


Braille Monitor



SEPTEMBER, 1977

VOICE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND



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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

PUBLICATION OF THE
NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

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THE BRAILLE MONITOR

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DONALD McCONNELL, *Editor*

* * *

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* * *

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SPEAKING FOR THE BLIND—IT IS THE BLIND SPEAKING FOR THEMSELVES.*

PRESIDENT JERNIGAN RESIGNS; RALPH SANDERS IS THE NEW NFB PRESIDENT

The 1977 Convention of the National Federation of the Blind is over, and its passing marks the end of a chapter in the history of the organized blind movement. Because of increasingly troubled health, aggravated by an unrelenting work load, Kenneth Jernigan has been forced to resign after ten years as President of the NFB. The Convention elected Ralph Sanders to succeed him, making President Sanders only the sixth man to hold the presidency of the organization in 37 years. Thus an era in the history of the NFB comes to an end.

When President Jernigan announced his decision at the conclusion of the first day of the Convention, the room was filled with cries of "No!"—expressing the unwillingness of Federationists to hear and accept what was being said. As President Jernigan went on to say that—were his health to improve—he might one day again seek the presidency, he was interrupted once more, this time by a prolonged and tumultuous ovation. This was the first of many outpourings of the intense affection and loyalty to this man felt by the members of the Federation. Both responses recalled the events of a decade earlier when the movement lost the leadership of another giant in the affairs of the blind.

But aside from the emotional blow experienced by the Federation on both occasions, the differences between this resignation and the earlier resignation, and later the death, of Jacobus tenBroek were very great. These differences reflect both the progress we have made and the effects of the unceasing labors and enormous strengths of Kenneth Jernigan. If Professor tenBroek was the visionary who looked within himself and knew that the traditional concept of a blind man was a lie, and who spent a lifetime challenging that lie—submitting its premises and oppressive corollaries to the analysis of a mind endowed with genius and bolstered by profound scholarship, then

President Jernigan is the one who brought this liberating message home to the experience of blind people throughout the country. For 25 years, as board member, officer, and leader of the Federation, he has spread the message of Federationism; he has preached and exhorted and led us to a personal realization of our normalcy; and in doing so he has unleashed, and even more, directed to coherent action, the energies of the blind population. The results are the proof of the thesis that the blind are normal human beings, capable of the failings of normal people, but capable also of their amazing ability to act cohesively and effectively, and capable also of their same heroism. Thus President Sanders assumes leadership of a unified movement—an organization which knows its purpose and has tasted the victories which grow from carefully directed collective action.

But if the chapter of the Jernigan Presidency is completed, the story of this man's involvement in the Federation is far from finished. As the week of the Convention proceeded and President Jernigan chaired the sessions with all of his accustomed spirit and wit, his promise of continued participation in the activities of the organization was clearly not an empty one. His leadership during the last year has not been that of weakness. Indeed, from almost every point of view, this has been our best year, bringing to conclusion projects that have been underway for a generation, and making our power in the affairs of the blind indisputable.

We have been lucky in the Federation, although most of our luck has been of the kind painstakingly created by ourselves. But the diligence and commitment of the blind has been matched by the appearance of leaders with the capacity to make the most of these virtues and direct us to substantive achievement. In Ralph Sanders we have another such leader. In his few years

in leadership roles in the organization—for President Sanders is still a young man, nearly as young as Jacobus tenBroek was when he founded the Federation—Ralph Sanders has shown the kind of intense commitment and the ability for intelligent strategy which we have come to expect from our leaders. He comes to an office already dignified by greatness, and it is the common expectation that he will continue this tradition undiminished.

Indeed, it has been our experience that each leader brings his own strengths, his

own peculiar talents, and we look forward to the years ahead.

In some ways, the situation is a happy one and different from those in our past. A new President comes to the fore, but he has available to him the experience and wisdom of the President stepping aside. The transition takes place at a time of great strength in the movement, of abundant talent in the other officers and the members, and with the lessons and guidance of our history to direct the changeover. We have not lost a leader, but gained another. □

RESPONSE FROM FEDERATIONISTS

Since the Convention, the National Office has received many letters expressing the feelings of Federationists about Dr. Jernigan's resignation. We reprint three of them here.

DEAR MR. JERNIGAN: In the midst of my struggle to get the family ready to leave for London, I'm going to try to chisel out a few minutes to put down on paper what I have been thinking for the past week. First of all, I am coming to accept what has always been unimaginable—the Federation without you at its head. For many of us who are new, you have been synonymous with the movement. Your leaving center stage leaves me with a painful sense of loss, but I must also admit feeling exultant at discovering that the movement can and will forge ahead. You were right when you said that we now have leadership in depth. I have no illusions about why. From the bottom of my heart I thank you for the time and skill and insight which you have given to preparing all of us to carry on.

I must tell you of and thank you for something much more personal. I was never one of those really imprisoned by society and circumstance in the crushing way many of those I now love have been. My bondage was much subtler, more nebulous. I spent time manipulating events so that I could avoid things I didn't want to face. I felt vaguely apologetic about the way I did things. You've heard it all a thousand times

before. The Federation changed all that. Knowing other people who were living the kind of lives I wanted to be free to live showed me that I could do it too. But most of all it was your encouragement, your thoughtful support for my efforts with the local chapter, your respect for my mind and ability, and your speeches. You have given me an understanding of myself and have freed me to fulfill my potential. It is no wonder that I love you so much. You have unfettered my future, and you have my profound thanks.

This year will be an important one for the Federation, and it pains me that I will not be here to help. But I have found work to do for the blind in England, so what you have taught me and believed me to be will be exported. Thank you for what you are and what you have made of me.

My love and gratitude,

BARBARA PIERCE.

DEAR SIR: I have thought long and hard about what I should say to you in this letter. I find that, for a change, I am not able to express all that I feel in words. In 1972, I had just graduated from college and was looking around for financial aid to attend law school. The agency in this state wanted desperately to avoid helping students in

postgraduate work. For that reason alone, I dug up an application for the NFB scholarship. My particular counselor hates the NFB with an intensity that I have seldom seen matched. But on this particular occasion he forgot that hatred and put me in touch with the organized blind movement. I filled out the application, caught a bus, and went to an Indianapolis chapter meeting to join, since the application said that you had to be a member. I found the Indianapolis chapter pretty much like I always thought organizations of the blind would be. There was ample coffee and doughnuts, a door prize, much talk about the upcoming picnic, and a good time was had by all.

At this time I had no idea what the NFB was all about. I attended the 1972 Convention in Chicago. I went to the Convention for the sole purpose of registering so that the next year I would be eligible for the scholarship. I will never forget the reaction that I had when I came into the meeting room and heard you speaking. You were announcing the ACB Iowa lawsuit. My reaction was instant. For the first time in my life I heard a blind man speaking forcibly, with direction and purpose, to those who seek to oppress us. I had often thought that what the blind needed was an NAACP of their own. Like other blind people, I had suffered discrimination and the misunderstanding that go hand in glove in our society. Before I left the Convention, I visited the literature table. I was like a kid in a toy store. I wanted everything. The next week I took one piece of literature to work with me each day—reading it on the bus, coffee breaks, lunch hours, whenever I could.

I had started that summer working at the sheltered workshop at the Indiana agency for the blind. Fortunately, I only worked there ten days. I found another job, one that the agency had told me was not available. I really believe that if I had worked all of that summer in the sheltered workshop, and if I had not attended the NFB Convention, thereby stumbling across the literature, I would not be a lawyer today. The depression that set in as soon as I started my job

in the workshop was enormous. Although college-trained, I was paid 80 cents an hour. My job was to place ten hose clamps in a small cardboard box, stick that box in a case, and then start over. The boredom was maddening. Everywhere one turned he was under constant surveillance and supervision by the overseers of the shop. At lunch and coffee-break times, each of us had a certain seat at a certain table. And woe be to the offender who sat in someone else's seat. It was like first grade all over again, except I was 28. Even when you left the hideous workshop, the reminders that you were different and a fit subject for segregation were all about.

A bell rang to stop traffic for us; signs that cautioned the driver to take care because there were blind pedestrians in the neighborhood; advertisements for blind-made products. When you finally got out of the neighborhood, you had tomorrow to look forward to. After ten days I felt ready to strangle the moron who was my overseer. I felt worthless and had an overwhelming desire to get drunk at night. Many of my fellow workers had been in this same shop for five, ten, maybe even twenty years. I still do not understand how they have kept their sanity. At the time of the NFB Convention, I had just found a new job. My relief at being out of the workhouse was great. I did not want to jeopardize my new job by being gone for a week, and therefore, I was at the Convention for only one day. However, I brought home with me the books and articles that were to give me the best part of my education. Much of what you and Dr. tenBroek said about blindness was only common sense. But yet I had never really thought of it that way. The entire philosophy was organized and integrated in such a fashion as to make the meaning of the NFB apparent.

I started law school in September. The first semester was the most challenging four months of my life. Not only did I have the same problems all first-year law students have—the confusion, self-doubt, and harassment by law professors who wished to weed

out those who cannot stand the heat—but I also had people all around me telling me I could not do it. The agency had warned me against this course I had embarked on. Each law professor could easily think of ten things that I would not be able to do or would be able to do only with great difficulty. My readers said that not even they could read that much material, and after all, they were sighted. Nay, even my wife counseled that I should drop classes, take a lighter load so as to be more competitive with those who had so many advantages over me.

Although January found my name on the dean's list, I almost gave up several times. I am sure that I was sustained by the inspiration that I had drawn from your life and the history of our movement. The *Braille Monitor* came monthly, and it almost always included a story about someone who had overcome greater obstacles than I was dealing with, and it always included stories about people whose opportunities were far less than the one I currently had. I had a lot of discouragement around me but in times of doubt, I had only to turn to what you had written to reassure myself. You have given far more than we had a right to expect of you. You have been our leader, our teacher, and our counselor. I am sure that I speak for thousands of others who will not for one reason or another write to you. We love you. You are to be respected in every way. We wish only the best of things for you, that your life may be long, happy, and healthy. I am sure that if you had devoted your life to something other than trying to better the lot of your fellow blind, you would not be a Senator, Governor, or whatever else you might liked to have done.

I think that we shall always look to you for guidance and wisdom. It is not possible to properly thank you for what you have done for me personally or for the blind people of this nation. Therefore, I will close this letter simply by saying that, thanks to you, we know who we are and we will never go back.

With deepest affection,

JAMES A. LEWIS.

DEAR DR. JERNIGAN: I decided to write you a letter after the New Orleans Convention of NFB because there were some things that I wanted to say personally to you and could not, due to time constraints.

As many Federationists (including you) were saddened at your resignation, so was I. I believe Ralph Sanders is a good choice. I have had contact with him and like him tremendously. I believe that you are a difficult act to follow. But instead of comparing Ralph to you, I'll get right in there and do what I can in my own way to help him.

I have read almost everything that you have ever written pertaining to blindness and the Federation. Your articles, speeches, and modern philosophies concerning blindness and work in the field of the blind have aided me to really "know who I am." My whole life has changed because of the National Federation of the Blind and I have you to thank for it.

You have given tirelessly to the organized blind movement. You have given of your time, your self, your energies, and your money. That is a lot to give. When things go wrong with the affiliate here in New Jersey, no more will I get discouraged as in the past. I will remember what you have done and just simply do what I can.

I have no doubt whatsoever that you will be back as President one day. But for now, I hope you get a chance to take vacations and get lots of fun out of life. Having two full-time jobs is difficult. Although I am sad that you aren't President of NFB anymore, I am glad that you will be taking better care of yourself.

When Peggy Pinder received her scholarship at the 1976 banquet, I believe her remarks were true. She stated that it was you who was the real scholar and through your teachings she was able to achieve her end. As I remember, you modestly passed

over her remarks. I firmly agree with Peggy.

In a while I have to go to court—it pertains to a landlord-tenant situation. In the past, I would have thrown up my hands in disgust and let whatever happens happen. But now, I know who I am and I'll never go back. A friend told me: "What are you trying to do? fight a civil rights case?" I said: "Yes, I am fighting for my right to live in the world as every other person already has the right to do." Of course, the situation has a great deal to do with my blindness. I even have been getting anonymous letters from someone in the apartment building where I live. Lots of the passages pertain to my blindness and how I really can see and how I am a fake. In that past I could have never stood up under all of this. Now, because of NFB and what you have taught me, I will fight until the day I die for my rights as well as other blind persons' rights to achieve equal status and bury the second-class status which society has placed us in.

It goes without saying that you will be greatly missed. I hope that you are able to continue in the Federation and make your voice heard loud and clear.

There is an anonymous poem which goes something like this: "I shall never pass this way again. Therefore, if there is any good that I can do, let me do it now, for I shall never pass this way again." I believe you have done that good, and unlike the poem, I definitely believe you will pass this way again and again.

Dr. Jernigan, you are our beloved leader. I believe I feel the same way as the many thousands of blind men and women across these great United States when I say: "We love and admire you." You have helped to influence and shape many blind people's lives. For that we commend you; for that we love you.

With sincerest regards,

DORIS PARNOFIELLO.

□

ISABELLE L. D. GRANT DIES

We are sorry to announce the death of Dr. Isabelle L. D. Grant, mainstay of the International Federation of the Blind, and longtime and beloved Federationist. Dr. Grant died the week before the 1977 NFB Convention, and the announcement in New Orleans of her death brought sadness to her many friends in the movement. Dr. Grant, whose extensive travels abroad and indefati-

gable labors spread the message of Federationism around the world, was actively engaged in the work of the IFB until the very end. She died the day before she was to fly to New York to make a presentation to the United Nations on the needs of the blind. Her death is a loss to the blind of this nation and of the world. She will be sorely missed. □

CONVENTION ROUNDUP

The 37th Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind was a historic one—for reasons of which readers are already aware. It had been 20 years since our last Convention in New Orleans—20 years which have seen enormous growth in the movement and substantial gains for the blind. As usual, this Convention was larger than the last, making it, again as usual, the largest gathering of the blind in history. The registration figure on Friday afternoon—the closing day—stood at 1,818; and as always, many who were there did not register. Last year's figure was 1,603. There were 1,730 people at this year's banquet, also a record.

Despite hotel accommodations which, due to a number of broken contracts and unexpected bankruptcies, were spread out over a distance of three or four miles, the logistics of the meeting ran more smoothly than many expected. Even the spotty air-conditioning of the headquarters hotel—the Braniff Place—which was far from coping with the heat and humidity for which New Orleans is famous, did not dampen our spirits. We were celebrating the close of our most successful year yet. If this was a Convention marked by great sadness at the resignation of President Jernigan, it was also one marked by renewed and increased dedication to continuing the momentum built up over 37 years.

A mark of this increased commitment was the major increase in PAC Plan pledges. At the start of the week, the PAC Plan total stood at \$89,000 per year. It began growing slowly, then much more rapidly, until at the end of the week the total exceeded \$120,000 per year. We pledged to come to Baltimore next July with the total over \$200,000. Iowa alone now has pledges totaling over \$2,000 a month, and other states are climbing fast. The Hawaii Federation announced donations of over \$2,500 and challenged other states to come up to its mark. All of this, when compared to the loss of income caused by the end of the

mail campaigns, still leaves us far short of what we will need if Federation programs are not to be greatly curtailed, but the response from NFB members showed that they are aware of the challenge and ready to meet it.

Prominent notice should be given to the efforts of the members of the Louisiana affiliate, led by John Lemaire, who provided warm hospitality throughout the week and who were constantly on hand to help with the shuttle-bus system or provide information about the city. The ride on a Mississippi steamboat on Wednesday afternoon, arranged by the NFB of Louisiana, was a high-point of our off-hours, even in competition with New Orleans' famous French Quarter and Bourbon Street. Also worthy of notice were the yeoman efforts of the Convention coordinator, Mary Ellen Anderson, and her crew of Iowans, truly a crack team.

