

As They Saw It: HUD's Secretaries Reminisce About Carrying Out the Mission

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One who was present at the beginning recalls it as a time when “urban policy was bubbling up.” The year was 1965, the ideas of the Kennedy administration were riding the wave of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Great Society, and the future U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was taking shape.

“The push for HUD came from a combination of mayors and Democratic politicians and academicians in the Kennedy campaign,” recalls Robert C. Wood, who was one of those academicians and later a Secretary of HUD.

The story of HUD over its 30 years can be told in many ways, but all of them begin with the Department’s eclectic origins. Founded in the swirling events of the mid-1960s, only a year after riots in Watts racked Los Angeles and the Nation, the Department has carried out the dual mission of implementing national housing policy and guiding development of the Nation’s cities and communities. The HUD Secretaries each interpreted that mission in his or her own way, worked with the President and Congress, and tried to advance the causes of decent housing and a rising quality of life for all Americans.

The Secretaries assumed responsibility for carrying out a mission crafted by Congress from those two broad pathways: first, to ensure decent housing, paying particular attention to those less fortunate in finding shelter; second, to encourage the healthy development of cities and communities nationwide, paying particular attention to economic development and quality of life.

These men and women have come from widely diverse backgrounds and include urban affairs experts, lawyers, big-city mayors, business executives, civil rights leaders, a Governor, and a former Congressman who was a National Football League quarterback. They have guided the Department through difficult times—urban riots, massive defaults on housing loans, scandals involving the misuse of Federal funds, and charges of conflict of interest. They have worked with, and sometimes battled against, Presidents and Congresses over philosophies and the fundamental mission of the Department. Is HUD essentially a housing or a community development agency? Should it emphasize people or places? Should housing policy favor shelter for the poor or opportunity for low-income homebuyers? Should HUD exercise central authority over the spending of Federal dollars or flow money to State and local governments and let them decide how to spend it?

These questions persist to this day, and the voters' political philosophy constantly shifts on these issues. HUD Secretaries have consequently been subject to intense pressure, unusual even in the Nation's capital. Politically muscled mayors pull in one direction and suburban Members of Congress in another. The Nation's powerful homebuilding industry takes one position and land-use reform advocates rise in opposition. HUD's Federal Housing Administration (FHA) announces a new program to aid low-income homebuyers; some private mortgage insurance interests try to head off the move.

This article is based on interviews with all living former HUD Secretaries, sometimes in person and other times by telephone.¹ The former Secretaries reminisced about their time in office, identified highlights and milestones, and offered observations on HUD's mission and its changing role in a changing America. They tell their stories as they recall events. They have reviewed this article, but the author has not independently checked facts except obvious ones such as dates of enactment of legislation, names of HUD programs, and the like.

Robert Clifton Weaver

The first HUD Secretary and first African-American member of a Presidential Cabinet, Robert Clifton Weaver shepherded the establishment, organization, and initial staffing of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. HUD represented the country's first commitment to improving the quality of life in the Nation's cities.

In those early days, Secretary Weaver and his Under Secretary, Robert C. Wood, were "the builders, and there was a lot to be done," Secretary Weaver says today. They managed to get the Department established, began to administer programs that had been enacted just prior to its founding, improved existing programs, got solid urban legislation on the books, and dealt with urban riots. "We put a lot of things into operation that made it easier for [our successors] later on," Secretary Weaver says.

White House task forces were responsible for germinating important programs to be administered by the new Department, including the rent supplement program, enacted 1 month prior to the creation of HUD, and the Model Cities program of 1966. Both were controversial and had passed Congress by only narrow margins. Both relied on coordination among Federal, State, and local officials—a new concept in urban affairs—as well as decisionmaking by local residents.

In many cities, slum clearance had replaced dilapidated buildings with commercial construction or luxury apartments to attract the more affluent back to the city. But if a local urban renewal agency failed to find a developer for an assembled and cleared site it fell into disuse, sometimes for years. Many cities were experiencing both a net loss in low-rent dwellings and a failure to attract upper income citizens. Secretary Weaver's response was to tighten regulations so that more low-income housing would be constructed on urban renewal sites. By 1968 the majority of new construction under urban renewal was undertaken for this purpose.

During 1967, together with officials at the White House, Secretary Weaver and Under Secretary Wood busily prepared new programs to provide decent housing for the urban poor. The growing desperation among the inner-city poor, as evidenced by riots in the Watts area of Los Angeles in 1965 and in Newark and Detroit during the summer of 1967

and by the erosion of support for President Johnson because of his stance on the Vietnam War, “shaped the timetable for these efforts,” remarked Secretary Weaver. He and Under Secretary Wood oversaw the drafting of new housing bills and maneuvered them through Congress.

The riots of 1967 were followed by one of the stormiest years in American political history: the violent death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the angry response within American ghettos, President Johnson’s decision not to run for reelection, the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy, the tumultuous Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Richard Nixon’s hairbreadth victory over the rallying Hubert Humphrey, and deepening national resentment over the Vietnam War and the inflation it had spawned.

As the department most directly concerned with fair housing and housing for the poor, HUD became the focus of national attention following the April 1968 riots in Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Chicago, and elsewhere. In the aftermath of Dr. King’s assassination, Secretary Weaver redoubled efforts to increase the production of subsidized housing units for lower income families. He and Under Secretary Wood testified forcefully on behalf of open housing legislation.

With the enactment of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968, the Nation acquired the most momentous Federal urban legislation in history. The law empowered HUD to establish Federal programs for crime insurance, flood insurance, New Communities, and the interstate sale of land. The law also partitioned Fannie Mae into a private corporation concerned with secondary mortgage operations and created another Federal agency, the Government National Mortgage Association (Ginnie Mae), to administer HUD’s special assistance funds. Most significantly, the 1968 Act gave HUD the authority to administer new programs that would make possible homeownership by low-income families (Section 235) and would increase significantly the low-income multifamily housing stock (Section 236).

By the time he completed his tenure, HUD was an “ongoing concern,” Secretary Weaver states. It had a home, a staff, and a nationwide network of offices. Most importantly, it had seen to the passage of landmark legislation to improve the lives of this country’s low-income and minority citizens. As a testament to the commitment that Secretary Weaver engendered, none of the some 78 people—Presidential appointees, “Schedule Cs,” and Civil Service personnel—who comprised his staff resigned during his tenure. “The President counted on us to create a new Department,” Secretary Weaver says, “and we did.”

