



A presentation of statements by the nation's leading authorities on matters relating to urban affairs. These remarks were made during hearings before the House Subcommittee on Government Operations and the Committee of Government Operations of the Senate.

MAYOR BEN WEST, Nashville, Tennessee. . . . Speaking on behalf of the American Municipal Association and the United States Conference of Mayors, representing some 13,000 cities, towns and villages throughout the Nation, said:

"We, who represent the Nation's cities, believe the creation of a Department of Urban Affairs as proposed by the Administration to be absolutely essential to sound progress in the development of our country.

"Today, urban problems are numerous, immediate, and overwhelming. Local governments have been unable to cope completely with these problems. Neglect of urban areas has largely resulted from the failure to include a responsibility for coordination with local governments in considerations with Federal policy.

"When we speak of a Department of Urban Affairs, we do not mean a department of 'big city affairs' or 'small town affairs.'" This Department would be charged with looking after the programs of vital interest to the big city and the small town.

"Let me urge you, with all the emphasis that I can, please, please get this Department established, this long overdue legislation."

HAROLD V. MILLER, Executive Director, Tennessee State Planning Commission, said:

"I speak as one having many years of experience as a professional city and regional planner at the State level and as the executive director of the Tennessee State Planning Commission. I wish to endorse the establishment of a Department of Urban Affairs and Housing, headed by a Cabinet-level Secretary.

"The Department of Urban Affairs concept has been advanced in various legislative drafts and advocated in various quarters, not just because a majority of the electorate now live in the urban manner, but because of the mess that cities generally are in.

"To confound the urban situation, the lack of coordination among the various Federal agencies, each building or sponsoring projects oblivious to other Federal programs, is producing some pretty grim results in many localities.

"The establishment of a Department of Urban Affairs is eminently desirable. It will provide a means of harmonizing or coordinating the Federal effort and minimizing conflict among the several programs of the Department and of other Federal agencies, each operating on a project-type approach. This Plan offers the best hope of constructive coordination and democratic planning meaningful to the urban citizens of the Nation."

MAYOR RICHARD J. DALEY, Chicago, said: "The creation of a new Cabinet Department of Urban Affairs and Housing has long been recommended by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the American Municipal Association. It has received the support of the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the National Housing Conference, and the American Society of Planning Officials, as well as other planning groups and organizations concerned with the vital program of urban renewal and housing.

"A secretary of Urban Affairs would fill a need which has already been met in all other important policy areas. In the Cabinet, business is served by the Secretary of Commerce; labor is served by the Secretary of Labor; the development of our natural resources in the West is served by the Secretary of the Interior, but nobody specifically serves the cities. And yet the productive capacity, the purchasing power, the backbone of our economy and the people who pay most of the taxes live in urban communities.

"The complexity, and the diversity of interests, with the impact of urban renewal and housing on every phase of the daily living of the great majority of our citizens, make it essential that programs be coordinated and concentrated attention on broad policies be de-

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veloped on the highest executive level.

"The first finding of the Hoover Commission was precisely along this line when it stated in reference to Federal programs:

"Until dispersed units are pulled together, and authority is placed in department heads as chief assistants to the President, there will be conflict, waste, and indecisiveness in administration.'

"The result of centralizing the various Federal activities concerned with urban affairs would provide for a unified organization at the Federal level, would coordinate existing programs, and would reduce the number of independent agencies reporting directly to the President and Congress. Certainly a Department of Urban Affairs and Housing would provide a central point in the Federal Government where cities could come for help and information. I urge the creation of this Department for the benefits that will accrue to all the people of our nation."

CROSS SECTION OF EDITORIAL COMMENT:

THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION: (Jan. 26, 1962)... "Urban Americans Need a Cabinet Voice.. Two-thirds of the American people live in urban areas. Their problems are multiplying with shifts and explosions of population. They now need to be served by a Department of Urban Affairs just as acutely as farmers need a department of Agriculture. Urban problems in fact, have far surpassed rural problems in their magnitude... It is time to break through the red tape of crossply authorities and streamline urban activities in a businesslike Department under a secretary of cabinet rank."

THE NASHVILLE TENNESSEAN: (Jan. 7, 1962) "Urban American Majority Deserves A Voice in the Executive."

ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH (Jan. 27, 1962) "For an Urban Republic... Most Americans, we think, will support the President's Plan to elevate urban affairs to the Cabinet, because most Americans live in urban areas, seven out of ten- the Census Bureau says. With the trend toward urbanization have come problems of slums, traffic, transit, city rehabilitation and galloping suburbanitis. These problems deserve federal attention today as much as did the farm and labor problems that long ago led to the creation of Cabinet posts for Agriculture and Labor.

"The placement of urban responsibility in the Cabinet will emphasize the Federal Government's role, and that is what it is intended to do.

"Urban citizens, which means most citizens, have a right to expect as much."

BOSTON TRAVELER (Jan. 12, 1962)... "A Strong America Depends On Its Cities. Thus there exists a direct relationship between the nation's ability to handle its urban problems and its readiness to take on the problems of world leadership in the struggle for freedom.

"Congress should not hesitate, therefore, to create a new position at the cabinet table, to be known as the Dept. of Urban Affairs and Housing. With so much urban renewal going on, there is an immediate need for the cities to have a voice in Washington in matters affecting metropolitan planning. None of the President's proposals is more timely than this one."

NEW YORK TIMES (Jan. 31, 1962) "The New Department: It is difficult to understand why so many Republicans in Congress are so deeply outraged by President Kennedy's intention to set up a new Department of Urban Affairs. The Republican party's own platform of 1960 recommended:

"' A stepped-up program to assist in urban planning, designed to assure far-sighted and wise use of land and to coordinate mass transportation and other vital facilities in our metropolitan areas.'

"To be sure, this Republican plank did not specifically suggest the idea of forming a new department. But the activities it described as needing to be 'stepped-up' are precisely the activities which Mr. Kennedy is now talking about. Certainly the most logical way of 'stepping-up' such activities is to bring them together, under the direction of a responsible Cabinet officer, within the framework of a single department."