The Convention proper began Tuesday, July 5, but most people came on Saturday to attend the committee and division meetings which occupied Sunday and Monday. The October *Monitor* will report on these meetings and the activities of the NFB divisions during the last year.

Tuesday Session

The first general session of the Convention began Tuesday morning at 9:00 a.m. The opening gavel and the words "The Convention is in order" set off a chorus of cheers. The invocation was given by John Niceley of North Carolina, followed by a welcome from the Office of the Mayor of New Orleans. Harry Vines of the Texas Commission for the Blind, who is president-elect of the National Council of State Agencies for the Blind, expressed his pleasure at being present, and he stayed to attend the entire Convention. Mr. Vines' awareness of and friendliness toward the organized blind augers well for future relations between the Federation and the NCSAB, an organization still recovering from the wounds inflicted

during the attempted takeover by NAC some months ago.

The rest of the morning was occupied by the Rollcall of the States, during which the delegate from each state introduced him- or herself, and in most cases, announced the striking achievements which occurred in the state during the last year.

The first guest speaker, on Tuesday afternoon, was Dr. James Bliss, president of Telesensory Systems, Inc., of Palo Alto, California. TSI is well-known to the blind as the developer of the Optacon, the most widely distributed electronic reading device used by the blind. The limited uses of the Optacon have, we felt, grown out of the reluctance of TSI to involve blind consumers in its development programs in a meaningful way. But this is changing. As Dr. Bliss announced in his talk: "[A] new era of organized consumer involvement is dawning on the entire process, of research and development through deployment and application. You—the organized consumers—should be playing the deciding role in this process. TSI's number-one objective is to be responsive to your needs. Thus we are seeking a close working relationship with the Federation. We are now involved in active discussions with Dr. Jernigan and Jim Gashel in this regard."

Dr. Bliss discussed a number of TSI projects, the most exciting of which is an Optacon adapted for use with the Traffic Service Position System (or TSPS) console, which allows its 86 buttons and indicator lamps and other visual displays to be read by a blind person. The TSPS console is used by telephone long distance operators. The telephone company is presently testing this device, and one blind employee is already handling live calls with it. This opens the prospect of thousands of jobs for blind persons with the telephone company.

A question raised by Sharon Gold of the NFB Teachers Division brought another positive response from Dr. Bliss. The exchange went like this:

Sharon Gold: Dr. Bliss, many teachers of blind children—that is, children who are first

and second graders—are teaching young blind children to use the Optacon in place of learning to use Braille. Would you care to comment on TSI's position on this?

Dr. Bliss: Yes. I think that's a great mistake. [Applause] I think it's extremely important for blind children to learn to read and write in Braille and to do it very well. And I wouldn't want to see the Optacon used in any sense in place of teaching blind children to read Braille.

Ms. Gold: Dr. Bliss, is there some way you could assist in making your position clear to educators of blind children, because there are educators who quote you as saying the Optacon is the next generation: it is the new thing; and it will take the place of Braille. We don't believe that this is so, and you have indicated that you don't either.

Dr. Bliss: Right. I'd be very happy to discuss ways of making our position more widely known. . . . I think it should be clear to anyone that Braille is an extremely important communication medium and shouldn't be reduced at all. If anything it should be increased.

Next on the program was Frank Kurt Cylke, Chief of the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress. President Jernigan introduced him as follows: "Mr. Cylke works with us, and sometimes our relationships are stormy and sometimes they are placid, but we have never ceased communicating. We talk to each other—we talk to each other with some candor about a great number of things. So I want to present Mr. Cylke to you and let him talk on the topic 'Library Services for the Blind: Developments and Prospects.'"

After some introductory remarks, Mr. Cylke spoke as follows:

"In terms of dollars it should please you to know that the Congress of the United States has been, as always, quite gracious with us. In fiscal 1977 we operated under a budget of \$21,800,000. In fiscal 1978 the House of Representatives has agreed to let

us operate at a \$28 million level. That's a \$7 million increase. I believe that your feeling about the interest of Congress in the program may be heightened when I tell you that it is the largest increase for a substantive program in the Library of Congress this year. The only other area which received a comparable sum was furniture for the new Madison Memorial Building. So the library program for the blind and physically handicapped continues to be of prime concern to Congress. Now with the \$28 million we will be continuing to do what we have done in past years. We'll be able to produce, however, more Braille books."

Mr. Cylke reported the following plans for 1978: There will be 375 new press Braille titles, 300 recorded disc titles, 1,000 cassette titles, and 100 flexible disc titles produced in quantities of approximately 1,500 each. The 100 flexible disc titles will be current best-sellers, and these titles will also be distributed on master tapes for reproduction by the regional libraries. In addition, there will be 500 hand-copied Braille titles produced, four copies each. Volunteers will produce 500 titles on recorded discs and 800 titles on cassettes, again in quantities of four copies of each title. There will be 33 Braille magazines and 45 flexible disc magazines. The Division plans to purchase 10,000 talking-book machines, 20,000 cassette machines, and 80,000 machines which play both talking-books and cassettes.

In other areas, Mr. Cylke reported that the Division is interested in the various new portable Braille recorders—machines which will store many volumes of Braille on a single cassette and play it back by means of moving metal Braille cells on the top of the recorder. He also reported that the Division has purchased a Kurzweil Reading Machine which will be fitted with a Grade II Braille output. The machine will be placed in the new Madison Memorial Building for the use of blind readers.

The question-and-answer period following Mr. Cylke's presentation brought up the continuing problem of the Division's subregional library program which divides the

available books among many local libraries. The rationale for this is to provide service to patrons who live near the local libraries and may drop in to select a book. In practice, however, the Division's small collection becomes so spread out that no subregional library can provide an adequate selection of titles. A voice vote of the audience was taken to give Mr. Cylke an indication of the sentiment of the blind toward this program. The vote was overwhelmingly against it.

Next to speak was Mr. Ed Wilkinson, of the Ludwig Candy Company, which cooperates with us on candy sales for fundraising. He announced a new product, a peanut caramel cluster with a higher melting point for sales in warm climates. The retail price is \$1.50, of which 75 cents goes to the local chapter and 20 cents to the NFB national treasury. Milk chocolate candy and almond squares still retail for \$1.00, of which 40 cents goes to the local chapter and 15 cents to the national treasury. Mr. Wilkinson recommended that chapters set up the details of the candy sales before ordering the candy.

Presidential Report

The afternoon concluded with the Presidential Report. After the traditional review of the progress of the Federation during the last year, President Jernigan electrified the audience by announcing his intention of stepping down from office at the close of the Convention. He also reported on changes which have been made to the by-laws of the Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Endowment Fund. It was put to the Convention whether the Federation should continue to make contributions to the fund in view of what had been done. The Convention voted to continue support of the Fund. As is our custom, we reprint the bulk of the Presidential Report verbatim.

President Jernigan: There are things of moment that I want to discuss with you. When you review the work of the past year and project what we have to do for the future, it is a multifaceted task. We've talked a lot in the past year about financing. Let me begin with that and move past it.

I have said to this organization for several years that the mailings of unordered merchandise would come to an end. I think that people thought I was simply crying "Scare." They *have* come to an end. In my judgment this organization will never again be able to mail unordered merchandise. We hope to develop new types of mailings. We have, in the meantime, developed some alternative sources of funding.

Now, if we are not careful, we can be deceived by the current results. The pipeline of the funding is long. Let me illustrate to you what's been happening. I think it will show you something. In 1975, from our solicited contributions—which means the necktie and the greeting card programs—we received less than we did in 1974. At the high, we were receiving 800,000 to 900,000 dollars a year for usable funds. We are not now counting the costs of the merchandise; I'm talking about money actually available to the Federation. In 1975 we received [in round figures] \$633,000 in solicited contributions. In 1976 we received \$557,000. That was last year. But in many ways it was one of our very best years.

This year—and this is what will cause problems if we're not careful—this year, even though we have made no mailings for the Federation, the mailings we made of Christmas cards and neckties last fall lapped over into this year. And therefore, we received, through May, from our solicited contributions, \$249,000. So you see, that's money that has come in this year from mailings we made last year.

However, we did not make a spring mailing. I hope we can make a fall mailing. If we do, since it will be a new kind of thing, we will not be able to make a mass mailing. Such money as we have now and such money as we can get through our own resources will be what we have to live on—at least through next year. Therefore, as opposed to the \$557,000 [last year], we'll get about \$250,000 this year, and that's all we'll get. But next year there won't be that pipeline coming there. Therefore, look at the amount of money I'm talking about.

Now, let's look at some other things. On the plus side, we're beginning to try to build donations. All right. In 1975 we received a total in donations of \$60,000; that is, donations from members or what we can't attribute to solicited contributions and that we can figure came through the state affiliates. Last year we received \$63,000, so you see that that's up; and this year through May, we have already received \$40,000 in donations. Okay, now that shows you a rise. But that's a \$20,000 rise to compensate for almost a—well, better than \$550,000, almost \$560,000 loss that we know we're going to have.

In the PAC Plan in 1975 we got \$7,300—in our Pre-Authorized Check plans. In 1976 they had jumped and we got in PAC Plans \$43,000. In 1977, through May, in PAC Plans we have received \$30,000, and we are at the rate now of better than \$90,000 a year in PAC Plans. And if we're wise, we'll go away from this Convention with better than \$100,000 and climbing. That's still not enough.

That's the financing. We have bequests; we have other things.

But let's talk about expenses for a moment. We've been trying to do what we can to maintain program and at the same time to cut expenses. We had, that we could use, in 1975, a total of \$796,000 at the national level. We had in 1976 total receipts of \$748,000. The problem is, What will we have this year? And my guess is that we have had the bulk this year that we will get. We've already had close to \$350,000 this year, but remember that of that a quarter of a million dollars came through the unordered merchandise mailings that are now gone. If those facts do not speak for themselves, you cannot hear; for they do speak for themselves. I heard a representative of an agency for the blind—namely, the American Foundation—quoted as saying, "You know, don't you, that the NFB is on the rocks and will be broke by the end of the year." Well, we won't be broke by the end of the year, and beyond that, we won't be broke by the end of next year if you and I

do what we ought to do. And that means, however much money you have or how little, that you do something. Not somebody else, not just your chapter, but you. And also me.

Okay. That's something about our financing. But let me go on and say more about that. We have for a long time resisted registering in the various states under their charitable solicitation acts. We have because we had taken the position that many of our opponents in the agencies were trying to use those acts in a discriminatory way to attack us through our fundraising. We know that's true. And that the states had no right to regulate the mails. The facts of life now are, as the lawyers tell me, that we must either not mail or we must register in the states. Therefore, we have now taken steps to register in each and every state in this country. And if we are denied registration, then we will fight that denial.

Okay, that is where we are with financing. I believe that we have the courage, the determination, the belief in ourselves to finance this movement. If we can, then we will have removed the only vulnerable spot we have, and no enemy anywhere in the country can hurt or touch us. But if we can't do this, we will go down the tubes ultimately; it's that simple. . . .

With all the problems, it has been a great year for the Federation. We have continued to send out materials by the tens of thousands of items. During the past year more than 300,000 items have gone out from the Des Moines Office—items which are in print or in Braille or on record or on film, or public service spots, whatever. That is from June 1 of last year through May 31 of this year, so we could tally it. It shows something of our growth.

There are other things we have done during the year that show our strength and our recognition. For instance, in January of this year, I was appointed by the President of the United States to serve as a member of the Advisory Committee to the White House Conference on Library and Information Service, along with some 26 other people

including Senator Javits, Gene Shalit of NBC, and a passel of corporate executives and college deans. No other person connected with the blind or with work with the blind was appointed for that Conference. [Applause] It is, I think, clear that the reason that was done is because of the growing power and recognition of the organized blind movement.

Peggy Pinder and I appeared, as most of you know, on the Today Show in April of this year. [Applause] I know of no other organization of the blind that had such recognition during the year.

We went to the White House Conference late in May and made our presence known. [Laughter] There is an Alternative Report to prove it, and I chaired the Alternative Conference. You will hear more about that Conference tomorrow when Jack Smith will presumably be here.

The Kurzweil Reading Machine is in the field and being tested, and we have raised the funds and financed several models of that as you will see in the financial report. We have spent several hundred thousand dollars which we have raised from Foundations in funding it.

We have had lawsuits during the year, and we have won some of them. Of particular gratification to me and to our Missouri affiliate, I'm sure, and to the members of the organized blind movement—we won the Missouri lawsuit. We said that we would years ago, that we'd fight on until we did, and we did. [Applause]

Likewise in Minnesota. [Applause] The scope of the victory there is truly remarkable. In the early 1970's, the Minneapolis Society for the Blind, which had always taken in people at a dollar a head for members, but in reality had had a small group running it, decided—when the blind wished to join—that the board would throw out all members and not permit anybody except the board to be members. We fought that. They then dug up amendments—which they alleged had been made earlier to their corporate charter—which permitted it. The ruling by the judge says that, in 90 days from

the time of his court order—not less than 90 days nor more than 120, the Minneapolis Society must open its membership, must take in every person who wishes to pay a dollar to come in, must take in people on the very day of the election, must hold an election for a new board, and abide by the decision.

Jim and Maxine Bohrer are members from Wichita, Kansas. Maxine is blind. Social Services wanted to take away their right to be foster parents. Dick Edlund and Ramona Walhof testified in that case. The case is not yet settled, but it has been remanded to the district court for further proceedings, and I think we'll win it. [Applause] You can read about it in the July *Monitor*.

The Jessie Nash case—likewise reported in the July *Monitor*—a case where a blind person in Georgia—at this Convention, by the way—was put out of a stand and it was given to private vendors. We are fighting that. It's the first case that I know of fought in this way under the new appeals procedures. We're fighting it in the courts, and we're fighting it on administrative appeals grounds. And we will win it ultimately, I believe. [Applause] And this is what our money goes for.

West Virginia—you will remember we discussed last year the vending stand case, and you will remember the conversation we had concerning it. We think we have about won that case. Jim Gashel will tell you more about it when his report comes up.

The Chicago Lighthouse—[loud groans from the audience]—I *know*, but we're not through. You see, we never give up on cases. [Applause] A representative of the AFL-CIO is here. You'll hear more about that Thursday, and you'll hear more about the Chicago Lighthouse case later in the week.

We won the Gurmankin case on appeal. We provided material help in that, and you will hear from Jonathan Stein later in the week. We won the Ammeter case in Washington—the right of a blind person to serve on a tribunal, a jury, the rest of it. Again,

you can read about that in past issues of the *Monitor*.

In Tennessee, Terry Carney was qualified to be the new director [of state services]. In fact, he had better qualifications than anybody else. They have a civil service system there, and they brought in a sighted person from outside the state and passed him by. We have instituted a lawsuit.

We have entered as a plaintiff in a civil rights case against HEW, which Jim Gashel will tell you about when he makes his report. We're entering that case.

We have joined the Braille Authority of North America, and we'll have something to say about what happens to the Braille code.

We—by our actions, and we did it—made United Airlines reverse its policy concerning the number of blind persons [who could ride on a single plane]. [Applause] I am pleased to tell you that Continental Airlines has also caved in.

There are other lawsuits. There is the James Upshur case in California—a teacher case; the Michael Zorick case in Florida—a teacher case. We helped another teacher in Connecticut—Ellen Beth Schuman. Again, see the July *Monitor*. In other words, this has been the most active year, and the most successful, in Federation history. [Applause]

In the state of Iowa we have a new insurance regulation which makes it illegal to classify the blind in issuing insurance, and we've already made one company back down and change its policy. The Iowa Insurance Commissioner will be here later in the week to talk about that situation; and we are working to try to get an appearance before the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, to try to make this uniform throughout the country.