Robert Coldwell Wood

Although his tenure as Secretary of HUD was brief—the final 27 days of the Johnson administration—Robert Wood was instrumental in the founding of the Department, first as a Presidential academic adviser, then as HUD Under Secretary from 1966 to 1968. In 1964 and 1965, President Johnson had asked Dr. Wood to chair two task forces on urban and metropolitan affairs that led to rent supplements and the Model Cities program and helped to develop the concept of the new agency.

Secretary Wood remembers HUD as committed to “place and community,” describing the 1966 Act as “an effort to restore urban neighborhoods.” Of the origins of HUD, Dr. Wood says:

HUD began as the embodiment of contradictory notions, concepts, and policies. It grew out of the Housing and Home Finance Agency (HHFA), the housing part, where the basic focus was on making it easier, through FHA, for first the middle class, and then the poor to get financing. The urban element was added in the first Kennedy proposal and secured by President Johnson. But it was added in such a way that the housing people always worried about the notion, and the urban people, the mayors in particular, worried about housing. What tail was wagging what dog became a source of conflict from the moment the Department was established. The Department originated because of the concerns of academics and mayors who wanted a voice in the Kennedy Cabinet. The housing people were added because they were troubled that their agenda would be neglected.

The focus of HUD in the Johnson era was on the enactment of the 1966 and 1968 Acts, the latter being the first quantitative specification of housing goals—26 million units in 10 years would be set aside for the poor. Between legislative victories, HUD dealt with the 1967 urban riots: some 60 in all, most prominently in Newark and Detroit. By the end of Secretary Wood’s 27 days, just as HUD began its campaign to inform the public about the new fair housing program, the Republicans took the helm.

George W. Romney

It was 1969 when former Michigan Governor George W. Romney joined the new Republican administration of President Richard M. Nixon as Secretary of HUD. The riots, the sit-ins, and the demonstrations were continuing. Charred buildings from the previous year’s riots illustrated the anger and frustration of low-income city residents regarding racial discrimination, housing problems, and the lack of job opportunities that plagued the Nation’s capital. The exodus of the urban middle class to the security of two-car garages and perfectly manicured lawns in suburbia was in full swing. The Federal Government’s urban renewal and Model Cities programs, once believed to be the answer to the decline of America’s metropolitan areas, were proving ineffective. By January 1969, many Model Cities programs were only in the planning stages.

Shortly after he took office, President Nixon assembled the White House Council for Urban Affairs to develop a new Federal urban strategy. Although Secretary Romney had a voice in shaping that policy, he focused most of his energies on implementing the provisions of the new Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970.

During the next 2 years, Secretary Romney’s chief goals were threefold: increase the volume of private housing production, demonstrate the feasibility of mass production techniques in the construction of housing, and reorganize HUD so that it would take on a more purely administrative role in the urban programs of the executive branch.

From the outset, Secretary Romney pushed for increases in subsidized housing production. Under his leadership the total number of assisted-housing units rose from 162,722 in 1968 to 190,251 in 1969. In 1970 HUD subsidized the production of more than 400,000 housing units, primarily under the Section 235 program for low-income homeowners and the Section 236 program for renters.

Secretary Romney, who was once the president of American Motors, believed that the cost of housing could be substantially reduced if more construction took place in the factory, rather than onsite, and if modular construction techniques were more widely used. Operation Breakthrough made this vision a reality. Begun in 1969, Breakthrough fostered the assembling of mass-produced, factory-built housing that employed the latest developments in housing technology. In an interview for this article shortly before his death, Secretary Romney described the program:

At the time we started, there was no national standard. You couldn't erect the same housing unit throughout the State because you had building codes that varied all over the State, sometimes in the same community. We had to overcome that, as well as labor's resistance to the idea of manufactured housing in factories, in order to get the program going.

Although Breakthrough did not revolutionize housing production, it did result in the construction of more than 2,700 units of new housing at 8 different sites. In addition, Breakthrough brought into being a number of important innovations in housing technology, such as the smoke alarm, and fostered the elimination of many antiquated building codes, which were a major stumbling block to the emergence of standardized housing construction.

A far less ambitious demonstration project, Operation Rehab, undertook to remodel absentee-owned apartment units in 29 cities and underlined Secretary Romney's interest in salvaging usable structures within central cities.

While HUD was busy implementing new housing programs, President Nixon and his urban affairs advisers were drafting what they viewed as an administrative revolution in Federal funding, Secretary Romney recalled. This policy came to light in President Nixon's New Federalism address delivered on August 8, 1969. One measure called for the consolidation of HUD and other Federal agencies within a Department of Community Development. Another sought to simplify and reduce the number of housing programs administered by the Department. The President's special revenue-sharing proposal for community development called for combining all Federal grant-in-aid programs for community development in a single block grant program. A community development block grant bill won congressional approval in 1974.

Another concept tested and proved during this period was the voucher system. Secretary Romney believed that "giving people vouchers to go out and locate their own housing was a superior method to helping low-income people find housing." He also became convinced that some of the programs operating at the time were counterproductive, such as urban renewal and Model Cities. During his tenure Model Cities was transformed from a demonstration program into a vehicle for revenue sharing.

The most noteworthy urban legislation to emerge in his early years, he said, was the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1970, a statute that introduced a Federal program for crime insurance and established a five-member Community Development Corporation authorized to guarantee bonds and lend assistance to new community projects.

In addition to housing production, Secretary Romney noted that he pushed strongly for the execution of fair housing policies. HUD was tasked with carrying out the fair housing policies of the 1968 Civil Rights Act, but Secretary Romney recalled that "we didn't have the power to enforce. We administered the program, but when court actions were needed,

the Department of Justice had to step in.” He drew criticism because of the attention the Department paid to the racial balance requirements contained in applications for Model Cities and urban renewal categorical grants. But he warned localities that they should voluntarily permit the dispersal of minority housing within their jurisdictions or face the likelihood of forced dispersal under Federal court order. President Nixon reiterated this sentiment in a 1971 address that confirmed his administration’s intent to enforce fair housing laws and Executive orders.

Finally, George Romney was the first Secretary confronted with a housing development so dangerous and drug infested that no one wanted to live in it. It was the infamous Pruitt-Igoe complex in St. Louis, Missouri. In Secretary Romney’s words:

When it was built, it was considered the model public housing project in the country. By the time I became Secretary, only about one-third of it was occupied. Nobody wanted to live there if they could avoid it because of the conditions—the murders, the drugs, the prostitutes. I had the building demolished, even though we still owed \$36 million on it, because it cost more to operate.

In August 1972 Secretary Romney informed the press that he would leave his position following the Presidential election. As Secretary Romney stepped down, he spoke in words reminiscent of Robert Weaver in support of a “real city,” a metropolitan, regional approach as the solution to urban problems. He called for a reappraisal of Federal housing programs and suggested that the Federal Government separate its efforts to stimulate private housing production from the Federal subsidies to help house low-income families.

