

February 17, 1968

NATIONAL COORDINATOR'S WEEKLY REPORT

John W. Gardner this week advised Co-Chairmen Heiskell and Randolph that he accepted the invitation of the Executive Committee to become chief executive officer of the Coalition.

Mr. Gardner, who recently resigned as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, will assume his Coalition duties on March 1. He will serve concurrently as a consultant to the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with offices in Washington, but will be on loan to the Urban Coalition, to which he will devote a major portion of his time.

In their announcement of Mr. Gardner's acceptance, the Co-Chairmen said the Coalition's Executive Committee agreed "enthusiastically and unanimously" last week to ask Mr. Gardner to take the new position. Of Mr. Gardner, they said: "Only a man with the exceptional stature and the rare combination of executive ability, intellect and idealism of John Gardner can provide the leadership needed to achieve the Urban Coalition's goals."

Mr. Gardner said he had discussed the new position with the President "and he urged and encouraged me to accept." The day following the announcement, President Johnson said he was "gratified" by Mr. Gardner's new appointment and had assured him of White House cooperation.

Mr. Gardner was president of the Carnegie Corporation at the time of his appointment to the Cabinet by President Johnson on July 27, 1965. A native Californian, he holds A.B. and M.A. degrees from Stanford University, a Ph.D. degree from the University of California, and honorary degrees from a number of other colleges and universities. Before World War II he taught psychology at the University of California, Connecticut College for Women and Mount Holyoke College.

Mr. Gardner has been chairman of a number of Presidential task forces and commissions. He holds the U. S. Air Force Exceptional Service Award and the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civil honor in the United States.

Mr. Gardner is editor of President John F. Kennedy's book To Turn the Tide, and is the author of the books Excellence and Self-Renewal.

LOCAL COALITIONS

The expanded Task Force on Local Coalitions held a productive meeting in Chicago on February 12. As a result of the meeting the Task Force has called an April conference of local urban coalitions to provide (1) an exchange of program and organizational experience, and (2) an opportunity to select representatives to the Steering Committee.

The Task Force recommended that the Executive Committee proceed with its plans for a one-day National Legislative Conference on Employment in conjunction with the one-day conference of local coalitions, scheduling the legislative conference for the day following the conference of local coalitions. This plan, the Task Force concluded, would attract greater participation from local coalitions the first day and enhance the impact of the legislative conference. These Washington conferences are tentatively scheduled for early April.