What a year we have had. Now, that is where our money goes; that is what we have been doing. You can see the tangible results.

We have other matters to deal with as a Convention. . . . The Board of Directors is up for nomination. The Executive Committee nominates; the Convention confirms.

The Executive Committee nominated, as you will remember, on Monday, two people—Peggy Pinder and Jacob Freid. [Peggy Pinder and Dr. Freid were unanimously confirmed by the Convention. The discussion then moved on to amendments to the NFB Constitution.]

Here is the first article that the Executive Committee discussed yesterday and that the required five states recommend to you for consideration: We have had for a number of years two affiliates in the state of Minnesota. One of those affiliates has now withdrawn its affiliation. We now therefore have only one affiliate in [each of] the states. Most of us, I think, believe that it ought to stay that way. Article III of the constitution spells out the procedure for having two affiliates. We propose to amend Article III, Membership, by deleting all of section D and adding the following new section D in lieu thereof:

“Section D. The Executive Committee shall establish procedures for the adoption of new state affiliates. There shall be only one affiliate in each state.”

It’s that simple. We are ready for discussion on that amendment. [No one rose to discuss the amendment.] I’ve had a motion. We follow the usual procedure: We’ll try voice votes unless there’s dissension. If there’s any difference, then the people on the minority side have a right to a rollcall. [The amendment passed unanimously.]

We have a second amendment. Article V, Powers and Duties of the Convention, the Executive Committee, and the President; section A, Powers and Duties of the Convention, is hereby amended as follows: Delete that sentence which reads: “The Convention shall (when possible) determine the time and place of its meetings.” The reason we propose deleting that is that constitutions ought to reflect what you actually do. Since 1972 that has not been the practice. By Convention vote, the national President has gone out, done the best negotiating he could, conferred with leaders of the organization, the people in that state affiliate, and also the Executive Committee, but had the

power on the spot to make a decision when that seemed necessary to get the best deal. That is the proposal—that we simply delete that sentence to bring it into line with what we do. I would be glad to hear discussion on it. [The amendment passed unanimously.]

The third constitutional amendment which I wish to present to you deals with the powers of the Executive Committee. I wish to present it to you, make a brief statement about it, and then recognize anyone who wishes to speak against or for it.

Article V, Powers and Duties of the Convention, the Executive Committee, and the President; section B, Powers and Duties of the Executive Committee, is hereby amended as follows: Delete that sentence which reads: “In this capacity”—that is, in the capacity of a credentials committee—“it”—which is the Executive Committee—All right, now let me read it to you. Delete the sentence “In this capacity it shall deal with organizational problems presented to it by any affiliate, shall decide appeals regarding the validity of elections in state or local affiliates, and shall certify the credentials of delegates when questions regarding the validity of such credentials arise.” And substitute in lieu thereof the following sentence:

“It”—again, the Executive Committee—“shall have the power to deal with organizational problems presented to it by any member or affiliate, shall decide appeals regarding the validity of elections in state or local affiliates, and shall certify the credentials of delegates when questions regarding the validity of such credentials arise.”

Now, let me say to you—and remember, we build legislative histories on what our amendments mean—so let me say to you what I understand this amendment to mean.

First, I believe the Executive Committee already has the power to deal with organizational problems when National Federation of the Blind policy is violated. The Convention has confirmed that decision on more than one occasion. First, when the D.C. affiliate was reorganized. The President did

not do that. The President took leadership in doing it, indeed; but the Executive Committee met, discussed it, took the action. Two state presidents that lived close by, and an Executive Committee member, went to the affiliate and began the reorganizing. In other words, it was not something that was done surreptitiously or single-handedly. Second, there was a reorganization in the state of New Jersey. That was discussed fully before the Executive Committee last year. I believe the provocations were regarded as sufficiently serious—that it had to be done. The Convention overwhelmingly confirmed that decision and voted that it should have been done.

This year we had a terribly difficult situation in Pennsylvania. I want to say to you what I said yesterday. I think it is necessary to say certain things directly and unequivocally. If I thought that the Federation's life were in jeopardy, I would take in any given instance whatever action lay within my power to take, and trust my fate to the Convention the following year. I believe that a President who will not do that does not deserve to be President. [Applause] Once before—not in this organization, but in the United States as a whole—a great Civil War prevailed. Abraham Lincoln, a President who was mindful of the Constitution, found a state in the process of deciding to secede. He sent troops and locked up the state legislature. I, for one, even though my ancestors fought on the other side, am glad that he did it. That's all I say about that.

I have no army and I have no police force. But to the extent that I have influence or moral suasion, or that I can make it stick in the courts, I will do what needs to be done to protect this organization.

I believe that there are safeguards aplenty, and I believe that the safeguards are: that the Convention has the power to remove any officer at any time, that the Executive Committee is made up of state leaders—it constitutes the collective leadership of the organization, and that the people we elect are answerable back home to the affiliates and also to this body. I believe, in

other words, that the question of whether we can enforce national policy in a state affiliate is as vital as the life of the National Federation of the Blind. We are either a confederacy or we are one movement. [Applause]

I do not believe that this article is necessary to give the power to the Executive Committee and the President to do what has been done. But I think we ought to make clear by our actions today what this organization wants that power to be. Now, as I said, this amendment is up for discussion. I have spoken and given you the reason why the states have brought it to you. I think we ought to hear people on the other side of the question, and that they ought to be given time to make their views known. And then I think we ought to vote, and then whatever the vote, I think we ought to abide by that vote. The chair will recognize people who wish to speak in opposition to this amendment. [No one rose to speak in opposition. The amendment was adopted with only one or two no votes.] Do the people who voted no wish a rollcall of the states? Very well. I take that to be clear and unequivocal. [Applause]

I now have a final topic and related matters to bring to you. What I have to say to you will not be easy to say—and incidentally, I didn't think it would. It is this: that for ten years, I have been President of this organization. This year is the last. [President Jernigan was interrupted by shouts of "No!"] I will make this as brief and as simple as I can. The reason for this is that during the past year—two years—my health has been such that it simply must be. Therefore, as of Friday night, after this Convention is over, and after the Executive Committee meeting, I will no longer be President.

Once before in this organization, under different circumstances, a President resigned. That was Dr. tenBroek. At that time, a transition committee was appointed to deal with a variety of details in the transition. I will appoint such a committee. The people of that committee are Rami Rabby as chairman, Don Capps, Ralph Sanders,

Lawrence Marcelino, and Dick Edlund. They are to get together and make recommendations concerning the transition. I will continue to preside during this Convention. I will continue to preside at the Executive Committee meeting Friday afternoon if there is one called, and will continue as President until this Convention is completely at an end.

I wish to make clear to you that this does not mean that I will cease to be—if I need to say this to you—an active participant in the Federation. I also wish to make clear to you that it does not mean that I will cease to be, to the extent that you want me to be, in the leadership of this organization. But I will not accept a board position of any kind or any office in the Federation. If the time should come when my health permits, then I would consider again seeking the office of President of this organization. [At this point, President Jernigan was interrupted by a prolonged ovation.]

Let me say a few more things to you and then we will adjourn for the afternoon. I want to talk to you a little bit about at least my recommendations concerning succession. The Convention must do what it sees fit to do. But I have always told you that I engaged in active politics in this organization—or if you like, you can call it statesmanship, you can call it either one you want—but I've engaged in active politics; and as long as I'm alive, and as long as I can, I plan to continue to engage in active politics in this organization. [Applause]

I would recommend to you that we make Ralph Sanders the new President of this organization. [Again he was interrupted by prolonged applause.] I want to say a word about Ralph, and I want to say a word about Don Capps, the First Vice-President. I have met with Don Capps and talked with him about this very recently. Mostly, no one has known of this decision because I felt it would be too difficult to talk repeatedly about it. As far as Don is concerned, he has been as long a time friend and ally and supporter as I have had in this organization. Don, as a matter of fact, since I had one

interruption in my board service—Don is the longest-time member of the board. When I think of Don Capps I think of perhaps three words—integrity, dignity, and persistence. [Applause] Don Capps will stay on as First Vice-President in the new administration, whoever is elected. I have talked to him and I know that he will, and that he will do—as he always has done—whatever he can to promote this organization.

I want to say a word about Ralph. Ralph Sanders has been active. Ralph Sanders has grown in this organization. He has only been a member of the board for a few years, but he has worked as hard as anyone could work. Yes, he's made mistakes; who has not? Yes, he has grown and will continue to grow—as I hope we all have. He will make, if you choose to elect him and I hope you will, a good President. I have said to him, "Ralph, if my health should be such that I could run for President next year, then I might well want to do that." And he said, "Well, I hope you will; I hope you will change your mind and not decide not to this time."

But I cannot. I'm not saying to you—I don't want to be misunderstood—that I will be in a position ever to run for President of this organization again. I'm only saying that if circumstances are such that my health should permit, if circumstances are such that you want me to do it, and if circumstances are such that it seems in the best interests of the organization, it would be a matter that could be given consideration. That's all I'm saying. [President Jernigan moved to the subject of the Endowment Fund, but then reverted to the change of administration before ending his report.]

I want to say one more thing to you before we adjourn today. The changing of a presidency in the Federation is a serious business. . . . I want to make in every way that I visibly can—symbolically and otherwise—an affirmation to you of my continued active participation in this movement. I have already given I guess what I thought I could give in the way of money to the Federation. I will, at this Convention,

increase my PAC Plan by \$25 a month. I will do that and continue to do that as long as I am in any financial position to do that at all, and it will have top priority. I will take as much of an active part in this organization as I am physically capable and mentally capable of doing. I will, in every way possible, continue to speak out. I will, in every way possible, continue to participate at state-, local-, national-level organizational activities. I will work with the new President—whoever he or she may be—in transition, in financial matters, in helping with what I know in the way of correspondence, files, other things. I will, in other words, do all that I am capable of doing. I want you to understand that and to understand it fully. I did not take the step that I have taken lightly. I cannot tell you what agony it cost me to take the step at all. I will find the balance of this Convention difficult, as you might imagine. . . .

I want to say to you something in conclusion along another line. I would like to be able personally to answer every letter from all the rank-and-file members and leaders and well-wishers that I receive, and maybe some of my opponents. But I probably won't be able to. Otherwise a good deal of the reason for resigning will be nullified. I therefore say to you, please be understanding if I'm slow in answering your correspondence in the months ahead, or if sometimes I refer it to whatever person becomes President for answering. I will do the best that I can do with it.

I also say to you, please understand if I am unable to attend a state convention when invited or if I do not respond to a cassette. People send me cassettes continually. Usually I have not read them. I have not, not because I didn't want to, but because I simply was unable to do them and also write the letters I've had to write.

The most gratifying experience of my life has been being the President of this organization, and also being a member and one of its leaders. I shall continue, as long as I live, as long as I am able, to be as active as I can.

Wednesday Session

The Wednesday session began with an invocation by the Reverend Howard May. Rami Rabby made a report on the deliberations of the Transition Committee. The committee proposed—and the Convention confirmed the proposal—that President Jernigan be made advisor to the Executive Committee.

The important business of the morning was the election of officers and Executive Committee members. Ralph Sanders was nominated by the Nominating Committee. Several others were nominated from the floor, but they acknowledged the honor and declined it. Thus Ralph Sanders became the new NFB President. In accepting the office he made the following remarks:

“Mr. President, my fellow Federationists, when I came to know the organized blind movement, I came to know a new way of life. And when I came to know Dr. Jernigan, I came to know him as my leader and as my teacher—the only teacher who could show me how to be effective in my new way of life.

“Some years ago I made a commitment to dedicate my life to furthering the cause of the organized blind movement. Since I made that commitment, I have done my best to answer every time Dr. Jernigan has asked us to join him on the barricades. Today I find myself in a new role. I am deeply honored and humbled by the trust placed in me by Dr. Jernigan and by you, my colleagues in the movement.

“In this new role there are, no doubt, many uncertainties which lie ahead. But let me tell you that some things are certain. Our enemies will misassess what has happened here this week. They will be mistaken. The administration of Dr. tenBroek and of Dr. Jernigan will go forward.

“This is a moment of great sorrow. I feel that sorrow as much as anyone. But our history is written, and our future awaits our answer. In the memory of Dr. tenBroek and in the presence of Dr. Jernigan, I pledge

to you all of the energy, talent, and resources which I possess. I am prepared to serve the organized blind movement in any capacity where I may be asked to serve. If, at any time in the future, Dr. Jernigan is able to return as President, I, along with you, will welcome him back with open arms.

"But for now there are challenges to be answered; there are problems to be solved. As I have said, I am prepared to give all that I have to give. I ask of you that you join with me in showing Dr. Jernigan that we are worthy of the challenge. Join me and our banner will advance, our barricades will be secure, our movement shall succeed."

Mr. Sanders' elevation to the presidency left vacant the position of Second Vice-President. Rami Rabby was elected to this office. There were four Executive Committee positions up for election this year. Jonathan May of Connecticut, Sue Ammeter of Washington, and E. U. Parker of Mississippi held three of these positions, and they each were elected to another two-year term. Perry Sundquist, who held the fourth position, was not standing for re-election due to poor health, and John McCraw of Maryland was elected to take his place on the committee. Rami Rabby's term on the committee would have ended next year, but his election to the second vice-presidency left a fifth committee seat open. Diane McGeorge of Colorado was elected to fill this.

Thus, the officers of the National Federation of the Blind for the next year are: Ralph Sanders, President; Donald Capps, First Vice-President; Rami Rabby, Second Vice-President; Lawrence Marcelino, Secretary; and Richard Edlund, Treasurer. The Executive Committee is as follows: Sue Ammeter, Elizabeth Bowen, Robert Eschbach, Jonathan May, John McCraw, Diane McGeorge, Ethel Parker, and Joyce Scanlan. Members of the Board of Directors are Jacob Freid and Peggy Pinder.

The rest of Wednesday morning was devoted to a program on the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals which took place in Washington, D.C., last May. The guest speakers were Jack Smith,

Executive Director of the Conference, and Lisa Walker, professional staff member of the Committee on Human Resources of the United States Senate. This session will be reported more fully in the October *Monitor*.

Thursday Session

The Thursday session began with an invocation by the Reverend Herschel Moore. The first program item was a keynote address by Dr. Jacob Freid, Director of the Jewish Braille Institute of America and long-time member of the NFB Board of Directors. His topic was "The Blind Face the Future," and as is his custom, Dr. Freid delivered a philosophical and eloquent account of the progress of the blind so far—the trials and misconceptions we have faced and the opposition we presently face. He discussed criticisms which are made of the organized blind movement, and after answering them, concluded with the following stirring words:

"Today, the NFB and its leaders and members are the best hope for the future of the blind, to safeguard the gains made in the past battles won, and to advance the struggle toward the year 2000—to the attainment of our objectives of first-class citizenship and control of the destiny of the blind by equal participation and determination of the standards, policies, and programs that affect our existence. Wherever there is injustice, there we will be as front-line soldiers in the liberation war for humanity.

"To Chick [tenBroek] and to Isabelle [Grant], who are no longer with us but whose spirit is here this morning in this room, to our President Emeritus, to our new President, this is our pledge: We will keep the faith; we shall overcome."

Dr. Freid was followed by Jonathan Stein, the attorney who handled the Gurmankin case, the case which affirmed the principle that blind persons may not be denied teaching positions on the ground of blindness and that a prohibition adopted by the Philadelphia public schools against the hiring of blind teachers was discriminatory and unconstitutional. Mr. Stein's talk, "Blind Justice or Justice for the Blind" will appear in

the October *Monitor*.

