



WASHINGTON REPORT

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JOB CORPS TO LABOR: From inside Office of Economic Opportunity, it is learned that Job Corps will almost certainly be transferred to Department of Labor. Move is in line with both report of recent manpower task force calling for single agency, and recent remarks of President Nixon during visit to Labor Department.

President stated Labor Department will be strengthened and given new assignments. Word from inside Department has it that major realignment will streamline manpower functions.

Labor Department and its manpower programs are to have greater visibility under current planning. Consistent with information function organization at top of Nixon Administration, Department is to have key director of communications. Joseph Loftus, veteran New York Times labor and public affairs reporter, has been brought into Labor Department as special assistant to Secretary Shultz to fill new information post.

Rumor persists--and it is strictly rumor--that Bertrand Harding, now Acting Director of Office of Economic Opportunity, will leave to become new Manpower Administrator in Labor Department. Post was filled in Johnson Administration by Stanley Ruttenberg who was also Assistant Secretary for Manpower. In line with Department restructuring, posts will be separated with Manpower Administrator subordinated to Dr. Arnold Weber, now Assistant Secretary for Manpower.

Weber, however, was warned by Senate Labor Committee Chairman Ralph Yarborough against precipitous plans to abolish Job Corps or alter manpower programs. Yarborough informed Administration that committee must be notified first so that it might conduct public hearings.

Job Corps may be renamed, and functions somewhat altered, but basic changes are not expected. Nixon welfare task force recently called for assignment of Job Corps to either Labor Department or HEW, but no enlargement of agency. It urged that new "residential youth centers" be established "only for specified conditions, in particular for youth in sparsely populated areas with high unemployment and high proportions of low-income persons."

Task force proposed that either Manpower Administrator or Commissioner of Education (if Corps were operated by OE) should have power

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to operate centers that should be retained in judgement of Administration. It proposed spin-off of centers to state or local control where possible.

President Nixon, during election campaign, cited Job Corps as horrible example of federal bungling. At same time, he pledged to enlist industry in manpower development. Most major urban centers and women's centers now are privately operated by business firms under contract. Large contractors have been drafting recommendations to keep centers under new name.

Church Women United, National Council of Catholic Women, National Council of Jewish Women and National Council of Negro Women, united through Women in Community Service, Inc., have expressed alarm at possible termination of Women's Job Corps. Group is willing to see name change, but holds up women's centers as essential program that must be continued.

Probability is retention of Job Corps, possibly with new name, inside Manpower Administration. Some smaller conservation centers could be spun off to states, and program will probably be publicly de-emphasized.

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BROADER POVERTY WAR: Broader poverty war pledged recently by HEW Secretary Robert Finch and Housing and Urban Affairs Secretary George Romney is expected to follow broad outlines of program sketched recently by Nixon public welfare task force.

Some parts of OEO will probably be shifted to other agencies and OEO will cease to exist under current name and as direct White House agency. President's new Urban Affairs Council will assume many anti-poverty functions. Similar in concept to National Security Council, new group will probably become responsible for "planning, coordination and oversight of programs for the poor."

Task force holds that operating responsibilities of OEO have undermined its planning-coordinating role. It has pointed out that "planning and priority setting functions" could be lodged in Urban Affairs Council while another agency, probably Bureau of Budget, would "have day-to-day responsibility for rationalizing and coordinating domestic programs and assuring their effective implementation."

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FEDERAL A-V LIBRARY: Office of Government Films, new unit under General Services Administration, is now in process of being set up. It will serve as central collection point for all films, film-strips, slide packets, tapes and other audiovisual materials produced by and for government.

New unit will have headquarters at Washington National Reference Center in Suitland, Md., when it starts about April 1. First catalogues listing materials are expected to be out July 1. Jim Gibson, audiovisual specialist who is heading operation, said more than 100,000 subjects have been collected so far. He said centralized A-V center will eventually be computerized to provide more rapid service.