

Braille Monitor



DECEMBER, 1973

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

A Publication of the
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
KENNETH JERNIGAN, *President*

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THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND IS NOT AN ORGANIZATION
SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.

THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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* * *

If you or a friend wishes to remember the National Federation of the Blind in your will, you can do so by employing the following language:

“I give, devise, and bequeath unto NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, a District of Columbia nonprofit corporation, the sum of \$___ (or, “___ percent of my net estate”, or “the following stocks and bonds: ___”) to be used for its worthy purposes on behalf of blind persons.”

If your wishes are more complex, you may have your attorney communicate with the Berkeley Office for other suggested forms.

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SEASON'S GREETINGS

The Officers, members of the Executive Committee, Board of Directors, and the entire Staff of the National Federation of the Blind extend warm greetings at this time and pledge that they will do everything possible to assure more abundant living during the coming year for all blind persons everywhere.

It seems appropriate at this time to recall some of the thoughts of the great Chinese philosopher and teacher, Confucius. Confucius is credited with originating the Golden Rule: "Do not do to others what you would not have them do to you." This is still the central doctrine by which men live in all of the great faiths of our day. Some of his other teachings are:

What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the small man seeks is in others.

Learning undigested by thought is labor lost; thought unassisted by learning is perilous.

Why should I feel hurt that men do

not know me? Rather should I feel hurt that I do not know men.

Be loyal to yourself, charitable to neighbors, nothing more.

I do not expect to find a saint today; if I find a gentleman I shall be quite satisfied.

When bad people dislike you, you may be a good person.

Words are easy to let out of your mouth, hard to recall.

Do not worry about people not knowing your ability; worry about not having it.

It is man that makes truth great; not truth that makes man great.

In my relations with men, I listen to their words, but I look to their actions.

Thus spoke the great sage of China more than 2,500 years ago.

NFB 1974 CONVENTION BULLETIN

It is that time of the year again—time to plan for next summer's NFB Convention! Recently, each Convention has been getting bigger and better, and Chicago in 1974 will be no exception. As you know, in New York this year we had 1427 at the banquet and almost 2000 people attended the sessions. We will have to work hard to do better next summer but we are sure to do it. Read the following, and you will see

why.

The Convention will be held in Chicago, and we are going back to the Palmer House Hotel. Most of the delegates will probably arrive on Saturday, June 29, or Sunday, June 30. Registration will begin on Sunday morning. The Executive Committee meeting (open to all) will occur Monday morning. All States should be represented

at this meeting. In fact, Monday should be regarded as a full-fledged business day of the Convention, and the various division and committee meetings should be attended by all. For that matter a great many of the divisions and committees will meet Sunday afternoon and Sunday evening.

The first general business session will begin on Tuesday morning, July 2. The banquet will occur on Wednesday evening, July 3. This is made necessary by the fact that Thursday (our usual banquet day) is July 4, and labor costs make it desirable to shift the time. Thus it is especially important that registration and purchase of banquet tickets be done early. Thursday afternoon will be free for shopping, sightseeing, or general get-togethers. The Convention will adjourn at five o'clock on Friday afternoon, July 5.

HOTEL

As those who attended the 1972 Convention know, the Palmer House Hotel is one of the best we have ever had. Its rooms are spacious, and its air-conditioning is flawless, as is the service. It has a swimming pool and a sun deck. It has several fine restaurants, including a Trader Vic's—which, as all connoisseurs know, is unequaled for Polynesian food. The meeting hall and committee rooms are magnificent, judged by any standards. We have never had better accommodations. Even so, our rates continue to be unbelievably attractive. Again in 1974, single rooms will be eight dollars, and doubles and twins will be twelve dollars. Rollaway for a third person in a room will be five dollars. There will be no charge for children staying in the same room with parents.

BANQUET

The Palmer House is famous for its excellent cuisine. The 1974 banquet will be a memorable occasion. The menu will be good and the price will be lower than we paid in New York.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON

For the 1974 Convention we are not planning organized tours for Thursday afternoon. Rather, the time is being left unscheduled for whatever activity the individual may choose. There is one exception. Guides will be provided for anyone who wishes to go shopping. The only limits will be your physical stamina and the size of your purse. There are many places of interest for those who wish to do sightseeing: The Museum of Science and Industry, Hadley Correspondence School, Marshall Field's, and many others. Of course, the hospitality room will be in full swing Thursday evening—and, for that matter, all of the other evenings. In this connection, the hospitality room will open Saturday night, June 29, since more and more of the delegates are arriving early. Come, meet friends, and have fun.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Again in 1974 there will be door prizes aplenty. Don't be late for the sessions, and don't leave the meeting room. The prizes will be worth winning. Here is a reminder to State and local affiliates: We ask that you please help us by securing as many worthwhile door prizes as possible for the drawings. We again recommend that door prizes be worth twenty-five dollars or more. You will recall that at recent Conventions many of the door prizes were

worth quite a bit more: tape recorders, typewriters, clocks, and cash. Then there were those \$100 bills at the start of each morning session and at the banquet. It is a good bet that you can count on them again in '74. All of us should get started collecting prizes without delay. *All door prizes should be sent to Mrs. Camille Myers, 1790-D West Estes, Chicago, Illinois 60626.*

Chicago is an interesting city, unexcelled as a convention site. Not only is it the home of two major league baseball teams but it has some of the world's finest stores

and restaurants, and the friendliest people you will meet.

Please do not wait to write for your hotel reservations. We always have problems because so many of our delegates do not make reservations until late in the spring. It will be our greatest Convention. Get those reservations in now! All you need do is write to the Palmer House Hotel, Chicago, Illinois 60690. You do not need a street address but you do need to specify that you will be attending the Convention of the National Federation of the Blind.

* * * * *

JOHN NAGLE RESIGNS AS CHIEF OF WASHINGTON OFFICE

BY

KENNETH JERNIGAN

On Friday, October 26, 1973, John Nagle submitted his resignation as a member of the staff of the Federation and as Chief of the Washington Office, effective immediately. His health made this step imperative. Accordingly, I accepted his resignation with regret. John Nagle's contributions to our movement have been great, and his presence in the Washington Office will be sorely missed.

I am now in the process of looking for a new Chief of the Washington Office. The transition will be made as soon as possible. In the meantime we will handle the duties of the Washington Office with the help of local volunteers in the District of Columbia and from the National Office in Des Moines. The work must go on, and our momentum must not be slowed:

October 26, 1973.

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT: In 1948, I joined the organized blind movement in Massachusetts, and in 1958, I came to Washington to work for the Federation.

During these twenty-five years, I have increased in my belief of the Federation's philosophy and objectives to the point where the NFB has become my way of life.

The NFB has continued a cause for me worthy of my total devotion and fullest possible effort.

But the responsibilities of running the Federation's Washington Office, of carrying the Federation's legislative load in Congress after Congress have reached a level, I believe, beyond my present strength and energy.

I am, therefore, herewith submitting my resignation to you, effective immediately.

I take this action after much thought and most careful consideration.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN NAGLE,
Chief, Washington Office.

October 30, 1973.

DEAR JOHN: I accept your resignation with regret. Your service to the movement has been long and distinguished. The contributions which you have made are many and varied and will be of a lasting nature. I am sure you know that the blind of the Nation hold you in high esteem.

For my own part, I respect you as a colleague and cherish you as a friend. I believe we originally met in the mid-1950's when the Federation was in the first great period of its growth. In 1957 I came to Massachusetts and we worked together planning the 1958 Boston Convention.

Ever since, you and I have been colleagues, closely associated in a team effort to better the lot of the blind. During the days of the Federation's civil war we served together on the Budget and Finance Committee. We worked as one. It was not always easy, but I think it gave us a feeling of comradeship which we might not

otherwise have had.

Later, when you joined the Federation staff and moved to Washington, our relationship continued and strengthened. As the Federation emerged from the civil war and moved into the second great period of growth during the 1960's, you were an ever more important part of the movement—going to State conventions, handling correspondence, giving testimony before congressional committees, and dealing with problems presented by individual blind persons. Your record of accomplishment and your dedication to the movement are known by all. They are recorded in the hearts and minds of tens of thousands of blind people throughout this country, and, indeed, the world.

For quite some time I have, of course, known that you have been having health problems. As you lay down the duties and burdens of the Washington Office, I express to you the appreciation of all of us in the Federation for the service you have given and the part you have played in improving the lives of the blind. In the years ahead, even though you are not on the staff, I know that you will be with us on the barricades. As you have often said, the Federation is not simply an organization. It is a cause, a movement, and a way of life.

Cordially,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

**NAC UNDER INVESTIGATION
BY UNITED STATES
GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE**

During the week of October 15, 1973, Mr. Matthew Solomon of the GAO (General Accounting Office) called President Jernigan to say that GAO is investigating NAC at the request of a congressional committee. Mr. Solomon said that he would like all of the information about NAC which the NFB could supply. He assured President Jernigan that the GAO is in no way subject to the influence of HEW officials but is an independent agency directly responsible to Congress. NAC officials will be interviewed—as will

Dr. Richard Wilson, the NFB President, and others who are in a position to give information.

The GAO is one of the most respected agencies of the Government. As the battle has increased in fury, NAC has made grave charges about the NFB, saying that the Council of Better Business Bureaus or some other entity does not like us. It might be observed, however, that we are not now and never have been under investigation by the GAO. Those who live in glass houses—

* * * * *

NAC REJECTED BY AAWB CHAPTER

NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) is much given to form letters. It is also much given to making assertions of questionable accuracy and repeating them over and over, apparently hoping by sheer insistence to make them come true. Thus, in a letter dated October 9, 1973, Mr. Gerald Topitzer of the NAC staff says to Mrs. Elizabeth Bowen, president of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida: "As you may know, NAC standards are based on the consensus of those in the field regarding what represents prevailing views as to best practice." Mr. Topitzer and other NAC staff members have said this same thing in almost these same words in letter after letter to everyone they could reach throughout the country. Of course, their desperate clamor that they have arrived at consensus and that everybody agrees with them does not make it so.

Witness, for instance, what recently happened in the State of Ohio. As everyone knows, the American Association of Workers for the Blind is an organization primarily composed of agencies and individuals providing services to the blind. It is not a consumer group and (so far as we know) does not claim to be. It represents management—in other words, the very essence of the group NAC says has arrived at a consensus that its practices are good and its policies right.

The Ohio chapter of the American Association of Workers for the Blind met in Toledo Wednesday, October 24, through Friday, October 26. At the Friday business session Dr. Richard Umsted, who is a professor at Ohio State University, offered a motion that the Ohio chapter of AAWB go on record favoring accreditation and endorsing NAC. As the motion was discussed, Dr. Norman Yoder

recommended its adoption. He attempted to divert attention from the weaknesses of NAC by attacking the National Federation of the Blind as an organization and its President personally. In answer to the charge that NAC is undemocratic Dr. Yoder said that the National Federation of the Blind is undemocratic. However, the AAWB membership did not buy the flimflam. He was reminded that whether the Federation is good or bad had nothing to do with whether NAC is good or bad. If NAC is undemocratic, it is undemocratic, regardless of how bad somebody else may be.

It may or may not be worth noting that under date of February 8, 1972, Dr. Umsted applied for the job as Superintendent of the Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School and that he was not hired. It might also be noted that the President of the National Federation of the Blind, acting in his capacity as a member of the School Selection Committee, had something to do with the decision. Likewise, it may or may not be significant

that Dr. Yoder is a member of the staff of the Cleveland Society of the Blind, which is now being sued by the organized blind because of alleged irregularities in the vending stand program. As one observes the tactics and behavior of NAC and its supporters, their claims that they are ethical and professional become increasingly ridiculous if not pathetic.

Be that as it may, when the vote was taken, the Ohio membership of the American Association of Workers for the Blind could not stomach NAC. Dr. Umsted's motion lost by a two-to-one vote. It will be interesting to see whether NAC tries to divert attention from this defeat by increasing its attacks upon the organized blind and their leaders—by name calling, personal abuse, and unprofessional and unethical behavior. NAC would do well to keep in mind the words of the poet:

The moving finger writes; and, having writ,
Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit
Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,
Nor all your tears wash out a word of it.

* * * * *

NAC TURNS "CUTSIE" AND PLAYS THE "DOCUMENTATION" GAME

Since midsummer NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) has been trying some new tactics. It works like this: Once someone makes a charge (for instance, that NAC holds closed board meetings, or accredits sheltered shops that pay less than the minimum wage, or does not have consumer representatives on its board), NAC writes a letter to the individual and asks him to "document" the

charge.

At first glance this would seem to be a reasonable request. But not the way NAC does it. In letter after letter its own officials have admitted that its board meetings are closed. When pressed, they have not denied that they accredit shops which pay less than the minimum wage—the Chicago Lighthouse, for example. The NAC Board does not have

(and, presumably, even *they* would not claim that they have) representatives of the National Federation of the Blind on their board. So, what is there left to be "documented?"

One might debate whether NAC's policies help or hurt the blind, but surely the facts are clear and the charges have been documented to infinity. Why, then, does NAC write its letters asking for "documentation?"

Well, for one thing, it helps confuse the casual reader. Surely, he will think, NAC would not ask for "documentation" if they already had documentation! Then, too, it makes NAC sound very "professional," very "fair," very "positive," very "ethical"—that is, until you think about it. It allows for delay. It adds to the great mass of wordiness which has been written on the subject. Finally, NAC undoubtedly hopes it will throw the person from whom they have demanded the documentation off balance.

But, like most attempts at deception and double-talk, the NAC tactic has backfired. It can now be "documented" that NAC's Executive Committee met and deliberately established the policy of asking for "documentation." They couched their action in their usual jargon but the intent shows through with undeniable clarity. In the following letter from Alexander Handel, executive director of NAC, to Mr. Don Staley, head of Recording for the Blind, it is all set forth:

July 24, 1973.

DEAR DON: Pursuant to our recent telephone conversation I thought you might like to know that our Executive

Committee met recently and directed staff to follow a new and even more positive procedure when allegations are made regarding NAC's accreditation or standards.

We are directed to send a letter to each person who can be identified as having made an allegation. The letter will note that a charge has been made and will request that the person, as soon as possible, send to NAC supporting documentation so that the charge may be considered by whichever commission is involved and appropriate action taken by NAC.

Previously NAC has let it be known that we welcome comments and criticisms and has noted that no specific or documented charges have been received from NFB. We are now prepared to react positively to comments or criticisms from any source with an immediate direct request for factual details. We believe this should facilitate action on bona fide suggestions for improvement and serve notice on others that they must do more than deal in vague generalities.

Please do keep us informed of developments at RFB. We want to be of all possible assistance to you.

Cordially,

ALEXANDER HANDEL.

The statement that no specific or documented charges have been received from NFB is, of course, the grossest kind of falsehood. In letter after letter, and article after article, month after month, the Federation has sent the "documentation" to NAC. All we have got for our pains is personal attack and name-calling. Does NAC really need further documentation that it does not have consumer representatives on its board? (Yes, we know that it has individual blind people on its board, but we also know that it does not have consumer representatives.) Can it deny this allegation? Does NAC really need to have us document the fact that it has accredited the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind and that the Chicago Lighthouse pays less than the minimum wage? Does NAC need "documentation" that it has accredited most of the agencies of its own board members, that it meets in secret, and that it used the son of its executive director (he said he was "hired" with NAC money) to spy on the blind demonstrators at the December, 1972, NAC Board meeting? We have "documented" that NAC has tried to flimflam the blind and the public through a "cutsie" policy of "documenting." Would NAC now like to "document" that it did not adopt the "documenting" policy, or does it want us to "document" that we have "documented?" It is all a matter of "documentation."

Recent occurrences in Florida show NAC's "cutsie" "documenting" game at work. Beth Bowen, the energetic leader of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, has been leading a fight to get the Gateway Hope Center of Jacksonville to withdraw its application for NAC accreditation. Among other things, Mrs. Bowen and the rest of the organized blind of Jacksonville have asked the City Council

to withhold funds from the Gateway Hope Center if their requests are not heeded. Mrs. Bowen has also written letters to Mr. Touchton, the head of the Gateway Hope Center, and to the members of the board of the center. Some of those letters were sent to NAC, and our old friend Mr. Topitzer entered the battle with his "documenting" trick. He got as good as he gave. In fact, he got better than he gave:

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York, October 9, 1973.

Mrs. ELIZABETH BOWEN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind of Florida,
Jacksonville, Florida.

DEAR MRS. BOWEN: A copy of your letter of August 19, 1973, to Mr. Bill Touchton, president of the board, and subsequent letters to board members of Gateway Hope Center, Inc., and to Mr. Gene McLeod, council auditor of Jacksonville, Florida, have been forwarded to me by Mr. McLeod. As the staff liaison to our Commission on Standards, I am writing to you since your correspondence implies serious criticism of NAC standards. Because of its concern that standards are constructive and relevant, it is the policy of the Commission on Standards to solicit and review reactions which may identify strengths or limitations in the standards as established and as they are being applied.

In your letter, you refer to the "condescending" attitudes to the blind which NAC has displayed, and the "petty, superfluous, and sometimes ridiculous" requirements NAC asks of agencies applying for accreditation. We request that

you refer to the specific standards to which you object and provide information you have available to support your assessment of these standards. This should include any published reports or studies substantiating your concerns about the standards or their application. We do have a copy of the article "Why I Object To NAC" by Cathy B. Smith, and also requested such documentation from Ms. Smith, since her objections without further documentation can be disputed by examining the standards themselves.

As you may know, NAC standards are based on the consensus of those in the field regarding what represents prevailing views as to best practice. The extent to which your concerns are shared and supported by other individuals or organizations and expressed in the professional literature will assist the commission in its review.

We are eager to receive this documentation of your critique of NAC standards or their application as well as your suggestions for change.

Sincerely,

GERALD F. TOPITZER,
Research Associate.

NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND OF FLORIDA,
Jacksonville, Florida, October 15, 1973.

Mr. GERALD F. TOPITZER,
Research Associate,
National Accreditation Council
for Agencies Serving the Blind
and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.

DEAR MR. TOPITZER: I have your

letter of October 9, 1973, and will try to answer the questions which you have raised, as I understand them.

From the overall tone of your letter it would appear that mine is the only criticism of NAC's standards which you have ever received. Could it be that the National Accreditation Council staff is so isolated from society that they are unaware of the thousands of blind persons who have, for years, raised their voices, first asking, then reasoning, then demanding the right to contribute their firsthand experience and information to the formulation of these standards? Could it be that NAC's staff did not see over fifteen hundred blind persons demonstrating their concerns on the streets of New York City last July—demonstrating because this was the only hope they had of ever being heard? If this be the case, my first suggestion to you and to the NAC staff and to the NAC Board members would be to come down from your ivory tower and talk with those whose lives are directly affected by the agencies you accredit and the standards you set for these agencies. Listen to the people who know, not from professional publications or collected data, but from firsthand experience. What better teacher can one have?

You ask for proof of condescending attitudes; I would ask you to speak with Ms. Anne New, community affairs director of your staff. Inquire of her how she feels about consumer participation. Ask her what statements she has made to the press on numerous occasions when speaking as representative of NAC. Then go to Mr. Robinson, president of the board of directors and ask him why he feels it unnecessary for observers from the organized blind movement to attend board

meetings, be allowed to speak at such meetings or even distribute literature. Speak to other members on the NAC Board and tell me what these attitudes are called, if not condescending.

You ask for documentation that NAC's standards are not truly in the best interests of the blind, thus making them superfluous, et cetera. The best documentation is the standards, which speak for themselves. I would ask you to study them carefully with the following questions in mind.

(1) Do NAC standards require that all accredited workshops pay the minimum wage or above?

(2) Do these accredited workshops allow for collective bargaining and consumer participation in policy-making issues?

(3) Do the schools for the blind which NAC accredits maintain academic standards at least comparable to the public schools in that region?

(4) Do these schools offer a sufficient number of precollege courses to enable its graduates to enter college as well prepared

as those students attending public schools?

(5) Do NAC's standards unequivocally exclude qualified blind persons from staff positions in agencies which it accredits?

(6) Do NAC standards allow for community involvement when an agency applies for accreditation? Specifically, are blind persons in that community consulted by the on-site review team before making a decision?

In closing, it would seem to me that if NAC staff is truly concerned about the relevance of standards, it would urge the NAC Board which is, after all, the policy-making body of the Council to accept consumer representatives as members of its board. Until this step has been taken, all the professional journals, research data, or published reports in the world will not afford you standards which are acceptable to blind people and responsive to their needs.

Sincerely,

ELIZABETH BOWEN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind of Florida

WE HAVE CHOSEN TO FIGHT

BY
ELIZABETH BOWEN

[Editor's Note.—The following is a speech delivered by Elizabeth Bowen, president of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, to the Board of Directors of Gateway Hope Center at its September 24 board meeting.]