Mr. Stein was followed by Thomas Carroll, the new Director of the National Center for Law and the Handicapped. Mr. Carroll described the Center as a resource for the handicapped. Some civil rights cases may be handled by private law firms on a charity basis, but the sort of long-term litigation which is usually necessary often has to rely on such resources as the Center. He went on to say:

“We need interaction with the handicapped in terms of your expertise. Lawyers don’t necessarily know anything about the handicapped they’re dealing with; they have to learn. Law associations or groups don’t necessarily have expertise in blindness, mental retardation, mental health, and what have you. We need your association to give us the expertise to promote cases representing these particular handicaps.”

Mr. Carroll concluded by suggesting that a Federationist would be welcome on the board of directors of the Center. After his talk, Mr. Carroll was addressed by President Jernigan, as follows:

President Jernigan: I must tell you that in the past—and you know, you’re new, so you have the fortunate position that we can say these things and not be talking about you. In the past, I for one have been disappointed with the Center that you now head, with respect to its actions toward the blind, and I’ll tell you why. It has made the mistake, which is easy to make, of confusing organizations *of* the blind and agencies serving the blind, and has acted as if they’re interchangeable and as if agencies for the blind could speak for the blind. Now, for the life of me, why this is such a mysterious concept to people, and apparently so hard for otherwise adult, intelligent people to understand, I don’t know. But I’m going to say it to you real quick-like, and it’s this:

If you had somebody who said they wanted to know what the workers in the automobile industry needed, and they said that they had General Motors’ company representatives and Chrysler’s company

representatives, and American Motors’ representatives, and therefore, why of course they can speak for the workers; cars are cars, you know. And the UAW said, What are you talking about; you know we are organized labor. And they said, You guys are just a bunch of trouble-makers. What do you mean? We’ve already got the automobile industry represented here.

Now, you guys in the Center have tended to speak to the agencies, the organized establishments of power in the country—although we’re coming; we’re getting to be a power, too. [Applause]

And incidentally, in a way I underplay that, because we are where the people are. We have more than 50,000 members in this organization; and some of these groups which have a good deal of money in their treasuries have boards of 10, 15, 20, 30 people, and that’s all they represent—just themselves. They speak for the blind. They sometimes have a blind guy or two on the board, or a dozen, who are front people, tokens; and they sometimes have directors who are blind and they’re tokens.

And you have also at least one other organization that, at least in our judgment, is made up of what in other civil rights groups would be called a bunch of Uncle Toms. [Applause] They have a few members, and they jimmy up their membership figures, we’re told, in all kinds of ways. They count people who come and register in one division at the convention, and that same guy may register at three or four other places, and then they count all those as individual members. Now look, we have registered at our Convention 1,806 separate bodies. We are from every state in this country and every locality, and what we’re saying to you is, When you start dealing with what the *blind* want, we don’t expect you to deal with the American Foundation for the Blind, the American Council of the Blind, the National Accreditation Council, the rehab agencies, or somebody else. You can deal with them if you want to; but if you want to know what the *blind* want, we expect you to deal with us.

I want to tell you one more thing, which I hope you won't regard as belligerent, but as a promise. And that is, if you do, we'll work with you. If you don't, and just give us tokenism and act as if you had a system where you had, say, four car companies represented and the union, and therefore the union should have a fifth of the action, then we won't work with you and we'll raise a row about it.

Mr. Carroll: I feel like I'm back in the Association for Retarded Citizens movement. That's the kind of language we used back there—an aggressive type of advocacy. . . . I'm very aware of the distinction between the providers of service, who—while doing a good job sometimes—come with a conflict of interest to promoting the rights of advocates. I'm very conscious of that, and my consciousness of that particular dichotomy will perhaps aid me in working with you. [Applause]

President Jernigan: All I'm saying is that—I guess what led me to this is the past experience we've had with the Center and also your use of the term "agency." We're not an agency. I just had the public library called and had it looked up in the dictionary to be sure of what it said, and it talks about somebody who is authorized to act for others. We're going to act for ourselves! [Applause]

Mr. Carroll: I probably consider people power the greatest type of authorization anybody could look for.

President Jernigan: Okay. I'm with you. And you know, we're not quarreling with what you've said. We want to work with you. You're a brand new director, and it's a new day, and we're glad to work with the Center; but we do want you to be aware of who we are, that's all. You can go anywhere in the whole United States—to the whole world—and find for me, if you can, a group of people this big in Convention assembled who know what they want and where they're going, who are blind or anything else. [Applause]

Following Mr. Carroll's presentation, the Convention turned its attention to discrimination against the blind in the sale of insurance. We had as a guest Herbert Anderson, the Commission of Insurance for the state of Iowa. He was joined by Donald Capps, who works for the Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company. Also present was Domenic Marinello, legislative chairman of the NFB of Massachusetts. The Massachusetts affiliate has been successful in achieving legislation barring discrimination against the blind in the sale of insurance, and the same result has been achieved in Iowa through administrative regulation. This session will be reported more fully in the October *Monitor*.

The afternoon session began with a speech by the Honorable Gilbert Ramirez, Judge of the New York State Supreme Court. Judge Ramirez is becoming a popular as well as a very active member of the movement, and his talk was interrupted often with cheers and applause. The speech, entitled "The Blind Can Judge Facts," will appear in full in the October *Monitor*.

Judge Ramirez was followed on the program by Elmer Smith, Associate Commissioner for Program, Policy, and Planning in the Social Security Administration. Mr. Smith discussed the problems Social Security faces in the future, particularly with regard to funding. He also discussed the SSI program, and obliquely, the modifications to the disability insurance program which we have proposed and which are presently being discussed by the Congress. In the past—and these proposals are not new—the strongest opposition to liberalization of the eligibility requirements for disability insurance has come from the Social Security Administration. Mr. Smith's comments and President Jernigan's reply went as follows:

Mr. Smith: . . . Many of the items mentioned in the [SSI] study group's report [issued in January 1976] have already been adopted. New rules on deeming of income from spouse to spouse and parent to child were issued in January of this year and have been described in the *Monitor*. Congress has ex-

cluded the value of a home from consideration when determining eligibility for the SSI program. Congress also took action to provide presumptive eligibility for blind persons.

It is apparent, however, that many of the proposals of the study group are controversial, and some of them which you might desire to see enacted are costly, and consequently, these have been temporarily, by and large, set aside as larger issues of welfare reform are being explored. Not all students and analysts of the SSI and social insurance programs are in full agreement with the changes proposed by the SSI study group. Economists, for example, who study the SSI program generally do not favor eliminating those policies—such as rules on income—because in their view these rules more efficiently direct SSI funds to the persons who are most in need. . . .

President Jernigan: . . . You alluded to one of our proposals, or some of our proposals. One of them, of course, has to do, as you know, with disability insurance, or the Burke Bill in the House and the Humphrey bill in the Senate—identical bills. You say that some of our proposals, in the opinion of economists, are not desirable because they would tend not to direct Social Security payments—disability payments—to where they're needed most. Precisely; and that's the whole point.

As you know, there was a time in the history of the world when education was provided only to the poor without cost. The rich were expected to pay for it themselves. And therefore, you had two classes of those being educated—if indeed the poor ever got educated—and there was a great stigma attached to any kind of public education because it was correctly regarded as only for the poor. And that carried with it a stigma.

Now, after we got to the place where we said that we'd educate the rich and the poor alike at public expense—it's not a matter of need, it's a matter of a different kind of thing; it's a matter of something that is for society's own good—then the rich people as

well as the poor sent their kids to the public schools more and more. Indeed, some don't; they have the option of not doing so. But it was only after that that we began to develop the great democracies in a true form and began to have the kind of public education system which most of us, I think, no longer regard as having any stigma to it.

Now, without belaboring this, Social Security as it was originally developed was called a social insurance. And insurance is something, ordinarily, that can be purchased and that can then be received if whatever the disability involved, or whatever the condition involved that you're insuring against, occurs. It hasn't anything to do with how much money you have, ordinarily. And as a matter of fact, Social Security went a long way toward recognizing this by saying that if a millionaire retires at 65 he can draw Social Security. It does have something to do with what got to be called "earned income." But in the disability insurance which we propose, we would, as you know, eliminate the earnings test entirely, and we would because we regard Social Security not as a welfare program but as an insurance program. Now, that's a quick summation, and indeed, some oversimplified; but I assume that you are familiar with those arguments.

President Jernigan concluded that he probably could not persuade Mr. Smith to come to our view of the matter, but that we would try to persuade the Congress.

Next on the program was Eugene Flack of the AFL-CIO. Mr. Flack helped with the unionization of the Skyline Center, a sheltered workshop in Clinton, Iowa. This shop, which does not employ blind persons, was the first to be unionized, and this occurred before the landmark NLRB decision last summer which opened the way for organizing without the cooperation of workshop management.

As Mr. Flack pointed out, the unionizing of Skyline Center was possible several years ago because the management of the Center

saw the possibility of benefits to the whole program. Before the union, a lack of work had meant that 30 to 40 workers were putting in seven-hour days and were being laid off three or four times a year for periods of two to three weeks. Since the union, work has increased so that now 70 to 80 workers are employed eight hours a day, and there have been no lay-offs in the past nine months. This is an answer to workshop managers who claim that unionization will mean closing the shops. The handicapped will work as well as regular workers when they are treated as regular workers; and the shops will prosper when profits are not drained away by meaningless "professional" services and the salaries of the "professionals."

Mr. Flack listed other benefits which have accrued to the workers since the coming of the union. There is a formal grievance procedure in place. When work is low, supervisors may not take over the work of employees who are then laid off. Workers receive a week's paid vacation and eight paid holidays a year. Before the union there were no paid holidays. Finally, a worker may take 360 days' leave of absence in order to attempt a career outside the shop; and if he fails, he can return with no loss of seniority. These are some of the benefits of unionization, and readers may judge whether they are worth having.

The last program item on Thursday afternoon was a panel on "The Future of Services to the Blind by State Agencies." It featured three Federationists: John Taylor, Assistant Director of the Iowa Commission for the Blind; Kenneth Hopkins, Chief of the Office of Blind Services in the state of Washington; and James Gashel, Chief of the NFB's Washington Office. Also on the panel was Robert Humphreys, special counsel to the U.S. Senate Committee on Human Resources.

Mr. Taylor and Mr. Hopkins talked about the trend toward conglomerated rehabilitation services and the degree to which this results in paperwork, bureaucracy, and poor service to clients. As Mr. Taylor summed

up: "Is umbrellaism going to prevail or are we going to have identifiable, responsible service units where we know who they are, and where they know who we are, and we know who is at fault when we don't get the services that ought to be there." Mr. Hopkins pointed to the recent creation in Washington of a Commission for the Blind and predicted that services will improve dramatically under the new structure.

Mr. Humphreys showed a clear awareness of the shortcomings of present state rehabilitation programs, including the shortcomings of many rehabilitation professionals. He hopes for an expansion of the federal Client Assistant Programs the personnel of which act as advocates for rehabilitation clients. He also stressed the need for outreach programs as well as services for the severely handicapped rather than for the mildly handicapped clients who are easy to place and therefore look good in agency statistics. Finally, he supported services to young and elderly handicapped persons who may not have an immediate vocational goal.

These auxiliary, non-vocational services were also discussed by Jim Gashel. He described the Comprehensive Services for the Blind bill, which is before the Congress and which would provide such services. The legislation would also lead to the collection of all services provided to blind persons into a single, identifiable unit.

The Banquet

The banquet took place Thursday evening, the largest banquet by far in our history. Spirits were high throughout the evening, which was filled with doorprizes and cheers. John Taylor was the master of ceremonies and Sandy Kelly led the group in song after song. In addition to "Glory, Glory, Federation," we sang the songs which have grown up on the demonstration line—songs such as "Old MacDonald Had a Shop" and "Bringing In the Thieves."

Present at the head table was the former Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration, Dr. Andrew S. Adams. He

brought to us a message from the Secretary of the Interior, for whom he now works on projects involving accessibility to the handicapped. The message was a pledge that we would have access to all national parklands and facilities on the same basis as every other citizen. But it was as an old friend that we greeted Dr. Adams, and the ovation when he was introduced was enthusiastic and sustained, as is our friendship and regard for this man.

The Reverend Howard May presented the Howard Brown Rickard Scholarship to Chester Smalley of Buffalo, New York. Mr. Smalley is bound for Notre Dame Law School this fall.

The Jacobus tenBroek Award was presented by Ralph Sanders. In presenting the award, Mr. Sanders said:

"[Tonight] we recognize an individual who exemplifies the highest standards set by Dr. tenBroek and by Dr. Jernigan—a Federationist for yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It is my honor and privilege to present the Jacobus tenBroek Award to a front-line soldier in the movement, Donald C. Capps. Like Dr. tenBroek's, Don's life is distinguished by his dedication, his courage, and his willingness to make any sacrifice to the organized blind movement. For more than two decades Don has been a leader of the organized blind movement at the local, state, and national levels. When the organized blind movement has been confronted with a new challenge, Don has answered. In 1959, when the organized blind movement faced its greatest challenge, Don accepted the second vice-presidency, a position he filled with distinction until 1968. Again Don answered the call to serve and was elected First Vice-President. He has stood alongside Dr. Jernigan on the barricades with conviction and courage.

"Don's contributions to the lives of the blind of South Carolina through his leadership of our South Carolina affiliate are too numerous to list. Suffice it to note that through Don's leadership, the blind of South Carolina were successful in establishing a model commission for the blind. No better

example of Don's dedication and courage can be found than in his recent efforts to revamp the quality of services to the blind of South Carolina.

"Don's leadership ability and his strength as an individual mark his professional and private life. Through hard work and dedication, Don has reached a level of success in private industry rarely matched by other blind persons. Don now serves as the Assistant to the Vice-President in charge of claims for Colonial Life and Accident Insurance Company. While dedicating his time and energies to serving as a leader of the organized blind movement, Don also has found time to be a leader in his church, a loving husband, and a model father. Few individuals have contributed as much to the progress and independence of the blind as has Don Capps. It is a pleasure to present to you, Don, this plaque which reads: 'In recognition of dedicated service, the National Federation of the Blind bestows its Jacobus tenBroek Award upon Donald C. Capps. Front-line soldier in the movement, he exemplifies the best in us. His life symbolizes courage, devotion, competence, and purpose. We call him our colleague with respect; we call him our friend with love.'"

In accepting the award, Mr. Capps said:

"It is with deep humility that I accept the Jacobus tenBroek Award. However, I'd like to ask my wife Betty to come and stand by me if she would at this particular time. I believe that I would be remiss if I accepted this award alone, as no one ever had a more beautiful wife, a more supportive wife, a more loyal wife than my wife Betty; and I'd like to share this honor and this award with Betty at this time.

"Both Betty and I had the unique and rewarding experience of knowing Dr. tenBroek for a dozen years, and Dr. tenBroek had a profound influence upon my life. The things that I believe in and work for were those things that Dr. tenBroek taught me to believe in. I know, though, as we look out over this great audience tonight, that there are many of you who equally deserve this high honor that has been bestowed upon

me tonight. And thus I not only accept it for Betty and myself, but for all of you who have worked so hard and who will continue to work so hard for the cause of the blind.

"In closing, I would like to state that I will continue to strive to do all in my power to improve the quality of life for all blind Americans as our cause goes marching on."

Friday Session

Friday morning began with a program on "The Federation and the World." After a tribute to Dr. Isabelle Grant delivered by Joseph Varghese, Rami Rabby discussed the continuing saga of our attempts to get the U.S. Department of State to employ blind people on a non-discriminatory basis. That progress of sorts has been made was demonstrated by the presence of Mr. Robert Muñoz as an observer for the Department. He promised to take back to his superiors the views of the Federation.

