

The Republican Club of Sun City NEWSLETTER

February 2019

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Sun City Texas

(Topics in this newsletter: "Hillsdale College," "Democrats and Socialism," "Charges of Racism")

STAFF MEMBER OF HERITAGE FOUNDATION, A GRADUATE OF HILLSDALE COLLEGE, TO ADDRESS CLUB FEBRUARY 22

Raz Shafer Senior Assistant to the President for Donor Relations at the Heritage Foundation, and a graduate of Hillsdale College, will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Friday, February 22 in the Ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.**

Raised near Stephenville, TX, Raz started volunteering on campaigns when he was 10 and was immediately hooked on politics. Following years of volunteer work and graduation from Hillsdale College, he began working full-time in politics. His experience and education at Hillsdale have been influential.

Over the past 10 years, Raz has trained thousands of activists and candidates how to win campaigns, worked for a range of non-profit political organizations and served on the official staff for U. S. Sen. Ted Cruz.

Reflecting his experience at Heritage, Hillsdale and in political campaigns, Raz will center part of his address on how the older generation can inspire and encourage the younger generation to become politically involved and help shape a promising future for the nation. His presentation will be based on his profound respect and love for Hillsdale – perhaps unique to virtually all Hillsdale graduates – which can make his presentation more meaningful. Given the present widespread fear that the nation's government, universities, public schools, morals, families, etc. are, to a disturbing extent, becoming dysfunctional, Hillsdale, with its successful promotion of traditional values and honor, stands as a beacon and has special importance in today's America.

In addition, Raz, being familiar with both Heritage and Hillsdale, will provide first hand information about each of those subjects.

Some background information: The stated mission of The Heritage Foundation is to "formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense."

In stark contrast with what columnist/university professor Walter Williams and others contend is the "brainwashing and indoctrination" which takes place at public universities is the curriculum at Hillsdale College which, according to Wikipedia, provides a broadly-based liberal arts curriculum based on Western heritage as a product of both the Greco-Roman culture and the Judeo-Christian tradition. Hillsdale requires every student, regardless of major, to complete a core curriculum that includes course on the Great Books, U. S. Constitution, biology, chemistry and physics. Graduating students thus have received a broad educational background which can help them avoid being indoctrinated. Significantly, Hillsdale takes no federal aid, hence can avoid the indoctrination and other deleterious effects which take place when government becomes involved in education.

Raz, his wife, Jennie Marie, and son, Stoney, currently reside in Fort Worth, Texas.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MEETING OF FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 22

BEGINNING TIMES: Doors Open – 5:45 pm; Social Period – 6:00 pm; Dinner – 6:30 pm; Program – 7:00 pm

MENU: Chicken spaghetti with a side salad and garlic toast. Optional is grilled chicken salad.

COST: Dinner fee is \$18 per person. Checks made out to "The Republican Club of Sun City" should be mailed to: **The Republican Club of Sun City, 1530 Sun City Blvd., Suite 120, PMB 227, Georgetown, TX 78633**, or left in a special drop box located on the front porch of the home of club treasurer Gene Edwards at 202 Duck Creek Lane. For information, contact Gene at 520-990-1159 or geneedwards@earthlink.net The deadline for payment or reservations is Friday, February 15.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME! Non-members may attend a maximum of two meetings per year – as attendees for the dinner or as observers for the program – without having to pay membership dues.

CHAIRMAN OF RAILROAD COMMISSION TO ADDRESS CLUB MARCH 28

Christi Craddick, chairman of the three-person Texas Railroad Commission – which currently regulates various aspects of the oil and gas industry, but no longer railroads – will address the club during its dinner meeting scheduled for **Thursday, March 28 in the ballroom of the Social Center in Sun City.** The March newsletter will provide information about that meeting and some clarification of the Commission's jurisdiction.

OTHER CLUB NEWS

Membership Drive. Members in 2018 wishing to renew their membership for 2019 and individuals wishing to become new members for 2019 are asked to submit completed membership forms along with their payments of the \$20 per person membership fee to: The Republican Club of Sun City, 1530 Sun City Blvd., Suite 120, PMB 227, Georgetown, TX 78633, or leave payments in a special drop box located at the home of club treasurer Gene Edwards at 202 Duck Creek Lane or at a club meeting. Contact the VP for membership, Kathy Sweeney, at KathySweeneyMembership@gmail.com for any needed forms.

