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### THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION OF THE GOALS AND MEASURES OF THE "AFFIRMATIVE ACTION" POLICY IN THE USA

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A demonstration of discrimination and a fight against it is shown in different societies. The more developed a society is, the more complicated its structure is, and the more varied the population is. Development is always accompanied by differential processes that require secondary integration at a new level of complexity. Under such circumstances, the desire of developed societies to positively solve integration problems, including in the field of ethno-cultural relations, which are an important form of social interaction in any society, is obvious. The problem of ethno-cultural integration becomes even more acute if there is a certain historical context in which these relations were formed. A clear example of such a problematic situation is the modern USA, where the great racial and ethno-cultural diversity of the population is complemented by the historical legacy of slave ownership and a long policy of segregation of certain sections of the population. The consequence of these circumstances was a significant deformation of social relations, to overcome which the state policy of "affirmative actions" has been implemented over the past few decades. In modern conditions, gender issues have also been added to the ethnic component. Analysis of the goals and means of this program seems important and relevant in modern conditions.

For the first time, the term "affirmative action" appeared in the decree of the 35th president of the United States, John Kennedy, from 1961. The main idea of the proposed program was the implementation of a system of measures that were supposed to compensate for the consequences of historical discrimination of certain sections of the population and ensure equal opportunities. First of all, these measures abolished all forms of legal segregation. Later, according to the decree of President Lyndon Johnson, economic measures were added to the political measures: government contractors were obliged to proportionally increase the number of representatives of ethnic minorities and women in the workplace [1]. Such measures created a system of ethnic quotas, which led to the emergence of privileges in hiring, entering an educational institution or opening a small business for those who were classified as certain historically oppressed minorities.

This approach of "artificial balance" was supposed to have positive consequences for society primarily due to increasing the equality of different groups

and overcoming disparities in the distribution of social resources. But in practice, the policy of "affirmative actions" had more controversial consequences, which are most clearly manifested precisely in the aspect of equality as the main goal of this policy [2]. The fundamental contradiction is the attempt to overcome inequality through the introduction of quotas, and not in the fight against the preconditions of inequality. The policy leads to the preservation of a system of inequality, in which stratification is based not on acquired, but on assigned statuses. This, in particular, is pointed out by the sociologist Nathan Glaser, noting that the transition from a policy of "indifference to skin color and race" to a policy of "race perception" creates a situation in which advantages for minorities discriminate against other groups, which leads to reverse discrimination [3]. This creates the conditions under which discrimination does not disappear, but only changes forms, creating new artificial hierarchies.

A clear manifestation of the reverse nature of the "affirmative action" policy is the situation at Yale University [4], where skin color was an important criterion for the admission of students to the educational institution for 50 years. In 2020, the US Department of Justice released data from an investigation that found African-American applicants were, on average, 10 times more likely to enter university than Asians and a quarter as likely as whites. This fact is only a demonstration of the general trend. It is indicative of the general tendency to shift the emphasis from assistance in achieving certain results (social scholarships or housing subsidies for representatives of minorities who demonstrate certain abilities and readiness for development) to direct quotas of certain proportions - regardless of the actual distribution of competences. Quotas obviously distort the selection procedures for professional training and the distribution of relevant statuses, which must first of all take into account the level of competence, especially in industries related to socially important and vulnerable spheres of public life and technical support.

The possibility of receiving privileges "by default" only on the basis of belonging to a certain group not only violates the basic principles of equality of opportunity, but also definitely creates prerequisites for various abuses. Privileges, which are granted regardless of competence and achievements, but provide access to certain resources and benefits, provoke a situation where, in order to preserve or obtain preferences and political advantages, the formation of certain minorities necessarily turns into a business project, for the promotion of which any what manipulations – including with statistics – in mass media (for instance[5]), and individual precedents can be presented as manifestations of systemic phenomena. A good example of the abuse of media tools in the interests of certain groups was the wave of violence and riots that began in the USA in the summer of 2020 in connection with the death of George Floyd during the arrest by police [6]. Coincidentally, these events took place a few months before the next presidential election. An important aspect of these events is the massive manipulative influence of mass media on public consciousness and the preference of an emotional presentation of a single tragedy over a rational analysis of the problem of violence in society.

Moreover, the criminal statistics run away from stereotypes. In 2017, African-Americans accounted for 53.1% of all homicide arrests in the US, compared to 12% of the total population. However, 93% of African American was killed by African Americans. It is also indicative that according to the statistics of 2016 (the previous) year, the number of African-Americans killed during arrests was almost twice as low as the number of "whites" killed [7]. It is natural to conclude that the greatest threat to African Americans is the conditions of their compact living and the spread of specific subcultures. The involvement of new generations in the criminal world is thus a self-reproducing process. That is why "affirmative actions" totally cannot overcome the conditions under which the African-American minority remains the most marginalized.

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There is no real improvement in the situation, because there is no overcoming of those prerequisites that caused the current socio-economic condition of the African-American community. The manipulative abuse of the mass media is even more clearly demonstrated by the statistics, which record that the position of the Latin American community in the USA is more vulnerable in many respects than that of African Americans [5].

Therefore, the main problem of the policy of "affirmative action" in the USA is the fundamental contradiction between the declared goals and the real circumstances and measures. The fight against various forms of discrimination declared as the main goal in the conditions of the increasing spread of quotas cannot be achieved, because it does not solve the problems of the existence of racial differences, but, on the contrary, exacerbates them even more. The policy of "indifference to skin color and race" cannot be implemented in the context of the slogan: "skin color matters." In society, ethics can only be general. Otherwise, society will inevitably disintegrate into separate communities, become fragmented. Under the conditions, discrimination does not disappear, but only changes its forms, once again being established in state laws, and political activity begins to concentrate around the struggle for all kinds of privileges and a dominant position in the system of distribution of unconditional subsidies and "reparations". The idea of direct financial payments to members of racial or ethnic and even sexual minorities already demonstrates that the general trend remains unchanged.

In the conditions of a society devoid of laws that previously limited the rights of certain racial and ethnic groups, any quota based on innate (assigned) statuses eliminates incentives for productive activity and self-development, fixing precisely belonging to a certain minority as the main social characteristic. Acquired statuses cease to be the main factor of individual efforts. This necessarily stimulates the preservation of the minority - instead of its reintegration into the general social space of activity and its evaluation through the successful actions of its individual members. Racial-ethnic origin (and even more imaginary forms of self-identification) from the elements of individual self-consciousness are once again transformed into dominant statuses, belonging to which is a decisive factor of social disposition, including economic and political.

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