics were quick to point out that O'Rourke is just making it up as he goes along. For example, columnist Matt Walsh tweeted:

First of all, there is not a single person in the universe driving three hours to get to a minimum wage job.

Second, if living near your job is a "right," then literally anything and everything is a right. The term has no meaning at all anymore. <https://t.co/zkabx1NsIx>

— Matt Walsh (@MattWalshBlog) [September 10, 2019](#)

Of course, it's hard to say if O'Rourke actually believes what he says, since he'll say anything to try to raise polling numbers that look like a *really* good golf handicap. Regardless, "Occam's Razor suggests that O'Rourke has not invested much thought into this proposal," [writes Commentary](#) in a different piece. "If he had, he would have confronted the fact that the primary obstacles to realizing his vision of hyperdense, automobile-free, classless urban spaces are his fellow Democrats."

The site continues:

America's urban centers are the locus of much social tension between upscale liberal residents and the progressive social engineers who govern them. The median home value in nearly 200 U.S. cities is now north of \$1 million, rendering life in American metropolises a fraught conflict between renters and commuters and wealthier residents for whom property values and livability are not academic concepts.

Mobilizing around the slogan "Zoning is a Promise," residents of affluent (and overwhelmingly [Democratic](#)) Westport, Connecticut, have organized in opposition to the expansion of affordable housing in their neighborhood — a display that is, [to some](#), indicative of their racial and cultural ignorance. A plan to build a five-story affordable apartment block amid the detached, single-family homes in San Francisco's Forest Hill neighborhood has [generated](#) similar concerns. "We don't know if there are going to be sex offenders living there," said one concerned resident at a fraught board of directors meeting. "As a parent, I am concerned about people with mental illness and drug addictions," another added. "I want my kids to be able to play outside — that's why we bought a house here."

In 2016, Manhattan residents [scuttled](#) a plan for 335 below-market-rate units in the Inwood neighborhood. Baltimore-area locals were not so successful. "We have worked for years in order to have a house in the county, and the government is pushing people out here," [said](#) one elderly resident of the city's prosperous suburbs who suddenly found himself surrounded by public housing. "They don't deserve to have what my family worked hard for."

Commentary provides other such examples as well — and they are legion. Taking the cake were the comments of a liberal parent who, reacting in 2015 to an effort to integrate his kid's primarily white Brooklyn government school, [said](#), "It's more complicated when it's about your own children."

This prompted *National Review* to [note](#) of this person and the other Dumbo leftists ("Dumbo" is their neighborhood's name — really!), "Of course they want integration, they'll tell you, but only if it entails no sacrifice on their part." And it's understandable that conservatives would experience schadenfreude contemplating how these liberals are being forced, for a change, to live with their own ideals. But the reality is that they generally won't.



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O'Rourke's integration scheme is just, as is apparent, not a new idea but an old mistake. For decades the government has, intermittently, tried to "diversify" neighborhoods, and for decades the result has been the same. When the intended "integration" is achieved, it never seems to last long and a certain pattern manifests itself: Crime and other social ills proliferate in the targeted area, the wealthy begin to feel unsafe, and their kids get harassed — and they move.

Wealth affords one the benefit of mobility. So unless O'Rourke wants to go full Mao, limit where people can go, and create collectives of sorts, there's no way to compel the rich to live with the poor. O'Rourke understands their attitude well, too. After all, you can bet that whatever schemes may come, the tired, poor, huddled masses won't be living in his neighborhood.



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