James T. Lynn

James T. Lynn was a corporate lawyer in private practice in Cleveland when President Nixon, at the beginning of his first term, tapped him to become General Counsel of the U.S. Department of Commerce. About halfway through those first 4 years, the President named Mr. Lynn Under Secretary of Commerce. When the President began his second term, he asked Mr. Lynn to join his Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. Secretary Lynn led HUD through the tumultuous years of Watergate—a time, he recalls, when “nearly every question I was asked by the press related to Watergate rather than to the work we were trying to accomplish.” The questions continued until several months into the administration of President Gerald R. Ford, when Secretary Lynn became Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

When Secretary Lynn arrived at HUD, the number of loan payment defaults and property abandonments by those being assisted through Federal housing programs was massive and growing. Defaults and abandonments were devastating the very neighborhoods the Government was attempting to improve, particularly in the inner city. “People who had been given homes didn’t understand the concept of homeownership,” says Secretary Lynn. “When the furnace needed repairs they called to ask when someone was going to come and fix it. When told that making repairs was their responsibility—a responsibility of homeownership—and they couldn’t afford to make the repairs they simply abandoned the property and defaulted on their loans.”

Calling for reform of the Federal Government’s role in housing and community assistance, President Nixon suspended both the housing programs for low- and moderate-income persons and the principal HUD categorical grant programs for communities—including urban renewal and Model Cities—and impounded the funds already appropriated for these programs. Attack in the courts quickly followed.

As Secretary Lynn recalls, his key objectives were fourfold:

First, deal as effectively as possible with the disastrous default situation in the field. Second, assist the President in identifying and implementing needed reforms in housing and community programs. Third, complete the design and start-up of full-scale simulated programs in selected communities to test the desirability of housing allowances and vouchers. And, finally, improve management within the Department.

A study by the Department, completed on Secretary Lynn's watch, *Housing in the Seventies*, became the basis for President Nixon's legislative proposals for revising assisted housing programs. The strategy presented in that report deemphasized new housing construction in favor of rehabilitation and moved toward cash assistance to the beneficiary and away from the housing provider. This strategy was buttressed by full-scale simulated program experiments of various approaches to housing allowances. It has been embraced, at least in concept, by every subsequent President and now appears to have gained substantial bipartisan support. In his "Better Communities Act," President Nixon proposed abolishing the suspended categorical grants to communities in favor of block grants.

Successful court defense of the President's impoundments of funding for the existing programs set the stage for Congress and the administration to come together to enact the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, signed into law on August 22. Heralded by the administration as the most important piece of Federal housing legislation since 1968, the Act was broad in scope but had two major titles—Community Development Block Grants (CDBGs) and Section 8 assisted housing. Under its mandate, competition for community development funds was eliminated by stipulation that block grants be awarded to cities and States on a formula basis. States and communities could now decide how they wished to spend funds that had formerly been contained in categorical grant and loan programs. Section 8 established a new subsidized housing program that could be used in place of most existing multifamily housing programs. Section 8 was viewed as less inflationary than earlier new construction programs, because it emphasized leasing and rehabilitation of existing housing stock to shelter the poor. In developing the Section 8 program, lawmakers assumed the existence of healthy, unsubsidized rental markets. Rental rates from such markets were to provide the benchmarks to determine the subsidy ceiling for Section 8 housing.

Ironically, the passage of this Act, the basis for the New Federalism President Nixon had called for in his first term of office, came 2 weeks after his resignation. The task of carrying out the mandates of the Act fell to the Ford administration in an environment of crippling interest rates, skyrocketing construction costs, a sluggish private-sector rental market, and the Nation's first real energy crisis.

Carla Anderson Hills

President Ford named Assistant Attorney General Carla Anderson Hills Secretary of Housing and Urban Development at a time when arresting inflation was gripping the Nation. Consequently, her 2-year term focused on implementing the new provisions of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 and putting in place a strong system of management within the Department.

Secretary Hills remembers her first days at HUD:

I was administering—implementing—brand new legislation ... when I gathered all of my advisers who had been there before I came and asked, “How many units of housing will we be able to get out annually with the new legislation?” The number given to me was 400,000. I went through the various housing programs and the Community Development Block Grant program. I testified on the budget, I think, a week after I got there, and ... when asked how many housing units we had gotten out to date, my answer was zero, nothing, no housing reservations, which is what we called them then. The regulations hadn’t been written between the time that the legislation was passed in August 1974 and my arrival in March 1975. So it was perfectly clear to me that, while the HUD team expected to get 400,000 reservations out in a year, and we were talking in March with the fiscal year ending in June, we simply weren’t going to do what had been frequently advertised in Congress. I told Congress ... we wouldn’t get any units out. That was a very difficult testimony.

After having delivered the bad news, however, the Secretary set about to produce the number of housing units as quickly as possible.

Secretary Hills emphasized rehabilitation, seeking to broaden congressional efforts to have HUD subsidize primarily new housing construction. She released housing from the HUD inventory of foreclosed properties for use in Urban Homesteading programs, earmarked the Section 8 program, and reinstated a revised Section 235 program to help replenish the supply of low- and moderate-income housing, largely from America’s existing housing stock. By the end of her first year, reservations had been made on more than 500,000 housing units. According to Secretary Hills, this was a time when the Department underwent an important transition:

We went from a solely bricks-and-mortar approach to providing shelter. Another change under the new housing program was that the Federal Government provided all of the monies necessary to make the shelter available. It paid everything above 25 percent of a family’s income, up to the fair market rental of the housing. So for very poor people who had no income at all, the Government was paying the entire rent. I think that program worked well to get to the bottom of the economic need.

During 1975 and 1976, the CDBG program won widespread acceptance among participating jurisdictions. Secretary Hills recalls that this program was “very high” on the national agenda. She believes in:

... Getting the monies back closer to the people. I think that the first tier, the local level of government, sees the problems in the community most clearly. Local representatives can literally walk a census tract and see what needs to be done far more clearly than the State or the Federal level of government. Yet the most efficient mechanism of raising the funds to deal with the problems is the Federal Government. The States are in between.... So it has to be a partnership.

This is what the block grant program was all about. At the same time, Secretary Hills says, the administration was beginning to learn that low-income people needed help in handling the responsibilities of housing:

We very often found that housing was not the complete answer. You could put a family into a new housing unit and if they didn't have the means to take care of the leaky roof or the clogged-up plumbing, the unit would deteriorate very rapidly and their frustration would go up very rapidly.... You had some units where the plumbing was literally torn out of the wall.