The Washington Report was next on the program, delivered by James Gashel, Chief of the NFB Washington Office. His report will appear in the October issue.

Next was Robert Sibley, Executive Director of Mississippi Industries for the Blind. He talked about his workshop program, which has systematically eliminated the custodial and demeaning features which plague shop programs in other states. Mr. Sibley's goal has been to make his program as much like private industry as possible, and to move his workers out into private industry. All major decisions and shop rules are made in cooperation with an independently elected Executive Committee of blind workers. No distinction is made between staff and workers in terms of fringe benefits, and all profits go to benefit the workers.

In the three years that Mr. Sibley has been at MIB, the workers' pay has risen from \$1.66 an hour to \$3.57 an hour; and this July, they will receive a raise of from 30 to 50 cents an hour. This is a far cry from other workshops we are familiar with where incompetent management is compensated for by ruthless exploitation of the blind workers. MIB is a large and growing

program, and the result of its equitable and progressive policies is yearly increasing profits and improved conditions for the workers.

The next speaker of the morning was Robert Bynum, Associate Commissioner for Program Operations in the Social Security Administration. Mr. Bynum discussed the affirmative action efforts of Social Security with regard to the blind. This has been an area of contention for years. Social Security hires blind persons as teleservice representatives and, occasionally, as service representatives in district offices. But opportunities for advancement seem to be non-existent, and Social Security has decided that blind persons cannot fulfill the duties of the claims representative position. Mr. Bynum talked about this a good deal. He glorified the service representative position, using phrases such as, "a very special kind of person is required to fill this . . . position," and stressing the tact, sensitivity, and empathy needed for the job.

In describing the job of claims representative, however, he said such things as, "they have to look at and examine evidence," or in the case of disability claims, "personally observe and record the physical condition and behavior" of the claimants. "Look at" and "personally observe" apparently are the operative phrases, and when questioned, Mr. Bynum was unwilling to budge from the position that these responsibilities are beyond the capabilities of a "totally blind person." The response from Federationists made clear to Mr. Bynum, we hope, that we do not accept such beliefs on the part of the Social Security Administration; and while we credit the Administration with having made pioneering efforts in hiring the blind ten years ago, we now expect them to expand the opportunities and fulfill the expectations they have raised.

Friday morning concluded with a panel on the Kurzweil Reading Machine. The speakers were Ray Kurzweil, president of Kurzweil Computer Products and inventor of the machine; Barry Unger, executive vice-president of Kurzweil Computer Products; and Michael Hingson, chairman of the NFB's

Research and Evaluation Committee.

Mr. Unger discussed methods of involving consumers in the development of technical devices, stressing the need for a formal cooperation agreement which begins at a point where consumer input can still play a determining role in the final form of the product. He also discussed reasons for setting up these agreements with organized groups of consumers. As he said:

"Consumers belonging to a strong organization that represents their interests are more likely to trust in the ability of their organization to influence the design and are therefore more likely to express their opinions and confront differences than are unaffiliated individual consumers. . . . The large consumer organization also is likely to represent a spectrum of needs, preferences, and user characteristics and to most accurately represent the true priorities of blind people where there are trade-offs to be made, such as between extra features and lower costs."

Mike Hingson discussed the setting up of the Federation testing of the reading machine and talked about the future placement of the testing models. Presently there are Kurzweil machines at the Iowa Commission for the Blind, Blind Industries and Services of Maryland, and the Jewish Braille Institute of America in New York City.

Ray Kurzweil announced his commitment "to provide at the soonest possible time a high performance reading machine which will be within the economic reach of individual blind persons. . . . in the five to ten thousand dollar range within two to four years. . . . We are designing an advanced high-speed computer which will enable the reading machine to go faster than human speech. We will be implementing an improved synthesizer which will provide a relatively natural speech quality."

"Most importantly," he concluded, "the new model will be the result of the same close collaborative effort that we have jointly engaged in over the past three years."

On Friday afternoon, Federationist Harold Snider, coordinator of programs for the handicapped at the Smithsonian Institution, reported on a very active year of preaching Federation philosophy to museum directors and personnel throughout the country. He discussed new guidelines for programs for the handicapped which are to be published by the Smithsonian, and he described the positive effect Federation input has had on these. Mr. Snider has made available Braille and cassette versions of Smithsonian guidebooks; and as a measure of the audience for these, in the last year 1,500 Braille and 2,000 cassette copies have been sold.

Finally, he urged Federationists who are interested in museum work to contact him for help in entering the field. And he urged Federationists to visit their local museums and report to him on the conditions they find and the treatment they receive. His address is Harold Snider, Coordinator, Programs for the Handicapped, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

The rest of Friday afternoon was occupied by committee reports and the discussion of and voting on resolutions.

The 1978 Convention

The 1978 Convention will be held in Baltimore, July 2 through 7. We will be lodged in three hotels clustered around the Baltimore convention center and all within a block of each other. Room rates will vary slightly from hotel to hotel: singles will be \$10 at two of the hotels and \$12 at one hotel. Doubles will be either \$12, \$14, or \$16. One hotel, which has rooms with two double beds in them, will allow four to share a room for \$18. But at this point, all you should do to make reservations is send a check for ten dollars and your reservation request to: Baltimore Convention, Box 4422, Baltimore, Maryland 21223. The check should be made out to: Baltimore Convention. Send your reservation requests in now, although it may be some months before you receive a confirmation. □

TO EVERY THING THERE IS A SEASON

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BY
 KENNETH JERNIGAN
 PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND
 AT THE BANQUET OF THE ANNUAL CONVENTION
 New Orleans, July 7, 1977

To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; a time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

Thus it is written in the Scriptures, and thus also it is written in the experience of our daily lives. To every thing there is a season. There was a time for me to be President of this organization. That time is no more. A new President now comes to the stage; a new era now begins in the movement. It remains for me to help with the transition and then assume my new role in the organization.

What, then, (at this final banquet on this last night of my Presidency) shall I say to you—what that we have not already jointly discussed and collectively experienced during the past quarter of a century? In articles and speeches, in public pronouncements, and in literally thousands of letters I have set forth my beliefs and declared my faith in the capacity of the blind and the need for collective action. I have said that what we must have is not pity but understanding, not custody but opportunity, not care but acceptance. I say it still—and this, too: I have tried as best I could to match deeds to words—to be not merely an armchair strategist but a frontline soldier as well. There are scars to prove it; enemies to resent it;

and friends to confirm it. Nothing I can say tonight will change the record. In 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.*

As President of the Federation I have always tried to see our movement in broad context—attempting to ease the losses and temper the victories with a sense of perspective. So, on this night, let us talk of history, and look to the future—assessing where we are by where we have been and where we are going.

In 1940, when the blind came to organize, the situation was as bleak as it could possibly be. It was bright enough to create hope and dark enough to make that hope seem impossible. Barely a handful from seven states met on that day in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, to establish the National Federation of the Blind. In the climate of growing agency control and custodialism they felt that freedom would not wait—that they must either act then (regardless of their numbers) or risk losing the opportunity forever. The majority they sought (the powerful movement of the organized blind) might never come unless they had the courage to create it and the dream to believe it. They had that courage—they created that dream—and thirty-seven years later we meet here tonight in our thousands, the strongest force in the affairs of the blind in the nation.

It is only when we look back that we realize how far we have come. In 1940 there was virtually nothing. By today's standards: no rehabilitation, no libraries, no opportunity for higher education, no rights for sheltered shop employees, no training for the newly blinded, no money for the elderly,

no help for the needy, no jobs in federal civil service, no chance in business, no hope in the professions, no state or federal civil rights protection, no encouragement to venture, and no recognition of dignity or worth. There were only the put-downs and exclusions, which made of the blind virtually a subhuman species. It was an atmosphere which broke the spirit and quenched the hope and killed the dream. But that was another time, another generation. Whatever else the National Federation of the Blind may have done, one thing is certain: It has helped us understand and made us believe—in ourselves, in each other, and in our collective strength. It has also taught us to fight. In short, it has brought us to see that we are (in every modern sense of the word) a minority.

Through painful experience we have learned that our problems come not from our blindness but from the misconceptions and misunderstandings of society, not from inferiority but public attitudes—attitudes which we ourselves still too often unwittingly accept and thus do much to make reality. With equally painful experience we have learned that the “professionals” in the very public and private agencies established to aid us frequently (instead of helping solve our difficulties) contribute to them. If (and, of course, there has been much more) the Federation had done nothing else but give us these understandings, it would have more than justified its promise. We are now organized, informed, and on the move. We want no strife or confrontation, but we will do what we have to do. We are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. They tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

With all our advances, we still face serious problems. Let anyone who doubts it look at the Gallup Poll taken in January of 1976. It shows that, next to cancer, blindness is the most feared of all human ailments—more than deafness, more than heart disease, more than mental illness, more than any other possible problem. This contrasts sharply

with our personal experience. We know that, with training and opportunity, we can reduce blindness to the level of a mere inconvenience; but we also know that custodialism, discrimination, denial of opportunity, and put-downs can make of our blindness a veritable hell—as terrible as it has ever been thought to be. This is why we have organized. It is why the National Federation of the Blind exists—to eliminate the fears, disseminate the truth, and bring new hope: to the sighted and the blind alike.

With the expanding hoard of “professionals” in the field—who must write papers, think up additional services, and find something to do to occupy their time so as to keep their jobs, enhance their prestige, and raise their salaries—it is not surprising that traditional fears and misconceptions are reinforced. The ancient myths and prejudices are absorbed by the “professionals” from the public and then fed back again in the name of science and expertise—bolstered by computers, sanctified by technology, and financed by government grants. It is a formidable array, but it is the same old lie it has always been. We are not inferiors, and we prove it every day through our personal lives and individual experience.

The public attitudes about blindness manifest themselves in every facet of daily existence. Consider, for instance, an item as simple as a mail-order catalogue. Such a catalogue (called *Mail-Order USA*) recently came to me with this cover letter:

“I am sure that your members would appreciate learning more about this book which will help make shopping less of an ordeal. The families of a blind person can send for catalogues of articles the person needs, and in the leisure and quiet of his home decide what he wants to buy—no more being stampeded by impatient sales clerks.”

A lot of food for thought is packed into that brief statement. Are the blind so frail that they are more likely than others to find shopping an “ordeal” or be “stampeded” by salesclerks? And observe that it is not the blind person who is expected to

order the catalogue but his family, who will decide for him what he wants to buy—and, you will notice, in restful circumstances: “in the quiet of his home.”

When it comes to cooking and matters related to the kitchen, both the public and the professionals have a field day. An article entitled “Arizona Volunteers and Blind Homemakers” in *Food and Home Notes*, a publication issued by the United States Department of Agriculture, says: “Ever wondered what it’s like to be blind? How would you boil water safely?” Where, one might ask, did the Agriculture Department get such ideas? We are not left in doubt. The article goes on to say: “Arrangements worked out through the American Foundation for the Blind provided expert trainees. Every trainee practiced skills both as a blind learner and as a teacher.”

The Arizona episode is not the only experience of the American Foundation for the Blind with kitchens. The January 24, 1973, *Miami Herald* reported that the Foundation would sponsor six workshops “for sighted rehabilitation personnel, public health nurses, and county home demonstration agents to teach homemaking techniques to blind persons.” Presumably these Foundation-taught personnel would then go into the homes of the blind to teach skills and proper attitudes about blindness. Judge for yourself the level of expectation, the image of blindness, and the probable results from the following statement by Evelyn Berger, home economist, who (according to the article) “introduced local women rehabilitation workers to the challenge of darkness”:

“A blind person’s kitchen should be simplified as much as possible, she said. High storage areas should be avoided. Pans used most frequently should be at an accessible level. If the teacher must leave the room for a minute, leave the person with his hand on something, such as a chair back, for security. When you return, announce your arrival with a ‘Hi, I’m back.’”

Yes, of course, pans should be at an “accessible level,” and “high storage areas should be avoided”—but no more for the

blind than for anybody else. As for the talk about putting the hand of the blind person on the back of the chair for security and cheerfully announcing the teacher’s return, that is pure drivel—the sort of thing that makes sensational newspaper reading, perpetuates public misconceptions, and creates high-paying jobs for dull-witted custodians.

Under the circumstances is it any wonder that the following passage appears in the standard advertising literature for the Mirromatic pressure cooker:

“Braille books for use by sightless people are available through Mirro. These books include the cooking charts, instructions, and 32 recipes. Cooking *procedure* is not given and must be taught by a sighted person.”

Yet, they tell us that there is no discrimination—that the blind are not a minority. But we know who we are, and we will never go back.

Kitchens, with their supposed dangers, seem to hold a special fascination for those concerned with our welfare. Graduate students at the Illinois Institute of Technology recently designed a special kitchen for the blind to (as they put it) help “the sightless achieve greater independence in a vital area of day-to-day living.” The September 16, 1976, *Los Angeles Times* quoted the designers as follows:

“Using the ordinary kitchen can be a disaster for a blind person. . . . All unnecessary kitchen and outside noise [should] be eliminated or reduced through soundproofing since blind people use sound to judge their cooking. The ventilation system [should] be designed to provide sounds necessary for a blind person’s awareness and control. The kitchen design [should] allow the user’s hands to be as independent of each other as possible to allow better preparation for emergencies. A rest area [should] be provided to combat fatigue. The telephone, doorbell, and radio [should] be located in one area of the kitchen. Work areas [should] have different textures and raised edges to provide clues for identification of reference points. Floors [should] have varied textural

surfaces to give blind people awareness of location. Varied shaped or textured handles [should] be used for ease of identification. Sinks [should] have a raised edge with small counter area in front. In addition, the sink might have different depths and/or shapes helpful in food preparation and washing. Burners [should] be placed at rear of [the] stove to provide a safe distance between the user and the heating surface. Storage units [should] be made vertically mobile, eliminating bending and stretching. Electrical outlets [should] be placed at waist level with large metal plates for ease of locating. The blind person should be encouraged to maintain close body contact with his work area to provide an additional clue to his location."

What a kitchen! It would be ludicrously funny if it were not so miserably pathetic and if it had not been seen by millions of readers to confirm and reinforce their notions of our helplessness. And where do you suppose it all came from! Where do you think these graduate students from the Illinois Institute of Technology got their ideas about blindness? How did they learn what we need, what we can do, and who we are? Did they come to the blind themselves (to the largest organization of blind people in the country) to the National Federation of the Blind with its more than 50,000 members? No. As the newspaper tells us, they went to the Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind and the Illinois Institute for the Visually Handicapped. Yet, these institutions (the Chicago Lighthouse and its like) sometimes express surprise that the blind resent them and seek to reform them.

We stand at the gates and demand to be heard. The hour is late, and we will not be turned away. We will speak, and they will listen—in peace if we can, in war if we must. We are simply no longer willing to be second-class citizens. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

Not only are the blind thought to need specially designed kitchens but special apartments as well. Earlier this year, the *New York Times* carried the headline "Apart-

ment Building for the Blind Is Planned for Site in Manhattan." The article said:

"The first apartment building in New York City designed for the exclusive use of the blind will be built on a vacant site on West Twenty-third Street, officials of the Associated Blind, Inc., said yesterday.

"The nonprofit group is planning a 12-story structure with 205 apartments. It will include textured doorknobs so that each resident will know which room he is entering, an emergency call system in each apartment connected to a central security office, and specially designed kitchens and bathrooms. . . .

"New York City is taking the lead in accommodations specially designed and equipped for the blind, said the chairman of the City Planning Commission. . . .

"The apartments will be designed in accordance with new national HUD standards for the blind and handicapped: . . ."

To add insult to injury all of this mumbo jumbo and segregation is done in the name of independence and self-expression. The article ends with a quote from the head of the agency involved: "We believe blind people should have the right to express themselves," he said.