Mr. President, Members of the Board, and Guests:

I would like to thank you for the opportunity of speaking to you tonight. I cannot begin my talk with frivolity, as is

usually a practice on such occasions; first, because I am only allowed to speak for fifteen minutes; and second, because the matter of which I speak is of such gravity that there is nothing humorous to be said about it. Since I have devoted many hours of my valuable time (I say valuable time because I have four children, a full-time job, am president of a State organization and have many other responsibilities), and because it is so vitally important to the lives and futures of blind people everywhere, I think that I have the right to expect from you your undivided attention for the next few minutes.

Why, you might ask, is a national accreditation council so important to blind people that they would devote their time, energy, and finances to seeing that this council either becomes responsive to blind people or is destroyed? The answer to this question is simple to blind people, but always seems so complex to those whose lives are not affected by it. We are concerned about the National Accreditation Council For Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) because NAC dictates to agencies, schools, workshops, and rehabilitation centers—both private and public—what services it believes are suitable and necessary for blind people in this country and, at the same time, will not consider or even listen to the opinions and ideas of blind people themselves—the sole consumers of services being accredited. Now, I ask you, who would be better qualified to know the type of services needed than the consumer? A Greek philosopher puts it another way, “If you wish to know how well the shoe fits, you do not ask the cobbler but the person who is wearing the shoe.”

Now that I stop and consider the makeup of the Board of Directors of Gateway Hope Center, I’m not so sure that you gentlemen understand the concept of the rights of consumers either. I might point out to you that your own board is guilty of blatant discrimination. For example, in a board with twenty-seven members there is only one person who is a professional, and thus knowledgeable about work for the blind—that being Mr. Phil Gilbert, who resides in another city and is thus not able to attend board meetings. And more to the point, there is only one blind person on your board, Mr. George Starfas, whose opinions are totally ignored—as witnessed by his recommendation for nominees for board positions this year which was not even considered. And yet you men sit there and presume to know what is best for Gateway Hope Center and the blind clients it serves; and when an organization of blind people wishes to speak with you, we must plead for this right; and when you finally agree, we are given conditions by which we must abide, namely, a time limit, no questions or answers, and only two people are invited to be present. *Gentlemen, tokenism by any other name is still tokenism.* How can I hope to make you understand our objections to this tokenism when the same practice is being carried out right here in this city?

Perhaps, you can better understand the condescending attitudes of NAC by hearing a direct quote from their director of community affairs. When approached by the news media concerning consumer participation on the NAC Board, she replied: “You can’t have the blind governing their own affairs for the same obvious reasons that you can’t have the mentally retarded teaching the mentally

retarded or first graders teaching third graders." Let me remind you that this statement was made by a representative of NAC, the very council you are asking to accredit your services, and every agency which applies to NAC for this accreditation is lending credibility to this philosophy and, therefore, we must assume that every person who recommends application to NAC is in agreement with this statement. Well, I can tell you right now that I and over fifty thousand other members of the National Federation of the Blind are not patients in a mental hospital and we are not first graders. We are intelligent, responsible, tax-paying, first-class citizens, and we will fight with every ounce of energy we can muster to destroy this condescending noose around our necks.

Time will not permit me to go into all our objections to NAC; therefore, I have given out material here tonight which I hope you will take the time to study. Since there can be no questions, I have included my phone number and address and I welcome you to contact me if you have any questions. However, I would like to offer a few points for your consideration.

(1) NAC's standards of accreditation are so broad and so generalized as to allow interpretation to be left solely up to the particular "on-site review team." These are not standards at all, but statements which can be used for or against an agency at the pleasure of the particular review team. The danger of this lies in the fact that these standards can and have been used as bribes to keep agencies in line and political tools to discipline agencies who do not see things their way. It is suspected that facilities directed by some NAC Board members have immediately received accreditation although the conditions in these facilities

were despicable, and still have not changed.

(2) NAC requires that all "travel" instructors must have 20/20 vision, and must have a master's degree. I suppose that since blind people are collectively comparable to mental patients and first graders, they cannot be expected to teach mobility—one wonders how they are expected to learn it. I might remind you that the Bureau of Blind Services here in Florida uses blind instructors in mobility, and good ones I might add, and yet NAC emphatically and judiciously says it can't be done. Do you support that statement also?

(3) NAC is so paranoid about its actions that they have repeatedly held their meetings behind closed and guarded doors, and when Members of Congress ask that they be investigated, all but one member of the investigating team were either employed by NAC or by HEW, who partially funds NAC. Why were they so afraid to have an impartial investigating team? What do they have to hide?

You have been told that it will cost about \$150 to receive accreditation from NAC. This is not true. (1) For your self-study alone, there is the salary for your "self-study coordinator," not to mention her time away from clients. Since I do not know her salary, I cannot compute the exact amount, but we know it is more than \$150. (2) When it is time for your "on-site review team," their expenses must also be paid by Gateway Hope Center—a great deal more than \$150. (3) If you should be accredited, there are yearly dues which could run up to \$500 per year. (4) After five years you must repeat this whole procedure again; more money, more time.

Now what have you gained from this expenditure, which could conceivably run into thousands of dollars? If you complete all the ridiculous procedures and you are not granted accreditation by NAC, which is quite possible, then you have wasted precious time and money which could and should have been better spent on training clients and placing them in gainful employment, getting them off the welfare rolls and into the mainstream of life, which is what it is all about anyway—NAC to the contrary. But if you should apply and be accredited, then what have you gained? Is this what you really want? to be a part of a self-serving agency whose goal it ultimately is to destroy the image of the independent blind person, to place him back into the bondage of servitude and submissiveness, and to strip away his pride and place him once more into second-class citizenship?

Gentlemen, why must we be forced to continually fight for our God-given rights: the right to live in this world as we choose, the right to think and speak for ourselves and the right to choose for ourselves our own professions and the pattern of our

lives? We are tired of being exploited by sometimes well-meaning groups who think they know what is best for us and who insist on speaking for us. We are tired of being told that we are second-class citizens, tired of being compared with patients in a mental ward. It will not be long, I hope, until these people will have to find another group to exploit, another second-class citizen to enhance their publican egos, because—like the Irish, the Jews, and the blacks before us—we will no longer tolerate these attitudes.

There are over 500,000 blind people in this country alone, not just names on a list but living, breathing people who will fight for the right to speak for themselves. If you receive accreditation from NAC, we may have lost the battle but, by no means have we lost the war. We have an ultimatum—we must destroy NAC or be destroyed ourselves. We have chosen to fight. Will you join us by not lending credibility to this despicable agency? We know we will win, Gentlemen; we know because we know we are right and our cause is just.

NAC: THE BATTLE IN VIRGINIA

One of the NAC Board members, Mr. Huntington Harris, lives in Virginia. The blind of that State have repeatedly requested Mr. Harris to meet with them to talk about NAC. He has refused. Not only has he refused but he has done so with arrogance and condescension. Virtually every sentence shows his contempt for the blind, his feeling that they have no business

discussing the programs affecting their lives.

The following exchange between Mr. Harris and Robert McDonald, the able president of our Virginia affiliate, speaks for itself. Perhaps NAC would like to have it “documented” for them as a “document” in their “documentation”:

Leesburg, Virginia, August 30, 1973.

Mr. ROBERT McDONALD,
*President, National Federation of the Blind
of Virginia,
Alexandria, Virginia.*

DEAR MR. McDONALD: I have your letter of 21 July in which, in reply to my letter of 21 June, you say—and I quote—that you “insist on your meeting with a group of us to discuss NAC.”

While I have been out of the country on an extended journey and unable to answer your letter sooner, I still have no inclination at all to accede to your demand. Were it a matter of the financial affairs of NAC, my area of competence, there might be something to discuss or, more properly, correspond about.

But it appears to be questions of consumerist philosophy that concern you, and that is something I have no wish or reason to discuss. The NAC Board in its entirety has taken its position on that matter, as you know, and it is one that seems entirely proper.

However, again, most importantly, if you are concerned with actual services to the blind in Virginia and some deleterious affect you suppose NAC to have on them, the man to see is W. T. Coppage. And, he assures me, he is willing to meet with you again on such points at any time.

Yours truly,

HUNTINGTON HARRIS.

Alexandria, Virginia, October 1, 1973.

Mr. HUNTINGTON HARRIS,
Leesburg, Virginia.

DEAR MR. HARRIS: I have your letter of 30 August, and it seems to me that we have reached an impasse. This letter, then, will be an attempt to try to break this impasse, and if I speak at times pointedly or bluntly, please be assured that I do so not from poor taste or ill will, but from a desire to try to have you truly understand our position.

First of all, let me apologize to you for the use of the word “insist,” with respect to your meeting with a group of us, which I used in my last letter. From the standpoint of common courtesy, the word should never have been used; from the standpoint of justifiability, however, I feel its use to have been entirely warranted. I shall try to explain my meaning in the following paragraphs.

In rereading our correspondence, I am struck by your position that you have “no special competence in the technical matters with which that organization (NAC) deals,” and that your contribution is in the area of financial affairs. If you will, let me propose an analogy with which, I am sure, you will not be unfamiliar. Let us view NAC as a corporation doing business for profit. I contend that a vice-president/finance must not only know about financial affairs but also should have a good working knowledge of the business practices and procedures of the corporation. We, of course, are trying to get you to become more familiar with some of these other areas of NAC activity.

Let us extend the analogy of NAC as a corporation a little further. Let us assume

that it is now a public corporation with stockholders to whom the officers and board of directors are answerable. I feel that I, as a blind person, am a stockholder in NAC. The standards which NAC sets, the agencies which it accredits, and the decisions which it implements to gain acceptance of its product are of deep and vital concern to me both as a blind person and as a recipient of services to the blind. Furthermore, as the president of the National Federation of the Blind of Virginia, I feel that I hold a number of votes by proxy for the blind people whom I represent.

You may say, of course, that NAC is not a public corporation, and that is certainly true. You may also say, and rightly so, that the directors of NAC are only responsible to NAC's legal constituency. Yet I would go even beyond this and say that NAC, in reality, is not responsible to its officers and directors except as they might happen to reflect the wishes and desires of the American Foundation for the Blind and a few other large agencies, private and governmental, prominent in the field of work for the blind. By your own admission, this is not your area of competence; what do you do then but act as a rubber stamp for the actions of the NAC staff? I do not mean this as personal criticism. Many of the other members of the NAC Board are, no doubt, in the same position. It is my contention that you, along with those others on the board who serve out of a true desire to do good and to be of help to a worthwhile philanthropic venture, are being led down the proverbial garden path. I must try to make you open your eyes and see this; I must try to counteract the brainwashing which you have received from certain others within the NAC establishment.

Let me use several examples. You were no doubt told, or at least led to believe (although probably not in such blunt terms), that the "independent" HEW report on NAC would vindicate it and would verify everything which you had been told. Due over six months ago, I must ask you where it is. Is it perhaps not quite such a simple and straightforward situation after all? Are there perhaps some real problems with respect to NAC which even the study group biased in favor of NAC, as its makeup would seem to indicate, cannot so easily gloss over?

Secondly, take Dr. Glasser's definition of a consumer. Although I do not have his exact words before me, I believe their import can be thus stated: Consumers are actual and potential users of services. In the case of the blind, consumers are those who are already handicapped and those who may become so handicapped—in other words, everybody. What kind of doubletalk is that? Should NAC really expect to be taken seriously by the blind when it espouses such utter nonsense?

Let me briefly return to my analogy of NAC as a public corporation. As a stockholder, where am I to turn if you refuse even to listen to my assertions? You suggest that I speak with W. T. Copping and, as you know, I have already done so; but no matter how much I may like and respect Mr. Copping he is the head of an agency *for* the blind and perforce will reflect that position on NAC's board. I might hope that he would do otherwise, but I would not expect it. Furthermore, assume that you and I lived in a State where there was no other NAC representative. Should I then turn to HEW representatives on the NAC Board who have seen to a rather large percentage of

NAC financing? I believe that they have a vested interest in NAC as it is and, as a typical governmental agency, prefer the status quo to any change.

Finally, let me return to your refusal to sit down with me to discuss NAC (please notice: not services to the blind in Virginia, but NAC). Your refusal seems to be based on two major contentions. First of all you contend that your contribution to NAC is in the area of financial matters and not in the area of technical matters with which NAC is concerned. Frankly, as a board member and officer of NAC, you should become competent with these technical matters, or you should refuse to serve any longer on the board. The votes which you cast affect the lives of many blind people. Probably you have no inkling of this, but I say to you that it is so and that you have a responsibility to look at NAC not only as some of the other board members would have you look at it but also as we, the consumers, view it.

Your second contention for refusing to meet with us seems to be that you spoke with two members of the National Federation of the Blind while in Chicago and that therefore you know our position thoroughly. You say it would be a waste of my time and of your time to sit down together to discuss NAC. To this contention may I only say that my discourtesy in insisting that you meet with me is exceeded by your condescension toward me by knowing already what I have

to say.

Are we all such monsters or so to be feared that we, along with our views, must be avoided at all cost? You know, I trust, that the feeling of dissatisfaction with NAC is not unique to me. There are many others who share my dissatisfaction. As you know, I was present in Chicago for the NAC Board meeting and participated in the demonstrations against NAC. Let me assure you that I did not do so for fun or because I happen to enjoy demonstrating. I have never before demonstrated for anything, and I would prefer not to have to do so again. However, when the cause is so vital and when all remedies have been tried and exhausted, what other recourse is there?

Although I have spoken bluntly in this letter, let me again assure you that I have not done so with the intent to offend. Rather, I am trying to force you to look at the situation from a different perspective. Perhaps, as you seem to be saying in your letters, this is futile. I do not know. But I do know that I must try. Therefore, I ask you to search your conscience and think about those matters which I have raised. I also request, and it shall be for the last time, that you sit down with me and a few other NFBV members, and that you listen to our position.

Very truly yours,

ROBERT McDONALD,
President.

SMOKESCREENS IN SYNTAX

[Editor's Note.—Here is another installment of the ongoing correspondence between President Jernigan and various functionaries of the National Accreditation Council. The November 1973 issue of *The Monitor*, in the article "NAC: HEW Deception Documented," contained letters from President Jernigan to NAC President Daniel Robinson in which he asks for answers to certain specific questions. Instead of replying in a straightforward manner, Mr. Robinson states that the questions have already been answered. In the meantime President Jernigan received a letter and questionnaire from Gerald Topitzer (NAC research associate and, increasingly, the bulwark of NAC's bureaucratic smokescreen). President Jernigan's reply to Mr. Topitzer includes Daniel Robinson's most recent attempt to evade altogether the questions raised by the NFB President. This is followed by President Jernigan's response to Mr. Robinson.]

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL
FOR AGENCIES SERVING THE BLIND
AND VISUALLY HANDICAPPED,
New York, New York.

TO: Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President
National Federation of the Blind

FROM: Gerald F. Topitzer,
Research Associate

DATE: October 10, 1973

SUBJECT: Inquiry Concerning National
Organizations of Blind Persons

The National Accreditation Council's goal is the improvement of services to blind

and visually impaired children and adults. This is accomplished through the development and application of standards for administration and delivery of services to blind persons. Among the standard-setting activities of NAC are two planned projects which should be of special interest to national consumer organizations. These are:

(a) Strengthening standards for consumer participation in agencies serving the blind;

(b) Establishment of a Consumer Council to assist the Commission on Standards in reviewing, revising, and developing additional standards.

Constructive participation by consumers is essential to these and other activities of NAC. In addition, we have occasion to advise direct service agencies about how they may turn to local affiliates of national consumer organizations for assistance in program planning, service delivery and evaluation.

In order for us to work most effectively with your organization and describe its potential value to the direct service agency, it is important that we have a clear understanding of your philosophy and operating procedures. For this reason, we are requesting that you complete the enclosed inquiry, which is being sent to each national organization of blind persons of which we have knowledge. Please respond with as much detail as possible, including especially the documents that are requested.

We look forward to your response in the

interest of improving our efforts to work together to insure standards of sound service for blind persons.

INQUIRY CONCERNING NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OF BLIND PERSONS

Kindly respond as fully as possible to each of the following questions. It will enable us to better understand your organization and its relationships with NAC and agencies serving the blind and visually handicapped. This will insure that we have a full and current knowledge of all of these facets of your organization.

Your Organization:

- (1) What is the purpose of your organization?
- (2) What are the qualifications for membership?
- (3) How is your organization governed?
- (4) What are the sources of your financial support?
- (5) When, where, and for how long has your organization been incorporated?
- (6) What assistance can you provide to local organizations serving blind people?

May we suggest that you include descriptive brochures, copies of your articles of incorporation, bylaws, and most recent annual reports (including financial data) in responding to the above questions.

NAC:

(1) In what way is your organization interested in participating in the activities of NAC:

- (a) financial support;
- (b) membership on technical committees;
- (c) suggestions and consultation for standard development and revision;
- (d) other.

(2) In what way can NAC be of most assistance to your organization?

Please supplement your responses to the above with any information that will be of value to us, including the names of persons in your organization whom we can contact for whatever assistance might be available.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, October 23, 1973.

Mr. GERALD F. TOPITZER,
*Research Associate,
National Accreditation Council for
Agencies Serving the Blind and
Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.*

DEAR MR. TOPITZER: Under date of October 10, 1973, you sent me a form letter and a questionnaire. You say that you are sending your form letter to "each national organization of blind persons" of which you have knowledge. This is rather a strange comment since the number is not

great. In fact, the National Federation of the Blind has affiliates in most of the States and something over fifty thousand members. Then, there is the Blinded Veterans Association, which is comparatively small and deals with the problems of veterans. Many of its members also belong to the National Federation of the Blind.

So far as I know, it is constructive and does good work. There is also the American Council of the Blind. It purports to be a national organization. Even though it claims quite a number of affiliates, it is quite small. Many people regard it as a company union for the more reactionary agencies, including NAC.

Surely a form letter is not needed for three organizations, or does NAC propose to resort to its usual sophisticated techniques of terminology as to what constitutes a "national organization of blind persons?" I note that you also refer to "national consumer organizations." Again, I would assume that you are using the mysterious definition of consumer devised by Mr. Glasser—namely, that everybody is a consumer of services for the blind since everybody is potentially a blind person. In fact, perhaps in the future we can refer to this concept as the "Glasser theory of consumerism." The Glasser theory of consumerism would state: "Everybody is a consumer of everything, and nobody has any greater interest in anything than everybody has in everything."

Certain parts of your questionnaire are noteworthy in the circumstances. The second part asks:

(1) In what way is your organization

interested in participating in the activities of NAC:

(a) financial support;

(b) membership on technical committees;

(c) suggestions and consultation for standard development and revision;

(d) other.

To this question I would respond, "other."

Question 2 of the second part of your questionnaire reads: "(2) In what way can NAC be of most assistance to your organization?" Ah, Mr. Topitzer, what a question!

Under date of October 5, 1973, your president (Mr. Daniel Robinson) sent me a letter. It reads in full:

October 5, 1973.

Mr. KENNETH JERNIGAN,
*President, National Federation
of the Blind
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: Thank you for your letter of September 27, 1973.

With respect to your request for more detailed information than I have already given you concerning the location of our board of directors meeting scheduled to be held in New York City on December 12-13, please watch for the Fall issue of *The Standard Bearer*.

With respect to our policy of admitting observers to board meetings, please refer to my letter of July 26, 1973, and its enclosed statement of board policy relative to this matter.

With respect to the reason why we requested that you send observers to our June, 1973, board meeting, please refer to our telegram of June 11, 1973.

With regard to the rest of your letter, I am sorry that your difficulty in comprehending is not matched by my powers of exposition.

Very truly yours,

DANIEL D. ROBINSON.

Mr. Topitzer, I reply in kind:

Thank you for your letter of October 10, 1973.

With respect to your request for more information than I have already given NAC, please watch for future issues of *The Braille Monitor*.

With respect to the questions contained in your questionnaire, please refer to my earlier letters to Dr. Salmon and Mr. Robinson.

With regard to the rest of your letter and questionnaire, I am sorry that your difficulty in comprehending is not matched

by my powers of exposition.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, October 23, 1973.

Mr. DANIEL D. ROBINSON,
President, National Accreditation
Council for Agencies Serving the
Blind and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: I have your letter of October 5, 1973, and the National Federation of the Blind again formally and officially requests that you tell us the exact time and location of your December board meeting and that you permit us to have a reasonable number of observers present. We also request that those observers be given fifteen minutes to present to the NAC Board matters of concern to us. In view of the fact that NAC is established to improve services to blind people and in view of the fact that the National Federation of the Blind has more than fifty thousand members and is the largest organization of blind persons in this country, our request would seem to be reasonable.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

* * * * *

NAC: THE BATTLE MOVES TO CAPITOL HILL

A gallant band of NFB citizen advocates answered President Jernigan's call to the barricades as the National Federation of the Blind took its differences with NAC (the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped) directly and personally to the Members of the United States Congress. The days of October 10 to 13 will be memorable for those who participated.