Individuals who were club members in 2018 will have their names kept on the communications list (to receive newsletter and other communications) until February 28, 2019. If they have not renewed by that date, their names will be removed from that list. They can, of course, renew their memberships any time during 2019.

Statistics.

Kathy Sweeney, VP for membership, reports current membership for 2019 stands at 329 – ahead of that of a year ago. Club treasurer Gene Edwards reports there were 203 paid meals, and 22 people attending as observers at the January meeting.

HILLSDALE'S PRESIDENT EXPLAINS HILLSDALE'S MISSION

Dr. Larry Arnn, long-time president of Hillsdale College, in two recent letters to supporters or potential supporters, provides some of the more unique aspects of that college. Following are some excerpts from some selected topics appearing in those letters. Dr. Arnn's comments are shown in italics:

Mission/Core Curriculum. *Hillsdale College not only “develops the minds,” but also “improves the hearts of its students. We develop the mind through our large and rigorous core curriculum, which requires every student, regardless of major, to take course in Western and American history, the U. S. Constitution, the Great Books, philosophy, theology, the sciences, and more.”*

The Honor Code. *We develop the heart through attention to character., Every incoming student signs our Honor Code, pledging to be “honorable in conduct, honest in word and deed, dutiful in study and service, and respectful of the rights of others.” There is a high demand for this sort of education: over 2,400 high school students applied to Hillsdale this school year, leading to our most selective acceptance rate on record.*

Federal Student Aid Not Accepted. *Thirty-three years ago, in order to preserve Hillsdale's independence and fend off federal mandates that threatened to undermine our mission, we told our students they could no longer accept federal student grants and loans to help with their college expenses. To replace that federal student aid with private funds, Hillsdale established the Student Independence Grant and Loan Fund.*

A majority of our students work campus jobs to help cover their expenses, and Hillsdale's student loan default rate is an extremely low 1.5 percent. This is a sharp contrast with the failing federal student loan program, which is facing a \$36 billion shortfall due to defaulted loans – a shortfall greater than the government bailout of the 2008 financial crisis. Under the government's “debt forgiveness” policies, this financial burden will fall to American taxpayers. Government subsidies for higher education have also fueled escalating tuition.

Charges of Racial Discrimination. *Harvard University has recently come under charge for racial discrimination in its admissions. Hillsdale College, on the other hand, has never counted its students by race or asked the race of its applicants. This is in keeping with our 174-year-old Articles of Association, which state that we will teach all who wish, “irrespective of nationality, color, or sex.” Our independence from government funding allows us to keep this principle. On October 16, the Wall Street Journal published an editorial on this issue title “What Hillsdale Can Teach Harvard.” [A report on that editorial is provided later in this newsletter.]*

Hillsdale's Ever-Expanding Influence on Education in America. *Today, in addition to the 1,460 undergraduates and 59 graduate students on campus, some 1.8 million citizens have enrolled in one or more of our free online courses, and nearly 10,000 young Americans in nine states attend the 20 K-12 schools currently operating under the guidance of our Barney Charter School Initiative. [Such as the Founders Classical Academy in Leander] Increasing numbers of citizens, including policy makers and opinion leaders, are attending educational events at our Kirby Center for Constitutional Studies and Citizenship in Washington, D. C. And of course Imprimis now reaches over 3.9 million household and businesses each month. [For information about the free online courses – such as Constitution 101 and Great Books – taught by Hillsdale College faculty, consult the college's website]*

WALL STREET JOURNAL HEADLINE: “WHAT HILLSDALE CAN TEACH HARVARD”

The Wall Street Journal, in its October 16, 2018 issue, published an editorial by William McGurn titled “What Hillsdale Can Teach Harvard” in which the issues of a lawsuit involving charges that Harvard discriminated against – not people of color – but, this time, against Asian-Americans who had been denied admission.

The editorial is valuable because it exposes some of the conflicts – seemingly impossible to resolve - when the federal government gets involved in education which, it should be noted, is a subject without constitutional authorization.