The second year of Secretary Hills' term ranks as the third best in U.S. history in both the production and sale of new homes, and the best year for the sale of existing housing. The Department supported a number of forays to test the advantages of "housing allowances" and tenant management of public housing. During the Hills years, the Department also subsidized the first large-scale demonstrations of solar heating and other new energy systems for use in homes and apartments. In summarizing her years at HUD, Secretary Hills remarks:

We thought we were making a contribution. Shelter is very basic, and we felt that community development was a source of pride to people all across the country. It enabled neighborhoods to come together. We could demonstrate that cleaning up one or two lots in a block was contagious. Neighbors would begin cleaning up theirs. And, similarly, we could demonstrate that a downward spiral of one or two units in a block was also contagious. If you could stop the downward spiral, you really could maintain a better living environment.

Patricia Roberts Harris

The first African-American woman to hold a Cabinet position and the first to serve as a U.S. ambassador, Patricia Roberts Harris was Secretary of Housing and Urban Development during the first 2 years of the Carter administration. She left the Department in 1979 to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, serving until the end of the Carter administration. In 1982 she joined the faculty of the George Washington University Law School, where she taught until her death in 1985.

"She was a Washington insider, a civil rights leader, and tough as nails," recalls Donna E. Shalala, who was Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research at HUD from 1977 to 1980 and is now Secretary of Health and Human Services. Robert C. Embry, Jr., HUD's Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development at that time, adds, "Secretary Harris was a very strong and outspoken person, and she didn't mind taking on the President or taking on the Office of Management and Budget and making her case very vigorously and forcefully. And she didn't back down to anybody." Mr. Embry recalls:

There were criticisms of [HUD] when we came in, on several counts. One is that poor people were being ignored. So we pressed for an interpretation of the law that emphasized benefiting low- and moderate-income people and defining what that meant. So on the one hand, you can say that there was more central government control. On the other hand, from the point of view of the poor person, you can say it was more enabling of the poor person.

At the same time, suburban jurisdictions were being told that they must provide low-income housing if they wanted Federal money, which could be (and was) seen as central government dictating rather than letting local governments decide what they wanted to do.

HUD was again in transition. It was moving toward something many had been talking about for the previous decade—public-private partnerships—and the showpiece was the Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) program, intended to help cities rebuild their downtown areas. UDAG demonstrated what a flexible, quick response HUD could develop. It opened the pipeline to build housing again. Mr. Embry remembers:

It was one of the first things that President Carter presented to Congress. It was the most successful Federal economic development program by far, as measured by several factors. One was its honesty. Every General Accounting Office investigation and [congressional] minority investigation showed no favoritism and no abuse, no money getting paid off, no indictments or convictions or congressional findings. Secondly, in terms of the success of the program, no Federal money was spent unless something was actually built, unlike the industrial parks and other programs. Third, the amount of money attracted in return for public money [spent] was very high.

A UDAG Vignette

The statute that established the UDAG program was a very open-ended statute that, sort of amazingly, left almost total discretion to HUD as to who would get the money, under what terms. HUD added a requirement for private capital to leverage the public capital. That was not in the legislation, which would have given the money away to people.

In fact, the first mayor in the door wanted a grant to build a convention center. There was some political commotion because of his clout, or thought-to-be clout.

So this influential mayor, highly connected in the [Democratic] Party, came in and wanted one of the first action grants to be a gift for a convention center, and [Secretary Harris] had the strength of character to say no.

It was a very successful program, but there was a lot of pressure to politicize it, because we had so much discretion that we could give grants to friends of the President or the Democratic Party or key Members of Congress or influential lawyers or lobbyists or mayors, and so forth. Much to the President's credit, and to Pat Harris' credit, for political reasons there wasn't one such grant made, with one exception: a city in the South that was moved up one or two ranks to obtain a grant for which it was already qualified.

But other than that one influence out of hundreds of grants, they were all made on objective criteria recommended by the Civil Service staff.

Robert C. Embry, Jr.

There was pressure on Secretary Harris to address housing issues, but little focus on the problems of cities. Moreover, the Secretary's ability to affect anything urban was marginal, because most Federal expenditures that affected cities did not come under her control.

One positive change during Secretary Harris' tenure was the completion of a study on the use of vouchers. Secretary Shalala says:

We finished the voucher study, so that we knew a lot about what would happen if you handed vouchers to people.... A debate flourished within the Department about whether to finish the study. I remember Pat Harris had some concerns that it was a Republican program. The rest of us felt that it was the most important housing study in a generation. We really needed to know a lot about housing vouchers and how they worked. It turned out that they worked better for the elderly than they did for large families.... For some people, housing is an income problem. For other people, it's a supply problem. And you can't have a single strategy. I think that the Department in that era really got the pipeline moving, the housing pipeline.

For then-Assistant Secretary of Housing/Federal Housing Commissioner Lawrence B. Simons, the choice was clear: "Production. Plus, preserve existing housing and management. You [must] also get better people to run the program. But our mission was to get housing built for low-income people and to manage the program effectively and productively."

Sounding a theme often—but not always—heard at HUD, Mr. Simons says that "the purpose of housing production was to help the working poor. HUD produced and preserved housing for working poor people—those who had an opportunity to work their way out of poverty."

But HUD was bogged down by bureaucracy. "We argued a lot about whether we should build housing in inner cities that were essentially segregated" states Secretary Shalala. "I think that Pat Harris was torn on the issue because she knew there was a limited amount we could demand that the suburbs do. And she wanted to get housing up for low-income people. She never lost her focus on low-income people." The Secretary adds:

HUD was an interesting place, because we were developing a national urban policy. President Carter was genuinely interested in some kind of an integrated urban policy. In the end, we put together a kind of umbrella policy, but the important thing was that we really had a Department that was full of energy and action. From the point of view of research and policy it was the heyday, because we actually used policy findings to influence programs. We used a lot of evaluations. We had a lot of very innovative programs that have now been incorporated, whether it's helping the elderly to stay in their own houses or integrating services into public housing.

Mr. Embry comments:

We were asked to produce the first Urban Policy Report in 1978 and again in 1980, and that raised a whole host of issues. Did anybody care about there being an urban policy? Who should be the convener to come up with the

urban policy? That task was given to Pat Harris, but the other agencies really had no significant interest in participating. They had their own agendas and were held accountable to their own constituents and didn't see themselves as answerable to the Secretary of HUD.