Approximately 120 Federationists gathered in Washington, D.C., in time for the 7:30 p.m. strategy meeting on Tuesday evening, October 10. Ralph Sanders served as general chairman. President Jernigan brought the group up to date on recent developments, briefed us on points to be emphasized, and then introduced the now famous NAC-Pac—the documents which NAC pretends do not exist. The planning went on for some hours. During the few days preceding, most States had made appointments with their Senators and Representatives by phone. These were coordinated at the meeting and some delegations were assigned to cover States unable to be present.

Perry Sundquist acted as anchor man. Each delegation reported to him by phone on its activities twice each day. Every evening Ralph Sanders conducted a review and reporting session. These meetings were

as short as possible, for the duties of the day were rigorous.

Long white canes moving briskly resounded in the marble halls of Capitol Hill. Congressmen and administrators had their old views about the limitations of blindness shaken. Well versed, well dressed, and articulate, the teams walked many miles between offices and between buildings as they "made their appointed rounds," talked endlessly about the Federation and NAC, and left a never-to-be-forgotten calling card—the NAC-Pac. The days of battle brought early hours, late hours, walking, walking, talking, meals skimped or skipped, long-forgotten muscles exercised, more walking, more talking. A detailed report will appear in a forthcoming issue of *The Monitor*. Not only was the response of the overwhelming majority of the Members of the Congress sympathetic to our concerns, but they gave every evidence of following through on our requests. That they were sincere in their purpose to help us can be seen by reports which appear elsewhere in this issue.

To obtain the desired results, it is now necessary that this effort in Washington be followed by action in the States. It is urgent that every chapter and State affiliate contact its congressional delegation either in Washington or at home. Do this in person if possible but by letter at least. Do not let this tremendous undertaking fail for lack of local action. The time is *now*.

* * * * *

CONGRESS FIRES AT NAC

[Editor's Note.—The Members of Congress are not given to empty gestures. The dates alone show that no time was wasted by some national legislators in taking care of our business. Others have asked investigatory agencies to study and report on questions dealing with accrediting bodies.]

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., October 10, 1973.

Mr. DANIEL D. ROBINSON,
*National Accreditation Council,
New York, New York.*

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: During the last few days, I have met with a number of my blind constituents and at each meeting with them have heard complaints regarding the operation of the National Accreditation Council.

In view of the seriousness of the complaints, which I find most disturbing, I regret very much that you were out of town when I called this morning to discuss this matter with you.

Their principal complaint is that while your organization is designed to set standards for blind groups, you have no set policy for blind organizations to elect their own representatives to the board of directors; consequently, there is no participation by the blind in policy-making decisions. In many instances, I am told, they are not even informed of your activities, nor are they notified of meetings.

They have requested that I, as a member of the Appropriations Committee, oppose

funding of your program and I find their argument most compelling. I, of course, do not wish to oppose funding of a program which I believe to be a worthwhile one, but may be forced to do so if their complaints are valid.

I will be meeting with a large delegation of my blind constituents in Los Angeles to discuss this matter further and would appreciate an early response from you with regard to this matter.

Sincerely yours,

EDWARD R. ROYBAL,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., October 16, 1973.

Mr. SYLVESTER NEMMERS,
*President, Iowa Department,
National Federation of the Blind,
Des Moines, Iowa.*

DEAR SYLVESTER: I enjoyed meeting with you and other members of the delegation of the Iowa Department of the National Federation of the Blind, and recalling old times in Northwest Iowa.

With further reference to our discussion of the problems your organization has encountered in its relationships with the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind (NAC), please find enclosed copies of letters I wrote today to the NAC and to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. You may be assured I'll forward a copy of any

reply received.

Please let me know whenever I may be of service to the blind of Iowa. With best personal wishes, I remain,

Sincerely,

WILEY MAYNE,
Member of Congress.

Encls.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C., October 15, 1973.

Hon. CASPAR W. WEINBERGER,
Secretary,
Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CAP: In further reference to my previous correspondence with the Department concerned with the welfare of the blind, please find enclosed a copy of a letter I wrote today to Mr. Daniel D. Robinson, president, National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC).

I had forwarded to Mr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, Des Moines, Iowa, a copy of the letters I had received from your Department in reply to my inquiries regarding the NAC. However, Mr. Jernigan, Mr. Sylvester Nemmers, president of the Iowa Department of the National Federation of the Blind, and other officials of the NFB contend the NAC continues to attempt to close its board meetings to NFB

observers. It would be appreciated if the Department, independently from and without reference to my own letter to Mr. Robinson, would through its own communication with Mr. Robinson, obtain the information sought and so advise me of the results.

Mr. Jernigan, on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind, on April 26, 1973, wrote to Mr. John R. Ottina, Commissioner-designate for the Office of Education, petitioning for revocation of the approval of NAC as an accrediting agency passing on eligibility of groups to participate in the Federal programs for the blind. Mr. John Proffitt, Director of the Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility Staff, Bureau of Higher Education, replied by letter of May 10 that the NFB's petition would be placed on the agenda of a forthcoming meeting of the Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Accreditation and Institutional Eligibility. Mr. Proffitt's reply to Mr. Jernigan further stated, "prior to that meeting, the National Federation will receive an official invitation to make an oral presentation to the Committee on the matter of the recognition of the National Accreditation Council." I do not have sufficient information as to whether or not Mr. Jernigan's petition should be granted, but feel the NFB is entitled to a hearing. I would appreciate your advising me as to the status of Mr. Jernigan's petition and whether it will be on the agenda for consideration at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.

Thank you for your attention and your cooperation in resolving these

matters. With best personal wishes, I remain,

Sincerely,

WILEY MAYNE,
Member of Congress.

Encl.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D. C., October 15, 1973.

Mr. DANIEL D. ROBINSON,
*President, National Accreditation
Council for Agencies Serving the
Blind and Visually Handicapped,
New York, New York.*

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: I am seriously interested in the problems of the blind, not only of my own Sixth Congressional District of Iowa, but also of all Iowa and the Nation. I'm concerned by reports from some of my blind friends in Iowa that the largest organization of the blind, the National Federation of the Blind, is not adequately represented on your board of directors, that the NFB has not been given real opportunity to present its views, and that it has been thwarted in efforts to send observers to meetings of your board, the Federation often having difficulty obtaining information as to when and where NAC Board meetings will be held.

Without my prejudging the above allegations, I would appreciate your advising me as to exactly when and where

the next meeting of the Board of the NAC will be held, whether that meeting will be open to the blind and general public, whether the various organizations of the blind including the National Federation of the Blind will be formally invited to send observers and to present views at this and succeeding board meetings, and whether the board will have on its agenda for discussion the various questions posed by these organizations, including the possibility of including increased representation on the board from the major organizations of the blind.

My friend and former constituent Sylvester Nemmers, president of the Iowa Department of the National Federation of the Blind, has assured me that any such representatives or observers from the National Federation of the Blind to the Board of Directors of the NAC would be responsible and orderly, would cause no disruption, and would comply with such rulings as the chair finds necessary to maintain the decorum and dignity of the proceedings.

Thanking you in advance for your consideration of this matter and your early reply, I am,

Sincerely,

WILEY MAYNE,
Member of Congress.

[Note.—Congressman Mayne is a member of the House Judiciary Committee.]

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C., October 16, 1973.

CORBETT REEDY,
*Acting Commissioner, Rehabilitation
Services Administration,
Social and Rehabilitation Service,
Dept. of Health, Education, and Welfare,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. REEDY: Recently, I was informed of the mistreatment and lack of recognition of the blind citizens of our Nation. Sincere and concerned representatives of the National Federation of the Blind visited me with their griefs over your agency's and the National Accreditation Council's dealings with the blind.

They feel they are being ignored, misrepresented, and treated as "special" citizens, a status which they regard to be quite unnecessary. As you probably know, the NFB considers NAC to be detrimental to their well-being by accrediting agencies and services somewhat oblivious to the needs and desires of the blind.

Furthermore, the NFB has evidence that NAC fails to incorporate the blind public in its decision-making. I fail to see the justification for excluding these people from helping to decide their existence.

Of immediate import is a bit of information which I strongly feel need not be kept from the NFB, or any independent blind person—that is, the date and place of the "secret" NAC Board meeting which is rumored to be scheduled for December in New York.

There is no reason to hold back this

information. Speaking for the NFB, I ask that you not only make the date of this meeting public and allow their attendance and input, but reform NAC so that it truly serves the blind.

Sincerely,

DONALD W. RIEGLE, Jr.,
Member of Congress.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, D.C., October 12, 1973.

Mr. JOHN D. TWINAME,*
*Administrator,
Social and Rehabilitation Service,
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR MR. TWINAME: I am writing to add my name to the growing list of Members of Congress who are disturbed by the way it appears that the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) is operating.

From the information which has been made available to me, it seems clear that NAC is not permitting the largest organization of blind persons, the National Federation of the Blind (NFB), to participate in any significant sense in the accreditation process, although it is the blind who are most assuredly affected by the decisions NAC reaches.

One gentleman who visited with me yesterday characterized NAC's attitude by saying, "They (NAC) treat the blind as though they are mentally retarded." This kind of attitude is inexcusable.

When an organization receives Federal funds, it should be required that the Federal Government take on the oversight responsibility to assure that the organization is meeting the needs of the persons whom it is designed to serve. From what I have learned about NAC, it is clear the organization is not living up to that responsibility. By the same token, it would appear that your agency is likewise not living up to its oversight responsibilities.

I would appreciate your advising me of what plans the Social and Rehabilitation Service has to address the concerns that blind persons have adequate participation in the decision-making process of accrediting agencies which provide direct services to the blind.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM LEHMAN,
Member of Congress.

[*Editor's Note.—Mr. Twiname was succeeded as SRS Administrator by James Dwight. Congressman Lehman is a member of the House Committee on Education and Labor.]

UNITED STATES SENATE,
Washington, D.C., October 24, 1973.

The Honorable CASPAR W. WEINBERGER,
Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare,
Washington, D.C.

MY DEAR MR. SECRETARY: My office was recently visited by Mr. Ralph Sanders, president of the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas, in regard to the National

Accreditation Council (for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped).

According to the information furnished me, Mr. Sanders' organization and reportedly many others throughout the Nation have encountered difficulty in being represented on the National Accreditation Council. Because NAC receives Federal funds from the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, I consider it appropriate to pose the following questions:

(1) It is my understanding that NAC persists in holding closed meetings. If this is the case, would you provide an explanation of why the National Federation of the Blind of Arkansas and other consumer groups are not allowed to attend these meetings as observers?

(2) It is my understanding that the National Accreditation Council opposes having one third of its board of directors made up of consumer representatives. If this is so, would you provide an explanation of why this policy has been adopted?

Mr. Secretary, your answer to these questions and other assistance in this matter will be greatly appreciated, and with kindest regards, I am,

Sincerely yours,

JOHN L. McCLELLAN.

[Note.—Senator McClellan is chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee.]

DR. MACFARLAND DISCUSSES NAC

BY

MARC MAURER

When the blind went to Washington early in October to try to do something about NAC, some of us met with Dr. D. C. MacFarland, the director of the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped of the Social and Rehabilitation Service of HEW. As might have been expected, the conference was largely a waste of time. Congressman John Myers of Indiana arranged the meeting. Members of the Indiana affiliate of the NFB spoke with Dr. MacFarland Friday morning, October 12, for about an hour in a conference room in the HEW Building. Dr. MacFarland said he would write a letter to NAC. He promised us that his letter would state that senior officials of the National Accreditation Council should meet with senior officials of the National Federation of the Blind to discuss the differences between the two groups. He also promised to include a statement that reasonable numbers of observers from representative organizations of the blind should be admitted to NAC Board meetings.

Dr. MacFarland did not believe that NAC was controlled by the American Foundation for the Blind but thought that if NAC were to be controlled by AFB, NAC was "doomed to failure." Dr. MacFarland felt that NAC was unimportant and stated that NAC is "a peripheral issue." Dr. MacFarland was jocular and treated NAC and our concern with NAC lightly. He tried to discuss other matters of no consequence to the blind such as the generalized topic of the accreditation of teachers in the public schools. His concern over NAC is exemplified by his taking much time in the meeting to tell us of a

subway being built under his building. Dr. MacFarland described in some detail a seventy-foot-deep hole outside his window. He's just not interested in the critical nature of NAC.

To what extent Dr. MacFarland kept his promises and just how firmly he was willing to deal with NAC can be seen in the following letter:

October 23, 1973.

DEAR MR. ROBINSON: Following a visit to several Indiana Congressmen, Mr. Marc Maurer, president of the Indiana Council of the Blind, and his wife visited my office on October 11, to discuss grievances that the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) has with your organization.

Although we discussed many aspects of the accreditation process, Mr. Maurer had two specific requests. He asked that I write you requesting that consideration be given to attendance of observers from the Federation at the National Accreditation Council's (NAC) board meetings, and that I urge you to arrange a meeting between top officials of NFB and NAC to discuss basic differences in NFB and NAC viewpoints.

I am sure you are well aware of my attitude toward the admission of observers to board meetings insofar as such participation does not violate laws of confidentiality. I believe, from my discussion with you, that you hold the same opinion. With respect to Mr. Maurer's second request, we in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare have long

held the view that the proposed meeting could be very beneficial. Occasions are rare indeed when disputes can be satisfactorily settled through publication or independent discussion with third parties.

I know that previous unsuccessful attempts have been made, but in view of Mr. Maurer's proposal made on behalf of

the Federation, I feel it in the best interest of all concerned that you communicate with Mr. Kenneth Jernigan in an effort to develop the dialogue requested.

Sincerely yours,

D. C. MACFARLAND,
*Director, Office for the Blind
and Visually Handicapped.*

McGILL FIRED—RABBY FIRES AT NAC

[Editor's Note.—The following exchange of correspondence to Congressman Ronald A. Sarasin of Connecticut is further evidence of how NACsters play with the lives of blind persons, to say nothing of the real facts. The first letter, written in August of 1973, is from the director of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, a NAC-accredited agency. He was shortly thereafter fired for mishandling the agency's funds. Rami Rabby, who was one of the leaders in Illinois who fought to improve the conditions in the shop at the Lighthouse, then writes a letter to Congressman Sarasin in September in which he proceeds to cut the first letter to pieces with a most trenchant analysis and exposes the abuses of that agency.]

THE CHICAGO LIGHTHOUSE
FOR THE BLIND,
Chicago, Illinois, August 14, 1973.

The Honorable RONALD A. SARASIN,
[*Member of Congress,*]
Waterbury, Connecticut.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SARASIN: I have received from Alexander F. Handel, executive director, National Accreditation Council of Agencies Serving Blind and

Visually Handicapped, a copy of your letter of August 3, 1973, to him and his reply, dated August 10, 1973.

We appreciate the tenor and content of Mr. Handel's statement regarding the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. To the best of our knowledge, the Chicago Lighthouse is in complete compliance with the Fair Labor Standards Act as amended, particularly part 525 which deals with regulations for sheltered workshops employing handicapped workers.

It is our further understanding that the Chicago Lighthouse is regarded as one of the more knowledgeable and capable agencies in this field by the Handicapped Worker Section of the Division of Wage and Hour and Public Contracts in the Department of Labor. All production operations at the Lighthouse are analyzed through the use of the Method Time Measurement System and industrial production standards are developed. The prevailing piece rate wage of \$2.58 per hour in the Chicago area is applied to the industrial standard production per hour to determine piece rates in the Lighthouse sheltered workshop.

The current base rate for the Lighthouse shop is \$1.40 per hour. Current average earnings are slightly less than \$1.65 per hour. The Department of Labor has approved special certificates for twelve persons ranging between \$1.30 and \$1.00 per hour.

About 175 persons are regularly at work in the Lighthouse shop. During the 1973 fiscal year—July 1, 1972, through June 30, 1973—there were twenty-seven persons who moved from the Lighthouse shop to employment in community industry. These persons are all the more capable workers and had the higher earnings. The cumulative average earnings of workers in the Lighthouse shop are, therefore, lower than they would be in a given day, week, or month. Those persons who would tend to increase the average are not those who would usually work a full year.

Within the field of sheltered workshops serving handicapped persons, the less than one hundred shops serving persons who are blind have traditionally paid higher wages, operated at higher levels of industrial sophistication, and have tended to have less community and Federal subsidy of shop programs than the almost two thousand other sheltered workshops in the country. It is possible there may be specific situations in which one or more individuals may have been unfairly treated. In our experience, when that happens, these are vocal people who bring it to our attention. When such complaint is recognized and justified, corrections are made. If your correspondent or any other person should know of any situation in which it seems the Chicago Lighthouse has been unfair to one or more persons, we certainly would appreciate the opportunity of knowing about that situation and taking steps to

correct it.

We appreciate your concern and interest. If you should have any questions or desire to have any matters of information included here clarified or expanded, please be assured that we are prepared and ready to cooperate with you.

Sincerely,

WILLIAM O. MCGILL,
Executive Director.

Chicago, Illinois, September 27, 1973.

The Honorable RONALD A. SARASIN,
*[Member of Congress,]
Waterbury, Connecticut.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN SARASIN: I am writing to you in response to a note I received, this week, from John May of Connecticut, to which he attaches a letter sent to you, on August 14, by Mr. William O. McGill, executive director of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, and in which he requests me to provide you with documented evidence of abuses perpetrated by Lighthouse management against the recipients of its services, in general, and against its sheltered workshop employees, in particular. I shall be very happy to do so, and am grateful to you for the interest you have shown in this matter.

I should, perhaps, begin by telling you that I am a founding member of the National Federation of the Blind of Illinois, the Illinois affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind. Over the past five years (and more dramatically, during 1970), I have been heavily involved, together with the entire membership of our

Federation affiliate in Illinois, in a campaign directed at the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, whose fundamental purpose has been to humanize the philosophy and programs of this agency by: (1) eradicating management's long-entrenched concept of the blind client and workshop employee as inherently and necessarily less productive, less adult, and less responsible than his sighted counterpart, and (2) replacing it with a more modern and more logical perception of the blind consumer of its services as an innately normal human being who, when offered the opportunity and afforded the proper training, is equally productive as his sighted counterpart, who craves recognition, and who is perfectly capable of responsible involvement in decision-making affecting his own life and livelihood.

This overall objective was translated, in 1970, into three practical demands, namely:

(1) that Lighthouse management compensate its workshop employees at a rate at least equal to the prevailing Federal minimum wage;

(2) that Lighthouse management cease and desist from any attempt at discouraging the unionizing efforts of its workshop employees and denying their right to collective bargaining; and

(3) that the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind permit the inclusion, on its board of directors, of a substantial number of elected representatives of organized consumer groups.

In addition, Congressman Sarasin, I should tell you that, in my occupational

life, I am successfully employed as a management consultant at Hewitt Associates, a prestigious firm of consultants and actuaries working in the fields of compensation, employee benefits, communication, and other personnel-related functions. Over the past four years, I have been engaged in manpower planning and development and wage and salary administration assignments involving client organizations in both the public sector and the profit and nonprofit segments of the private sector.

Thus, in my dual capacity as a management consultant specializing in compensation and personnel administration, on the one hand, and as a consumer of services to the blind, on the other, I have been able to gain not only a unique insight into modern theories of worker motivation and actual personnel practices in American industry, but also a clear perception of the tragic disparity which exists between the circumstances of workers in open industry and the dismal plight of employees in the sheltered workshop of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. It would surely be no exaggeration to say that the attitude and behavior of Lighthouse management toward its clients and employees, today, represent a cross between, on the one hand, the authoritarianism and distrust which formed an integral part of Frederick Winslow Taylor's "Scientific Management" movement so popular at the beginning of the century, and, on the other hand, the overwhelming paternalism and demeaning condescension toward the employee which was so pervasive in American management, during the so-called "Human Relations" era of the twenties.

Clearly, my principal aim in this letter

will be to refute many of the claims made by Mr. McGill in his August 14 communication to you, as well as comment in detail on his general attitude toward blindness and the blind which is apparent from a discerning reading of, and between, his lines. However, I believe you will gain a better understanding of our position vis-a-vis the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind if you first place this local confrontation in a wider context, and relate it to the nationwide campaign which the National Federation of the Blind is currently waging for the purpose of reforming the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped. As you will see, the one is nothing more than a reflection, in microcosm, of the other.

