

(ADVANCE) STANFORD - Federal and state intervention is a "counter-productive and potentially dangerous" means of saving universities, John W. Gardner said Saturday (JUNE 14) at Stanford.

"If universities are to be saved, they will have to do it themselves," he declared.

Chairman of the Urban Coalition and a Stanford trustee, Gardner formerly headed the Carnegie Corp. and served as Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare in the Johnson Administration.

In remarks prepared for the inauguration of Kenneth S. Pitzer as Stanford's sixth president, he said the erosion of authority in all institutions throughout the world "poses exceedingly difficult questions for a free society." If a free society fails to create and honor its own structure of authority "it moves back toward the only alternative--government by force," he warned.

"Professors... have seen their position seriously undermined in recent years. In a time when authority... is scorned, the teacher-student and master-apprentice relationships are weakened at the core. The role of the learner becomes one of distasteful subordination.

"But when we reject apprenticeship, when we scorn the learner's role, we demolish the path that leads to craftsmanship and mastery. And then we discover that the most intransigent master of all is hard reality. You can't vote yourself into the company of great heart surgeons or concert pianists....

"When prolonged and savage attacks are made on those who derive their authority from the institutions of a free society, they begin to doubt their own legitimacy--and they show it.

"But as they increase their permissiveness, their opponents become increasingly restive and sensitive, so that even permissiveness seems arrogant.

"All of which moves inexorably toward the 'freedom' of the alley brawl, not toward the confident self-discipline of a free people engaged in the hard, serious business of self-government."

Universities must look forward to a decade of criticism and "vigorous internal reform," he said. "But both the criticism and the reform can be accomplished without the savage and destructive conflict that is raging in our best institutions today....

"We have now proven beyond argument that a university community can make life unlivable for a president. We can make him the scapegoat for every failure of the institution. We can use him as the target for all the hostility that is in us. We can fight so savagely among ourselves that he is clawed to ribbons in the process. We have yet to prove we can provide the kind of atmosphere in which a good man can survive.

In a personal tribute to Pitzer, Gardner said: "Since he has arrived on this campus last December, Kenneth Pitzer has been subjected to all the perils and pressures that surround the office of a university president today. And in my judgment he has demonstrated in that half year qualities that augur well for the future. The mind that proved so effective in pursuing the science of chemistry has proved equally sharp in untangling the complexities of campus conflict. He is cool under fire. He is capable of winning and holding the trust of the faculty. And most important he has the steadiness of purpose to serve as a rallying point in a tumultuous community."

Gardner said America is moving through "a time of supreme danger, her passage made more hazardous by chisellers, by bigots, by extremists, by vested interests, and by the paralyzing lassitude of well-fed citizens." "The heaviest burden that this free society must carry" is the apathy of "average citizens," he charged. "They are earning higher wages or salaries than ever before, buying more consumer goods, enjoying longer and more elaborate vacations--yet they vote down school bond issues, neglect elementary civic duties, allow their local government to fall into disrepair, nurse their prejudices and complain. And grow fatter." Extremists of right and left "believe that hatred will cure and that violence will pave the way to a better world," Gardner said. "They do not understand that in her hour of agony, America needs physicians, not executioners." "Coercion invites counter-coercion," he observed. "The student with an inclination toward violent or coercive action and the policeman with a taste for brutality are waiting for each other. The politician with a fondness for repressive measures and the ghetto leader with a leaning toward violence are waiting for each other--and eventually they find each other.... They escalate first the tensions and then the overt acts, and draw increasing numbers of moderates into the deadly