There is even a further question: Is an explicit urban policy wise? Most people in the United States didn't live in cities, and they increasingly identified cities with minorities and poor people. So, to the extent that we tried to articulate an urban policy, it didn't have many constituents, and it focused people on problems that they'd rather not face. For instance, we wanted to target development in cities, and that raised a hue and cry from people who weren't in cities, and that was most people. They wanted development to go where they were. So that was a continual and unresolvable dilemma, as to whether to have an urban policy at all.

Another policy area was the CDBG program, which had come into being under the Republicans and had the effect of taking money that had been heavily targeted on distressed older cities and distressed neighborhoods within those cities and spreading it around the country to all kinds of cities and suburbs. How should that money be spent? Should the program be focused on helping poor people, or should the focus be on community development? Who should decide?

Some of these questions have a familiar ring today. "There will always be questions," Mr. Embry says, "but there's no clear answer to them."

Secretary Shalala says:

We were not under attack on the Hill. We had a relatively easy time from Congress, in part, I think, because we were actually delivering in their districts quickly. Whether it was housing or UDAG grants, there were lots of things going on with relatively small amounts of money. We didn't have big money at that point, but we made things work. We had two very strong Secretaries, Pat Harris and then Moon Landrieu, who were very knowledgeable about the populations that we served and about the institutions that we worked with.

The cities had more leverage and were more visible then. The mayors were more powerful in the politics of the Carter administration and of this town. It's been sort of sad for me to see how the Governors dominate the discussions now. The mayors are almost bit players, and they shouldn't be. Even though Jimmy Carter was a Governor, the White House was more oriented toward urban policy in those days. It was literally a different era.

But I don't want to give the impression that it was the Johnson administration, with lots of money. It was just the opposite. There was a lot of discussion about leveraging, about using glue money. In many ways, Enterprise Communities are the heirs of the UDAG grants. They have the same kind of energy and feel that the UDAGs did and the partnerships that are necessary to rebuild communities.

Jay Janis

When Patricia Harris left to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare on August 3, 1979, Jay Janis became Acting Secretary of the Department. He had served as executive assistant to Secretary Weaver from 1966 to 1968, special assistant to the Under Secretary of Commerce, director of equal employment opportunity at the U.S. Department of Commerce and, finally, Under Secretary of HUD during the Harris years. Mr. Janis died in 1992.

“HUD had two missions under Pat Harris,” Mr. Simons recalls, “community development and housing. Community development was Bob Embry’s responsibility and housing was mine. Jay Janis monitored the Department’s staff functions, and he did an excellent job at it. He was a management person. He was Acting Secretary for a short time after Secretary Harris left. He didn’t make any major decisions because President Carter nominated Moon Landrieu for the job and Jay didn’t want to infringe on his prerogatives.”

Maurice “Moon” Landrieu

When Secretary Harris left HUD to become Secretary of HEW, President Carter appointed Moon Landrieu to be the new Secretary of HUD. Secretary Landrieu served from September 24, 1979, to the end of the Carter term in 1981. He came to Washington from New Orleans, where he had been a lawyer, a member of the Louisiana house of representatives, city councilman, and mayor. He had also served as president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

“Moon was an easygoing, very shrewd, big-city mayor,” Secretary Shalala recalls. “He was used to being pounded on. When something appeared in *The Washington Post*, he did not get nervous, because he was used to being a mayor and everything being on the front page.”

“My contribution was to get the most out of people there at HUD,” Secretary Landrieu says, adding, “The players win, not the coach. The players were the Assistant Secretaries and the technical staff people and field operatives. When President Carter arrived, coming out of the Nixon/Ford years, HUD had been downplayed. It was dispirited.

“I tried to be a good cheerleader,” he says. “I think I improved the performance at HUD. There is a lot to be said for making what was there work better.”

Secretary Landrieu believes the Federal Government of the time suffered from some of the same chronic problems that it suffers from today:

We have very high expectations, unrealistic expectations. At the first minor failure in a program, we abandon course. We cannot stay the course. There is a tendency in the Federal system to buy into a new approach, throw a few bucks at it, declare a victory, or accept defeat and walk away. There are a few clear-cut victories in areas such as medicine, where research actually conquers diseases, but not so in the social area, not in the growth and development of cities. We can’t solve all the problems in cities. We can only try to manage them as the population shifts and changes, creating new problems.

One ongoing debate during the Carter years, and throughout the course of HUD’s history generally, has been definitions: What is a city, and what is its relationship to the Federal Government and to the States?

“Along with that issue,” Secretary Landrieu says, “the Nation has difficulty defining the responsibility of the Federal Government to ‘that thing we call a city.’ Cities are not mentioned in the Constitution. We continue along the road without a clear understanding of the relationship among the Federal Government, States, and cities.

“Republicans and Democrats view cities differently,” he continues. “Republicans see them as centers of democratic political activity. Democrats see them as centers of political activity and social progress. Under either political party, however, cities may be profoundly underappreciated,” the Secretary says, adding:

An important point about cities is their synergism. They combine universities, great research centers, centers of learning, business activity, religious institutions, and other elements that sometimes produce marvelous results, the very highest in human achievement, and sometimes produce horrible results, the worst of human conduct.

“One of the major problems facing HUD planners and managers during the Carter years,” adds the Secretary, “involved the growing inability of cities to support themselves.” Older center cities have become poorer and poorer. New Orleans is now the second poorest place in Louisiana, and one of the poorest in the country.

“People and money have shifted to the suburbs,” Secretary Landrieu adds. The question is whether suburbanites can be educated about the importance of maintaining central cities.

“We need to clarify the relationship among Federal, State, and local governments,” he says. “Each has its own responsibility. Maybe there is no perfect solution, but only the Federal Government can set reasonable national standards.”

A Moon Landrieu Story

Moon was very funny. He called me in one day and he said, “You’ve got to cut the cost of public housing.” He said, “Bring me in a list of all the costs in a public housing project.” I had this long list, and his response was, “Okay, I’ve gone through it, and I’ve cut some things that we don’t have to put in the projects.” I looked at the list, and he had cut out the bathtubs.

He said, “People can just use showers.” And I replied, “We can’t do that.” He answered with, “Okay, bring me the research that says you have to have bathtubs.”

So I walked in the next day, and I said, “Moon, I’ve decided to hire a consultant. We don’t have any research.” He said, “You’re always hiring consultants. We don’t need a consultant.” I said, “Call your wife,” and so he called her up, and she said, “Moon, you idiot. How are people going to wash their little kids”—Moon had nine children—“if they don’t have bathtubs?” Moon said to me, “Oh, how did you know that?” I answered, “Moon, you have all these kids. I knew your wife would know the importance of bathtubs. Public housing projects are full of little kids.”

He was very funny, though. Very quick.