As you already know from correspondence you have received from your own blind constituents, the National Federation of the Blind is seeking to reform the National Accreditation Council (NAC) (1) because NAC is undemocratically constituted, and (2) because, as a result, the standards which it formulates and against which it measures the accreditation-worthiness of any one agency are bad standards, standards which evince an asylum mentality and a paternalistic and custodial attitude toward the blind, standards which are much more concerned with an agency's compliance with mechanistic accounting procedures and abstruse legal requirements than they are with that same agency's fundamental concepts of blindness and rehabilitation, and the programs which it may establish to implement and reflect those concepts.

Since many of the Nation's agencies for the blind rely, for their continued existence, on contributions from private

sources, and since private contributors are likely to support only agencies which have received NAC's stamp of approval, the clear danger exists that agencies now enjoying the support and collaborative efforts of blind consumer groups will be obliged to modify their policies and practices, and allow their clients to suffer the regressive consequences of compliance with NAC's standards. The National Federation of the Blind is determined to prevent this threat from becoming a painful and irreversible reality.

Let me now turn to Mr. McGill's letter to you of August 14, and demonstrate to you the pervasive and deleterious impact which NAC's philosophy and practices at the national level have had on the lives of blind men and women at the State and municipal levels.

Client Consultation and Consumer Representation

Let us begin with the issue of management-client or management-employee consultation, and consumer representation on the Board of Directors of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, the policy-making instrumentality of the agency. In his letter, Mr. McGill writes as follows: "It is our further understanding that the Chicago Lighthouse is regarded as one of the more knowledgeable and capable agencies in this field by the Handicapped Workers Section of the Division of Wage and Hour and Public Contracts, in the Department of Labor." Then, toward the conclusion of his letter, he continues: "It is possible that there may be specific situations in which one or more individuals may have been unfairly treated. In our experience, when that happens, these are vocal people who bring it to our

attention. If your correspondent or any other person should know of any situation in which it seems the Chicago Lighthouse has been unfair to one or more persons, we certainly would appreciate the opportunity of knowing about that situation and taking steps to correct it.”

For years, the sheltered workshop employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind have cried: What must we do to have our voice listened to? The answer in Mr. McGill’s letter echoes loud and clear: be “vocal,” but if you *are* “vocal,” dare not be “vocal” before me nor before my board of directors, for we hear not what you say; rather, voice your grievances and opinions in Washington, or, if no remedy is forthcoming from Washington, voice them before Congressman Sarasin’s “correspondent or any other person”; just don’t bother us!

There is surely only one interpretation which may rationally be drawn from Mr. McGill’s statements, namely: as long as sheltered workshop employees remain silent and submissive, the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind will be more than happy to redouble the pressure, but, should even saintly forbearance become intolerable, the Chicago Lighthouse will be prepared to entertain the complaints and criticisms of its employees *only* from outside sources, and *only* such outside authorities will the Lighthouse recognize as competent to judge its performance as a rehabilitation agency. The practice by American managements of surveying employee attitudes and morale for the purpose of initiating improvements in organizational policies and procedures (or “employee sensing,” as it is now called) is, today, so widespread and universally accepted in industry, that Mr. McGill’s

almost physical abhorrence of accidentally finding himself within communication range with his employees can only be described as pathological.

The National Federation of the Blind of Illinois has long been aware of the Chicago Lighthouse’s stubborn refusal to conduct meaningful consultation with organized groups of actual or potential consumers, let alone bargain collectively with its sheltered workshop employees. In 1970, it was only following strenuous appeals, both private and public, that Lighthouse directors finally agreed to open their boardroom doors to our representatives. That, however, was tokenism, and no meaningful consultation has taken place since.

It is interesting to note, in passing, that, while in NAC’s own standards: “Provision is made for the constitution of an advisory group or committee made up of recipients or potential recipients of agency service who can be of assistance in formulating policies which affect the well-being of the agency’s clients,” no such group or committee has, to the best of our knowledge, been established, unless, that is, the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, like its mentor NAC, considers “potential recipients” to include its board of directors which is predominantly composed of high-powered, downtown Chicago executives whose suburban mansions and stock options are, indeed, a far cry from the sheltered workshop and its subsistence piece rates.

A Decent Living Wage

As to the wage rates paid the sheltered workshop employees of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, Mr. McGill writes as follows: “All production operations at

the Lighthouse are analyzed through the use of the Method Time Measurement System, and industrial production standards are developed. The prevailing piece rate wage of \$2.58 per hour, in the Chicago area, is applied to the industrial standard production per hour to determine piece rates in the Lighthouse sheltered workshop. The current base rate for the Lighthouse shop is \$1.40 per hour. Current average earnings are slightly less than \$1.65 per hour. The Department of Labor has approved special certificates for twelve persons ranging between \$1.30 and \$1.00 per hour.”

Quite apart from the issue of whether or not Mr. McGill’s statistics and the procedures by which they were arrived at are sound and accurate (a subject which I shall treat shortly), the clear assumption made by Mr. McGill is that sheltered workshop employees are inherently and necessarily less productive than their sighted counterparts. This we know to be false, since many Federation members who have worked in the Lighthouse workshop contend that they were invariably removed from their station and placed on a different product line as soon as they had attained a predetermined level of productivity.

Thus, while the rest of the Nation has embraced the concept of a minimum wage designed to guarantee a decent standard of living, the National Accreditation Council and the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind derive *their* criteria for adequacy and decency from the medieval poorhouse tradition, and rest content so long as the sheltered workshop meets “approved labor standards” (NAC standard 2.10). Surely, Congressman Sarasin, the question is not whether or not the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind complies with an arcane clause of

a recondite subsection of the Fair Labor Standards Act, but rather whether or not the employees of the sheltered workshop are being treated as normal human beings who derive as much satisfaction as their brothers in open industry out of a job well done, who reach out for ever-increasing levels of achievement and responsibility, and who expect to be compensated accordingly. Clearly, at the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, any equation with conditions and circumstances in the outside world has been eliminated, since the standard of living which may be eked out from \$1.40 per hour and less, rather than encouraging in the workshop employee the striving for competitiveness and self-reconstruction, automatically guarantees its frustration and defeat.

“Lies, Damn Lies and Statistics”

In his letter, Mr. McGill claims that the prevailing piece rate wage in the Chicago area is \$2.58 per hour. I should tell you that in April 1973 the Employers’ Association of Greater Chicago reported, in its Industrial Wage Rate Survey, that the prevailing rate was \$4.49 per hour. This is not to say that the Employers’ Association of Greater Chicago is right and Mr. McGill is wrong, although, from my knowledge of the compensation field, I would strongly suspect that the Employers’ Association of Greater Chicago is much nearer the mark than Mr. McGill. Rather, my purpose in presenting to you the \$4.49 figure is to pinpoint a typical problem relating to the validation of any wage and salary survey. The fact is that in order to be meaningful wage and salary surveys must gather data on comparable jobs in comparable circumstances, a procedure which is expensive and time-consuming, and requires the kind of professional expertise

which the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind clearly does not possess.

Suffice it to say that, before you give credence to Mr. McGill's figure of \$2.58 per hour, you would do well to seek answers to such questions as: What jobs did the Lighthouse survey? Which establishments participated in the survey? What proportion of the participating establishments were located in Chicago, and what proportion in the suburbs? What indirect compensation plans (such as, pension, life insurance, accident and hospitalization coverage, et cetera) were available to workers in the participating establishments? Answers to such questions are crucial in determining the validity of any statistical data presented in connection with wage and salary surveys.

However, whether Mr. McGill's data are valid or not, the following observations may justifiably be made:

(1) As is typical of NAC and the professional staff of its accredited agencies, Mr. McGill's letter poignantly exemplifies the overwhelming emphasis which the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind places on statistical equity and legal propriety to the total exclusion of human equity and any issue bearing on employee motivation and development in the industrial workplace. Thus, nowhere in the letter do we find any mention of the promotional opportunities and job enrichment possibilities which *could* be available to workshop employees and which *are* available to their sighted counterparts.

(2) Nor do we find any mention of the role played by Chicago Lighthouse management in discouraging unionizing efforts by workshop employees which

might have resulted in the institution of collective bargaining and grievance procedures, both of them symbolizing responsible employee-management relationships, in modern industry. Rather, Federation members report that with the first inkling of protest and disgruntlement the guilty "trouble-makers" are invariably laid off, and replaced by more docile, more submissive recruits.

(3) As Mr. McGill himself admits, the cumulative average earnings of workers in the Lighthouse shop are lower than the \$1.65 per hour figure he claims earlier in the letter, since the highest earners are not usually those who would work a full year. What Mr. McGill does not say is that these high earners are, for the most part, blind college students and sighted Neighborhood Youth Corps teenagers who have no business being employed in the sheltered workshop in the first place.

Condescension and Paternalism

Perhaps the most pernicious aspect of the relationship which exists between Chicago Lighthouse management, on the one hand, and workshop employees and potential consumers of the agency's services, on the other, is the unrelievedly demeaning and degrading character of its condescension and paternalism. Although I could offer you numerous examples of this phenomenon, let two suffice:

(1) One of the most painful facts of Lighthouse workshop life which we discovered in 1970 was that, while workshop employees devoted much of their efforts to assembly work subcontracted to the Lighthouse by the Western Electric Company, Western Electric was, at the same time, following a

declared policy of not hiring handicapped employees. In other words, the employees of the workshop were helping keep *in* business a company that was keeping them *out* of business. Surely, there can be no more eloquent nor more morally reprehensible statement of the plight of the blind in society and of the Chicago Lighthouse's disregard for their true needs and interests.

(2) On February 6, 1970, the members of our Federation affiliate in Illinois conducted a peaceful demonstration outside the premises of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind, in support of the three demands mentioned earlier in this letter, which we had presented to Mr. McGill, and which we had repeated before the cameras of Chicago's local NBC-TV affiliate. In response to our demonstration and the accompanying television coverage, the board of directors and management of the Chicago Lighthouse proceeded, even to our own amazement and disbelief, to retain the services of a firm of private detectives for the purpose of investigating whether or not it was the NBC station that had goaded our members into holding the demonstration. How foreign must the idea have been to Lighthouse directors and management that blind people can actually think for themselves, and organize themselves for direct action!

Yet, upon second thought and reasoned reflection, should we really have been surprised by the reaction of the Chicago Lighthouse to our independent and forthright spirit? The answer must necessarily be no; not, that is, if we had previously been aware of NAC's thinking on this and other related matters; for, lo and behold, in standard 1.5.3, we find the following: "The agency makes conscious

efforts to develop relationships with such specific groups as clients and their families." What, one might ask, would the reaction of Mr. Leonard Woodcock of the United Auto Workers have been if Chrysler management had chosen to sign their recent contract with the auto workers "*and their families?*" The point, I believe, is clear. Why, even the Social Security Administration has discarded the concept of relatives' responsibility for the blind; yet, at the Chicago Lighthouse and at the National Accreditation Council, the concept lives on, perpetuating the image of the blind person as no more than a helpless and incompetent ward who should be seen and not heard.

Congressman Sarasin, what can one say, in conclusion? It is often claimed by agency professionals that, although we of the National Federation of the Blind may differ with them in matters of strategy and technique, we are all, in fact, striving to attain the same end. To such claims, we can only reply: nonsense! For how can our ends be the same, if our initial premises and fundamental assumptions about blindness and the blind are so divergent?

While NAC speaks of the need "to combat prejudice and discrimination directed at blind persons" (standard 1.7.3), and preserve "the dignity of the client" (standard 1.2.3), within its accredited agency walls, the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind practices the rankest form of prejudice and discrimination against the blind consumers of its services, and subjects its employees to the most humiliating of indignities. We have tried, tried, and tried again to reform the National Accreditation Council and thereby reverse the direction so long followed by the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. So far, we have

failed; with your assistance, we shall succeed, for if we do not reform NAC, it will surely destroy us.

By way of an ironic postscript to this letter, I should tell you that, as I was in the process of writing it, I received word that, on September 7, Mr. William O. McGill was fired by the Board of Directors of the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind. My immediate reaction to this piece of news was that the fact of his being fired, following so closely, as it does, the copacetic picture which he depicted for you of conditions in the Lighthouse, should provide you with a closing illustration of the deceptive and duplicitous management style which has permeated Lighthouse operations, from the board of directors downward, for as long as we have known this agency.

Moreover, upon further investigation, I

can report to you that the reason for the firing of Mr. McGill only demonstrates that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Rather than being fired for his regressive attitude toward Lighthouse clients and employees, Mr. McGill was fired because, for the past three years, he had dipped into the principal of the Lighthouse's endowment fund in order to finance the agency's services, a practice which did not accord with the board of directors' view of what sound financial management should be.

I look forward to hearing of your efforts on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind, and thank you for your interest and cooperation. I am,

Sincerely yours,

RAMI RABBY.

* * * * *

NAC: THE BATTLE IN MISSOURI

Hon. STUART SYMINGTON,
*United States Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.*

DEAR SIR: I'm writing you in regard to the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped, better known as NAC. NAC was set up by the American Foundation for the Blind about five years ago. NAC is funded partially by the American Foundation for the Blind. It also draws funds from HEW. They have spent more than \$600,000 of taxpayers' money and are due to draw in excess of \$90,000 this year. We of National Federation of the Blind feel that they are doing a disservice

to the blind of the United States.

It is known that they accredit substandard agencies. They have accredited schools for the blind that could not qualify for academic accreditation. They also accredit workshops for the blind that pay the blind employees as little as one dollar an hour or less. They hold their meetings behind closed doors and refuse to admit observers into their meetings.

We feel that as an organization of forty-seven State affiliates with a membership in excess of fifty thousand blind persons we should have something to say about the programs brought forth by

this group. We are asking that one-third of their board be made up of persons representing consumers. When questioned about this, they point out that they have some blind persons on their board. But this is only token representation since their blind members only represent themselves. The membership of NAC is chosen as to the wealth and prestige of the person. NAC claims that they are experts in the field of accreditation.

I had the privilege of sitting in on accreditation of the Bureau of Services for the Blind in the State of Kansas. This was a self-study by the head of each department. The NAC team passed their judgement of these findings. One secretary in the agency told me she was instructed to have two cases to present to them when they came through. They looked over the folders and

that was all it amounted to.

The workshops in Kansas have a base pay of ninety-six cents an hour. When an agency is given accreditation, they are required to pay dues not to exceed \$500 a year for membership in NAC. They are also required to pay all of the expenses of the survey team which may take several days. The survey starts with a cocktail hour and winds up with a banquet. We could go on and on with this but it would be boring. The one way you could help us would be by cutting off HEW funds from NAC. Thanking you for any help,

Respectfully,

JAMES COURTS,
[*Second Vice-President,*
National Federation of the Blind.]

REHABILITATION OVERSIGHT HEARINGS

One of the duties of the United States Congress is to insure that the laws it has passed are executed, and the monies it has appropriated are spent, by the executive branch in accordance with the purpose intended by Congress, an intention usually expressed in the "purpose" clause of most statutes. When the Congress wants to discover whether the laws are being properly administered in a given area of concern, it conducts a kind of housekeeping "oversight hearing." (There are several other kinds of investigatory hearings carried on by Congress, but this is the one which concerns us here.)

On August 3, 1973, the House Subcommittee on Education held an oversight hearing on vocational

rehabilitation services. The results were astounding. Watergate fever had spread to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the subcommittee discovered plans well made to dismantle the vocational rehabilitation program. The information about proposed changes in this program came to the Congress by way of leaked DHEW memoranda which were brought to the attention of the subcommittee's chairman, John Brademas of Indiana.

The existence of the DHEW memoranda, kept secret from the Congress, the dangerous character of their content, and their coming into the possession of the subcommittee in such a devious manner, led to the calling of the oversight hearing. It should be noted here, that this method

of dealing with problems it does not wish to bring to public attention is not new with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, as anyone familiar with the NFB's struggle with NAC knows.

The DHEW was not informed by Chairman Brademas that he had the Department memoranda. The central document for discussion was a memorandum prepared by William A. Morrill, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, for presentation to the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare at a meeting in July 1973. This paper, in the words of the author, "will describe four general optional courses for the programs to take in addressing their goals and objectives. These options represent generally broad policy guidance positions, which can be somewhat combined in arriving at a best DHEW position. The four options are: Increased Federal presence, status quo with improvements, altering program delivery (meaning eliminating, cashing out, and so on), and decreased Federal presence and increased sub-Federal centralization." In fact, the options favored in the memorandum represented "such generally broad policy guidance positions" that if instituted the vocational rehabilitation program would disappear altogether or be so dismantled and redistributed in various other agencies of the DHEW as to be hardly discernible.

The very existence of an idea designed not to improve and enlarge the vocational rehabilitation programs by making them available to more needy and handicapped people but to do the very opposite, namely, curtail and/or eliminate these programs altogether, was more than Chairman Brademas could stomach. That

that is the intent of the memorandum is expressed by Corbett Reedy, Acting Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, in his comments on the Morrill memorandum: "The proposed program memorandum concludes that the vocational rehabilitation program is sufficiently ineffective as to warrant fractionation and dissolution of the State-Federal program."

Representing the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare at the hearing were James S. Dwight, Administrator, Social and Rehabilitation Service; William A. Morrill, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation; Corbett Reedy, Acting Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration; and Frank E. Samuel, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Congressional Liaison. James Dwight and Corbett Reedy are familiar names to Federationists and we have seen their efforts to protect their participation in support of NAC.

Brademas opened the hearing with a short historical statement about the importance of vocational rehabilitation programs. Then, in a tone more injured than not, he quickly reviewed the sad treatment of proposed vocational rehabilitation legislation by the current Administration: The "rehabilitation program, which has been almost universally acclaimed as one of the most successful Federal-State cooperative endeavors, has found itself in a state of limbo in the past few years. . . . Early in 1972, . . . Congress still had not received any recommendations from the Administration with regard to amending the Vocational Rehabilitation Act and the Members . . . decided that the time had come to improve this program. . . . The members of this committee . . .

tried to work in a bipartisan, cooperative fashion with the senior officials at the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as the Rehabilitation Act of 1972 moved through [Congress]. . . . Evidence of our success was the unanimous vote of approval which the Conference Report received in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

“The Chairman believes that he can safely assert that most of us were surprised, not to say absolutely astonished, when the President vetoed that measure after Congress went into recess last October and could not, as a result, vote to override. . . . The President’s proposed 1974 budget would allow less than a two-percent increase in the basic grant program for vocational rehabilitation, and would, indeed, virtually dismantle the Federal role in research and training in the area of rehabilitation. . . .”

He ended his introduction innocently enough: “The Chair raises these issues only to illustrate his own concern that these developments may have had profound effect on the administration of this highly successful program. So we have asked several Administration witnesses to meet with us today so that we might engage in a little colloquy as to the state of the rehabilitation program in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the future plans of the Department for the program.”

James Dwight then submitted his formal statement in which he says: “I would like to state at the outset my strong belief in the goals and activities of the rehabilitation program. It is one of the oldest and certainly one of the most successful of the Federal human resources programs.

Vocational rehabilitation has consistently enjoyed strong Presidential and public support for its valuable contributions to this Country.” “Any HEW recommendations for long-range changes would be developed for presentation to the Congress so that a joint discussion between the executive and the legislative may reach accord on future direction.” This is a good public relations statement and, since he did not know about the Department leaks, is not quite as brash as it might otherwise seem.

Because this is the first time that this particular group from the DHEW is testifying before this committee, Chairman Brademas asks each witness to outline his background. That done, he points out that only Reedy has any experience in vocational rehabilitation and that the others, besides being newcomers to the Department and its programs, have experience only in budget, management, and finance and were hired because of their backgrounds as CPA’s.

Brademas then cleverly leads them down the path.

Mr. BRADEMAS. I note the statement, Mr. Reedy, of Mr. Dwight that the rehabilitation program, to quote his testimony, is “one of the oldest and certainly one of the most successful of the Federal human resources programs.” Do you share that judgment?

Mr. REEDY. I do indeed. . . . I am completely devoted to the philosophy of rehabilitation, to the goals that it has, and proud of the accomplishments which it has recorded in its years of operation.

Mr. BRADEMAS. Mr. Morrill, do you

share the judgment of Mr. Dwight and Mr. Reedy?

Mr. MORRILL. Yes, sir. . . . the evidence that I have seen clearly supports that judgment.

Chairman Brademas then leads the DHEW witnesses to talk about their departmental responsibilities and brings Morrill to talk about planning processes and how the Department arrives at conclusions and proposed programs. Brademas tells Morrill that he is interested in the progress they have made in current planning because the subcommittee is in the process of writing a conference report. He goes on to state: "And what you commend to your superiors may obviously have some bearing on our own thinking as we make judgments on what we ought to do. . . . If you are making recommendations to the Secretary for long-run future of this or indeed other programs, how do you make judgments with respect to what kinds of changes are appropriate or not. . . ."

