

Draft 5/10/67

CONFIDENTIAL

INTRODUCTION

America and its communities are changing with unsettling rapidity.

Most of this change has been healthy; and most of the problems it has caused tend to evoke their own solutions. This country - despite its transitional strains and its freely-voiced complaints - has an immense capacity for self-correction.

There is always a temptation - and a pressure - to over-react: to give equal ear to every complaint, to chase off after every problem, and to wind up with a congeries of programs which may slow up rather than accelerate the nation's natural and long-run capacity for self-correction.

Evidence is accumulating that such has already happened in the federal government's response to urban problems over the past twenty years.

These have been years of experimentation, improvisation, and probing. On balance, they have been constructive. But neither in scale nor impact have they caught up with the dimensions and force of the nation's urban trends and developing problems.

The time has come to move from experimentation over a wide front, and in sometimes contrary directions, to an effort

- a) which is aimed at selected problems of transcending importance
- b) which is of a scale large enough to make a difference;
- c) which is not dissipated by conflicting policies and administrative arrangements;
- d) which offer powerful incentives to state, local and private initiative, and thereby move toward a "steady state" of continuous problem-solving;
- e) which begin to erase the public's skepticism -- its growing

feeling that public programs are not to be taken seriously, that more is promised than will ever be delivered.

* * * * *

The Task Force believes there are seven urban problems which presently call for a national effort at scale -- problems which are not self-correcting, at least not within a sufferable length of time:

- 1) the segregation of race and income, and the separation of ghettoed populations from the growth sectors of the urban economy.
- 2) the lack of provision for urban youth, especially education and jobs.
- 3) the absence of an urban competence in the determination of national economic policy.
- 4) the inadequacy of financial flows to and among urban communities, and to the older, depressed areas in particular.
- 5) the extremely categorical approach to urban programming; the over-centralization of detail; the multiplication of required consents; and the disincentives to community enterprise.
- 6) the meagre flow of talent into public service at state and local levels.
- 7) the lack of provision for long-range programming, and for continuous innovation and evaluation.