

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director**REGIONAL OFFICES**

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Editor, 161 Spring Street, N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30303, Telephone (404) 523-2593

DALLAS R. T. McCartney, Editor, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) RI 1-1996

WASHINGTON W. Barry Garrett, Editor, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

BUREAUBAPTIST SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD Lynn M. Davis Jr., Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37203,
Telephone (615) 254-1631

July 18, 1967

625

602

**Baptist Editor Asks Help
For Handicapped Persons**

WASHINGTON (BP)--Marse Grant, editor of the Biblical Recorder, North Carolina Baptist state paper, spoke before a Senate subcommittee here in support of a bill that would make all public buildings constructed in the future with federal funds accessible to physically handicapped persons.

Grant told the subcommittee on public buildings and grounds of the Committee on Public Works that he was appearing before them in a dual capacity--as the father of a physically handicapped youngster and also as state chairman of the National Foundation-March of Dimes.

The subcommittee is considering legislation to require all new public buildings financed wholly or in part with federal funds to be so designed and constructed as to be accessible to the physically handicapped. Sen. B. Everett Jordan (D., N.C.) is chairman of the subcommittee.

The measure was introduced in the Senate by Sen. E. L. Bartlett (D., Alaska) who said he was opposed to amending the bill to require alteration of existing public buildings.

The Baptist editor told the subcommittee that the bill's passage would accomplish "untold good" in federally-financed buildings and "would be an incentive as well as an example for those constructing churches, schools and other buildings."

Grant said that the thousands who would benefit most from the bill "depend on members of Congress to do what is right for them."

The subcommittee also heard testimony from men in wheelchairs representing national organizations for handicapped persons who told of those whose careers and activities are frustrated because of the inaccessibility of most public buildings.

Narrow doorways, restroom facilities, public telephone booths, drinking fountains, long flights of steps--even short ones, were cited as architectural barriers to the person in a wheelchair.

It was pointed out at the hearings that only a nominal cost would be involved in planning buildings with adequate facilities for the physically handicapped.

Sen. Bartlett told the subcommittee that what is required is "a consciousness of the problem, an interest in its solution and a little forethought in the planning stage of the construction."

Grant described for the Senate committee a new college in North Carolina, St. Andrews Presbyterian in Laurinburg, where wheelchair students can move over the entire campus under their own power without meeting any architectural barriers. He said one of the prime goals of the architects and trustees was to make all facilities easily accessible to students with handicaps.

In an interview with Baptist Press, Grant said he hoped Baptist churches planning buildings of any type would keep the physically handicapped in mind. "If the federal government is seriously concerned about architectural barriers, certainly our churches ought to be even more so," he said.

Many changes could be made in existing church buildings without exorbitant costs, Grant continued. "Public awareness is needed and even minor improvements attract attention to the problem," he emphasized.

According to the Congressional Record, 20 states have passed legislation calling for the elimination of architectural barriers in new public buildings. Executive order also requires this for new buildings in the District of Columbia. Similar measures are under consideration in nine other states.

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625

It was pointed out at the hearing that 22 million people would be benefited by the bill. Two million of these are under 21 years of age. One out of 10 families has a child with a major handicap. At least one out of 17 babies born has a major handicap.

Bartlett said that what is important in this issue is the fact that "the physically handicapped are citizens of this country--just as others of us are; they pay taxes and contribute to the economy of the country--just as others of us do; and they deserve access to their public buildings on an equal basis with the rest of us."

"This is all they ask--and it is all I ask," the senator concluded.

-30-

Three Young People
Win Speakers' Awards

626

7/18/67

154

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Three Baptist young people won national "speaker of distinction" awards at the fourth young people's speaker's tournament at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Assembly.

The speaker's tournament tests the youths' skill in public speaking by comparing their speeches with a high standard. The speaker of distinction citation is given when the standard is attained.

Claire Suzzane Mosteller of Georgia won the award with her speech on "My Place...God's World...Today."

Anita Durham of Tennessee and Jim Lovvorn of Texas earned the award with speeches on "Responsible Morality."

Each of the eight participants at Ridgecrest were winners of church, associational, district, and state contests.

The other five state winners in the contest were Judy Thornton, Illinois; Norma Peterson, Indiana; Deborah Dyer, Arkansas; Ken Brunson, Florida; and Damon Ray Talley, Kentucky.

The tournament was directed by Carlton Carter, young people's consultant in the Training Union department of the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

-30-

Maryland Pastor Named
To Training Union Staff

627

7/18/67

84

NASHVILLE (BP)--Harold Bergen, former pastor of First English Baptist Church, Frostburg, Md., has joined the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention as family ministry consultant in the Training Union department.

A native of Nebraska, Bergen received his bachelor and master of arts degrees from Bob Jones University in South Carolina and a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Bergen has served as minister of education at three Maryland churches and pastor of two others.

-30-

URGENT CORRECTION

Please correct the last graph of story mailed July 14 (Friday), headlined "Hunger in America Called National Emergency:" The key word: "no" was omitted, and it changes the whole meaning of the sentence, reversing the idea.

Please make last sentence of story read: He replied, "There is no doubt in my mind that we've given you an accurate picture." (Adding words "no" and "my".)

--Baptist Press

626-627