"You have already come to that judgment. . . . how do you then make the judgments, what kinds of criteria do you use, particularly in view of the fact . . . that you have already indicated that you are in a field with respect to which you don't feel terribly qualified. . . ."

Morrill replies that "in terms of looking at a program, even a successful one, the Department can never rest entirely on its laurels and assume that there is no room for improvement in the long-range future. We need to keep asking ourselves questions about that program." To which Brademas replied, "A statement with which no one, I think, can quarrel."

The chairman, with no intent to dissemble, questions them about their long-range plans for the vocational rehabilitation program, telling them, in Senator Vandenburg's words, that he would like to be "in on the takeoffs as well as the crash landings." Then he asks, "Can you explain a little?"

Even at this late point in the session, the Department witnesses seem to have no notion that in Chairman Brademas they are dealing with a master of the socratic method. All three jump into the explanations and trot out the options proposed in Mr. Morrill's memorandum—continuation and expansion of the present program; movement in the direction of some form of revenue sharing; income maintenance of some kind—and try to defend them against the questioning from Mr. Brademas. Then, like the master he is, Brademas says: "You leave me in some state of confusion with these . . . responses. Do you think you can rescue your colleagues, Mr. Morrill?" Mr. Morrill resorts unsuccessfully to jargon: "In a broad sense human resources programs can be delivered to the target populations in any of three broad ways, which is not unique to any particular one. . . . Each has advantages and disadvantages when one gets to a specific area and must determine which way seems to be the best, with the ultimate choice hopefully to be based primarily on the effectiveness of the program delivery system to do what it is we have set out to do." This tactic only raises the chairman's ire.

Congressman Brademas then strikes. He informs the Department witnesses that he has the memoranda and flings back to them their own words which appear in the various statements and memoranda,

pointing out that the public statements praise the program while the private ones recommend that the whole system be dismantled. Then he threatens: "You know, there is now serious discussion on the part of some Members of the House of Representatives about requiring all witnesses from the Administration to henceforth testify under oath. You ought to think about that." "I don't like falsification in the DOD [Department of Defense] and I don't like it in HEW and I certainly don't like to see responsible high officials of the Administration come in having produced documents that admonish a certain degree of rhetoric on the one hand while moving in a different direction in terms of action on the other."

There is further dialogue, statements both written and verbal by others, entered into the record, but the main concern is with preserving the program and discovering how the Morrill memorandum would affect it. It is evident from that document that extended involvement by the Federal Government is not the intent of the planners. In a moment, pertinent excerpts will be set out from the memorandum which so vitally affects essential programs and every blind person whether he works in a shop, private or public, seeks an education, or hopes for an industrial career, or would just like to adjust to the problems of blindness.

Having borrowed jargon from science and methods from business, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare and the Morrill memorandum, attempt to deal with human problems which are not always amenable to solutions usually available to and proper when attempting to solve problems in, say, mathematics or corporate bookkeeping. So, too, theories of

"gamesmanship" have been popular for some years now, along with the development of "models" for the solution of social problems. "Delivery of services" is an increasingly popular preoccupation with some social reformers, especially those attached to a level of government administration.

Corbett Reedy, Acting Commissioner, Rehabilitation Services Administration, reacted in his written comments of July 18, 1973, to the Morrill memorandum by defending the present system, and even went so far as to suggest that "the bases upon which many of the allegations in the program memorandum are made need careful scrutiny and analysis." Stanley B. Thomas, Jr., who was then Assistant Secretary for Human Development-Designate, in his written comments of the same date, evidently accepted Morrill's general thesis and simply wondered about strategy for effecting it. He accepts, for example, the proposal to "cash out," that is, giving people money with which to buy services, and then adds, "we should confront the issue of how to determine the appropriate level of cash assistance." The more serious question he poses is, "What is to be done if the private sector is not ready or willing to provide needed services?" He suggests an answer: "The range of options presented from direct service provision to cash grants does not mention such approaches as Federal incentives for coordination, demonstration and market development." The blind person seeking rehabilitation services doesn't have much choice if one listens to this language of the market place or that of the social prober turned scientist. Mr. Thomas deals with the other proposals in the same manner but in each case indicates agreement with the important phases of the program changes

suggested in the program memorandum.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION, AND WELFARE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY.

Memorandum to: Assistant Secretary for
Human Development Administrator,
SRS.

From: Assistant Secretary for Planning and
Evaluation.

Subject: Program memorandum: Review
meetings.

Attached for your review and comment is a copy of this year's program memorandum for Social Services/Human Development. Your comments are requested for submission to P by c.o.b. July 11, so that your positions may be reflected in the memorandum that is given to the Secretary.

In addition, meetings will be scheduled for each of you (or your representatives) to meet with the OS planning team, so that issues raised in the program memorandum may be discussed in preparation for the meeting with the Secretary which will occur during the week of July 23.

WILLIAM A. MORRILL.

**IV. OPTIONAL FUTURE COURSES
FOR SOCIAL SERVICES/HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS**

Moving from the discussion of the Federal role in social services/human development, this section of the paper will describe four general optional courses for

the programs to take in addressing their goals and objectives. These options represent generally broad policy guidance positions, which can be somewhat combined in arriving at a best DHEW position. The four options are: Increased Federal presence, status quo with improvements, altering program delivery nature (elimination, cashing out, etc.), and decreased Federal presence and increased sub-Federal centralization.

While there are many other possible options, these four have been selected since they represent distinct positions along the continuum of from little to substantial Federal presence and the option of completely changing the nature of the program. A decision to pursue one of these courses for a specific program will give sufficient policy guidance for the formulation of more specific program options for decision.

**II. PROGRAMS FOR THE
PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED (VR)**

Alternative Federal goals

(i) P and SRS propose: to provide Federal support to States for a program which, through the provision of vocational services, places physically handicapped persons into gainful employment which they would not have otherwise achieved.

(ii) RSA proposes: to rehabilitate a selected number of eligible clients.

(iii) In addition, a supplementary goal proposed by SRS is: to provide services to those severely disabled persons not expected to be able to enter the labor force which will permit them to function more

effectively as individuals and which will reduce their dependency on society.

With regard to these goals, several policy issues arise:

Should VR services be limited to the physically and mentally disabled?

Should VR services be limited only to the poor?

Should VR focus exclusively on gainful employment as an outcome?

How can VR select clients for service who would not get a job without VR?

Should VR set specific goals for serving the severely disabled?

The following discussion will address each of these specific issues and will be prefaced by a general overview of the structure of the VR program in addressing its goals.

In reviewing the cost data in the VR program, the average DHEW investment is \$2,137 for each rehabilitation achieved. In order to determine if this is a desirable investment of resources a review of the services purchased and the results achieved is necessary.

In reviewing the program figures, several important issues arise. In the area of training, should VR spend about 10% of its budget, or \$68 million on college training? In examining this issue two points need to be discussed. The first point is that college training seems to be beyond the services necessary for moving clients into jobs. While social benefit is probably accrued from this training, the question is whether

these funds might be better spent upon persons who need very fundamental vocational training in order to get a job, rather than persons who are equipped to attend college and evidently already have a higher vocational potential. Further, the basic educational opportunity grants, the BOGS program, provides grants and loans for college training, and clients eligible for VR are also clearly eligible for this program. Consequently, in order to avoid program overlap and to free VR funds for more needy clients, VR training could be limited to basic education and vocational training.

The second broad issue arising out of budget examination is that cash assistance is indicated to account for from 8% to 15% (\$56 million to \$104 million) of the total budget. These numbers are probably low if wage subsidies are counted for rehabilitated clients who work in sheltered workshops. The cash assistance is in the form of subsidies and incentives which counselors can provide clients. The basic issue here is whether or not VR should be an income maintenance program. The basic point to be made on this issue is that there are social insurance (SSI, Unemployment Insurance, etc.) and income transfer (public assistance) programs whose purpose is to determine who is eligible for cash assistance and to provide it. On equity grounds, it seems somewhat inconsistent and unfair to establish cash assistance eligibility criteria for programs and then to circumvent them in a categorical service program.

The third broad issue area arising out of the budget is that of medical services which account for 21% of expenditures. In the long run the diagnostic and physical restoration medical services should be covered by national health insurance. In

the short run, program planning should begin to adjust and plan this upcoming change. Specifically, Medicaid in most States can pay for most of the medical services now provided by VR. . . . Such Medicaid services payments can be made to any eligible clients (generally public assistance recipients). The issue then becomes whether VR should provide medical services when they can be provided by Medicaid.

The final broad issue area is that of the role of VR counselors. The discussion of the above series of issues leads to a possible model of "cashing out" the VR medical and educational services in the form of health insurance (Medicaid in the short term) and BOGS, and eliminating the cash assistance aspects of VR. This would change VR into a counselor system which informed handicapped persons of their entitlement to benefits and referred them to the appropriate sources of funds or services.

The necessity for this high cost (30% of VR costs or \$209 million) counselor system to remain in existence is based upon the argument that the expert diagnostic and referral services of the counselor are essential in efficiently moving clients to appropriate services and in finding them employment. This contention is difficult to contest, however, there is some data which presents another perspective on this issue. First, Manpower Administration data indicates that Employment Service programs, without trained counselors, placed 300,000 physically handicapped persons into jobs in FY 1972, more than claimed by VR. While the severity of these handicaps is not known and while some of these placements may represent double counting (the clients may have also been to

a VR counselor and been counted as rehabilitated by VR), the data indicates that the general manpower programs are able to move a high volume of physically handicapped persons into jobs.

Additional information is obtained from a recently interviewed sample of 4,200 persons who received VR services. Of the persons who received training, 50% said that the training did not help them become or stay employed; of the persons who obtained employment, 38% indicated that they do not use their training at all in their current job, 17% said they made little use of it; of the same group, 80% indicated that they could have gotten their current job without this training. Finally, when asked how they obtained their first job after case closure, only 11% indicated that they received help from their VR counselor, while 89% indicated other persons as instrumental in assisting them in finding employment. In fairness it needs to be mentioned that the study (by National Analysts) from which this data is taken is subject to methodological criticism with regard to its generalizability to the county as a whole. Nevertheless, it does seem to indicate that substantial samples of clients from test States (including California, Illinois, and Pennsylvania) felt that they received inappropriate training and that the counselor was of little value in assisting them in obtaining employment. The VR counselor system, which has always been regarded as the core of the VR program, amounts to 30% of VR program costs or an average of \$641 per rehabilitation. It has been argued by program proponents that, while medical and training services can be cashed out in the form of health insurance or education grants and loans, and while cash assistance can be pruned or eliminated, there will always be a need for

a system of counselors who understand the needs and potential of the handicapped and can refer them to appropriate services and jobs. The studies cited above call into question the necessity of the counselor.

B. Should VR services be targeted to the poor?

Currently there is no means test imposed upon persons seeking VR service; only 60% of the VR clients in FY 72 had incomes below the welfare reform breakeven point and only 15% were on public assistance. Since the average cost of service in the VR program is about \$300, it could be argued that those with incomes above the cash assistance breakeven point should be required to bear the cost of their service, and that the VR program should concentrate completely upon those whose incomes are below the cash breakeven point. By so doing, the VR program would be assured of serving clients who would not be able to obtain employment without assistance from VR.

In sum, this discussion has argued that the VR program should concentrate upon the physically disabled and within this group provide services primarily to those whose income is below the current cash assistance levels.

C. Should the exclusive outcome goal of VR be productive employment, and more specifically improvement in productive employment status?

The discussion of this issue will focus upon the types of jobs currently obtained by VR rehabilitants and the change in wage rate brought about by the program. On the question of jobs obtained by rehabilitants,

a substantial proportion of these are in the homemaker (housewife) category or the sheltered workshop category, neither of which are self-sufficient, the former have no income at all. Specifically, for FY 70, 11.2% of rehabilitations were homemakers (own home), 1.8% were unpaid family workers, and 1.1% were placed into sheltered workshops. In sum then, 1/7 of the VR clients whose cases were closed as rehabilitated were placed in non-self sufficient jobs and for the most part non-wage earning jobs.

In examining the total impact of the program in terms of net change in earning power of all VR closures, the following data is instructive:

Earnings at closure and percent of closures

No earnings	27.4
Below minimum wage	21.5
Above minimum wage	42.8
No data	8.3

In the case of public assistance recipients, and the question of the amount of welfare savings brought about by making the clients employed and more self-sufficient, the following data is instructive:

Public assistance status (monthly) and percent of closures

Decline in P.A. payments	
\$100 or more	11.4
Decline in P.A. payments \$1-99	12.3
No change	59.7
Increase in P.A. payments	4.4
No data	12.2

This latter data substantiates to some extent the initial information available on the PA/VR expansion grant projects which indicated that in this highly intensive effort to rehabilitate handicapped public

assistance recipients, 50% of the P.A. recipients closed as rehabilitated were still on welfare, and a substantial number of these rehabilitations were as homemakers.

In sum then, it appears that the current VR program: (1) rehabilitates a substantial number of persons into non-wage earning positions; (2) has little effect upon net earning power; and (3) does not have a substantial effect upon public assistance recipients either in increasing their earning power or in reducing their welfare payments. Nevertheless, each of these outcomes is classified as a "rehabilitation" and costs an average of \$2,100 per client. The issue then is whether DHEW shouldn't get more back for its money in terms of substantially changing the earning capability of its clients. It is interesting to note that from the clients' point of view, they would have been better off if they had been given the \$2,100 rather than the service.

D. Should more specific criteria be applied to assure that clients who receive service in the VR program are not persons who would find jobs without the program?

While no control group analysis has been done on the VR program to indicate what type of clients would attain the same employment status even without the program, there is concern that much of what is regarded and counted as benefit in the VR program could have been achieved without the expenditure of public funds. This concern surfaces indirectly from the data presented earlier in this discussion. That data indicated that: (1) persons with minor physical problems which might not be truly disabling were receiving services; (2) that persons with incomes above the poverty line were receiving services from

this program whereas persons with similar incomes face a fee schedule or are refused services in other programs and must see to their own needs; and (3) that a majority of a sample of previous clients did not feel that VR provided appropriate training or helped them to find their jobs. Consequently, in conjunction with the issues raised previously, the limiting of VR services to those who really need them, the physically disabled with low incomes, and accepting as "success" only the placement of a rehabilitant in gainful employment, should provide some assurance that the VR program is achieving ends that could not have been achieved without it.

E. Should specific goals be set for serving the severely disabled?

The discussion of this issue needs to be placed in perspective. For several years both DHEW and the Congress have been becoming concerned that the VR program was "creaming," serving easy cases, and not serving persons with truly disabling physical handicaps. As a result, it has been suggested that VR, without losing its vocational goal, should serve more severely disabled persons. One way of addressing this problem is to change the systematic forces which promote the serving of easy cases by VR counselors. As noted above, this problem arises from the fact that counselors and States are rated on the basis of the total number of rehabilitations per year, regardless of the difficulty of the case. Consequently, the incentive is to serve quick, easy cases. The effect of this pressure to serve easier cases was seen above in the discussion of the many forms of minor physical problems addressed by VR. It can also be seen by examining the number of rehabilitations per quarter in the VR program as a whole. For FY 72 the

data are as follows:

<i>Quarter and percent of total rehabilitations</i>	
1	18.5
2	23.7
3	24.5
4	33.3

As the end of the fiscal year approaches, the counselors and States attempt to better the number of previous year's rehabilitations and in so doing are stimulated into serving easier cases which can be closed quickly and cheaply. Therefore, one way to encourage the rehabilitation of more difficult cases is to change the system by which counselors and States are rated so that weight is given to the degree to which the client's situation is improved. After a couple of false starts, RSA seems to be making good progress in developing such a system and could have it ready to demonstrate in a few States in a short period of time. Such action has the advantage of treating the problem, whereas simply mandating that States serve the severely disabled does not provide any means for the program to adjust systematically to treating appropriate clients.

This issue will be closely connected to decisions reached on earlier issues. If it is decided that VR concentrate primarily upon the physically disabled who cannot become employed without VR services then the "creaming" will of necessity be reduced. Nevertheless, a change in the systematic incentive system is also appropriate to avoid the friction between the mandate to serve seriously disabled

persons and the incentive to close easy cases.

The program memorandum recognizes weaknesses in the current vocational rehabilitation programs and deals with them, for the most part, in a very cursory manner. When it does go into detail about specific portions of a program, it is not for the purpose of suggesting improvements but to bolster the arguments for adopting the new "models." In other words, the method used to deal with deficiencies in present programs is to suggest approaches which are untried and with many unanswered questions about their feasibility.

All kinds of social programs are politicized. National programs exist because the States have never been able to handle large social problems adequately on their own. There is already much empire building and contests for funds at local, State, and Federal levels within the programs. It is possible to imagine what might happen to vocational rehabilitation programs under a system of revenue sharing with every program at the mercy of every very political Governor and his even more political staff.

Chairman Brademas and the Subcommittee on Education are properly worried about the implementation of program changes in vocational rehabilitation on the administrative level without so much as a nod to the Congress about legislation. Blind people are fortunate that he is so concerned. Members of the National Federation of the Blind know that blind people have had to battle

to retain their programs when administrators have attempted to dismantle programs for their benefit in the very recent past. The fact that there is some awareness in the Congress is of some comfort. But even with the brilliant

leadership of Congressman Brademas, we may have to go to the barricades to preserve and protect the right of every blind person to have the necessary training it takes to live an active, normal life.

"MRS. MURPHY" DISCRIMINATES AGAINST THE BLIND

There is a clause dealing with housing in many civil rights acts which allows the owner of a single family and/or duplex home in which he himself lives to rent a room on a discriminatory basis. That clause is known in some parts of the country as a "Mrs. Murphy" clause.

In August of 1973, the City of St. Cloud, Minnesota, attempted to amend several sections of its Human Rights Commission ordinance to make it applicable to several classes of persons previously excluded. Among those were the disabled, welfare recipients, and students. But in the housing section was that small but mighty Mrs. Murphy clause, and Mrs. Murphy provided the forum for an illustration of the whys and hows of local, State, and national organizations of the blind.

Andy Virden, vigilant president of the Central Minnesota Chapter, NFB of Minnesota, alerted State President Joyce Hoffa and the National Office. Armed with a strong letter from President Jernigan, Andy Virden, Jim Brennan, and Joyce Hoffa appeared and testified at the public hearing conducted by the City of St. Cloud on its proposed amendments to the Human Rights ordinance.

In a NAC-like manner, the city officials explained to the representatives of the

blind that the blind did not understand the law and that no harm was intended and that all would be well. But the blind have eaten at that table before. The city council was assured by Miss Hoffa in no uncertain terms that the blind understood the law and all that it implied, and that the NFB of Minnesota was prepared to fight such discrimination no matter where it occurred. President Jernigan's letter was distributed to the council members and it left no doubt about where the organized blind stood. The letter reads:

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND,
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
Des Moines, Iowa, August 30, 1973.

Mr. ANDY VIRDEN,
Waite Park, Minnesota.

DEAR MR. VIRDEN: Although I am accustomed to discrimination against the blind, I must say that I was shocked to learn of the proposed ordinance by the St. Cloud City Council specifically authorizing the violation of the constitutional rights of the blind. What can one say of such an ordinance except that it violates all reason and common sense! If discrimination is unreasonable and detrimental classification, then this proposed ordinance is certainly discriminatory. It is also probably illegal. If it is enacted, I would suspect that it will be

tested in the courts—probably all the way to the United States Supreme Court if necessary. The battle may be costly and long, but we must not permit such flagrant violation of our rights to go unchallenged.

Very truly yours,

KENNETH JERNIGAN,
President,
National Federation of the Blind.

Mr. Virden pointed out that while the Mrs. Murphy clause is limited in its application in the law, the sad experience of the blind has shown that this kind of discrimination and prejudice, once officially sanctioned, would spread to other community activities. A *St. Cloud Times* staff writer reported: "Thomas Thompson, counsel for the St. Cloud Council on the Employment of the Handicapped, said the

proposed ordinance is discriminatory and regressive and contrary to the spirit of progress made by handicapped persons."

On September 25, 1973, the City of St. Cloud, Minnesota, adopted an ordinance for protecting the physically handicapped from discrimination in housing and employment without any hindrance from Mrs. Murphy.

What would have happened without an active local chapter, an energetic State affiliate, backed by a vigorous national organization? We all know that one person working alone could not have done the job. With all the interlocking elements present, the blind and other handicapped of at least one city have considerably improved their prospects for better and fuller lives and have provided another practical answer to the question: Why a National Federation of the Blind?

