

DISCUSSION PAPER

Chicago Conference

Mobilizing Urban Coalitions

Chicago Circle Center, University of Illinois October 17th, 1967

Introduction

With any new national effort such as that being undertaken by The Urban Coalition, it may be expected that organizational structure methods will continue to undergo change. For this reason The Urban Coalition is understandably following a flexible course of action. The ideas set forth in this discussion paper may be expected to undergo further change as they are subject to continuing review by both national and local leadership. The views of those interested in The Urban Coalition are invited and welcome.

Goals

Based upon the Statement of Principles, Goals and Commitments adopted at the August Emergency Convocation, The Urban Coalition's program may be restated as follows:

1. To encourage the Congress to respond affirmatively to the needs of the cities.
2. To encourage public concern with the needs of the cities.
3. To stimulate greater private initiative and effort in dealing with the problems of the cities, including both investment and technical assistance.
4. To stimulate greater support for and interest in ongoing efforts to meet such needs as:
 - job development and manpower training programs
 - open housing efforts
 - urban renewal and reconstruction

--anti-poverty programs

--programs to overcome educational disparities.

Methods

Among the methods that may be followed by The Urban Coalition are the following:

1. Be supportive, not operational. It is expected that The Urban Coalition will support ongoing efforts at both the local and national levels. It may stimulate new undertakings. It will cooperate with such major new efforts as the \$1 billion investment allocation of the insurance industry for center city development. It will give support to local urban coalitions.
2. Stimulate interest in successful examples of action. Through its Task Forces The Urban Coalition will identify, work with, and publicize successful efforts to expand employment, extend lower income housing and equal housing opportunities, new educational programs and the like. The Task Forces hope to serve as catalysts and convenors. They will serve as clearinghouses of local action.
3. Work with the mass media. Through its Task Force on Communications and Public Support and through counterpart committees at the local level, it is hoped that the mass media can be encouraged to focus greater attention on the needs of cities. Broad public understanding of the need for greater resources, of the complexities of the problems involved and the need for urgent action are essential if the goals of The Urban Coalition are to be achieved.

4. To coordinate a national legislative campaign. The Urban Coalition has called upon Congress for action across a broad front to meet the urban crisis. Interpreting and emphasizing the need for national action is as much a local obligation as it is a commitment of the National Steering Committee. Discussions with members of Congress is as much a hometown affair as are appearances before Congressional committees.

Structures

The National Steering Committee at the present time consists of thirty-six members. They are broadly representative of business, labor, local government, religion, civil rights and education. It is expected that two additional members of the Steering Committee will be selected by the Council of Urban Coalitions. As local coalitions are formed they will be invited to designate two representatives to serve on the Council and through this Council provide the National Steering Committee with advice and guidance on matters of national concern. The National Steering Committee has established seven Task Forces and it is expected that local coalitions will develop counterpart units. These are identified and discussed in the attached guidelines. Under consideration for future development is the establishment of a Council of Urban Economic Advisors to assist the Coalition in analyzing the impact of Federal economic, fiscal, tax, and budgetary policies of cities. A second Council of University Urban Studies Centers is being contemplated as a means of channeling the best research ideas concerning urban development into the discussions and plans of both the National Steering Committee and

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and local coalitions. Further additions and modifications in the organization and structure of The Urban Coalition may be expected as experience is gained.

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