The editorial is also valuable because, having appeared in a newspaper having one of the largest – if not *the* largest – circulation in the nation, a number of Americans who would have no knowledge about such charges of racism not only at universities, but in other settings, can begin to understand the complexities surrounding such charges and that such charges are often made by demagogues who are attempting to intimidate opponents. Following are excerpts, shown in italics, from McGurn's editorial:

On Monday in federal court, Harvard denied charges that it discriminates against Asian-Americans in the same way it once discriminated against Jews. Race, its lawyer insisted, was just one of many factors considered, and it could only help an applicant's chances for admission, not hurt them.

On the substance, this is a dubious proposition. Students for Fair Admission, which brought the lawsuit, has produced considerable evidence that Harvard uses various means to exclude Asian-Americans even when they are more qualified academically and have better records of extracurricular activities than other accepted students.

The Harvard pretense is that it is possible to favor one race without discriminating against others. A 2009 Princeton study demonstrates otherwise. It found that an Asian-American applicant to an elite university has to score 450 points higher on the SAT to get in than a black applicant, 270 points higher than a Latino one and 140 points higher than a white one.

In a footnote in its motion for summary judgment, the university says “this case involves a private university . . .

Just one teensy problem. It's called the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and it “prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin in any program or activity that receives Federal funds or other Federal financial assistance.” Harvard receives millions from the feds each year . . .

All of which puts two fundamental principles in conflict. The first is that people should not be discriminated against because of their race. The second is that private institutions should be left to run their own shops without the feds telling them how to do it.

Can these principles be reconciled? Tiny Hillsdale College suggests they can. Back in the 1970s the federal government demanded the Michigan-based college begin counting its students by race and sex as a condition of the federal loans some of its students received.

Like Harvard, Hillsdale believes it knows best how to run its school. Unlike Harvard, it made tough decision to stand on principle. To avoid the regulatory strings that come with federal dollars, in 1985 Hillsdale decided to forgo all federal dollars – including financial aid for students.

MANY DEMOCRATS NOW OPENLY EMBRACE SOCIALISM

Today's Democrat party can no longer be considered the party of Franklin Roosevelt and Jack Kennedy, one of the reasons being its clear embrace of socialism by many of its leaders, in stark contrast with the beliefs of the party's earlier leaders.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, currently a widely-quoted advocate of the left in Democrat circles and in the media, is quoted in a recent *WSJ* op-ed piece as saying, “My policies most closely resemble what we see in the U.K., in Norway, in Finland, in Sweden.”

But her reference to Sweden as a model socialist state – as do a number of other leftists – is misplaced, so indicate a number of conservative writers.

For example, the authors of the cited *WSJ* op-ed piece report that, despite its reputation with leftists, “Sweden's experiment with socialist policies was disastrous when it changed from market-based policies in the mid-20th century after, in 1970, Sweden achieved the world's fourth highest per capita income, a remarkable achievement. But “then increasingly radical Social Democratic governments raised taxes, spending and regulating much more than any other Western European country.” The result: Sweden's per capita income ranking dropped from fourth place to 14th place. [Could this kind of phenomenon come about in this country under leftist control?] But more recently, since the early '90s, Sweden began to reverse itself and eliminate some of its socialist policies and replace them with policies more consistent with a free economy.

Columnist/Economics Professor Walter Williams summarizes Sweden's evolution with the following observations:

When the tragedies of socialist regimes – such as those in Venezuela, the USSR, China, Cuba and many others - are pointed out to America's leftists, they hold up Sweden as their socialist role model. But they are absolutely wrong about Sweden. . . Americans might be surprised to learn that Sweden's experiment with socialism was a brief flirtation, lasting about 20 years and ending in disillusionment and reform. Reason magazine reports: "Sweden began rolling back government in the early 1990s, recapturing the entrepreneurial spirit that made it a wealthy country to begin with. High taxation and a generous array of government benefits are still around. But now it's also a nation of school vouchers, free trade, open immigration, light business regulation, and no minimum wage laws." School vouchers, light business regulation and no minimum wage laws are practices deeply offensive to America's leftists.

