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# A Call for Concern about Cities

THIS age of protest and participation has coined its own jargon—"activism", "Vietnik", "freedom marcher." For many of this year's American college graduates, picketing has become the valid, and therefore leading, answer to conventional problems. But Pennsylvania commencement speaker (and U. S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development) Robert C. Weaver offered an alternative for this generation of "activists" and their restless social consciences.

Addressing 2,900 degree recipients on May 23 in Convention Hall, Weaver said: "Our need is to be concerned with urban values and translate them into equal opportunity, attractive communities, and the good life for ourselves and our neighbors." The new member of President Johnson's cabinet said he is "sometimes concerned lest we underestimate or misinterpret the implications and potentialities of urbanization." We need to "raise the horizon of expectations of the American people" in order to accomplish this great goal. "It cannot be that the complexity of the issue deters us," he said. Nor can it be that "we shy away because the issues involved yield to no simple, single, sure solutions, for that is equally true of so many other problems.

"Perhaps it is that urban problems are so immediate and so much a part of our daily existence that we accept them as immutable. If so, I want to disabuse you of that delusion. Man has created cities and man can change them. The fundamental issue," he continued, "is, of course, whether or not urban democracy will work, truly, for all Americans. Stated another way, the highest goal of our national efforts in urban development is to maximize options, to insure the highest possible level of opportunities for all our people, at the same time that cities provide comfort, security, excitement, and satisfactions for their occupants." The Federal government is "stressing

experimentation, innovation, and demonstration," he said, "... not to fend off radical change in cities, but to foster it." Government is seeking compromise solutions which it feels are inevitable. This process calls for planning and decision making, with the implicit belief that "if people and institutions can agree on common problems, become involved in common solutions, and learn to work together for specific, though limited, objectives, then there is the basis for wider joint action."

Citing his aspirations for urbanization and the complexities awaiting the graduates of 1966, Weaver said: "I believe in cities. I welcome an urban America. But I know both can be much better than they now are. To achieve the urban potential that is ours is the domestic challenge of your generation.

"It is my hope," he told his audience, "that this will be your commencement to identify with this crucial issue. You are urban America. What you and others in our society dream can become a new environment that maximizes choices, reduces inconvenience, demands and achieves beauty, and establishes a viable system of local and regional government."

Sharing Weaver's platform of beliefs, President Harnwell said: "Commencement implies the beginning of new activities and new goals, and offers new achievements. The challenge today for this potential energy assures an opportunity for each individual to contribute significantly toward the revitalization of contemporary society." Noting many changes and improvements made by governmental programs, the president pointed to society's current "process of dramatic evolution" and the role of educational institutions in that process: "The great urban universities, as communities of concerned and knowledgeable people, are meeting the challenges of urbanization at an increas-

ing pace... The university, as a non-political, non-profit establishment, is in a position to experiment with programs of innovation and to provide a medium for action on the part of the private citizen, the philanthropic foundation, and the government."

Pennsylvania's involvement is "witnessed in the enterprising community efforts of our divisions of law, medicine, education, city planning and its environmental institute, regional science, and the department of labor and industry.

"More recently this thrust of the University toward assisting our urban neighbors in seeking experimental solutions to long neglected and rapidly emerging social problems is represented by our Human Resources Program, a nationally acclaimed segment of the University which is involved in seeking solutions to the problems of breakdown in community relations. The student involvement in this University effort, the Community Involvement Council and its Tutorial Board, have demonstrated that our undergraduate students care deeply about the human and social problems of our Philadelphia community. Over 600 of our students under the coordinated efforts of their own leadership actively engaged in performing a variety of community services on a regular basis in the Philadelphia area throughout the past academic year including tutoring elementary and high school students. Clearly this University," the president concluded, "stands ready and willing to implement the efforts of those already engaged in compounding a remedy for the problems of the city."

At the 210th Commencement, the University also awarded honorary degrees to ten distinguished men:

- Walter H. Annenberg, '31 W. editor and publisher of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and president of Triangle Publications, Inc., doctor of