AL SPERBER INTERVIEWS PRESIDENT JERNIGAN

[Editor's Note.—The following is a transcription of a radio interview held during the NFB Convention in New York City last July.]

AL SPERBER. I'm Al Sperber. My guests today are here to cover a Convention of the National Federation of the Blind and I'm very fortunate to have the President of NFB, Mr. Ken Jernigan. Welcome to "Out of Sight."

President JERNIGAN. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SPERBER. And with us is the

managing editor of *Dialogue*, a publication that's read and listened to by many blind, Mr. B. T. Kimbrough. Good to have you aboard, B. T.

B.T. KIMBROUGH. Thank you. It's good to participate.

Mr. SPERBER. All right now, there are many thoughts and many ideas to discuss and—Mr. Jernigan that fact that NFB is in town on a Convention—can we know what the purpose of the Convention is?

President JERNIGAN. Well, I think that in

order to understand the purpose of the Convention, one must understand the purpose of the National Federation of the Blind as an entity. And that is that there are many agencies doing work for the blind in the field, both governmental and private. The National Federation of the Blind is not such an agency. It is an organization of the blind and friends of the blind established to speak for the blind and to work out common problems. The National Federation of the Blind has about fifty thousand members. It has members in all of the States. It has affiliated organizations in all but four. The purpose of this annual Convention, held in New York this year, is to make policy, consider matters affecting the blind, and do exactly what you would find at a convention of the AFL-CIO, the National Farmer's Organization, the Farm Bureau, or of the NAACP. It's that kind of a convention.

Mr. SPERBER. Right. How many members are in town?

President JERNIGAN. Two thousand. I think this is the largest meeting of blind people ever held anywhere in the world.

Mr. SPERBER. And I'm curious to know some of the—see, we've had many guests, and they've been telling us problems that they've had, legislatively and what have you, and I have a feeling that NFB is really involved legislatively.

President JERNIGAN. Yes, the National Federation of the Blind is interested in making the views of the blind known to Congress and to State legislators as well as to public administrators and the public at large. We are concerned that discriminations against the blind which are sanctioned by law be eliminated. I can give

you examples of those if you'd like.

Mr. SPERBER. I would.

President JERNIGAN. Well, all right. Last year we were able to get an amendment passed to the Higher Education Act which said that no institution of higher learning that is financed in whole or in part with Federal money may deny the right of a person to take any course of study, or to enroll in the institution, on the grounds of blindness or visual impairment. The language of the law goes on to say that the institution shall not be required to alter its course of study or in any way modify what it's doing. What we're seeking there is to eliminate what has been a real discrimination. That is, very often in this country, schools—sometimes history departments, departments of biology—different departments of colleges and universities—have denied persons the right to take courses or to enter those colleges on the grounds of blindness. They weren't mean people. They weren't trying to be hostile or to hurt blind people. As a matter of fact that's the definition of discrimination. You don't call it discrimination if a man knowingly and deliberately tries to deprive you of a right. It implies ignorance.

Mr. SPERBER. And so you're here to get a unified effort in many areas, like in the past we've had as our guest, Senator Jennings Randolph, concerned about the blind vending stand problem. And that's a nationwide problem. And he's trying to help the blind and it's a terribly important situation. Now, we hope that based on his findings in Washington that perhaps things can happen that will be good for the blind.

President JERNIGAN. Also, in connection

with the vending stand operator, we're carrying on, now, a case in the courts, the Federal courts, concerning a vending stand situation where the rights of blind people have been abridged; and we have in the past carried on legal cases concerning these matters. We also, of course, have worked with Senator Randolph and others on vending stand legislation.

Mr. SPERBER. I'm curious because I don't know too much about NFB. Can you give us some basic background on how it started, when it started, and its purposes and goals?

President JERNIGAN. N a t i o n a l Federation of the Blind is an incorporated organization. It was established in 1940 when the blind of seven States came together to form a national organization. It was small at that time. Currently, it is by far the largest organization of its kind in the country or the world. National Federation of the Blind has as its goals the—well I guess, a two-fold kind of thing. Attempting to help blind persons to self-realization. That is, attempting to help blind persons come to know what's going on in other parts of the country, what's going on in other parts of the world, to provide for blind persons a means, a vehicle, whereby they can have a forum for the expression of their views. It's also trying to carry on a program of widespread public education about blindness and to change public attitudes because ultimately we don't live in a world which is made up just of blind people. We live in a—not a sighted world—I don't like that concept any more than I like to say this is a white Nation, the blacks have as much right in it as the whites, so its *predominantly* white. It's predominantly a sighted society and world, but we must if we're ever to make

long-range, lasting progress, then we must, it seems to me, educate sighted people to new concepts concerning blindness. And that's what we're really aiming at.

Mr. SPERBER. And this program is aiming at the same direction and B.T.'s publication *Dialogue*, I think, is also headed in the same direction. Wouldn't you say that, B. T.?

Mr. KIMBROUGH. I would say that, yes. I wanted to ask Dr. Jernigan, because there are a couple of other national organizations of blind members, how do you feel, Doctor, that the NFB is most distinct from, say, the American Council of the Blind and the Blinded Veterans Organization. What most distinguishes the NFB from any other organization of blind members?

President JERNIGAN. In the early 1800's William Pitt was Prime Minister of England. He was succeeded by one Mr. Addington. A poem went the rounds which said, "Pitt is to Addington as London to Paddington." I would say that when you say there are a couple of other national organizations affecting blind or of the blind in the country, it depends on the definition you use. Everything that calls itself a national organization is not necessarily a national organization.

With that as prelude, let me say this to you. You have the Blinded Veterans. It's a comparatively small organization—so far as I know it's a constructive organization. It is limited, however, in membership to, as I understand it, to blinded veterans and it is also quite small. It does not, therefore, have a nationwide character in the sense of being a truly national organization open to all and providing a common forum for the blind. Then, of course, you have the

American Council of the Blind. The American Council of the Blind is a group that splintered away from the National Federation of the Blind. We might very well differ about the American Council. My understanding is that the American Council of the Blind has maybe a fortieth of the members of the National Federation of the Blind, or something like that. It's a small organization. I think it tends to be negative in its outlook and I think the difference between the National Federation of the Blind and the American Council of the Blind, except perhaps in philosophy, is the difference between the United States and Luxembourg.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. It has been pointed out in the past by some Federationists that they feel one of the differences is that Council people tend to have an agency outlook. And yet, you yourself are the head of an agency in Iowa. So that it couldn't be said, could it, that the Federation is anti-agency by any means?

President JERNIGAN. It couldn't be said that the Federation is anti-agency, and this has nothing to do with whether I'm the head of an agency. You see, whether a man is the head of an agency is not the test. There are three ways that the blind may have a relationship to an agency, Mr. Kimbrough. One of those is that the blind may control the agency. The second is, that the agency and the blind may have one degree or another of coexistence. The third is that the agency may control the blind.

Number one and number three may, superficially, or to some people who want to make it that way, appear to be the same, but there's a vast difference. In other words, what I would say to you is this. The fact that I am blind does not give me the

right to speak for blind people. The fact that I am head of an agency doesn't give me a right to speak for blind people either. The only way that I may speak for blind people—and this wouldn't matter whether I were blind, I could be sighted and do this—blind people elect me to speak for them. And, therefore, as far as I'm concerned the National Federation of the Blind is not anti-agency, but it has nothing to do with whether I work for an agency for the blind.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. In that connection, *The Braille Monitor* begins with a statement, and I'll paraphrase, to the effect that the Federation is not designed to speak for the blind but it is the blind speaking for themselves—

President JERNIGAN. We so state.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Does the Federation ever make an effort to speak not only for its members but to set itself up as an organization speaking for all blind consumers whether they be Federationists or no?

President JERNIGAN. Oh look, we don't need to approach it obliquely. The Federation not only ever makes an effort, it blatantly, overtly, all the time says that.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Well, how do you reconcile saying that it's the blind speaking for themselves and on the other saying you want to speak for all consumers whether they're in your organization or not?

President JERNIGAN. Doesn't matter. Look, the test again is a simple test and it's not difficult or hard to understand logically and it's not mysterious. Let us take the present situation in the United States. We

have a number of people in the United States who do not choose to vote. We have a number of people who are Democrats and a number of people who are Republicans. Now, the Republican Party currently holds the White House. It elected a man to be President. President of all of us. President of the Republicans, yes. They elected him. President of the Democrats. They voted against him. President for those who are children, who are old, those who are in the voting years and who just didn't choose to vote, those, as a matter of fact, who are Communist, those who are Nazis, those who are something else, those who voted for George Wallace. So, the alternative you see, Mr. Kimbrough—and here is where the real sophistry comes in by the people who would like to say to this effect: "Well now, I'm a middle-of-the-road man. I'm not in favor of some group speaking for the blind; I think every individual ought to speak for himself." See, that sounds beautiful. It sounds democratic. But it's terribly sophisticated and sophistry. Why? Because the alternative to having an organization like the Federation, which is open to anybody—open to you, you are here—open to anybody who wants to come, anybody who wants to take the floor and talk—the alternative to having such a group speak for the blind is to have somebody accountable to nobody speak for the blind. And so, the Federation, it seems to me, must speak for the blind whether it will or no, because it is a nationwide organization representative of blind people and it is the most representative group that you can get in this country because of its size and its open membership. That's what I'd say.

Mr. SPERBER. I'd like to throw a thought, because when you say "middle of the road"—you and I had a phone conversation when I told you I was a

middle-of-the-roader. Your remark to me was something which I didn't seem to understand. The point is that this radio station—which there are very few of who'll give us an opportunity to air our views, be they NFB or ACB or anyone—and when I said to you that I'm in the middle of the road, I'm sort of an impartial observer trying to see why there are differences, why the hundreds of thousands of blind people that we have in this country are not unified.

President JERNIGAN. They are, mostly.

Mr. SPERBER. No, Mr. Jernigan, if you say that you have fifty thousand members and I know it for definite proof that there are forty-five units of ACB which would mean that there are several thousand there, I can't see why all the blind having the same purpose, the same goals, could not unify, and why that they had to splinter from your group and set up another organization. I don't understand that.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Sperber, look, I just don't believe you when you say there are forty-five units of ACB, and I'll tell you why I don't believe you.

Mr. SPERBER. This is based on what people tell me.

President JERNIGAN. I know. However, you first said you knew that as a fact.

Mr. SPERBER. When you tell me there are fifty thousand I believe you.

President JERNIGAN. Okay. Let's talk about the forty-five units. Let's don't get away from that. Now, I don't deny that there are forty-five names associated with ACB. But I do tell you that I think that a

lot of those, for instance the national student group they had, as I understand it, last year—and I wasn't there so I can't tell you I know this for certain, I only tell you what I heard—that it had six people present. Well you see, that's still a name though, that's one of the forty-five. I believe that, as a matter of fact, in several States they have several affiliates and I believe that some of those are paper organizations. Now that's what I believe, but I'm not sure of it. All I know is what I hear about what they do and what I see about their programs. But let's go back to the middle-of-the-road business.

[There was a pause here for station identification, after which listeners were invited to subscribe to *Dialogue*.]

President JERNIGAN. While we're putting in plugs for magazines I'd like to urge people to contact the National Federation of the Blind by writing to me at 218 Randolph Hotel Building, Des Moines, Iowa 50309, and we'll put you on the list for *The Braille Monitor*, which is the publication of the National Federation of the Blind. It's available in print; it's available in Braille; and it's also available on record.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. I'll second that recommendation. *The Monitor* is fascinating reading.

President JERNIGAN. Well, thank you very much. Let me now go back, though, to my talk about the middle-of-the-road business. In the civil rights movement, the black man who says, "I do not wish to be a part of any civil rights movement; I wish to be apart, as sort of an impartial observer of the black scene," is not very well respected by black people who have tried to alter the

scene for blacks in this country, but is regarded as a cop-out. I'm not presuming to say that anybody should join anything. A man ought to join what he wants to join. I only say that, for my part, I feel that I have an obligation to participate in the organized blind movement and to try to have some input, since that group is, whether I like it or not, going to speak for me, and whether it likes it or not. If a group goes and tries to do something affecting legislation, if a group puts out something in the way of education, then that group does speak for me whether it wants to or not. It indirectly affects my life and, therefore, I feel some obligation either to go and try to have some input to it or else not to criticize what it does.

Mr. SPERBER. Mr. Jernigan, you are doing a great deal for the blind in your way. I, in my little way, am helping the blind—and I know I am because of the mail and the contacts I have. B.T. and his publication is helping the blind too. We're all going in the same direction.

President JERNIGAN. Mr. Sperber, I would not at all contradict what you're saying about what you're doing to help the blind. I don't know whether you're helping the blind or not, but you say you are and I'm sure you are. Let's put that to one side. But, you see, what I'm concerned about is something else.

I believe that blind people ought to participate and help make the decisions affecting their own lives. Now, you are free to believe something else if you want to. This is no criticism of you or of anybody. That's what I think.

Mr. SPERBER. Well, I'm involved with the Lions of my area. The Lions

nationwide, worldwide, have been helping the blind. I'm doing my little bit the best way I know how, without having to be part of an NFB or an ACB—

President JERNIGAN. Without *getting* to be part, that's right. I don't like the word *having* but I don't object to your using it. I only say that it is a loaded word, and I would say one more thing. When you say that we're all working for the same thing, I would respectfully disagree. I'm not working for the same thing that a lot of the people in the field of work with the blind say they're working for. So I don't agree with you.

Mr. SPERBER. Mr. Jernigan, may I have the pleasure of knowing a little of your background, because all I know, other than the fact that you're the President of NFB and you're the Director of the Iowa State Commission for the Blind—may I know a little of your background?

President JERNIGAN. Yes. I grew up in Tennessee on a farm. I went to the Tennessee State School for the Blind. I've been blind all of my life. I went to college at the Tennessee Technological University and at George Peabody College for Teachers. I taught school for awhile. I ran a furniture business making and selling furniture for awhile. I, at one time in my life, sold insurance. I have worked as a staff member of the Orientation and Adjustment Center in California. And I have directed all programs for the blind in the State of Iowa since 1958. I guess that's a thumbnail summation.

Mr. SPERBER. And I hear tell that the Iowa blind are much further advanced than any other State based on your efforts.

President JERNIGAN. I don't know that I'd want to make that claim. I think that many blind persons in the State of Iowa feel that the programs are helpful and good. I don't claim the programs there are perfect, nor that programs somewhere else may not be good also.

Mr. SPERBER. B. T., if you want to pop a question, it's all right. You may.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Well, I would like to deal with one issue that the Federation has addressed itself to recently, and that has to do with the National Accreditation Council. When the Council held its board meeting in Chicago, members of the National Federation were on hand to demonstrate their disapproval of the makeup of the board and of some of the policies of the Council, and the NFB has been involved for some time in trying to transmit its disapproval of the Council into some changes. I wonder, Dr. Jernigan, how you think that effort stands at this point.

President JERNIGAN. I t w i l l b e successful. I'm sure of that. Let me tell you why. I think the people should know that the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving the Blind and Visually Handicapped (NAC) is a group that the American Foundation for the Blind, a private agency and non-membership organization, appointed. That group consists of some blind people, but they don't represent the blind, they represent themselves, and it indicates its tokenism; and NAC, by the way, agrees with this—it says they don't represent organizations of the blind—they represent themselves. That board now has set itself up to accredit agencies doing work with the blind. We

think that it's harmful. We think that it's harmful for two reasons. One, because the National Accreditation Council (NAC) does not have input from consumer organizations—that is, there's a difference between a consumer and a consumer representative. And every time you talk to them about consumer representation, they come back and say, "But we have some blind people." Well sure, but tokenism is tokenism and they don't represent blind people. Now, second, we think the National Accreditation Council is bad because its standards are such that it accredits agencies that we think are substandard and then holds them out to the public as performing a service. All right, and a standard service, and I think it's misleading. Now then, to move on from that, I'd say that the Chicago meeting is a perfect illustration. We've been trying to get these people, who have used over \$600,000 of Federal tax money, just to let us have observers sit in their meetings. After a great deal of pressure we were able to get them to let us have two silent observers in their December 1972 meeting. Then they represented to Congress, all during the winter and spring, that they were an open group—that they were open, permitting observers. Their own board had voted to have this meeting in Cleveland—their summer meeting—and to have it in July. However, their executive committee, without the knowledge of some of their own board members, changed this to Des Plaines, Illinois, for June, in the middle of the week, and tried to hide from us, and I literally mean that—they had it out at the O'Hare Inn where construction was going on and where there was only one exit. We went there to demonstrate after we learned where they were having it, and they first said they weren't going to let us have any observers in the meeting, in the

board meeting. Then they said: Because they were afraid of violence from us as blind people, they were going to let us have two observers in. We asked them to distribute a memo which was about eight lines. They refused even to let us do that. And I'd say just this in conclusion about the NAC demonstration. I think we convinced a lot of people in the public—we passed out about thirty thousand leaflets telling people what the problem was with NAC and urging them to contact their Congressmen and Senators. And we had no violence, no disturbance—we didn't block a single exit, we weren't loud and noisy, and the NAC minutes themselves said of us—in our December conduct—that we were courteous and in every way respectful toward them. I think we will prevail because I happen to believe in justice and truth still. I think that still it's possible to get right in this country.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Dr. Jernigan, during the meeting some of the Federationists said, most of them said, that what they would like to have, to start with, would be a third of the members of the NAC Board answerable to the organized blind. One of the board members said, on the other hand—and he thought he was quoting you—that you and the NFB, specifically, want to dominate the National Accreditation Council.

President JERNIGAN. That is not true.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. I wanted to ask you if that's an accurate quote.

President JERNIGAN. That is not accurate. As a matter of fact, in writing to the NAC Board, I told them that we wanted at least a third of the members of the NAC Board elected by constituencies

of blind people and answerable to them. Not all of that third necessarily, by the way, from the Federation, but proportionately a large number of that third, and I said that we wanted that because we wanted consumer representation. Some of the NAC people said, "Well, you know, we couldn't do that. Legally we're a corporation, and so we have to—our board members have to be elected by us and answerable to us." And I pointed out to them that GM is a corporation but it finds a way to put a consumer representative on its board, and so forth—that this is a technicality that they're ducking behind. It can be done.

Mr. SPERBER. Mr. Jernigan, I only have a few minutes and one of the questions that was asked many times on the program, Are you in favor, as the NFB as a group or as an individual, of the idea of the government financing those blind people who need the help?

President JERNIGAN. Yes, I am and NFB is.

Mr. SPERBER. You are. And, it was just that that seemed to be a bone of contention and I just, you know, wanted to get your reaction.

President JERNIGAN. Oh, I think generally in our society most people feel that if a person cannot help himself, whether he's blind, or whether he's aged, or whatever he may be, I think that most people would be in favor of governmental assistance. We don't let people starve in this country. This ought to be done.

Mr. SPERBER. B. T., I have three minutes. I wondered if you had another question for our guest.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Yes, I do. I want to ask Dr. Jernigan, what do you consider the most important issue at this time to be dealt with in connection with the blind?

President JERNIGAN. I think that the most important issue that faces the blind today is whether we can create enough public understanding on the part of society and enough self-awareness and realization on the part of the blind that we can truly have integration of the blind into society on a first-class basis, and I think that no other issue is as important as that.

Mr. SPERBER. But in saying what you say, and knowing that there are splinter groups, how do we get them into one fell swoop—how do we get all the blind connected and powerful enough to raise a fuss?

President JERNIGAN. Oh, I think we're powerful enough as an NFB to do that, and I don't think that it's essential that all Democrats join the Republican party—or, for that matter, that all the members of George Wallace's American Independent Party join either. I think that what is essential is that there be a representative organization of the blind, and that the blind themselves have a right to speak for themselves and not have somebody elected by nobody speak for them.

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Do you think, Dr. Jernigan, that it's workable for a single person to be a member of both NFB and the American Council of the Blind?

President JERNIGAN. No more than I think it's workable for a man to be a member of the Catholic church and the local atheist society. I don't think they're working for the same things. I think the

ACB is not representative, as I've indicated to you. I think that it's negative in its programs and I—very often the organizations are advocating diametrically opposite things, so how can a man support his organization if his organization, the NFB, advocated one thing and his organization, the ACB, advocated the opposite?

Mr. KIMBROUGH. Some there may be who feel that the NFB is right some of the time and that the ACB is right some of the rest of the time.

President JERNIGAN. No, but look, if you're—if you've got a member of the organization, the organization binds himself, it seems to me, to support the organization, otherwise he shouldn't be a

member of it. It doesn't matter whether—if you're a member of a church, you should not support your church two days a week and not the other days. You should not be a member of a competing church. If you're a member of a political organization you should not be a member of a diametrically opposite political organization. This is just a matter of good sense.

