

Executive Committee Sets Urgent Priorities

“We owe it to his memory to end inaction . . .”



The Executive Committee of the unincorporated Urban Coalition, meeting on April 8, prefaced its statement of urgent legislative goals with this tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

“The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is no longer among us to challenge our consciences and to press us forward toward fulfillment of a just society. We owe it to his memory and to our society to end inaction in the face of urgent national needs.

“The leadership and organizations which work together as The Urban Coalition mourn the loss of Dr. King as a courageous national leader and as a member of our Steering Committee. We here and now renew our pledge to pursue action at both the national and community level appropriate in character and scale to the crisis confronting the nation.”

Tax Increase Supported To Finance New Programs

The Executive Committee of the unincorporated Urban Coalition met on April 8, four days after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., and adopted a set of high-priority legislative recommendations keyed to the national crisis.

Immediately following the Executive Committee session, Chairman John W. Gardner, accompanied by Andrew Heiskell and Whitney Young, Jr., held a press conference to make the actions public.

The Executive Committee placed the highest importance on passage by the House of Representatives of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, with fair housing provisions. The bill passed the House by a vote of 229 to 195 several days later. It had previously passed the Senate.

The proposed supplemental appropriation for the Office of Economic Opportunity also received urgent endorsement, but was defeated in the House.

The Committee called across-the-board cuts of Federal expenditures “irrational by definition” and strongly opposed them.

Expenditures should be raised

If Congress rises to its responsibilities, the Committee said, “it will increase, not cut, expenditures for essential programs such as jobs, housing, education, and community services.”

To finance such a program the Committee urged the adoption of a tax increase, “pending the accomplishment of the reordering of priorities and the reorientation of our resources in the light of urban needs.”

The committee reaffirmed Coalition support for a public service employment program to create one million meaningful jobs, and public and private housing programs to produce one million units annually.

The newly incorporated Urban Coalition Action Council is actively seeking fulfillment of all these legislative objectives (see page 2).

The Report of the President’s Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders was strongly endorsed, with the pledge that “The Urban Coalition will give the highest priority to bringing it to the attention of leadership at all levels of both the public and private sectors.”

Legislative Goals Outlined at Press Conference



Chairman John W. Gardner talks into an array of television and radio microphones at press conference called to express urgent legis-

lative goals. Also participating were Steering Committee Member Whitney Young, Jr. (left) and Co-Chairman Andrew Heiskell.

Action Council Is Created To Carry Out Legislative Program

On April 8, 1968, with the approval of the Executive Committee, two separate and distinct corporations—The Urban Coalition and the Urban Coalition Action Council—were created to carry out the objectives of the unincorporated, voluntary group previously known as the Urban Coalition.

The new organizations will operate in completely different areas. The Urban Coalition Action Council will be concerned with legislative activities, and The Urban Coalition with non-legislative programs.

The purpose of creating this new corporate arrangement was to facilitate financing by making it possible to secure tax exempt status for the Coalition under Section 501(c)(3) and for the Action Council under Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. These exemptions have now been secured. This means that contributions to the Coalition are tax deductible. Contributions to the Action Council are not.

John W. Gardner will be chairman and chief executive officer of both corporations. The Steering Committee of the former unincorporated Urban Coalition will serve as the Steering Committee of the new Urban Coalition. The same individuals, acting in separate and distinct capacities, will serve as the Policy Council of the Action Council.

Gardner Calls for Million Public Jobs in Two Years

Chairman John W. Gardner appeared before a Senate Labor Subcommittee recently to urge prompt approval of a public service employment bill.

He generally endorsed S. 3063, the measure under consideration, but noted that its objective of one million public service jobs would not be reached until the third year after enactment.

"It seems to me," Gardner said, "that this pace should be accelerated so that 500,000 jobs are made available the first year and a total of one million the second year. We are in a period of great urgency and should stretch both our fiscal and administrative capacity to the utmost."

He cited a recent study made for the Urban Coalition which shows that at least 141,000 persons could be employed "almost overnight" in 130 cities with populations of over 100,000. Projecting the study to include smaller cities, local governments and non-profit organizations, he added, makes it likely that jobs could be found for 500,000 persons within six months.

All public service jobs, Gardner emphasized, should be meaningful and socially useful—not dead-end, make-work projects.

He said a public service employment program should apply to rural as well as urban areas.

ACTION NOTES . . .

The Urban Coalition has moved into new headquarters in the Federal Bar Building, 1815 H Street, N. W., Washington (20006). Main offices occupy the sixth floor of the building. The new telephone number is Area Code 202, 347-9630.

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A new booklet containing the major addresses given at the National Action Conference on Equal Housing Opportunities in Chicago in January has been published by the Urban Coalition Action Council and is available on request.