America's First Experiment With Socialism. America, during its founding era, had a brief flirtation with socialism in a very pure form, if not in the form of unadulterated communism. The following description of that flirtation has been published in several issues of earlier newsletters, and is now published one more time because it is so timely:

In 1620, one hundred two passengers, known as Pilgrims, left England on the ship "Mayflower" for the New World under a contract with their backers which said, in part: "That all persons as are of this colony have their meat, drink, apparel, and all provisions out of the common stock of goods . . . " In addition, all the land cleared and structures they built belonged to the community.

The arrangement proved hugely unsuccessful. William Bradford, Governor of the colony, after a trial period, wrote that a change was needed, that the arrangement "was found to breed much confusion and discontent and retard much employment that would have been to their benefit and comfort."

By 1625, the colonists, after their unfortunate experience, decided to put an end to this "common course." In place of the original arrangement, every family was assigned its own plot of land and permitted to market its own crops and products. Bradford on the result: "This had a very good success, for it made all hands very industrious, so that much more corn was planted than otherwise would have been by any means the Governor or any other could use . . ."

Rational Thought, Government and the Nature of Man. Today, a number of prospective Democrat candidates for the office of President are promoting a variety of socialist or communist policies such as free health care, free college and university education, subsidized housing – to name but a few. Some then try to explain how those benefits will be financed. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez proposes that one way to pay for such policies is to impose a 70% top marginal tax on the rich so that they pay for what she consider to be their "fair share" of the tax burden.

It should be noted that the admonition that the rich pay "their fair share" may, at least at first blush, seem rational. Statistics may even provide some support for those proposals. But there are limits on how much those kind of rational thoughts should be relied upon.

Writer Bruce Thornton notes in that regard to rational thought that, for centuries, there has been a "stubborn belief in the power of rational thought and knowledge to improve human life." But, as our founders and framers, relying on Biblical insights, believed rational thought and knowledge may not be able to overcome a flawed human nature. Thornton explains the thinking of our founders as follows:

The Founders agreed with Machiavelli that "it is necessary for whoever arranges to found a Republic and establish laws in it, to presuppose that all men are bad and that they will use their malignity of mind every time the have the opportunity." This fundamental assumption also underlies the Constitution's architecture, most famously laid out by James Madison in Federalist 10.

To protect freedom, Madison writes, the state must be organized to protect against "faction," groups of citizens united and motivated" by some common impulse or passion, or interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interest of the community as a whole." Freedom nourishes faction and gives it scope, especially freedom of speech, which allows opinions to be publicized and conflict with those of others. Finally, faction is not a result of bad education or poverty, it is "sown in the nature of man," which creates a "connection between his reason and his self-love," and makes "his opinions and passions" a "reciprocal influence on each others." To protect the freedom of all from this dynamic, the Founders checked and balanced and divided power so no one faction could dominate the rest and create tyranny.

Thornton concedes there are differences between today's world and the world centuries before WW II:

Our high level of material existence, safety, and comfort is on an unprecedented scale. One consequence has been the elevation of expectation for our existence far beyond what's possible for flawed, passionate creatures like us.

Millennials are a different breed. They have lived in this brave new world of affluence from childhood, and so have a much higher baseline standard of material comfort, and greater expectations for achieving their political ideals like universal health care . . . This is the same childish mentality that has fueled the rise of political correctness, hate speech codes, whimpering "snowflakes" . . . A generation marked both by an elevated, unearned sense of self-regard, and an arrogant certainty about their own intellectual and moral superiority is more likely to scream and threaten rather than listen thoughtfully. Thornton added: "Not all millenials, of course, deserve this portrait."

THE INCIDENT INVOLVING BOYS FROM CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL, UNSUBSTANTIATED CHARGES OF RACISM, AND PENDING LAW SUITS

Foreword. An event which has been given almost unprecedented media coverage is the event involving boys from Covington Catholic High School (Kentucky) who had been present for a March for Life event in Washington, D. C., in January and who later came to be involved in what has been described as a confrontation between various individuals.