Yes, we reply, but what does self-expression have to do with segregated housing? That is the very ghetto from which we are trying to escape.

As with other minorities segregation of the blind, once begun, does not end with housing. Tom Bozikis recently wrote me as follows:

"In the city of Hammond where I reside, we have what is reported to be the world's largest Sunday School. What disturbs me is that this church, the First Baptist Church of Hammond, segregates those with physical and mental limitations from the rest of the parishioners.

"There is a Sunday School class for the blind, the deaf, the crippled, and the mentally retarded. They also have a separate area in church for the blind, deaf, etc. For example, the blind have a special section

where they sit which is clearly marked and no one else is allowed to sit there. Even in the area of religion we are second-class citizens. Does this mean that the blind will be placed in a special area before the judgment seat?"

Whatever the answer to Tom's question may be, at least one person believes the blind are especially blessed: "Dear Sir," a teacher wrote me a few months ago.

"I can find no criminal statistics in the Annual Uniform Crime Report in which blind people are a part. I have assumed for 25 years that blind people cannot become criminals due to this sight limitation.

"I teach a course in the correction and prevention of delinquency and crime. . . .

"A 26-year investigation of criminal phenomena has confirmed the Bible's statement that, 'if ye were blind ye should have no sin (crime): . . . (John 9:41)' . . .

"If you have any statistics relative to either delinquent or criminal behavior among the blind, I shall greatly appreciate a review of it."

By way of answer I sent him a newspaper headlined "Blind Man Kills Landlady." I don't know what his reaction was.

Speaking of crime, I recently received the following letter:

"Reasonably healthy and handsome and sterile caucasian widower and prison inmate with at least three more years to serve before parole and who is five feet, ten inches tall and who weighs 150 pounds and who was born on 7 November 1934 would like to make the acquaintance of a blind lady of virtually any age who has never been divorced and who is reasonably secure financially. Objects: matrimony and the mutual happiness of two losers.

"If I cannot please you, blind lady, no man can. The need for your being reasonably secure financially is in line with my intention of having a full-time job keeping you happy. We can teach each other much. My sanity and intelligence are matters of public record. What have we to lose?"

With a different twist I received a letter from India not long ago:

"DEAR SIR: I inquired here through the United States Information Services that your Federation deals with blind females in the U.S.A. Please send me the details and photos of the blind females which are unmarried and between age 15 and 25. If some unmarried blind females want to marry with the young Indians (not blind) then I can help them. Some few young Indians want to marry with the blind American ladies. They want to settle themselves in the United States after their marriage."

To be sure, not all of the attitudes about the blind are bad, but the incidents I have mentioned are not isolated exceptions. They occur with monotonous frequency. Consider the following examples:

Mala Rubinstein (of the famous cosmetics firm) after working with the American Foundation for the Blind to (as she put it) "teach unsighted women how to use a simple collection of cosmetics to heighten their self-sense of beauty and psychic security" said:

"Nature compensates the blind by giving them a highly developed sense of touch, knowledge of the contours and planes of their faces, and a supremely sensitive sense of smell that easily distinguishes between delicate nuances of fragrance."

A release from the Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress last fall said:

"Surely no one would dispute the idea that the one music library in the nation serving the entire blind and physically handicapped community should be as good as the best music libraries serving everyone else. There is even some justification for saying that this library should provide *better* music library services than that available to others. It is a well-recognized fact that music tends to have a greater importance to the blind than to the sighted."

When asked by the newspapers why he found it necessary to make demeaning rules for blind vending stand operators, "stipulating that they bathe twice daily, obtain dental

care at least twice a year, eat a balanced diet, and shampoo frequently," Cleo Dolan (the much-publicized head of the Cleveland Society for the Blind) defended himself by saying: "A blind person has to be almost overly cautious, so we set these guidelines." Mr. Dolan's rules covered everything from when the blind should change their underwear to the requirement that they give eight percent of their monthly gross sales to his agency. The federal courts thought so little of the civil rights of the blind that they refused to take jurisdiction. The case (with National Federation of the Blind backing) is now on appeal.

Rowe International, Inc., (a company that sells vending machines) apparently saw no impropriety in the following language in one of its brochures:

"Rowe International, Inc., and our network of over 40 distributor service centers across the country can provide—

"(1) Guidance in developing a profitable vending program.

"(2) Training of nonhandicapped supervisors in administering the program.

"(3) Training of the blind operators to serve and maintain the equipment (by specialists in training the blind)."

Not long ago I received the following inquiry from a student:

"DEAR SIR: I am doing a research paper for a class. I would like to know, how many or what percentage of the blind marry and if any steps are taken to prepare them for this part of life. Also what might be the difficulties or advantages of these marriages?"

I received the following letter from a blind woman in Connecticut:

"I am tired of feeling like a second-class citizen! My most recent frustration occurred when I visited a U.S. Post Office to apply for a passport. I produced my birth certificate, passport pictures, and completed application. Then the crushing blow: 'Please put your drivers license number on this line.' I replied, 'I'm sorry, I don't have one; I am legally blind.'

"Though I had numerous credit cards, professional organizations, a Social Security card as well as a bank identification card with my picture on it, none would suffice. Finally, my friend, who had accompanied me, was asked to fill out an affidavit swearing to my identity which required her name, drivers license, and passport information."

An article¹ published by the American Foundation for the Blind discusses what is called a severity rating scale for multiply impaired children, in which different conditions are given a numerical value according to their severity. Light perception, total blindness, or blindness before age three is given a severity rating of ten. Mental disorders and retardation are regarded as less severe. In the language of the chart:

"An IQ of 49 or below, observed functioning at a level of one half or less of chronological age, trainable, not educable—add eight. Psychotic. Extreme disorder resulting in a loss of contact with reality. Common symptoms are hallucinations and distorted behavior—add eight."

In other words it is 25 percent worse to be blind than to have an IQ of 49 or be psychotic—not to mention that we have a keener sense of touch and smell than others, that music is more important to us, that we must be told when to change our underwear, that we must have nonhandicapped people to supervise us, that our marriage habits are so peculiar as to warrant special study, and that we must have a driver's license or do without a passport. Yet, because of our protests, some people call us militant. In the face of such prejudice, ignorance, discrimination, gross insensitivity, and what can only be called downright insanity the wonder is that we have behaved with such restraint as we have. In the circumstances our conduct has been mild to a fault, and a model of propriety—but let them wait; we are learning.

Not all misconceptions and discrimina-

¹Milton D. Graham, "Multiply Impaired Children: An Experimental Rating Scale," *The New Outlook*, March 1968, pp. 73-81.

tions are as overt as the ones I have just mentioned. In fact, the majority cloak themselves in glib generalities about how independent and capable we are. Al Fisher, one of our members who runs a center for the blind in Spokane, recently sent me a perfect example:

"We were asked [he said] to speak to a high school class on child development here. Very early in our discussion we asked how they felt about blindness and what they thought blind people could do. Their reaction was that blind people were no different from anybody else and that a blind person could do about anything he wanted. Then we started getting into specifics and they were skeptical about a number of areas. I asked them if they would be willing to hire a blind person as a babysitter. Not one, including the teacher, said they would. I'm wondering if they aren't expressing what they think is a popular position, something with form but no substance."

I would say Mr. Fisher sizes it up pretty well. Deep down at the gut level (at the place where people feel and live) most of the "professionals" and the general public still believe we are helpless. It is that simple and that compelling. Some of them don't know it; most would deny it; and a few just plain don't care and don't want to be bothered. But the feeling is there, and it is our biggest problem. Change is occurring, but it is occurring slowly; and it does not happen by itself. It happens only if we make it happen, and that is exactly what we are doing, making it happen—often to the anger and consternation of the professionals, and sometimes to the confusion and bewilderment of the public. But we are doing it. Regardless of the consequences, we are doing it—and we are going to keep on doing it. That is what the National Federation of the Blind is all about. There was a time when we did not know our identity, when we settled for second-class citizenship, but that time is finished. Never again! There are blind people in this room (and sighted allies, too) who will take to the streets and fight with their bare hands if they must to

prevent it. We know who we are, and we will never go back.

On this last night of my Presidency, as I recall the past and look to the future, I think of a letter which symbolizes the spirit of what we are as a movement and speaks to the special relationship we have developed through the years. It was 1974, and we were going to Cincinnati to demonstrate against NAC. Some of the Kentuckians were troubled about the thought of picketing and wrote to ask exactly what they would be expected to do. I wrote to them as follows:

"You say that there 'seems to be somewhat of a reaction to the word, demonstration.' As you know, I grew up in the hills of Tennessee, where the waters ran clear and the loyalties deep. I doubt that any member of the Federation (either in Kentucky or anywhere else) had a more conservative upbringing than I. Picketing, demonstrating, and everything associated with those words were foreign to me. As I said in Chicago in 1972, I had never participated in a demonstration in my life—never, that is, before NAC.

"For that matter, I still regard myself as a conservative citizen, but I cannot stand by and do nothing while NAC remains unreformed and while I have life and strength. NAC represents tyranny to the blind. That means tyranny to the blind of Kentucky, as well as to the blind of other places. It is that simple, and we cannot avoid our responsibility by telling ourselves it does not exist.

"In the days of the youth of our nation a man named Andrew Jackson went down the Mississippi to fight the British at New Orleans. The backbone of his army consisted of Kentucky riflemen straight from the edge of the frontier. They were not radicals or irresponsible hell-raisers, but they would die and be double damned before they would give up their freedom to the British. I am not Andrew Jackson, and today's Kentuckians are not the frontiersmen of the 1800's; but if we meekly bow to NAC, we deserve the second-class status we will

surely get.

"You ask me what is expected of those attending the NAC demonstration, and I reply that we need every man, woman, and child we can get to go to the Barkley Americana May 30 to serve as a visible reminder to the NAC Board members that we are free people and not inferiors—that we are not indifferent, not unconcerned, and not afraid to stand up for our rights. This is what is needed, but I would not want a single person to go to that meeting who is unwilling in his heart to go. We need front-line soldiers; but the army we need must be an army of volunteers, not draftees. We want no person there in body only, he must bring his heart with him, or stay at home.

"You ask what is expected of Kentucky, and I answer that I want you to come as your fathers came—with the spirit that crossed the mountains, settled the wilderness, and fought the British. Do it, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against us."

The Kentuckians came to that demonstration, and so did hundreds of others from throughout the country. So it has been over the years, and so it will continue to be until we achieve our goals. When NAC arrives in Portland this summer and in Phoenix this fall, we will be there to meet them. We will also be wherever else there is injustice and discrimination against the blind or an opportunity to make new achievements—in the halls of Congress, in the state capitol buildings, in the television studios, in the newspaper offices, in the board rooms of the agencies, in the establishments of commerce, in the classrooms of the universities, in the luncheons of the civic groups, and on the streets and sidewalks. We are the blind speaking for ourselves, and no force on earth will stay our progress.

And now I come to the hardest part of all, to my final words as President. For 25

years I have held office in the Federation. Tomorrow night that comes to an end. I believe the new President we have elected will lead strongly and with purpose.

As I leave the Presidency, I go with the knowledge that our future is bright. It is true that there are problems to be solved and challenges to be met—that the public must be enlightened and the agencies reformed; but we are on the road, and we have already come far on the journey. We must see it in perspective. As I said last year, it is not that our situation is worse or our problems greater today than in former times. Far from it. It is only that we have become aware and that our level of expectation has risen. In other days we would hardly have noticed, and even if we had, we would not have been organized to communicate or prepared to resist. We have it better now than we have ever had it before, and tomorrow yearns with promise.

As we make our advance and set our daily skirmish lines, we come to the fight with gladness—not with cringing or fear. We come with a song on our lips and joy in our hearts, for we have seen the vision of hope and felt the power of Federationism and self-belief. We are organized and moving forward. We will be free—and the sighted will accept us as partners and equals.

On this note I leave the Presidency. You have supported and comforted and loved me in a way that few people have ever experienced, and, in turn, I have loved *you*—and have sought with all the wisdom and capacity I possess to lead wisely and well. Together we have built dreams and marched to the battlefield. Together we have constructed a mighty movement and brought better lives to the blind. My brothers and my sisters, the future is ours. Come! Let us join our new President on the barricades, and we will make it all come true! □

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE
THIRTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION
OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

RESOLUTION 77-01

Whereas the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals was mandated by Congress to consult the handicapped themselves to gain the benefit of their personal experience in the future development of programs and legislation to deal with the whole range of problems facing these citizens; and

Whereas the Conference instead turned out to be an embodiment of many of the practices and attitudes which have been a major stumbling block to our progress; namely, the belief that the handicapped do not have the perspective or sophistication to understand and recommend solutions to their own problems, and further, that they need to be protected from the perils of independent contact with the world; and

Whereas these beliefs in the minds of the planners of the Conference resulted in a Conference dominated by the traditional keepers of the handicapped and by so-called "experts" and professionals, and resulted as well in a forum where all the real decision-making was kept firmly in the hands of the staff, and where the handicapped delegates were constantly insulted by an all-pervading and degrading custodialism; and

Whereas the widespread publicity given to these attitudes is likely to further engrain in the public mind an image of the handicapped as helpless and incapable of employment or normal responsibility: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization deplores the negative attitudes of the planners of the Conference which turned consultation of the handicapped into custodialization of the handicapped, and further, that we work to ensure that future conferences of this kind truly involve the handicapped in a meaningful and democratic fashion and gain the benefit of their experience, rather than impose on them the ideas of professionals who have goals which are not our goals and who have had little success in solving the problems we face.

RESOLUTION 77-02

Whereas the overly rigid voting structure and staff domination of the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals precluded free expression and discussion of the views of the handicapped themselves; and

Whereas the day is long past when handicapped citizens are willing to accept such custodial treatment, as demonstrated by the fact that, in the face of attacks and pressure from regressive vested interests, a large number of handicapped delegates withdrew from the regular Conference sessions to hold instead an Alternative Conference where ideas could be openly expressed, debated, and voted on in time-honored democratic fashion; and

Whereas this Alternative Conference produced an Alternative Report which represented the freely voiced and uncensored input of all groups of the disabled; and

Whereas this process produced a document which is more representative of the needs and recommendations of handicapped Americans themselves, and therefore closer to the national assessment of those needs called for by Congress, than is the report being prepared by the Conference staff on the basis of a controlled and suspect computerized voting system: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this sixth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization demands that the staff of the White House Conference distribute this Alternative Conference Report as an official document of the White House Conference and include it intact as part of the Final Report of the Conference now being prepared.

[Note: Prior to the adopting of the preceding resolution, Jack Smith, Executive Director of the White House Conference on Handicapped Individuals, informed the Convention that he had already recommended to the National Planning and Advisory Committee of the White House Conference that the Alternative Conference Report be included as an integral part of the official Conference report and that it be disseminated as widely as the official report.

RESOLUTION 77-03

Whereas Section 7(e) of the Randolph-Sheppard Act, as amended, provides that a priority shall be established for the operation of cafeterias on federal property by blind licensees; and

Whereas, on March 23, 1977, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare published implementing regulations in the *Federal Register* which, with respect to cafeterias, failed to establish a priority, substituting instead a traditional bidding procedure and thus placing blind vendors and state licensees in direct competition with large and well-financed private food service providers; and

Whereas imposition of this bidding procedure contravenes the law and will result in endless conflict over proper assignment of cafeterias on federal property; and

Whereas, by choosing to promulgate a regulation which will, in most cases, operate against blind vendors who wish to manage full-line food service facilities, HEW, and specifically, the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, have again demonstrated a shameful lack of leadership: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization condemns and deplores this callous disregard of the letter and spirit of the law and this indifference to the desire of the blind for additional business opportunities; and

Be it further resolved that the President of this organization file a formal request for appropriate modification of the regulations so that there will be a true priority established as called for in the law, and if this request is unsuccessful, all other steps, including litigation, are hereby authorized; and

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent without delay to the President, to the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, and to all appropriate members and committees of the Congress.