Donna E. Shalala

Samuel R. Pierce, Jr.

In January 1981 the Reagan administration arrived in Washington armed with what it perceived as a mandate from the voters, and soon launched an economic recovery program based on four policy objectives:

- A substantial reduction in the growth of Federal spending.
- The prudent elimination of excessive regulation.
- A sizable cut in the Federal tax burden.
- Development of a monetary policy geared to stabilizing the money supply and revitalizing the economy.

President Reagan chose as his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Samuel R. Pierce, Jr., a prominent New York City lawyer who had served as a New York judge as well as the Assistant to the Under Secretary of Labor and former general counsel of the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The new Secretary soon focused on the first two policy objectives of the President's economic recovery program.

Secretary Pierce looks back at the Reagan administration and recounts how the assisted-housing debt was reduced from \$240 billion to less than \$200 billion. At the same time, he points out, the number of assisted families increased from 3.2 million in 1981 to 4.3 million by the end of 1988. "In short, we did much more with less," the Secretary says.

Moreover, HUD's overall outlays were under budget for 6 out of the 8 years that President Reagan was in office. Secretary Pierce observes, "The final result was that HUD was under budget by more than \$26.6 billion for the 8 years of the Reagan administration."

In addition, the housing industry grew substantially between 1981 and 1989. FHA was authorized to issue mortgage insurance for less than \$40 billion in 1981. At the administration's initiative, Congress raised this ceiling to \$96 billion in 1987. Ginnie Mae increased its issuance of mortgage-based securities from \$111 billion in 1981 to more than \$500 billion by the end of 1988.

"Thus, in the 8 years of the Reagan administration," Secretary Pierce observes, "Ginnie Mae issued securities valued at almost four times more than it had issued in the 13 years between its founding in 1968 and 1981. The availability of federally guaranteed credit resulted in homeownership for more than 4.4 million additional households between 1981 and 1987."

HUD also extended its international presence during the Reagan administration. "For the first time in history," Secretary Pierce says, "Ginnie Mae securities were placed on international markets. Ginnie Mae obtained a listing for its securities on the Luxembourg Exchange in June 1983; in 1985, trading was initiated in Asia. By 1988 an estimated \$10 billion to \$15 billion in foreign funds were invested in Ginnie Mae securities as the result of this initiative."

The United States is signatory to a number of international agreements for exchanges of information on housing and urban affairs. Secretary Pierce occupied a leadership role in these international activities:

During the Reagan administration, HUD's international activities were emphasized for the opportunities they presented to contribute to the Nation's overall foreign policy goals. In addition, increased international contacts were recognized to offer the possibility of enhanced foreign trade, the expanded sale of U.S. housing-related products overseas, and a beneficial exchange of insights on policy and problem solving among officials with similar responsibilities.

I led a number of delegations, which sometimes included officials of American companies in housing-related industries, to meetings in China, Egypt, Singapore, and the Soviet Union. I also had the honor in 1983 of being elected chairman of the first Urban Affairs Ministers Conference in the history of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

That meeting, held in Paris, was attended by delegates representing the 24 OECD nations and 5 international organizations. Secretary Pierce was reelected chairman of the second OECD Urban Affairs Ministers Conference, held in Paris in 1986.

During his second term, Secretary Pierce points out, President Reagan placed increased emphasis on improving U.S./U.S.S.R. relations. "Consequently, when the Soviets announced plans for an international construction exhibition, known as *Stroyindustriya '87*, to be held in Moscow in May 1987, HUD formulated plans for a significant U.S. presence there." Hundreds of American companies were contacted and encouraged to participate. A total of 116 firms from 26 States and the District of Columbia took part. "It was the largest American private-sector presence ever at a Soviet Union trade show," Secretary Pierce says, "and the first time in nearly 30 years that the United States had taken part in a housing and construction exhibition in the U.S.S.R. under a bilateral agreement."

"Another point I would like to make is that a relentless campaign was waged in HUD between 1981 and 1988 against fraud, waste, and mismanagement," Secretary Pierce says. "The results documented for those years showed, among other things, more than 2,300 convictions of persons or firms doing business with HUD and more than \$300 million in unnecessary expenditures avoided."

Fair housing also occupied a central role during the Pierce years:

Repeated attempts before 1981 to strengthen the enforcement provisions of fair housing legislation included under Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 had met with failure. However, our sustained effort at HUD resulted in the Fair Housing Amendments Act, passed by Congress in August 1988 and signed into law by President Reagan in September 1988. This Act made it easier for victims of discrimination to sue for redress, stiffened the penalties against offenders, and extended protection under the law to persons with disabilities and families with children.

A HUD account of the Reagan years points out that, under Secretary Pierce, the Department increased homeownership opportunities by attracting more investment (both domestic and foreign) in mortgages and mortgage-related instruments, by streamlining FHA mortgage insurance and redirecting it to those not well served by the private sector, and by seeking solutions to housing affordability problems. HUD sharply cut back excessive paperwork requirements for its community development programs, the account reports, while fostering local flexibility and decisionmaking and the proliferation of public-private partnerships in economic development. The Department “made progress in helping the poor to meet their housing needs while drastically lowering the cost of such help,” Secretary Pierce states. “We continued and reinforced support for equal housing opportunity and aggressively pursued strengthened enforcement of the Nation’s fair housing law.”

Jack F. Kemp

Jack Kemp had 18 years of experience representing the interests of his Upstate New York constituents in the U.S. House of Representatives in 1989 when newly elected President George Bush asked him to join the Cabinet as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. The popular former professional football quarterback’s task was twofold: provide a roadmap for a paradigm shift on housing and urban economic policies, and find a solution to one of the most vexing problems of the 1980s: the homeless, particularly those who were socially dysfunctional.

As Secretary Kemp remembers, a high-priority order of business involved housing, and he opted for homeownership over incremental rental housing subsidies. He recalls:

[President] Lincoln pointed out [that people] treat that which they own differently from that which they don’t own. So clearly, promoting low-income homeownership would ... impact positively on families and communities. I come out of the Lincoln wing of the Republican Party with a strong belief that low-income people, newly emerging immigrant families, people who want to climb out of the trap of poverty and welfare, need assets—ownership.