That event and the confrontation were given considerable coverage in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed piece appearing in the January 23 issue of that newspaper, and is reproduced below (in italics) in almost its entirety. It is provided because of a number of issues which have clearly surfaced and which are now ripe for discussion, among them being unsubstantiated charges of racism, lying, impugning character of political opponents - and, more recently, threats of lawsuits against individuals who impugned the character of the boys.

Those issues will be discussed after the reader has had opportunity to read the *WSJ* op-ed piece.

THE HIGH SCHOOL DEPLORABLES

Of the most culturally deplorable boxes one can check in progressive America in 2019, the boys of Covington Catholic High School have most of them: white, male, Christian, attendees at the annual March for Life in Washington, and wearers of MAGA hats. What's not to dislike? So when four minutes of video footage emerged online this weekend showing the students appearing to harass a Native American Vietnam veteran named Nathan Phillips, America's media and cultural elite leapt to judgment.

A short video clip of student Nick Sandmann supposedly "smirking" as Mr. Phillips banged his drum in the student's face went viral, and instantly the boys of Covington Catholic in Kentucky were branded racists.

Best-selling author Reza Aslan tweeted that the high school junior had a "punchable face." Former Democratic Party Chief Howard Dean opined that Covington Catholic is "a hate factory." GQ's Nathaniel Friedman urged people to: Doxx'em all," i.e., make their personal information public.

Meanwhile, mainstream news outlets published misleading accounts of what happened based on incomplete information. And pundits on the right and left rushed to demonstrate their own virtue by trashing high school students as somehow symptomatic of America's cultural rot in the Age of Trump.

Only it turns out there was a much longer video, nearly two hours, showing that almost everything first reported about the confrontation was false, or at least much more complicated. The boys had been taunted by a group of Black Hebrew Israelites, who shouted racist and homophobic slurs. Far from the boys confronting Mr. Phillips, he confronted them as they were waiting near the Lincoln Memorial for their bus.

It also turns out that Mr. Phillips is not the Vietnam veteran he was reported to be in most stories.

More surprising is the rush to judgment by those who might have been expected to consider the boys innocent until proven guilty, or at least until all the evidence is in.

Many of these early critics have now apologized or walked back their initial condemnations. But these social injustices perpetrated on social media are not so easily redressed. Covington Catholic was closed Tuesday for security reasons.

Most of those who so eagerly maligned these boys will face no lasting consequences, while the boys themselves will always have to wonder, when they are turned down for a job or a school, whether someone had Googled their name and found only half this story. This is an ugly moment in America all right . . .

It seems that conservatives, when attacked as racists, do little to defend themselves. They just "take it."

But the situation involving the boys appears to be different. The boys have an attorney, Robert Barnes, who has already advised media people and others who have libeled or defamed the boys with unsupported charges of being a racist that they have 48 hours from Wednesday – specifically, until Friday, midnight, January 25 – to issue a correction to charges they have made. If they do not meet that deadline, they will be faced with charges of libel and/or defamation.

Appearing on Tony Perkins talk show, "Washington Watch" (TonyPerkins.com), Barnes said a number of those individuals had already issued apologies while others appeared defiant. When asked if the defiant individuals could issue apologies after that deadline and thereby escape a legal procedure, Barnes responded with an emphatic "no."

Barnes also said that as a result of work getting out about his threatened lawsuit, his office had been inundated with calls from individuals from all over the country volunteering their services to him or volunteering to make monetary contributions. He stated that his services will remain *pro bono*, but that he would set up a foundation next week to receive funds which might be used to provide legal services – the cost of which can run up to one million dollars – to individuals who have unfairly been attacked. His website is BarnesLawLLP.com

Currently, a second attorney, Lin Wood, stated he would be representing Nick Sandman, the student.

GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF CHARGES OF RACISM WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN VERIFIED

The Doctrine of “Disparate Impact” Begins. Flooded with about 1,500 complaints related to racial discrimination in school discipline between 2011 and 2017, the Obama administration made the issue a priority. Relying on the doctrine of “disparate impact,” which emerged in the 1970s and holds that differential treatment by race amounts to discrimination whether or not there is overt or intentional bias, The Department of Education thus opened sweeping investigations into disciplinary disparities.