RESOLUTION 77-04

Whereas, on March 23, 1977, regulations were published implementing the Randolph-Sheppard Act, as amended; and

Whereas, although the Randolph-Sheppard program is specifically aimed at blind persons and is designed to assist the blind to lead lives of self-support and self-sufficiency, the new regulations--the most significant regulations in the history of the program--to date have not been published in Braille; and

Whereas distributing these regulations in Braille is legitimately the responsibility of the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped; and

Whereas its failure to distribute these regulations in Braille is inexcusable, but equally inexcusable is its failure to distribute Braille copies of relevant Rehabilitation Act legislation

and regulations, as well as the Randolph-Sheppard Act itself: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization takes the position that government agencies responsible for programs which affect significant numbers of blind persons should provide basic documents, such as laws and regulations, in Braille; and particularly is this true of the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped which should, more than most agencies, have an appreciation for the need for such materials; and

Be it further resolved that this Federation deplores the need to push the Office for the Blind and Visually Handicapped to prepare and distribute relevant laws and regulations in Braille and urges that steps be taken so that the Office, on its own initiative, will provide these documents in the future.

RESOLUTION 77-05

Whereas, now that a regulation is in effect which implements Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, it is crucial that an effective enforcement strategy be developed by the Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; and

Whereas a satisfactory plan must contain procedures assuring promptness in the investigation, resolution, and if necessary, litigation of complaints and must specify a reasonable period of time, not to exceed ninety days, for the administrative complaint process, after which complainants shall have standing to sue in the federal courts; and

Whereas it is also essential that the Office for Civil Rights conduct regular and periodic compliance reviews of recipients to ensure that their policies and practices conform to the requirements of Section 504; and

Whereas it is alleged that budgetary and staff limitations prohibit even adequate enforcement of Section 504 during the present fiscal year and this situation is projected to continue through fiscal year 1978, with the result that no compliance reviews are being scheduled; and

Whereas the Office for Civil Rights has so far chosen the option of allocating its alleged limited resources to a program of "technical assistance," hoping that "voluntary compliance" can be achieved; and

Whereas compliance reviews are a stronger enforcement tool and play a crucial role in the development of policies and guidelines which can then be disseminated, through the technical assistance project: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization calls upon the Carter Administration and the Congress to give budgetary priority to vigorous enforcement of Section 504; and

Be it further resolved that this organization opposes the use of technical assistance in the absence of compliance reviews as an enforcement strategy for Section 504.

RESOLUTION 77-06

Whereas the Honorable Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, has declared his intention to provide technical assistance to recipients of federal financial assistance to enable them voluntarily to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and with the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare's implementing regulations; and

Whereas, despite the fact that the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in HEW has been assigned overall enforcement responsibility for Section 504, several top-level HEW officials seem to

believe that the technical assistance project is somehow related more to rehabilitation and human development than to civil rights and have, therefore, made efforts to place administrative authority over technical assistance outside of OCR; and

Whereas there have also been efforts to assign responsibility for complaint investigation to agencies other than OCR; and

Whereas in civil rights enforcement the emphasis should be on equal opportunity and identical treatment rather than rehabilitation; and

Whereas recipients of federal financial assistance must be taught to regard the new 504 regulations as civil rights obligations rather than rehabilitation responsibilities, for if they do not, there is a very real danger that compliance efforts will be aimed at developing ways of "caring for" the disabled in the custodial sense rather than ensuring their opportunities for equal treatment; and

Whereas it is not a valid assumption that rehabilitation and social services professionals have any expertise in the matter of civil rights for the blind and disabled: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization takes the position that under Section 504, technical assistance, complaint investigation, and all other enforcement activities are the responsibility of civil rights enforcement authorities and not that of rehabilitation, human development, or social services administrators, and that any abdication of this responsibility would be an unacceptable administrative plan.

RESOLUTION 77-07

Whereas research and demonstration projects play a significant role in influencing long-range planning and service delivery to blind persons; and

Whereas almost universally these projects fail to involve consumer participation, operating on the presumption that only the so-called "professionals" know how to conduct research; and

Whereas decisions about federal financial participation in support of research and demonstration projects are customarily made without even the consultation of consumer representatives; and

Whereas these procedures are inconsistent with the new age of consumerism and the demonstrated competence of consumer organizations, such as this Federation, in guiding research projects and evaluating their validity: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization calls upon all agencies and departments of the federal government which provide funding for research and demonstration projects having a potential effect on the blind—especially the Rehabilitation Services Administration and the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped—to assure equal participation of consumer representatives in the project evaluation process prior to awarding grants; and

Be it further resolved that this organization seek appropriate regulations, or if necessary, legislation to mandate that all recipients of federal research and demonstration funds be required to assure equal participation by consumer representatives on policy boards as a condition for receipt of federal grants.

RESOLUTION 77-08

Whereas the Honorable Don Edwards of California has introduced a bill, H.R. 3504, in the 95th Congress, which would amend title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and title VIII

of the act commonly called the Civil Rights Act of 1968; and

Whereas, among its other provisions, this bill would include handicapped persons as a protected class under the basic civil rights law, with specific protections in equal employment opportunity and fair housing; and

Whereas passage of this legislation by the Congress would constitute recognition that the employment problems and housing discrimination faced by the blind should be classed with discrimination encountered by other minorities and should be dealt with by the same enforcement authorities; and

Whereas affirmative action and nondiscrimination legislation protecting the rights of blind persons is limited both in the scope of the legislation and the strength of enforcement efforts: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization expresses its strong support for H.R. 3504 and urges the House Committee on the Judiciary and its Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights to which this bill has been referred to hold early hearings and otherwise take action to approve it; and

Be it further resolved that this support for H.R. 3504 be made known through presentation of testimony and that our interest in positive action on this legislation be communicated by sending copies of this resolution to appropriate Members of the 95th Congress.

RESOLUTION 77-09

Whereas Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, requires all federal agencies in the Executive Branch of the government to submit annually for approval by the Civil Service Commission affirmative action program plans for the hiring, placement, and advancement of handicapped individuals; and

Whereas the legislative history of Section 501 carries the clear intent of the Congress that this section's provisions serve as a mandate for significantly expanding the number of handicapped federal employees and increasing their proportion within the total federal work force; and

Whereas enactment of Section 501 has not materially changed the employment prospects for handicapped persons seeking federal positions, and in fact, there is data which reveals an actual decrease in employment of handicapped persons in major federal agencies since the law was signed nearly four years ago; and

Whereas, even in agencies which on paper have shown the best statistical record of affirmative action, there is often a kind of hidden discrimination which, with respect to the blind, is manifested in placing artificial limitations on advancement, thus perpetuating second-class treatment: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization hereby petitions the United States Civil Service Commission to initiate an aggressive approach, including the promulgation of complaint procedures and other specific regulations, to ensure that all federal agencies meet their affirmative action obligations under Section 501; and

Be it further resolved that this organization calls upon the Congress to exercise initiative and leadership by adopting much-needed amendments to strengthen this affirmative action law; and

Be it further resolved that all steps necessary be taken by this organization to call the attention of federal officials, lawmakers, and the public at large to the continuing discriminatory hiring and advancement practices which exist in most agencies of the federal government.

RESOLUTION 77-10

Whereas the Social Security Administration has employed a number of blind persons as Teleservice Representatives; and

Whereas this affirmative action step, while commendable, has not been matched by an attitude of confidence in blind employees; rather the approach has been one of limiting advancement possibilities, arbitrarily placing a ceiling on career opportunities, wages, and professional growth; and

Whereas many blind persons have entered Teleservice employment, finding later that they are underemployed, but encountering massive bureaucratic and policy roadblocks when they try to secure more challenging positions; and

Whereas this situation has been brought to the attention of Social Security Administration officials, but as yet there has been no satisfactory resolution; instead the response has been that persons without sight cannot serve as Claims Representatives and thus cannot rise through the ranks; and

Whereas this restrictive policy flies in the face of Section 501 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which requires all federal agencies to carry out affirmative action programs for the hiring and advancement of handicapped individuals: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization deplors the negative attitudes of those Social Security officials who have prevented blind Teleservice Representatives from exercising their right to promotional opportunity—a right which they have as citizens and as Civil Service employees; and

Be it further resolved that this organization declares its willingness to work cooperatively with the Social Security Administration to establish an equitable program of employment of blind persons; and

Be it further resolved that if efforts to resolve the present unacceptable conditions do not prove fruitful within a reasonable period of time, this organization authorizes all other steps, including litigation, which may, in the judgment of the President of this organization, be necessary.

RESOLUTION 77-11

Whereas Public Law 95-17 has given the President broad statutory authority to reorganize the Executive Branch of the government on his own initiative with some (but restricted) congressional participation; and

Whereas the efficiency experts and administrative planners are already at work trying to design a streamlined bureaucratic structure; and

Whereas it is the experience of the blind that these efforts to better manage “big government” usually focus on bigness and show a propensity for irrationally lumping programs together which often have little or nothing in common except, perhaps, a related name; and

Whereas human services programs, including especially programs for the blind, have in most instances fallen victim to the “economy of scale” principle which, when misapplied, results in a generalized service delivery system which is unaware of and unresponsive to the unique needs of the blind: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization declares its firm opposition to any reorganization plans which diminish the identity of programs serving the blind at the federal level; and

Be it further resolved that the members and leaders of this organization remain vigilant to guard against the further fracturing of federal authorities administering services to the blind; and

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to the appropriate Members and committees of the Congress and Administration officials with the request that the blind be invited to participate fully in reorganization planning prior to (not after) final decisions.

RESOLUTION 77-12

Whereas the Honorable Gene Snyder of Kentucky has introduced H.R. 4775 in the 95th Congress; and

Whereas H.R. 4775 would establish a program of "comprehensive services for the blind," recognizing that current rehabilitation efforts fail to reach vast numbers of blind persons in need of training, equipment, library services, and other related assistance; and

Whereas the Comprehensive Services for the Blind bill would fill in the service gaps which presently exist and would encourage state rehabilitation agencies to establish and maintain identifiable programs for the blind: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization heartily commends Congressman Gene Snyder for his introduction of H.R. 4775 and urges him to press for adoption of this progressive legislation as a part of any legislation amending or extending the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; and

Be it further resolved that this organization declares its intention to work closely with Congressman Snyder and other Members of the 95th Congress interested in H.R. 4775 to bring its provisions to the attention of appropriate committees of the House and Senate in order that it may be enacted into law.

RESOLUTION 77-13

Whereas Radio Reading Services were originally designed to serve the blind and the print-handicapped by the reading of printed materials not readily available in Braille or recorded form, such as daily and local weekly newspapers, etc.; and

Whereas Radio Reading Services, when used to disseminate propaganda and self-serving agency advertising by a public or private agency for the blind, tend to project a "Big Brother" attitude, thereby talking at, rather than talking to or with, the listener, thus creating a custodial climate of agency control; and

Whereas competent blind persons should (to the maximum degree possible) be employed on the staff of each Radio Reading Service and all positions should have job descriptions; and

Whereas the funding of Radio Reading Services should be kept in perspective so that rehabilitation and library monies are not drained off to the detriment of other phases of rehabilitation and library programs, thereby lessening monies available for other services to blind persons; and

Whereas a committee controlled and selected by consumers should be constituted for each Radio Reading Service and should have policy-making as opposed to advisory powers: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization urges Radio Reading Services to broadcast only books and newspapers not readily available in Braille or recorded form; and

Be it further resolved that the National Federation of the Blind urges Radio Reading Services throughout the country to hire competent blind individuals as administrators, policy-makers, program planners, etc., and that state affiliates of the NFB actively seek these positions for blind individuals; and

Be it further resolved that we advocate that a majority of the members of advisory boards and policy-making boards of Radio Reading Services be consumer representatives; and

Be it further resolved that the amounts of rehabilitation and/or library monies devoted to Radio Reading Services should not be so large that the quality of other rehabilitation and library services will thereby be reduced and that in no case shall expenditures be made for the purpose of distributing self-serving agency propaganda; and

Be it further resolved that the officers of this organization do everything possible (legislatively, administratively, and otherwise) to implement the provisions of this resolution.

RESOLUTION 77-14

Whereas the Honorable Phillip Burton of California has introduced a bill, H.R. 8104, in the 95th Congress, the purpose of which is to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act to provide that blind persons may not be employed at less than the applicable minimum wage under the act; and

Whereas the payment of subminimum wages to blind workers in sheltered workshops and in private industry, which the Fair Labor Standards Act now permits, is inconsistent with the demonstrated capacity of the blind to compete equally with the sighted and works to the detriment of the very rehabilitation principles which are used to justify it; and

Whereas, to the blind who receive subminimum wages and to all blind persons, such second-class treatment in the labor force is anathema: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization commends the Honorable Phillip Burton for introducing H.R. 8104 and urges him to work for its early consideration and hoped-for adoption; and

Be it further resolved that this organization requests early action on H.R. 8104 by the Labor Standards Subcommittee and the full Committee on Education and Labor, since the blind have long been waiting to be free from the shackles of subminimum wages and to march with dignity alongside other Americans in the labor force.

RESOLUTION 77-15

Whereas the 94th Congress acted positively to ensure that recipients of Supplemental Security Income who live in states which add a state supplement to the basic federal grant will now receive annual increases; and

Whereas this effort to assure all SSI recipients the full benefit of annual cost-of-living increases is to be commended, but it is also to be recognized as only the first step since the new law allows for a limit in the pass-through provision by assuring that costs to states for supplementation need not be higher than they were in the preceding twelve-month period; and

Whereas this organization is already on record in support of the full pass-through of SSI cost-of-living increases: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization declares its continued dedication to the principle that all recipients, not the states, should be "held harmless" from the rising costs of living and the corresponding increase in SSI program costs; and

Be it further resolved that this organization make its position known to all appropriate officials of the Carter Administration and to committees of the Congress so that remedial action can be taken at the earliest possible date.

RESOLUTION 77-16

Whereas the 94th Congress enacted legislation directing the Social Security Administration to accept and process on a presumptively eligible basis applications from blind persons seeking Supplemental Security Income benefits; and

Whereas this provision for presumptive eligibility on the basis of blindness was intended to expedite the payment of benefits to all potential blind SSI recipients; and

Whereas procedures now in use by the Social Security Administration effectively restrict the application of the presumptive eligibility provision to persons who "allege total blindness," thus keeping the advantages of presumptive eligibility from all those who are legally blind under the Social Security Act but not totally blind: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this seventh day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization opposes the restrictive, and likely illegal, procedures for presumptive eligibility determination now used by the Social Security Administration in the Supplemental Security Income program; and

Be it further resolved that the Social Security Administration is hereby requested to review these procedures with the organized blind to correct the present inequities.

RESOLUTION 77-17

Whereas the notion that blind persons are unable to function independently and live alone in unadapted housing is false and grows out of the age-old myths of their helplessness; and

Whereas this myth has led recently to a proliferation of projects to construct special housing for the blind, despite the fact that such projects are not only unneeded but are likely to make it more difficult for blind persons to conquer the misconceptions of landlords and obtain regular housing, and are also likely to increase the number of custodial institutions such as Clovernook Home for the Blind where blind persons are treated as patients and kept in unproductive isolation to be preyed on by misguided custodians who very often have not even the excuse of good intentions; and

Whereas the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development has announced a program whereby five percent of federal money used for housing subsidies will be channeled to special housing for the handicapped; and

Whereas, so far as the blind are concerned, this is a wasteful use of federal funds which would be better spent eliminating discrimination in regular housing: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization opposes such segregated housing projects as unneeded and contrary to our interests, and that we take steps to stop the use of public money to support such projects.