Mr. SPERBER. Mr. Jernigan, I wish we had more time. I'm delighted you came by. All good success with your Convention. It's a pleasure to have had you on our program. Pleasure to have had you too, B. T., and all good success in your endeavors. Pleasure to have both of you. I'm Al Sperber for "Out of Sight" saying thanks for listening. Bye for now.

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MEET OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEEMEN

ROBERT WHITEHEAD

The election to the NFB Executive Committee last summer of Robert Whitehead caps a long and distinguished career of Federation activity. President of the Kentucky Federation of the Blind since 1962, Whitehead was first vice-president of that organization for many years before.

Whitehead was born in 1903 in the small mining town of DeKoven, in western Kentucky. During his first year of school a bout with the measles left him with very little sight. He continued in the Kentucky public schools, however, until the fourth grade when his family moved to Coalgate, Oklahoma. He was accepted as a student by a Catholic school in Coalgate for a year and then began attending the State School for

the Blind in Muskogee. He graduated six years later with a high school diploma. He had acquired the skills of piano tuning and broommaking and these provided him with a means of employment for the next few years.

In 1923 the Whiteheads moved back to Kentucky. Three years later Robert Whitehead was hired by the Kentucky School for the Blind to teach piano tuning, shop work, and poultry raising. While at the school he met and, three years later, married Lillian Pierce, supervisor at the school.

At first the couple worked with the Kentucky Farm for the Blind, but a

combination of politics and the depression caused this project to be discontinued three years later. Whitehead then worked for the Kentucky Industries for the Blind. In 1935

the Whiteheads opened a snack bar in the Snead Building in Louisville which they operated until their retirement in 1969.

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RALPH SANDERS

The youngest member of the NFB Executive Committee (he was born December 21, 1945), Ralph Sanders is no stranger to *Monitor* readers. He has been "on the barricades" most of his adult life.

Sanders lost his sight when he was seven years old. He attended the Arkansas School for the Blind until his graduation. He then went on to earn a B.A. in journalism at California State University at Northridge and a master's degree from the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University.

Ralph Sanders has worked as a newspaper writer and editor, and as a freelance writer. In 1970 he was employed as director of press relations for Winthrop Rockefeller, the late Governor of Arkansas. Sanders is now co-owner, executive vice-president, and chief financial officer of Concept-three, Inc., an advertising, public relations, and marketing firm in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Sanders' involvement with Federationism began during his undergraduate years at CSU, Northridge. When the Arkansas

affiliate was reorganized as the NFB of Arkansas, in 1971, Ralph Sanders was elected its president, a position he still holds. The organization has grown from sixty-nine members to more than two hundred during the last two years.

Ralph Sanders was one of the two official NFB observers at the NAC Board meeting last June in Des Plaines, Illinois. (His report of that meeting, entitled "Inside NAC," appeared in the September 1973 *Monitor*. He was also actively involved in the NAC campaign in Washington, D.C., in October. He coordinated the activities for the Federation citizen advocates and led a review of the day's efforts each evening during the campaign.

Ralph Sanders was elected to the Executive Committee of the National Federation of the Blind at the 1973 national Convention in New York last summer. Of his work in the Federation Sanders says: "Full involvement in the organized blind movement is the only way that present and future generations of blind Americans will realize the potential for full citizenship which lies within our grasp."

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NEW YORK STATE LAW HINDERS SHELTERED SHOP WORKERS

BY

FRIEDA WOLFF

[Reprinted from *The Blind New Yorker*, publication of the NFB of New York State.]

Although the New York labor relations law which protects the right of workers and employees to join unions of their own choosing has been in existence since 1937, it has ignored the plight of the employees of sheltered workshops and other such facilities.

Over the years, the law has been broadened so as to cover even employees and workers employed in institutions such as hospitals, day-care centers, and in educational and other charitable facilities. But it has bypassed and ignored the sheltered workshop employee to the extent that in 1970 the law was amended so as to exclude these people from the right to join unions to protect their interests.

This is how the 1970 amendment shuts the gates to these people; and I quote: "Any individual who participates in and receives rehabilitative or therapeutic services in a charitable, nonprofit rehabilitation facility or sheltered workshop, or any individual employed in a charitable, nonprofit rehabilitation facility or sheltered workshop who has received rehabilitation or therapeutic services and whose capacity to perform the work for which he is engaged is substantially impaired by physical or mental deficiency or injury" is not an employee over whom the New York State Labor Relations Act

will take jurisdiction. Because of this, the hands of the sheltered workshop employees are tied and they cannot seek strong outside help to aid them in improving their conditions of employment.

Because of this unfair attitude on the part of the legislature towards these people, they are unable to improve their working conditions; they are unable to receive wage increases, improved working conditions, hospitalization and medical care; they are not covered by workmen's compensation or unemployment insurance—benefits which most other workers have. Sheltered workshop employees are, therefore, at the mercy and whim of the institution or facility that employs them; they have no recourse to any body or agency to aid and assist them in improving the quality of their economic life.

It is time for sheltered shop employees not to be treated as second-class citizens; it is time for sheltered shop employees to be treated as first-class citizens, with the same rights as all other employees.

Now is the time for these people to organize, to unite with all others in the same situation and present a strong and united front to bring pressure on our legislators to change this inequitable law which keeps these people in bondage, so that they can take their rightful place at the side of all other free American citizens.

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BLIND LOBBY FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

BY

HAROLD WARREN

[Reprinted by courtesy of the *Charlotte* (N.C.) *Observer*.]

Mrs. Mabel Conder, an energetic, intelligent woman, lobbies in the North Carolina General Assembly, holds a full-time job in Charlotte, is active in church and PTA, serves as president of the Queen City Federation of the Blind, and tends to the myriad needs of her bustling family.

She travels, shops, cooks, sews, studies, listens to music, plays bridge, and keeps an immaculately clean, orderly home at 4417 Rainey Way.

With quiet pride, her daughter, Ellen, said, "My mother is not only an exceptional blind person, she's an exceptional person—period."

And yet, because she has been blind from birth, Mrs. Conder often has felt frustrated at being treated as a second-class citizen or even as an incompetent.

"Most of the time it's just lack of understanding. People don't mean to be this way. But they have to understand we're not an 'it'—we're individuals just like everyone else," Mrs. Conder said, relaxing briefly in her living room and wearing an expertly tailored red pantsuit she made herself.

"It's just real unfair," she said emphatically, "that there has always been discrimination against the blind in a lot of jobs, in such things as housing, the use of public places, and so on."

While legislation alone cannot obliterate "lack of understanding," it can remedy many inequities and eliminate barriers to first-class citizenship, Mrs. Conder indicated. So Mrs. Conder and many other members of the statewide National Federation of the Blind of North Carolina have been battling to get such laws passed.

For twelve thousand-plus blind in North Carolina, passage of a handful of bills now before the legislature would have the most far-reaching effects ever legislated for the blind, say Federation leaders.

The major bill, an omnibus act called the "Bill of Rights for the Blind," passed in the North Carolina House May 4. It is now in the senate.

In South Carolina, a similar version of a model "White Cane Law" passed unanimously in both houses last year, said Donald C. Capps of Columbia. Capps is national Vice-President of the Federation, as well as State president.

The model has been enacted in full in twenty-four States and in part in several other States, Mrs. Conder said. It insures the rights of "visually handicapped and the otherwise physically disabled to participate fully in the social and economic life of the State and to engage in remunerative employment."

It covers such areas as the "right of access to and use of public places," the "right to use of public conveyances and accommodations," the "right to be accompanied by a guide dog" in any of

those places, standardized pedestrian rights, the equal right to all housing accommodations, and equality of job opportunity in all employment “supported in whole or in part by public funds on the same terms and conditions as the able-bodied, unless it is shown that the particular disability prevents the performance of the work involved.”

Mrs. Hazel Staley of Charlotte, State president of North Carolina’s Federation, commented:

“You say ‘blindness,’ and most people see an image of the poor old blind man on the corner with his guitar and old tin cup. But most blind people are perfectly capable of taking their place in society.”

Job discrimination, said Mrs. Conder, is “about the most unfair” form of treatment, because it affects the whole way of life. “Being blind is a nuisance, and sometimes it can be a problem—but then, everybody has problems.

“Until I got involved in this organization (the Federation), I wouldn’t have had the confidence to go apply for a job in industry, because I’ve just always been told, ‘You can’t do that, you’re blind.’”

Transportation is a real problem, but it has not hampered her work as a darkroom film processor for the GAF Corporation in Charlotte.

“They said, ‘If you can do the work, we’ll see you get here and back,’” Mrs. Conder said. “Of course, my job is done in total darkness, so it can be done better, if anything, by a blind person than a sighted person.”

She said some other industries voluntarily have hired blind people in Charlotte “in just the last few years particularly.”

But some blind people, however well qualified in other ways, cannot get appropriate jobs in North Carolina, she said.

Teachers are examples: “In California, they have 109 blind teachers in regular, sighted classrooms. They have them in New York, Iowa, and other States. But as far as I know, there are none in North Carolina. Ours are not stupid or anything, but they just have to go to other States to seek employment.”

South Carolina now has “just a couple” of blind teachers in regular public school classrooms, Capps said.

Some seemingly minor provisions of the “Bill of Rights” also can have tremendous effects. For example, many large stores, office buildings, and public conveyances now ban animals—including guide dogs.

With the right of access and the right to be accompanied by a guide dog, thousands of blind persons would be able to move about freely for the first time.

Housing discrimination against the blind also is far more widespread than most people realize, Mrs. Conder said. “I’ve gone to rent a house,” she said, “and the person would say, ‘Oh, I can’t rent to a blind person—you might burn the house down.’ That’s purely ridiculous, but again, it’s just lack of understanding and awareness.”

Mrs. Staley said another perennial problem would be solved by an

identification bill introduced by Mecklenburg Representative David Jordan.

Nearly all clerks and cashiers in business require drivers' licenses as identification for cashing checks or obtaining credit. The blind don't drive, so they have no license number.

Jordan's bill, which recently passed the senate, "would require the Department of Motor Vehicles to issue an identification exactly like a driver's license, except it would say 'Non-Driver,'" Mrs. Staley said. It is now law.

When the bill was in committee in the house, she said, "we insisted that we be charged for the license just like everybody else. One legislator said he wanted to exempt us from the \$3.25 charge, but we don't want anything like that."

Another bill, now in the House Appropriations Committee, would authorize installing a toll-free, incoming WATS telephone line in the State library for the blind.

"Sighted people," Mrs. Conder said, "think nothing of going to their public library to get most anything they want. But for us, we have one regional library in the State in Raleigh. The staff there try to do the best they can, I guess, but it's in an old building with inadequate materials and facilities and it's understaffed. We do have the 'talking book' service, but there's no taping room or listening rooms.

"If every time a sighted person wanted something, he had to call long distance, he probably couldn't call much. And therefore he wouldn't keep learning and developing his mind to the fullest."

Still another bill, now in a senate committee, would expand the current nine-member board of the State Commission for the Blind to eleven members, two of them to be blind persons. Now one member is blind, but this is not required.

An earlier bill, introduced in the house by Mecklenburg Representative Roy Spoon, would have required that four of nine members of the board be blind persons.

Even if all these bills and others are passed, though, the blind must still cope with the everyday "lack of awareness" of their sighted peers, Mrs. Conder said.

Some people speak in hushed tones as if she is very sick, she said. Others ask her daughter, "would she like a cup of coffee," as if Mrs. Conder cannot communicate. And there are many other examples.

"I wanted to take sewing at Central Piedmont," Mrs. Conder said. "But when the instructor was told I'd signed up, she said, 'I can't teach a blind person to sew—I'll just quit.'

"Of course, I didn't know that when I enrolled. I went on and made A's two quarters. The instructor and I became good friends, and she was so pleased and happy that she told me this herself. She's proud of me."

And Mrs. Staley added, "the necessary legislation is the first step. We don't accept favoritism. We want to be contributing members of society just like everybody else."

IOWA STUDENT DIVISION

BY

MARY HARTLE

The student chapter of the NFB of Iowa is alive and very active, as can be seen by a look at its activities over the past year. The chapter set two special goals: (1) Revitalization and broadening of student participation, and (2) the initiation of a study of public school education of blind children. As one step towards reaching its first goal, the chapter held a meeting with students of the State school for the blind in November. The purpose was simply to get to know the high school students as friends and introduce them to the NFB, rather than to make a hard push to recruit new members.

In December the chapter discussed legislation with a United States Congressman and the aides of Iowa's two United States Senators. The result was very fruitful since the Congressman agreed to support the Disability Insurance for the Blind bill.

January saw the election of Peggy Pinder as president. She is currently attending Cornell College in Iowa. It soon became evident that Peggy was a charismatic leader of the sort hard to find. Federationists from Washington State were on hand at the January meeting to discuss services in that State. Student Federationists are carrying out an interesting program in a Waterloo, Iowa, grade school. Grade schoolers are shown the film "The Blind Guys," are taught a little Braille, and are shown the

abacus, cane travel, and other alternative techniques used by blind people.

A two-day seminar was held in March. NFB President Kenneth Jernigan addressed the group Saturday morning. That afternoon and again on Sunday morning the group assembled for sessions dealing with: (1) attitudes, policies, and practices we are fighting against; (2) the goals we are working towards; (3) Iowa services and legislation; and (4) national legislation.

The student chapter of the NFB of Iowa meets once a month on Saturdays at different colleges across the State. The chapter tries to tie its meetings in with local chapter activities. This is done to build unity and friendship among Federationists, for as Peggy Pinder says, "A smooth-working organization, despite all the plan-laying in the world, cannot function if its members do not know and respect each other as friends."

Presidential releases are always read and discussed thoroughly at meetings. The student chapter initiated the idea of the Nac-Tracker bus, which carried Federationists to the NAC protest in Chicago last June. One purpose of the student chapter is to train future leaders, but Peggy states that: "Our policy is not just leadership for tomorrow, but active local participation today." Keep up the marvelous work, Iowa Students!

MICHIGAN STUDENT DIVISION

BY

PAT MAURER

The National Federation of the Blind of Michigan Student Chapter came into being on October 27. Twenty students and members of the Michigan affiliate participated in spirited discussion about the principles and goals of the National Federation of the Blind. John Halverson presided; his enthusiastic leadership had brought guests to the meeting from Ohio and Indiana. Mary Ellen Reihing, secretary of the NFB Student Division, and Pat Maurer, of South Bend, Indiana, were delighted to be a part of the exciting new student movement in Michigan.

Carl Schier, longtime counsel for the NFB, told us of the vital necessity for involving the energies and interests of younger members in the NFB. Mr. Schier was glad to see that students were beginning to be active and encouraged us to

keep growing.

National Student Division President Marc Maurer spoke to the group, telling of the past experiences of students in the NFB and of projected goals that students might adopt. Several projects—notably reader service evaluation and improvement, and library service evaluation and improvement—were adopted for work during the next few months. The next meeting of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan Student Chapter will be held on December 8, when a seminar will be held dealing with NAC. The officers of the new group are: president, John Halverson; vice-president, Thadius Zaremba; recording secretary, Kathy Baudette; corresponding secretary, Mary Olson; and treasurer, Donna Simmons.

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MICHIGAN CONVENTION

BY

RUBY GARNER

The convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan was held September 14, 15, and 16 at the Olds Plaza Hotel in Lansing, Michigan. It began Friday evening with registration, an open board meeting, and a meeting of the Resolutions and Publicity Committees.

The convention opened Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. with a welcoming address by a representative from the Lansing Mayor's office. This was followed by a report on national legislation by

Florence Grannis of the Iowa Commission for the Blind, and a report on pending State legislation of special interest to the blind by Senator William S. Bellechner of the Michigan Senate.

The morning program featured a panel discussion on sheltered workshops. The participants were William C. Jewell from Rehabilitation Industries in Lansing, Russell Albright from Goodwill Industries in Detroit, and Jerry Vercurse of Sturgis.

A panel discussion on library service in Michigan opened the afternoon session. The panel consisted of Florence Grannis, Assistant Director in Charge of Library and Social Services, Iowa Commission for the Blind; Sue Haskins, Librarian for the Blind, Lansing State Library; Dale Pretzer, Assistant Director, State Library, Lansing; Eunice Tuttle, Librarian for the Blind, Wayne County; and Douglas Weiser, Assistant Director, Wayne County Federated Library System. Mrs. Grannis began the discussion by talking about what services a blind person should expect from his library. After the discussion, a resolution was passed concerning libraries for the blind in Michigan.

Two positions for board members at large were up for election. Both were won by the incumbents, Joe Varghese of Detroit, and Jim Palmer of Grand Haven. Geer Wilcox, State president, was elected as delegate to the 1974 national Convention and Walter Garner of Detroit was selected as alternate delegate. The site of the 1974 State convention was also selected. The convention will be held the first weekend

in November at the Hilton Hotel in Detroit.

After a delicious banquet, Florence Grannis gave an inspiring address which distinguished between the Pollyanna attitude of some individuals and the positive, cheerful attitude which is Federationism. This was followed by dancing and refreshments.

The Sunday morning session opened with a discussion of NAC. Then Jerry McKlesky spoke on social security changes which become effective January 1, 1974, and what these changes mean to the blind in Michigan. Several resolutions were passed and the 1973 convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Michigan was adjourned.

There were seventy people registered. About \$165 was given away in door prizes. A warm thank you is extended to the Lansing chapter for the fine job they did in hosting the convention. Detroit accepts the challenge to make the 1974 convention even better.

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COLORADO CONVENTION

BY

GEORGIA MORASH

The annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado was held September 15 and 16 at the Holiday Inn, Grand Junction, Colorado. The opening invocation was given by Reverend Coffee, followed by a welcoming address by Mayor Anderson of Grand Junction.

The day's speakers included Ray Howard, a home teacher for the western slope. John

Amerea, a blind ski instructor from Aspen, Colorado, spoke about outdoor sports for the blind. Gerald Buttars, Librarian, Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Utah State Library, discussed the expanding goals of library service.

Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant was the featured speaker at the evening banquet. The theme

of Dr. Grant's speech was "The Global Challenge of Blindness." She spoke of the many things that had been done around the world and of the work yet to be done. Her humor added a note of laughter to the evening. It was a real treat to have Dr. Grant in Colorado.

State officers were elected at the business session Sunday morning. They were Marjorie Gallien, president; Carl Coleman, first vice-president; Violet Barbes, second vice-president; Diana McGeorge, recording secretary; Georgia Cox, treasurer; Georgia Morash, corresponding secretary.

A report was given by the White Cane chairman, Ruth Ashby. Ray McGeorge gave a report on the growing Braille book project which is handled by the Denver chapter. A highlight of the convention was the museum display which was set up at the inn by the Grand Junction Historical Society. Delegates were able to handle the exhibits and read the Braille notations.

The convention was a success due to the efforts and interest of many people. The convention was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. by the outgoing president, Lyle Neff.

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MASSACHUSETTS CONVENTION

BY

ROSAMOND M. CRITCHLEY

The twentieth annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Massachusetts was held at the High Point Motor Inn, Chicopee, Massachusetts, Saturday and Sunday, October 6-7.

Our former president, Armand Lefebvre, had laid the groundwork for this convention and had appointed the necessary committees. Then late last winter he was suddenly struck down by a heart attack which forced him to give up his office. It remained for his successor, William Burke, with the invaluable assistance of his wife Florence, to build upon the foundation which Armand had laid, and bring his work to a happy and successful conclusion.

Much of this success also must be credited to the program coordinator, Bernice Hamer. In the late 1950's there was a New England Conference of NFB

Affiliates, which held meetings once or twice a year to delve into various aspects and problems of the Federation and its member organizations. Bernice attended these meetings, gaining from them a good deal of knowledge and inspiration. When she was asked to map out a program for this year's convention, her mind went back to the New England Conference, and she began to wonder if there was any possibility of its being revived. With this in mind, she built a program around the theme "New England United at the Barricades." It focused on an inward look, an examination of our foundation to see how best we might build on it.

As always, people began arriving on Friday, to be on hand for preliminary committee meetings that night, or just to get together with friends. Then on Saturday morning the convention got down to business, and the fresh breeze of

“something different” was evident right at the start. Following the invocation, delivered by the Reverend Walter Voitasek, corresponding secretary of the NFBM, and the addresses of welcome by the president and Mayor Edward J. Ziemba of Chicopee, came the president’s report and the rollcall of chapters. As each chapter was called upon, its spokesman was asked for a report of activities and accomplishments during the past year. Formerly these reports had been scattered among program items. The morning session was concluded with a fine keynote speech entitled “Are We Our Brother’s Keeper,” delivered by Richard Wood, president of one of our two new affiliates—the National Federation of the Blind of Nashoba Valley.