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The Steering Committee of The Urban Coalition and the Policy Council of the Urban Coalition Action Council will meet at separate sessions on June 10. The first meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the Tudor Room of the Shoreham Hotel.

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Local Coalitions have now been formed in 33 cities, and several others have expressed active interest. The national Coalition is placing new emphasis on assistance to the locals, hopes 100 will be established by the end of the year.

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During the period of widespread unrest following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, President Johnson called on the Urban Coalition to play a key role in efforts to reduce tension. In response, Chairman Gardner wired the officials of local coalitions asking that they bring together the leadership of their communities to examine local tensions and needs, and support the pending Civil Rights Act of 1968.

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In recent issues, the *Wall Street Journal*, *Business Week*, and *Agenda Magazine* have carried in-depth articles on the work of the Coalition. Reprints are available from Coalition headquarters.



Publishers Contribute Part Of Profits From Riot Report

Bantam Books and *The New York Times* recently contributed \$10,000 from the profits from the sale of the Bantam edition of the *Report Of The National Advisory Commission on Civil Rights* to the Urban Coalition. Presenting the check to Chairman John W. Gardner are Tom Wicker (left), Washington Bureau Chief of the *Times*, and Bantam Books President Oscar Dystel. Wicker wrote a special introduction for the book.

New Staff Members Join the Coalition

In recent weeks several staff members have joined the Urban Coalition and are now at work in the new headquarters at 1815 H Street in Washington. They include:

Sarah Collins Carey, an attorney, served as consultant to the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders and was associated with the Washington law firm of Arnold and Porter. Mrs. Carey is a graduate of Radcliffe College and received her law degree from Georgetown University.

Margaret Carroll, a graduate of Lawrence College, worked for the past seven years as a researcher, writer and editor for the *Congressional Quarterly News Service*.

John Dean, former Regional Administrator of Office of Economic Opportunity programs in the Southeast, is a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D. C.

Brian M. Duff, a former Washington correspondent,

came to the Coalition from NASA, where he was Director of Special Events in the Office of Public Affairs. He is a graduate of the University of Michigan.

Herbert M. Franklin, former director of the Business and Development Center of Urban America, Inc., and Development Administrator of the city of Middletown, Connecticut, is a graduate of Harvard College and the Harvard Law School.

Peter Libassi, former special assistant to the Secretary of HEW and director of that agency's Office for Civil Rights. Libassi is a graduate of Colgate University and Yale Law School.

Richard S. Sharpe, former Peace Corps Volunteer serving in Ethiopia, was recently Research Assistant, Center for Studies in Education and Development at Harvard. He is a graduate of Wesleyan University and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard.

Gardner on local coalitions

"No One Segment Can Solve the Problem Alone"

Speaking at the Convention of the United Auto Workers recently, Chairman John W. Gardner discussed the importance of broadly based local coalitions, and areas of activity at the local and national levels. The following is an excerpt from his remarks:

"The need for collaboration is most dramatically apparent in the cities themselves. No one leadership segment can solve the problem alone. City Hall can't go it alone. The business community can't solve the city's problems singlehandedly. All must collaborate.

"Because of this need at the local level, our national organization set out immediately to form local coalitions. We now have 33 and we hope to have 100 by year's end. As in the case of the national, each local organization includes representatives from a variety of leadership segments in the community—the mayor, business, labor, minority groups and religion.

"Now I still encounter leading citizens who say, 'Why try to get all those people into the act? Why don't a few of us get together quietly, and try to solve some of these problems?'

"It's a reasonable suggestion, but hopelessly old-fashioned. It won't work for long in any modern city. We won't re-establish stability in our cities until all significant leadership elements get together, until we bring into the same conversation all the people who exercise significant power—or veto power—in the community.

"This includes ghetto leadership. Nothing is more important to stability in the cities than the creation of

open, continuous and understanding communication between white and black communities. This must be a prime task of any coalition.

"Such communication is not easy. It requires hard work and patience and imagination on the part of every person involved. But it is necessary. Indeed, there is no alternative, unless we are willing to see our cities torn apart.

We Must Work at All Levels

"At both national and local levels the Urban Coalition will work toward the solution of our urban problems. We will be concerned with unemployment, housing, education, race relations and many of the other problems that plague the cities today. We will try to make the public aware of those problems. We will try to bring the nation's best talent to bear on them. We will support constructive efforts to solve them.

"We will seek to supplement and not supplant other efforts. We consider every organization constructively engaged in these matters to be an ally and we will hope to work with them and strengthen them where possible.

"The purpose of the coalition is to enable all of the segments of our national life, represented by those various leaders, to act together toward solutions to the urban crisis.

"I would emphasize the importance of the coalition principle. The woods are full of specialized organizations interested in the urban crisis. Our distinction is that we bring together leadership elements that do not normally collaborate in the solution of public problems."

THE URBAN COALITION

ACTION REPORT

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