Subsequently, according to black columnist Jason Riley writing in the December 26 issue of the *WSJ*:

In 2014 the Obama administration sent school districts “guidance” letters that essentially threatened federal action if black suspension rates weren’t reduced. The letter stated that even if a school’s suspension policy “is neutral on its face – meaning that the policy itself does not mention race – and is administered in an evenhanded manner,” the district could still face a federal civil-rights investigation if the policy “has a disparate impact, i. e., a disproportionate and unjustified effect on students of a particular race.”

Riley asserts that Arne Duncan, who was President Obama’s Secretary of Education when the “guidance” was issued “insisted that blacks are suspended at higher rates than other groups only because schools officials are racially biased.”

Author Heather Mac Donald, however, contends there are several situations which can account for the differences in suspension rates, including reports that around 70% of black children come from homes where the father is not present, and from neighborhoods where there are drug dealers, robbers, rapists, etc. who can influence the culture of students.

Riley contends that one of the more serious consequences of using only the “disparate impact” standard is that, “more schools have been disciplining fewer students in order to achieve racial balance in suspension rates and stay out of trouble with the federal government.”

It should be noted that, upon the recommendation of a special Task Force, current Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos discontinued in December the imposition of the “disparate impact” doctrine on public schools. That doctrine, may not, however, be completely dead, this being said because schools may, at their discretion, impose that standard, and it may be imposed by municipal government as is illustrated below. Further, charges of racism, even though unsubstantiated, have been effectively used by the left for political purposes.

What follows are excerpts appearing in the January 12-13 issue of the *WSJ* of an interview of a writer with the father whose daughter, and 13 other fellow students and 3 adult staff members were murdered at the Marjory Stoneman Douglas School in Parkland, Florida on February 14, 2018.

The killer was Nikoles Cruz, a student at that school who was a participant in the government-mandated Promise program which was based on the disparate impact doctrine.

The excerpted comments of the father, which follow, are both revealing and touching.

A PARKLAND FATHER'S QUEST FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

THE FATHER, ANDREW POLLACK. “I blame the murderer for 50% of what happened,” Mr. Pollack says. “I don’t blame him for the whole thing. Because there were just so many people who didn’t care, who didn’t do their job, that I blame them for the other 50%”

He thinks “day in, and day out” about accountability “for these people, because of whom I can’t walk my daughter down the aisle.”

He has co-written a book, “Why Meadow [daughter] Died: The People and Policies That Created the Parkland Shooter and Endangered America’s Students,” to be published next month.

THE GOVERNMENT’S “PROMISE” PROGRAM. Mr. Pollack believes that “political correctness killed Meadow.” A prominent villain in his narrative is Robert Runcie, who came to Broward from Chicago in 2011 as the superintendent of the county’s public schools.

Mr. Runcie introduced a program called Promise – a feel-good acronym for Preventing Recidivism through Opportunities, Mentoring, Interventions, Support and Education – under which students who commit crimes in public schools would no longer be reported to the police by administrators...Even felonies as severe as drug dealing, sexual assault and bringing weapons to school could lawfully be kept from the police.

Mr. Runcie “saw that minority students were being referred to the police at higher rates than whites,” as Mr. Pollack tells it. “Rather than recognize that misbehavior can be the result of many complex problems outside school, or at home, “ the superintendent concluded the disparity was because “teachers and schools were racist.” With no reporting, “now there’s no crime. The school’s data look great. Problem solved.”

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY OF STUDENTS IS NOT REPORTED? But a much worse problem was created: “No student has a criminal background as a result, so once you graduate from school and want to buy a gun, background checks are useless.”

Mr. Runcie and his supporters called their policy “discipline reform.” Violent students had to attend “healing circles” ... The result is that “mentally disturbed students like Cruz are right there in the classroom ...with normal students like my daughter, and with teachers who don’t know how to deal with them, since they can’t bring in the cops.”

CRUZ’ PROBLEMS. In high school, he vandalized a bathroom. He racially abused black students and had fistfights with them. He hurled furniture across classrooms. He threw hard objects at other students. He threatened to kill teachers.

The political correctness appears to have infected law enforcement. The department allowed Cruz to keep a clean record

even though deputies were called to his home 45 times. .When officers never arrested Cruz they were following policy.