Many believed that providing homeownership opportunities to low-income persons was an impossible task. Secretary Kemp, however, remained convinced of the validity of the concept throughout his tenure, adding that, at a recent housing conference sponsored by Fannie Mae and HUD, one of the presenters reported findings that “low-income owner households [have] higher levels of self-satisfaction, more confidence, greater happiness, and much more desirable physical health than low-income renters.”²

Homelessness had become a major problem in urban America. The homeless seemed to be everywhere: sleeping on city heating grates, camping out in train stations and bus terminals, begging for money on corners and along city streets, and spreading out on worn blankets in once-pristine urban parks. President Bush was under tremendous pressure from homeless advocates, city dwellers, and businesses to solve the problem. Because many considered the crux of the homeless issue to be a lack of affordable housing, HUD and its Secretary took center stage on the issue. Secretary Kemp found the problem to be more than one of shelter:

The homeless issue was not, in our view, simply a lack of affordable rental housing. We helped return the debate over homelessness to a reality by advocating a program called Shelter Plus Care, which is a concept that refocused the debate on the underlying causes of homelessness; that is, mental illness,

drug and alcohol addiction, dysfunctional families and, of course, the problems that would be exacerbated by recession and unemployment and a loss of hope in urban policy prescriptions for the economy. [Although] housing policy must still be concerned with sheltering the homeless ... the overall issue ... is not just the focal point of housing policy. Instead, it is the domain of social services, mental health-care professionals, and drug and alcohol rehab programs. I think that's a lasting accomplishment of my [term at HUD] and is a genuine paradigm shift to the benefit of the people who are in genuine need of shelter, as well as the additional social services that go along with that shelter.

Reform of an ailing FHA also became a goal. Secretary Kemp had obtained an FHA loan when he was first married and playing professional football with the San Diego Chargers. To him "FHA was, if not sacrosanct, pretty close to a vital part of the American dream ... the universal dream of homeownership." Under his direction FHA's financial position was strengthened through the addition of risk-based premiums, capital targets, and other changes. Even then, however, Secretary Kemp believes that "it was really the improving economy and lower interest rates that saved FHA."

Jack Kemp gives much credit to the men and women of HUD for the successes during his 4 years as Secretary: "The civil servants, the so-called bureaucracy, performed unbelievably. I think these men and women deserve the credit. [They] wanted to perform, did perform, and performed to a high ethical and moral standard."

In a final comment, Secretary Kemp reminisced about what he called his biggest "failure":

[We] could never get the Congress ... to go for a radical Enterprise Zone concept to channel credit and capital into the inner cities to encourage entrepreneurial opportunities and job opportunities. I am still convinced to this day that the greatest problem for minority entrepreneurs in the inner city is this lack of access to capital. And the resultant unemployment rate among minority men and women, and among low-income whites as well, is so high that you have a festering economic-social problem. While I cannot defend or justify the Los Angeles riot, I can explain it to a certain extent by suggesting that, if you put a large number of people on the street without any job or hope of a job, you have a recipe for a serious disturbance, even a riot, if there is a spark that might set it off.

I am convinced that where people have a stake in the neighborhood, a stake in their own future, you will find it not only gives them a long-run view of their lives, it extends their outlook far beyond just the existential moment, and it also builds respect, not only for their own property but other peoples' property. Where the opposite condition occurs, you lose respect for private property, having none yourself.

What Are They Doing Now?

Former Secretaries maintain links to their tenure at HUD. Quietly retired in New York City, Robert Weaver talks frequently by phone with Robert Wood, who is senior fellow of the McCormack Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Secretary Wood's latest book, *Whatever Possessed the President? Academic Experts and*

Presidential Policy: 1960–1988, was published in 1993. James Lynn's "retirement" includes shuttling from Washington, D.C., to New York City and places beyond as a senior adviser to Lazard Freres, investment bankers.

Carla Hills is chairman and chief executive officer of the international business consulting firm of Hills and Company, which takes her to cities in emerging markets around the globe, from Beijing to Buenos Aires, from Bangalore to Beirut. Moon Landrieu is a judge on the court of appeals in New Orleans. Sam Pierce practices law part time and is engaged in business projects. As codirector of Empower America, Jack Kemp runs that busy Washington conservative action organization and chairs the Republican Party's commission on a new Federal tax system. Donna Shalala is Secretary of Health and Human Services, Bob Embry is head of the Abell Foundation in Baltimore, and Larry Simons practices law in Washington, D.C.

Carla Hills summed up the HUD experience for all her colleagues when she called it simply, "exhilarating."

Author

Joseph Foote is a writer living in Washington, D.C. He earned his A.B. degree from Williams College and his J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Notes

1. Secretary George W. Romney, who died on July 26, 1995, was interviewed shortly before his death. Secretary Patricia Roberts Harris is deceased. Observations on HUD during her tenure were obtained from Donna E. Shalala, Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research during the Harris years and currently Secretary of Health and Human Services; Robert C. Embry, Jr., Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development in the Harris years and currently president of the Abell Foundation in Baltimore, Maryland; and Lawrence B. Simons, Assistant Secretary for Housing/Federal Housing Commissioner during the Harris years and now a lawyer practicing in Washington, D.C. In the interim between the departure of Secretary Harris to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and the arrival of Secretary Maurice "Moon" Landrieu, the late Under Secretary Jay Janis served as Acting Secretary of HUD. The comments of Secretary Shalala, Mr. Embry, and Mr. Simons cover events during Mr. Janis' time in office.
2. "Homeownership for Low-Income Households: Benefits and Costs for Residents in Communities," The Fannie Mae Annual Housing Conference, held in Washington, D.C., May 24, 1995.

Biographies

Robert Clifton Weaver

Economist and educator Robert Clifton Weaver was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson to be the first Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, guiding the new agency from 1966 to 1968. Prior to serving at HUD, he was the advisor on Negro Affairs at the U.S. Department of the Interior (1933–37), a special assistant to the administrator of the U.S. Housing Authority (1937–40), an administrative assistant at the Office of Personnel Management (1940–44), a visiting professor at Columbia University (1947) and New

York University (1947–49), and the director of opportunity fellowships at the J.H. Whitney Foundation (1949–54). From 1954 to 1960, Dr. Weaver held a variety of housing positions in New York State government. After leaving HUD, Secretary Weaver was president of Bernard Baruch College of the City University of New York City (1969–70). He now lives in New York City.

Robert Coldwell Wood

Robert Coldwell Wood was Under Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1966 to 1968, and served briefly as Secretary during the last month of the Johnson administration. Dr. Wood interrupted a distinguished teaching career at Harvard University (1953–57) and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (1957–66, 1969–70) to join HUD. In 1969 Secretary Wood returned to teaching at MIT and served as chairman of the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority and director of the Harvard-MIT Joint Center for Urban Studies (1969–70). He then became president of the University of Massachusetts (1970–77), superintendent of Boston public schools (1978–80), and a professor at the University of Massachusetts (1981–83) and Wesleyan University (1983–93). Dr. Wood currently resides in Boston.