RESOLUTION 77-18

Whereas it is the distinct philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind that blind people are independent and thus should be integrated fully into the community on the basis of equality; and

Whereas any attempts by the government, or by the private sector, which seek to segregate the blind in employment, housing, or public facilities are in direct violation of our right

to full participation in and access to the community and business world; and

Whereas the Associated Blind (AB), a New York-based private agency which professes to render meaningful services to the blind, proposes to build an apartment complex for the blind primarily with the financial backing of the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which we support through our taxes; and

Whereas this apartment complex would be fully equipped with such regressive features as textured doorknobs, low shelves in the kitchen so blind people do not have to climb and reach, an arts-and-crafts room, a bowling alley, and a swimming pool—none of which do anything to ensure proper training and opportunity for the blind; and

Whereas such a complex, by its very being, is degrading to the dignity, stagnating to the progress, and devastating to the independence of the blind: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that the necessary steps be taken by the Federation to have HUD withdraw its financial backing of this complex; and

Be it further resolved that the officers and members of the Federation take those steps necessary to ensure that such housing complexes do not become a national trend, including forceful representation to the Office for Civil Rights that any grants of this nature would be flagrant violations of the basic thrust of the Section 504 regulations which embody the spirit of integration through equality.

RESOLUTION 77-19

Whereas in 1967 the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) arbitrarily established a rule forbidding qualified blind persons from having the opportunity to take its examination to qualify for a first-class radio operator's license; and

Whereas in 1971, after suit was filed by the National Federation of the Blind on behalf of Miss Mary Jane Keener, the FCC changed its policy and again permitted blind persons to be examined for first-class radio operators' licenses; and

Whereas, even though this progressive step was taken, the FCC placed a vague and undefined restriction on commercial licenses issued to blind persons which says in part, "This license is not valid at any station not adapted for a blind person"; and

Whereas this restriction hurts prospective blind broadcasters since station managers and chief engineers are not certain that they would be acting within the law if blind persons were hired since no one knows what the restriction means; and

Whereas the technique by which a licensed blind engineer might perform his duties as an employee does not properly fall within the scope of the authority of the FCC, but is more properly an item which should be discussed and agreed upon by the employer and the employee (it being understood that the employing broadcaster would approve only those techniques which would meet sound broadcast and safety practices): Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization calls upon the FCC to remove this restriction from all commercial licenses issued to blind persons (both those currently in effect and those issued in the future); and

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to all FCC members, to key Members of Congress, to the National Association of Broadcasters, and to *Broadcasting Magazine*; and

Be it further resolved that the officers and representatives of this organization be directed to take whatever measures are deemed necessary to implement the changes called for in this resolution.

RESOLUTION 77-20

Whereas the National Federation of the Blind supports fully and unequivocally the right of all blind persons to use the mobility aid of their choice (including but not limited to the use of a dog guide); and

Whereas every state has passed legislation which, though it may differ in phrasing and even quality of rights and privileges of the dog guide user, does make it possible for the dog guide user to travel from state to state without the restrictions of a quarantine; and

Whereas, even though most foreign countries exempt dog guides from quarantining following an examination by a qualified veterinarian, Hawaii, our nation's fiftieth state, still requires a quarantine, arguing that there is the danger of the spread of rabies; and

Whereas rabies shots are given to dog guides on a regular basis as required by most dog guide schools: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization condemns and deplores the abhorrent requirement in the Hawaii state statute that a dog guide be quarantined, thus making it easier to travel to Europe than to Hawaii; and

Be it further resolved that this organization calls upon the Hawaii Legislature to change the quarantine requirements for dog guides in the law; and

Be it further resolved that if legislative change cannot be effected, the President and officers of this organization explore other remedies, including litigation.

RESOLUTION 77-21

Whereas the goals of the National Federation of the Blind have long been the social and economic integration of the blind into society; and

Whereas superior public transportation is an essential ingredient in achieving our goals, since it is vital for us to have the opportunity to move about freely either for purposes of employment, community activity, or recreation; and

Whereas the current deplorable condition of public transportation throughout the nation is impeding our progress toward absolute equality and first-class citizenship; and

Whereas, pursuant to the National Mass Transportation Assistance Act of 1974, many mass transit districts are developing special programs for blind and physically handicapped people; and

Whereas these special programs and services, while having been intended to be of help, in fact have become regressive, custodial, and condescending, and have, in many instances, resulted in discriminatory treatment of the blind and physically handicapped: for example, we are required to pay reduced fares or forced to pay no fare at all; we are forced to sit in special areas; and we are inadequately served by inferior substitutes such as the dial-a-ride systems; and

Whereas, in many regions, transit providers are seeking to reduce or eliminate much-needed services; and

Whereas, almost without exception, consumer organizations including the National Federation of the Blind have not been consulted, and more particularly, have not been placed in positions of responsibility on transit boards and advisory committees as a result of which proper input has not been received from those affected by transit services: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that the National Federation of the Blind support legislation to increase funding to public mass transportation, it being under-

stood that, as we make our views known, we lay emphasis upon the fact that we are in no sense seeking special public transportation for the blind but are seeking superior public transit systems which will be available to all citizens including the blind; and

Be it further resolved that the officers and agents of this organization be directed to pursue the possibility of supporting legislation which would require the providers of mass transit services to open board and advisory committee positions to consumer representatives; and

Be it further resolved that the National Federation of the Blind seek to make the concerns of the blind known to administrators of mass transit agencies and that members of the National Federation of the Blind do all within their power to secure appointments to boards and advisory committees of mass transit agencies so that the views of the blind can be heard.

RESOLUTION 77-22

Whereas the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has promulgated regulations which permit individual airlines to develop their own procedures for carriage of blind and handicapped passengers; and

Whereas the FAA has the responsibility for regulating the airlines but, in the present instance, has allowed the airlines to regulate themselves, thus shirking its responsibility to protect the public trust; and

Whereas the FAA's failure to establish a uniform policy has already caused confusion and resulted in the continuation of discriminatory treatment of blind passengers; and

Whereas the FAA permits airlines to require that blind passengers comply with any "notice requirements" which may be developed individually by any airline, but does not mandate that the blind be informed of such "notice requirements," thus making it impossible to comply with them even if "notice requirements" were desirable, which they are not; and

Whereas, under the new FAA regulations, the blind will be expected to comply with the procedures of all the different air carriers, but there is no requirement that these procedures be consistent, that they be developed with the participation of our representatives, or even that they be made available for public distribution: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization deplors the FAA's abdication of responsibility and formally demands a review and alteration of the present regulations, and that the procedures be developed with the participation of the National Federation of the Blind; and

Be it further resolved that this position be made known to officials of the Carter Administration and appropriate committees of the Congress so that a more positive and rational approach can be developed to ensure freedom of travel on terms of equality for all blind persons.

RESOLUTION 77-23

Whereas the nation's air carriers have in the past had a record of positive attitudes and behavior towards blind persons, treating them as passengers rather than as patients; and

Whereas, more recently, the air carriers' policies regarding blind passengers have been modified, resulting in discriminatory and undesirable treatment of the blind, with such practices as: (1) routine assignment of blind passengers to bulkhead seats, ignoring personal preference; (2) insistence upon pre-boarding of blind passengers; and (3) prohibiting blind passengers from being seated in over-wing emergency exit row seats; and

Whereas these practices are demeaning and custodial, implying that blind people are incapable of independent travel, or otherwise unable to lead normal lives: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization strongly urges the nation's air carriers to review their policies with the participation of the organized blind and reinstate a progressive and positive approach toward blind passengers; and

Be it further resolved that the air carriers are hereby encouraged to work cooperatively with representatives of this Federation to establish a set of procedures which will demonstrate confidence in the innate capacity of the blind; and

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent without delay to the air carriers, the Civil Aeronautics Board, the Federal Aviation Administration, and the Airline Passengers Association.

RESOLUTION 77-24

Whereas the National Federation of the Blind has long worked to achieve educational opportunity for all blind children; and

Whereas integrating handicapped children into the regular classroom through mainstreaming is a growing concern among the nation's elementary and secondary school teachers; and

Whereas teachers complain that they are being given added responsibility without adequate preparation or commensurate relief from their usual teaching loads; and

Whereas a number of teachers organizations have incorporated in their district labor contracts the option for the regular classroom teachers to accept or reject the handicapped child; and

Whereas the American Federation of Teachers has stated in resolution that there should be educationally sound reductions in class size, with up to but no more than two handicapped students in a regular class; and

Whereas it has been demonstrated that blind children have competed at all levels of education under the direction of regular classroom teachers; and

Whereas, when instructing blind children, the regular classroom teacher does not necessarily require additional preparation or training or commensurate relief from the usual teaching load; and

Whereas any such quota system limits the educational opportunity for blind children: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization deplores any quota system which will limit the educational opportunities of blind children; and

Be it further resolved that the officers of this Federation take all appropriate steps to remedy this situation including the initiation of discussions with the American Federation of Teachers and other organizations of teachers and school administrators.

RESOLUTION 77-25

Whereas, on July 6, 1977, Postmaster General Benjamin F. Bailar announced a proposed new postage rate structure; and

Whereas the proposal calls for altering the basic first-class postage rate by dividing first-class mail into two subclasses—business mail and citizen mail; and

Whereas the proposed rate for first-class business mail is sixteen cents for a letter weighing one ounce or less; and

Whereas the proposed rate for first-class citizen mail is thirteen cents for a letter weighing one ounce or less; and

Whereas the Postmaster General proposes to distinguish between these two subclasses of first-class mail on the basis of how the envelopes are addressed; thus letters addressed by typewriter would be classified as business mail and carry a sixteen-cent basic charge, and letters bearing a handwritten address would be classified as citizen mail carrying a thirteen-cent charge; and

Whereas this proposed postal rate structure is on its face discriminatory and particularly discriminatory against the blind, callously ignoring our necessity to use typewriters for personal correspondence: Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this eighth day of July 1977 in the City of New Orleans, Louisiana, that this organization condemns and deplores the unworkable and discriminatory postal rate proposal of the United States Postal Service and declares its intention to fight adoption of this plan, in the federal courts, if necessary; and

Be it further resolved that this position be made known to appropriate federal officials, the Congress, and the media. □

RECIPE OF THE MONTH

by VERA BRANDT

Note: Ms. Brandt is a member of the NFB of Iowa.

EASY PEACH COBLER

Melt one-half stick margarine in an eight-inch pan. Mix together one-half cup flour, one-half cup sugar, one-and-one-half teaspoon baking powder, and one-half cup milk. Add the mixture to the margarine. Drain the juice from a can of peaches and put the drained fruit into the pan. Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees. □

MONITOR MINIATURES □□□□□□□□

□ The NFB of Connecticut will hold its annual convention at the Downtown Holiday Inn in Hartford, Connecticut, on November 12, a Saturday. Rami Rabby will be the representative of the National Office. For fur-

ther information, write to Howard May, R.F.D. 1, West Willington, Connecticut 06279.

□ Joie Stuart, president of the NFB of the District of Columbia, has received a personal achievement award from the United

PRE-AUTHORIZED CHECK PLAN (Instructions on back of the card)

I hereby authorize the National Federation of the Blind to draw a check to its own order in the amount of \$_____ on the _____ day of each month payable to its own order. This authorization will remain in effect until revoked by me in writing and until such notice is actually received.

X
Bank signature of donor (both signatures if two are necessary)

Address _____

We understand that your bank has agreed to cooperate in our pre-authorized check plan on behalf of your depositor. Attached is your client's signed authorization to honor such checks drawn by us.

Customer's account and your bank transit numbers will be MICR-printed on checks per usual specifications before they are deposited. Our Indemnification Agreement is on the reverse side of the signed authorization.

AUTHORIZATION TO HONOR CHECKS DRAWN BY NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

Name of depositor as shown on bank records _____ Acct. No. _____
Name of bank and branch, if any, and address of branch where account is maintained _____

For my benefit and convenience, I hereby request and authorize you to pay and charge to my account checks drawn on my account by the National Federation of the Blind to its own order. This authorization will remain in effect until revoked by me in writing, and until you actually receive such notice I agree that you shall be fully protected in honoring any such check. In consideration of your compliance with such request and authorization, I agree that your treatment of each check, and your rights in respect to it shall be the same as if it were signed personally by me and that if any such check be dishonored, whether with or without cause, you shall be under no liability whatsoever. The National Federation of the Blind is instructed to forward this authorization to you.

X
Bank signature of customer (both signatures if two are necessary)

Date _____

States Department of Labor. Joie is an employment opportunity specialist at the Department, where she reviews discrimination complaints filed by the handicapped. She was also the subject of a profile by the newsletter of the DOL's Employment Standards Administration.

□ Hermelinda Lopez de Miller, of the NFB of Ohio, has been chosen Outstanding Woman of Toledo by the Toledo Jay-C-Ettes. Mrs. Miller is employed by EOPA in Toledo and is working on a master's degree at the University of Toledo.

□ Federationist Jim Radcliffe, of Lincoln, Nebraska, received an award on April 20, 1977, for being the Outstanding Handicapped Employee of Nebraska for this year.

□ The Central Jersey Federation of the Blind is selling NFB patches which can be worn on jeans, jackets, or any informal clothing. To buy these, send \$2 for each patch to Howard Wright, 200 East Broad Street, Apartment 4, Burlington, New Jersey 08016. Also send a self-addressed stamped envelope. Twenty-five percent of the profits

made on this fundraising venture will go to the NFB national treasury.

□ The Student Organization for the Visually Handicapped of Manitoba, Canada, is conducting a survey of the needs of blind persons in Manitoba. If you are such a person or have comments or ideas on the subject, contact the Student Organization for the Visually Handicapped, 206 1181 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G OT3.

□ A device has been developed in Kentucky to aid blind telephone centrex operators. The machine, a small computer, stores up to 10,000 names and telephone numbers. The operator types the name of the person whose number is requested and the machine speaks the number in a mechanical voice. This device was the idea of T. B. Cranmer, director of technical services for the blind in the Kentucky Bureau of Rehabilitation. He was aided by Dr. Emerson Foulke of the University of Louisville. Mr. Cranmer hopes to place a prototype of the machine in Kentucky's state service. It will initially cost seven to eight thousand dollars, but will probably go down in cost as the machines are put into production. □

NFB PRE-AUTHORIZED CHECK PLAN. This is a way for you to contribute a set amount to the NFB each month. The amount you pledge will be drawn from your account automatically. On the other side of this card, fill in the amount you want to give each month and the day of the month you want it to be drawn from your account. Sign the card in two places, where the X's are. The rest will be filled in by the NFB Treasurer. Enclose a voided check with the card, and mail it to Richard Edlund, Treasurer, National Federation of the Blind, Box 11185, Kansas City, Kansas 66111. Your bank will send you receipts for your contributions with your regular bank statements. You can increase (or decrease) your monthly payments by filling out a new PAC Plan card and mailing it to the Treasurer. Also, more PAC Plan cards are available from the Treasurer.

INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT

To bank named on the reverse side:

In consideration of your compliance with the request and authorization of the depositor named on the reverse side, the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND will refund to you any amount erroneously paid by you to The National Federation of the Blind on any such check if claim for the amount of such erroneous payment is made by you within twelve months from the date of the check on which such erroneous payment was made.

Authorized in a resolution adopted by the Board Members of the National Federation of the Blind on November 28, 1974.

THE NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND

BY: _____
Treasurer

THE BRAILLE MONITOR
218 RANDOLPH HOTEL BLDG.
DES MOINES, IOWA 50309

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 581
DES MOINES, IOWA