Following a luncheon for speakers and constitutional officers, the afternoon session opened with a series of talks on various phases of Federation activity. The Reverend Howard E. May, Jr., of Connecticut spoke on reorganization of local and State units; Kenneth Brackett of Rhode Island on “Membership Methods”; Helen Hutchins of New Hampshire on the meaning of national affiliation; Helen Collins of Maine on transportation, and on problems arising from attempted subversion by agency-oriented groups and individuals; Anita O’Shea of Massachusetts on working in partnership with the State Commission for the Blind. A fifteen-minute coffee break was followed by a workshop on the subject “A New England United—Shall It Be,” moderated by Donald C. Capps, First Vice-President of the NFB, with all the previous speakers participating, along with the audience. This lively discussion culminated in a motion, which was adopted, that a committee be set up, with Bernice Hamer as chairman, to study the possibility of reviving the idea of a New

England Conference.

The banquet Saturday night was a truly memorable one, with Thomas Cotter, president of the Boston chapter and State legislative chairman, as master of ceremonies. Charters were presented to the two new affiliates—the NFB of the North Shore, and the NFB of Nashoba Valley. The Brockton chapter received the Dr. Jacobus tenBroek Award for its outstanding contribution in work to help the blind in general. The State organization’s first annual award of Employer of the Year, presented to a company which employs one or more visually handicapped persons, was presented to Rexnord, Inc., of Worcester, where our president, Bill Burke, has worked for the past thirty years. Had he not been attending this convention, Bill would have been a guest of honor at a dinner the previous night, to receive a gold watch in recognition of this long period of continuous employment. Instead, a delegation from the company, together with members of Bill’s family, traveled to Chicopee on Saturday, for this double honor. The company received the award, and Bill was presented with the watch. The events of the evening were climaxed with a fine speech by Don Capps, expounding the NFB’s goals of Security, Equality, and Opportunity. This was followed by the singing of Anita O’Shea’s version of the NFB Song.

Sunday morning brought another “first.” Rather than attempt to provide transportation and guides for conventioners to attend churches, Catholic and Protestant services were held in the inn. A priest was invited to officiate at the one service, and the Reverend Walter Voitasek led the other.

The Sunday business session was opened with an invocation by Rabbi Jordan Ofseyer of Springfield, who then conducted the annual memorial service for deceased members. Business took up the balance of the day, with legislative reports by John Nagle and Thomas Cotter, committee reports, resolutions, and election of officers.

Among the resolutions adopted were the following: that action be taken to avert the threatened cut in social service funds by the Federal Government; that the State legislature be urged to pass an NFBM-sponsored bill to preserve the Commission for the Blind in its present form; that an effort be made to organize student groups within the State; that chapters allocate as much money as possible to help members attend conventions; that the NFBM constitution be amended to provide for chapter assessments to the State organization on a per capita basis; that the Dr. Jacobus

tenBroek Award be opened to individuals and groups outside the organization, along with the local chapters; that the organization establish a speakers' bureau; that a State newsletter be started; and that we go on record in opposition to any charge by telephone companies for the use of directory assistance.

This report would not be complete without mention of the eager and capable assistance we were given by Boy and Girl Scouts, who even wrote a letter of thanks to the organization for giving them the opportunity to be of service.

Officers elected for a two-year term were: William Burke, president; Eugene Raschi, first vice-president; Armand Lefebvre, second vice-president; Rosamond Critchley, recording secretary; Manuel Rubin, corresponding secretary; Edward Murphy, treasurer; and Domenic Marinello, legislative chairman.

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MARYLAND CONVENTION

On October 12, 13, and 14, 150 Federationists from the State of Maryland checked into the Commander Hotel in Maryland's claim to resort fame, Ocean City, for a truly superb convention.

The sun sparkled, the ocean sparkled, and the brilliance of the panelists and speakers outdid them both. Friday evening, after the meetin's and greetin's, an open board meeting was held, followed by hospitality, music, and mirth; Saturday morning we got down to the nitty-gritty—the serious business at hand.

The morning session, which convened at 9:30 a.m., was opened with an invocation, and welcoming remarks by John McCraw, Maryland's well-known and well loved president; by the Honorable Harry Kelly, mayor of Ocean City; and by Dorothy Hall, president of the host chapter—NFB of Maryland, Eastern Shore. Tony Mannino extended greetings from NFB, as did the inimitable John Nagle.

James Murray, Director of the State Library for the Physically Handicapped; J. Kirk Walters, Principal of the Maryland

School for the Blind; Regina Flynn, Director of the Multiple Handicapped Division at the school; and George Keller, Eugene Spurrier, and Ross Birely, representing the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, State Services to the Blind, presented well prepared and well received reports anent their respective agencies, followed by a lively "give and take" question-and-answer period.

Tony Mannino was scheduled to speak just before lunch. His subject was "Fundraising Techniques and Public Relations," and speak he did, both before lunch, and again after lunch, in stellar manner. Anyone not more well informed after his speech was either asleep or out of the convention hall.

Edward Binder, Assistant Director, Bureau of Disability Insurance, Social Security Administration, presented the first report of the afternoon, followed by a panel discussion, "Blind Industries and Services of Maryland," moderated by Ned L. Graham, Jr., president of the Greater Baltimore Chapter, NFBM, and William T. Snyder, public relations counsellor for BIS of Maryland. The following panelists from BIS—Jerome Brooks, personnel director; Milton Freeburger, general manager of BIS and director of the Salisbury Workshop;

Robert Bennett, counsellor, Vending Stand Department; William Anderson, placement counsellor, Training and Evaluation Center; John Horn, director of the new East Baltimore Division—and our own John McCraw, newly appointed member of the BIS Board of Trustees, shared a huge amount of individual and collective expertise during the discussion, and very ably supplied answers to the myriad questions coming from the floor.

The session adjourned at 5:15 p.m. to prepare for the evening's activities and festivities, and reconvened at 6:30 p.m. for drinks and dinner. Tony Mannino was the principal speaker, and his excellent style of expounding the gospel of Federationism left nothing to be desired. Flowing hospitality and conviviality were the order of the remainder of the evening.

Ned Graham presented the State legislative report and John Nagle the national legislative report on Sunday morning, and the State affiliate met for a business meeting.

President McCraw rapped the gavel at 11:00 a.m., and adjourned the seventh annual convention of the NFB of Maryland.

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

BY

DONALD E. MATOON

VEGETABLE SOUP BURGUNDY

[Author's Note.—Having prepared Julia Child's Gallic Pot Roast (with Burgundy wine), I made a soup with the remaining

broth and thought it was delicious also. So the idea occurred to me to make a soup with essentially the same flavor, yet

without having to go through the work of preparing the pot roast. This is easy to do because I use a Burgundy wine sauce mix.]

Ingredients

- 2 cups carrots, chopped
- 3 cups onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 can (16 oz.) tomatoes, chopped
- 2 cans (10½ oz. each) beef bouillon
- 1 package Lawry's Burgundy Wine Sauce Mix, prepared according to directions

Method

Simmer carrots 15 minutes in 1½ quarts water; add onions and simmer 10 minutes; add celery and simmer 10 minutes; then add tomatoes, bouillon, and prepared Lawry's Burgundy Wine Sauce Mix and simmer 5 minutes more. This makes about a gallon of soup.

Beef chunks can be added to make a Vegetable Beef Soup Burgundy.

MONITOR MINIATURES

James Ryan, president of the NFB Merchants Division, contacted Elverna Kezar who agreed to prepare the copy for a quarterly newsletter for that division. Information of national interest—legislative changes, new and unusual job opportunities, statewide problems or unusual achievements—should be sent to her at 4315 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55409.

Anyone who would like to receive this quarterly newsletter should send his name and address to Ben Snow, 171 Washington Street, Apartment E-3, Hartford, Connecticut 06106. Mr. Snow is in charge of printing and mailing.

At the urging of the NFB Teachers Division, Recording for the Blind has begun monthly publication of the *NEA Journal*. To obtain this magazine write to: Recording for the Blind, 5022 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, California 90027.

The following is the list of officers of the National Federation of the Blind of Ohio elected October 21, 1973: president, Robert Eschbach of Dayton; first vice-president, Thomas Matthews of Columbus; second vice-president, Charles Burton of Cleveland; secretary, John Knall of Lakewood; and treasurer, Ivan Garwood of North Baltimore. Helen Johnson of Toledo was elected to a two-year term on the executive committee, and Ray Creech of Dayton and Stanley Doran of Columbus were elected to one-year terms on the committee.

On September 26, 1973, the President signed a vocational rehabilitation bill, scaled down from a version he vetoed twice before as too costly. The two-year measure authorizes \$1.54 billion in grants to States, local governments, and private agencies to operate programs of rehabilitation of the handicapped for employment. The major emphasis in the program is training the handicapped for jobs, the President

emphasizing that social welfare and other services could be more appropriately handled by other agencies. However, the two-year extension includes for the first time special projects and research into problems of the handicapped suffering from spinal cord injuries, the older blind and deaf, and migratory workers. It also sets up a system of Federal mortgage insurance to help construct rehabilitation centers and remodel public buildings to accommodate the handicapped.

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An eye chart to test preschool children for visual defects is available to parents who write to the Utah Society for the Prevention of Blindness, 2033 South State Street, Salt Lake City, Utah 84115. It is estimated that one in every twenty preschool children has a vision problem which, if uncorrected, can seriously interfere with his or her development and schooling. The chart for the home eye test can be used in the home with reliable results.

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Are you a blind person holding an unusual employment? Or, do you know such a blind person? If so, please contact the Director, Occupational Information Library for the Blind, 1401 Ash Street, Detroit, Michigan 48208, giving details of the job such as job title, educational requirements, job duties, and so on. This agency is compiling a card catalogue of occupations of the blind for the benefit of blind persons, rehabilitation counselors, and others interested in employing the blind or in securing employment for them. The time of traditional blind crafts is part of ancient history. Ambitious blind men

and women are making inroads into hitherto unopened avenues of employment such as electronics, landscape engineering, space, science, and so on. Your job, whatever that may be, has become common for you, but it could be of interest to others and useful in securing new employment opportunities for the blind. So why don't you write a few lines to the Occupational Information Library for the Blind?

* * * * *

On January 1, 1974, the Federal Government will begin the administration of its Supplemental Security Income plan (SSI). Each State is required to at least supplement the grant to the December 1973 level. At this writing the State of Nevada has set a flat grant of \$215 a month per individual for Aid to the Blind and the State of California is preparing to set a flat grant of \$237 a month per blind individual, less any deductible income in excess of \$20 a month. It is hoped that other States will follow suit so that blind persons may have a more adequate grant with which to purchase the necessities of life.

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The National Federation of the Blind of Virginia was recently granted its charter from the National Credit Union Administration, which is an independent agency of the United States Government and guarantees each individual account up to twenty thousand dollars (similar to the FDIC which insures individual bank and saving and loan association depositors). The newly-formed Virginia Credit Union has its duly elected officers, a Credit Union Committee, and a supervisory board which serves to oversee both the board of

directors and the Credit Union Committee.

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It is reported that the State of Mississippi recently became the forty-sixth State to pass legislation permitting guide dogs in public places. Only Montana, South Carolina, Utah, and Vermont carry no such law on their statute books. The first legislation of this kind, covering buses and other public utilities, was passed in Illinois and New Jersey in the early 1930's.

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The United Cerebral Palsy Association recently adopted a "Bill of Rights for the Handicapped" which includes the following points: prevention of disability insofar as possible; health services and medical care; education to the fullest extent to which he is capable, provided through the regular channels of American education; training for vocational and avocational pursuits; work at any occupation for which he has the qualifications and preparation; an income sufficient to maintain a lifestyle comparable to his nonhandicapped peers; the right to live and work where he chooses; barrier-free public facilities; the right to function independently in any way in which he is able to act on his own; and the right to petition social institutions and the courts to gain such opportunities as may be enjoyed by others but denied the handicapped because of oversight, public apathy, or discrimination.

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In the *Federal Register* for June 27, 1973, HEW published a notice that it intends to revise its regulations governing the administration of public assistance for

all categories to conform to the United States Supreme Court decision in *Graham v. Richardson* to require that a State plan must include as eligible any otherwise eligible resident of the United States who is either a citizen or an alien lawfully admitted for permanent residence, or otherwise permanently residing in the United States under color of law; and must exclude any individual who is not lawfully in this country. At the time of the *Graham* decision, eight States had citizenship requirements for some federally assisted programs. Five of those required, as an alternative to citizenship, residence in the United States for a period of time ranging from ten to twenty-five years. Since that decision, four States have revised their plans to eliminate durational residence requirements. In the same issue of the *Federal Register*, HEW proposes another rule change to provide that under certain conditions a disability insurance benefit to which an individual is entitled is reduced if he is also entitled to a workman's compensation benefit for the same month. The amount of the reduction is the amount by which the total of his social security benefits and workmen's compensation benefits exceeds the higher of (1) eighty percent of his average current earnings or (2) his average monthly earnings for the five consecutive calendar years after 1950 for which his earnings were highest.

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H.R. 7250 has been introduced in the Congress to prohibit housing discrimination on the basis of being or not being an adult. The term "adult" means anyone who has attained the age of eighteen years.

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A Soviet eye specialist has described development and successful use of a new laser technique for the knifeless surgical treatment of glaucoma. The method involves using laser beams, which produce tiny punctures without burning beneath the eyeball's surface and thus relieve pressure from blocked fluids within the eye. The laser treatment can be applied in five minutes on an outpatient basis, eliminating hospitalization. The success rate among patients who are victims of advanced glaucoma: ninety percent, it is asserted.

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The Department of HEW, in its release on public assistance standards, indicates that for recipients of Aid to the Blind, thirty-five States met their full standard; with fifteen paying less than 100 percent. Of the fifteen, seven States paid 90 percent but less than 100 percent; two States paid 80 percent but less than 90 percent; three States paid 70 percent but less than 80 percent; two States paid 60 percent but less than 70 percent; and one State paid less than 50 percent. The significant thing, of course, is how high or low is the assistance standard for each of the fifty States. In view of the nationalization of the adult aid categories under H.R. 1 beginning in January 1974, it is of interest to note that 46 percent of the total number of Aid to Blind recipients resided in States that paid at least the new Federal minimum of \$130 a month. Of the fifty States, twenty-eight paid \$130 a month or more, and twenty-two States paid less than the \$130.

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In the first year of the new two-year session of the State legislature, the NFB of

California had unprecedented success. It actively sponsored six bills, every one of which was passed and signed by the Governor. One adds discrimination based on physical handicap to unfair employment practices prohibited by the California Fair Employment Practices Act and makes such discrimination subject to jurisdiction and control of the FEPC. Another increases the Revolving Loan Fund in the Department of Social Welfare from \$35,000 to \$70,000 for the purpose of making loans to recipients of Aid to the Blind, and increases the limit on any one loan from \$5,000 to \$10,000. A third measure appropriates \$10,000 to the Orientation Center for the handling of talking book machines.

Yet another bill appropriates \$145,300 for the establishment and maintenance of a new unit of the State Library to more adequately furnish services to the blind and physically handicapped. A fifth bill establishes as a special need an amount not to exceed \$500 in any fiscal year for property taxes for recipients of Aid to the Blind. Finally, a measure appropriates \$3,100,000 for the building of a new California School for the Blind and a new California School for the Deaf in northern California. These tremendous legislative successes were due chiefly to two events—the presence in Sacramento for hearings of several volunteer citizen advocates from the ranks of the NFB of California and the fact that President Anthony Mannino and members of his administration held lengthy conferences with each of the heads of the State departments involved even before the bills were introduced.

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Sonia Carr of Kansas City, Missouri,

writes: Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of the National Federation of the Blind, submitted my name to be placed on the National Advisory Committee for Sheltered Workshops. In September 1972, I received a letter from Secretary Hodges appointing me to a two-year term on the advisory committee to the United States Department of Labor on sheltered workshops for the employment and rehabilitation of the handicapped.

The first meeting was to be held on December 13, 1972, and after thorough preparation was made to attend, it was virtually impossible to get to the airport, because on that very day, Kansas City had the worst ice storm in forty years, and I had to forego the meeting.

The second meeting was held June 19, 1973, and I attended the meeting without any problems arising. At this meeting I was presented with an official certificate of membership. Some of the topics discussed were: The Fair Labor Standards Act on minimum wages in sheltered workshops--this bill was being considered in the House of Representatives that same day and an increase was inevitable; also, the question of whether or not a manager of a sheltered workshop should be allowed to vote with the board of directors; work by patients in hospitals and their wages; a study on piecework variation; et cetera. I brought up the fact that subcontracts by sheltered workshops were being accepted with the same rate of pay for years, while wages for those working in the same companies, such as the steel industry, had nearly quadrupled in the same period. I also suggested that more consumer representatives be appointed on the committee, since the consumers are the ones who are affected by the decisions, and

consumers have more realistic ideas of what can be done. I was pleased to receive a commendation for my contribution to the committee.

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"A twelve-inch-square white porcelain magnetic board with a silver-colored frame at eight dollars; magnets with Braille and raised print at fifty cents each; magnets with Braille at twenty-five cents each: Send the list of what you want and I will make them to order." This notice comes from Berneice Johnson, 717 Fourth Street, Apartment 114, Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

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Shirley King writes: "We have a newly organized chapter in Kansas. Our chapter, whose location is in Wichita, Kansas, was organized May 12, 1973. Kansas State officers came to assist us in adopting a constitution and electing officers. Our first meeting after organization was July 26. We set our fiscal year to begin September 1 to give us more time to 'get off the ground.' Our name is South Central Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Kansas, and our officers are: president, Esther Gunther; vice-president, Ruth Rigg; recording secretary, Donald Dibble; corresponding secretary, Shirley King; and treasurer, Robert D. King. Currently we have twenty-five members."

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The newest local NFB chapter in Indiana came into being on Saturday, November 3, in Bloomington. The National Federation of the Blind of Bloomington joined the other eight chapters of the Indiana NFB affiliate, the Indiana Council of the Blind,

at a meeting chaired by Indiana's president, Marc Maurer. Thirteen spirited, enthusiastic Federationists constituted the membership in Bloomington. Students from Indiana University, as well as housewives, businessmen, and a retired counselor, brought their energy and experience to this first meeting.

Many different problems of the blind were discussed, both local and national. A constitution was adopted. Officers were elected. Various projects that the chapter wanted to work on were established at this meeting. The NFB of Bloomington plans to hold its next meeting December 1. A seminar on NAC will be the principle topic of discussion.

The elections presented the following people to serve in office: president, Lucele Uttermohlen; vice-president, Bessie Hiers; secretary-treasurer, Roberta Barner; board members, Shari Johnson and Pat Weller. We're proud to welcome this very enthusiastic and fast-growing chapter to the National Federation of the Blind.

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The Greenville (South Carolina) Aurora Club of the Blind, at a meeting held October 13, 1973, elected officers to serve the year 1974: president, W. Ralph Brockman of Greenville; vice-president, Robert Hermeston of Greenville; secretary, Marlene Black of Greenville; treasurer, Robert R. Bell of Laurens; and social director, Bill West of Greenville.

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Harvey Webb has been doing some radio work for his local station, KMRC, and recently was made Music Director. Harvey says: "Big title, but actually all it means is that I am responsible for all music played on the station. I have to select records to

be ordered, and go through all the promotional material we receive in the mail to determine what we should use. Also, I have a hand in selecting public-service material to be used on the station, and guess whose spots are getting a lot of play?

"By the way, Adele and I tried Ned Graham's dish of string beans and corn, and it was great!"

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Creig Slayton reports: "On September 21, 1973, the Scott County Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Iowa held its annual election of officers. Dan Tigges, 1504 Fulton Court, Davenport, Iowa 52804, was elected president. The other officers are as follows: vice-president, Betty Taylor; secretary, Michael S. Smith; treasurer, Kenneth Cellman; and legislative chairman, Richard B. Pierce. A number of new individuals came to this meeting and we are looking for this chapter to be quite active during the upcoming year."

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We have learned that Joseph DiPerna was elected president of the Hudson County Social Club of the Blind, Jersey City, New Jersey. This news was in a communication from chapter secretary Pauline Santora.

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The Capitol City Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Tennessee held their election on Saturday, September 22, 1973. Elected were: president, Hubert J. Smith; first vice-president, Roger Anons; second vice-president, Namoi Manning; secretary, Katherine Smith; treasurer, Mrs. Willie D. Burns. Elected to be members of the board were Mildred Hamby, James Brown, and Armstead Moore. Appointed to be members of the board were J. M. Warren, Billy Cole, and Leroy Duff.

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