George W. Romney

George W. Romney served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development under President Nixon from 1969 to 1972. From 1939 until his election as Governor of Michigan in 1962, the Secretary occupied several high-level positions at the Automobile Manufacturers Association, Nash Kelvinator Corporation, and American Motors Corporation. After leaving the Nixon Cabinet, Secretary Romney became chairman and chief executive officer of the National Center for Voluntary Action (1973–79). During his retirement in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, Secretary Romney retained an active interest in urban affairs. At the time of his death on July 26, 1995, he was involved in efforts to enhance communication between Detroit and its suburbs.

James T. Lynn

James T. Lynn was Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1973 to 1975, during the Nixon and Ford administrations. A lawyer in private practice, Mr. Lynn was tapped by President Nixon to be general counsel of the Commerce Department and later Under Secretary of Commerce. After serving at HUD, Secretary Lynn was President Ford's Director of the Office of Management and Budget (1975–77) before returning to his private law practice in 1977. From 1984 to 1992, the Secretary was chairman and chief executive officer of Aetna Life and Casualty. He is currently a senior advisor at the investment banking firm of Lazard Freres and Co. and lives in Bethesda, Maryland.

Carla Anderson Hills

Carla Anderson Hills became the third woman to hold a Cabinet position when President Ford appointed her to be Secretary of Housing and Urban Development in 1975. Prior to serving at HUD, Secretary Hills, was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Los Angeles (1958–61), a cofounder and partner in the Los Angeles law firm of Munger, Tolls, Hills, and Rickerhauser (1962–74), and Assistant Attorney General (1974–75). Upon leaving HUD in 1977, Hills went back to private practice in Washington, D.C. She also served as chairman of The Urban Institute (1983–88) and U.S. Trade Representative for the Bush administration (1989–93). Secretary Hills is currently chairman and chief executive officer of the international business consulting firm of Hills and Company.

Patricia Roberts Harris

Patricia Roberts Harris was the first African-American woman to hold a Cabinet position, as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1977 to 1979 in the Carter administration. Prior to her appointment as Secretary of HUD, Secretary Harris was a staff attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice (1960–61) and served on the faculty of the Howard University Law School (1961–63, 1967–69). In 1965 President Johnson appointed Secretary Harris to be Ambassador to Luxembourg (1965–67), the first African-American woman to hold an ambassadorship. Mrs. Harris left HUD in 1979 to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. In 1982 she joined the faculty of George Washington University Law School, where she taught until her death in 1985.

Jay Janis

Jay Janis was Under Secretary of Housing and Urban Development during the Carter administration and served briefly as Acting Secretary when Patricia Roberts Harris left to become Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. After a 14-year career as a developer and builder in Miami, Mr. Janis served as executive assistant to HUD Secretary Robert Weaver (1966–68), special assistant to the Under Secretary of Commerce, director of equal employment opportunity at the U.S. Department of Commerce, chairman of the Florida Governor's Council on State Housing Goals (1974–75), and senior vice president for management and business affairs at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Mr. Janis died in 1992.

Robert C. Embry, Jr.

Robert C. Embry, Jr., was Assistant Secretary for Community Planning and Development at HUD from 1977 to 1981. Prior to his appointment by President Carter, Mr. Embry practiced law and served in a number of elective and appointed posts in Baltimore. After leaving HUD in 1981, he returned to private practice and served as chairman of the Governor's Commission on Quality Education (1987) and as a member of the Board of School Commissioners for the Baltimore City public schools (1983–86). From 1989 to 1994, Mr. Embry was a member of (and also president) of the Maryland State Board of Education. Since 1987 he has been president of the Abell Foundation.

Donna E. Shalala

Donna E. Shalala was HUD's Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research from 1977 to 1980. Before coming to HUD, Dr. Shalala served in the Peace Corps in Iran (1965–69). She held tenured professorships at Columbia University (1972–79), the City University of New York (CUNY) (1980–88), and the University of Wisconsin (1989–93), and served as director and treasurer of the Municipal Assistance Corporation (1975–77), which helped reverse New York City's financial collapse. After leaving HUD, Dr. Shalala became president of Hunter College at CUNY and chancellor of the University of Wisconsin at Madison, the first woman to head a Big Ten university (1988–93). Since 1993 Dr. Shalala has served as President Clinton's Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Lawrence B. Simons

Lawrence B. Simons was Assistant Secretary for Housing-Federal Housing Commissioner at HUD from 1977 to 1981, after being employed as a private attorney and a developer/builder in New York City. After his tenure at HUD, Mr. Simons became a partner in the Washington, D.C., law firm of Powell, Goldstein, Frazier, and Murphy, where he still practices. Between 1981 and 1987, he was the presidentially appointed director of the Pennsylvania Avenue Development Corporation. Mr. Simons has also served in leadership positions at several housing-related organizations, including the National Housing Conference, National Housing Trust, Center for Democracy, and National Association of Home Builders.

Maurice “Moon” Landrieu

Moon Landrieu, a lawyer and politician, was President Carter’s Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1979 to 1981. Prior to serving at HUD, Secretary Landrieu was a partner in the New Orleans law firm of Landrieu, Calogero, and Kronlage (1958–69), a member of the Louisiana house of representatives (1960–65), a councilman-at-large for the city of New Orleans (1966–70), Mayor of New Orleans (1970–78), president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors (1975–76), and president of the Joseph C. Canizaro real estate development firm (1978–79), where he returned in 1981. Mr. Landrieu is a judge on the court of appeals in New Orleans.

Samuel R. Pierce, Jr.

Samuel R. Pierce, Jr., was Secretary of Housing and Urban Development during the Reagan administration, from 1981 to 1989. In addition to his law practice, Secretary Pierce was a New York City assistant district attorney (1949–52), assistant U.S. attorney (1952–54), Under Secretary of Labor (1954–56), and counsel to the U.S. House of Representatives Antitrust Subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee (1956–57). He has also been an adjunct professor at the New York University School of Law (1957–70), a New York county judge (1959–60), and general counsel of the U.S. Department of the Treasury (1970–73). Mr. Pierce now lives in New York City.

Jack F. Kemp

Jack F. Kemp served as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 1989 to 1992 during the Bush administration. After early fame as a professional football quarterback for the San Diego Chargers and the Buffalo Bills, Mr. Kemp was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1979. He represented districts in western New York State and the Buffalo area until his appointment to HUD in 1989. After leaving HUD, Secretary Kemp cofounded Empower America, a public policy and advocacy organization, and serves on its board of directors. He is also a visiting fellow at the Hoover Institution and a distinguished fellow at the Heritage Foundation.