

Over the past 2 years, I have shared the unhappy experience of parents of a 3-year-old girl, who may have a serious visual impairment, or she may not; sometimes she acts as though she can see considerably, and at other times as though she cannot see at all.

This little girl may be severely mentally retarded or she may not be retarded at all—she will accurately repeat what is said to her, but she seldom initiates an idea, or responds to a question with the expected answer.

This little girl may be severely crippled in her legs or physically weakened in some other way, although no crippling condition is apparent—still, though the little girl is more than 3 years old, she crawls from place to place—she has never taken a step unaided.

The little girl I speak of and her family live here in the Washington area. I am familiar with the sad searchings of the little girl's parents for answers, for intelligent, informed help with the difficulties of their unfortunate child.

I am acquainted with their fruitless task of trek from doctor to clinic to hospital to institution—but their questions remain unanswered; the little girl remains unhelped in her desperate need.

Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind endorses and supports section 152 of H.R. 6230 which is directed toward increasing the number of persons entering the field of special education—as teachers, psychologists, therapists, social case workers, research specialists.

It is not merely enough to determine the educational needs of handicapped children, to devise educational programs, to develop specially—required tools and equipment, new methods and ingenious techniques—

For all this will be lost, wasted, and unavailable in the education of the handicapped children if teachers in substantial numbers, if supportive personnel in all specialties, cannot be induced to prepare for entry into the special education field, cannot be persuaded to seek employment in special education programs once they have acquired the requisite training.

Section 152 of H.R. 6230 as Federal law, will make it possible to accelerate and expand present efforts to recruit college and university students, general education teachers, and other general education specialists to enter the special education field.

The National Federation of the Blind endorses and supports section 155 of H.R. 6230, to include Interior Department operated schools for Indian children, and Defense Department operated schools for overseas dependents within the scope and benefits of title VI of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

It is our belief, Mr. Chairman, that physically and mentally defective Indian children, that physically and mentally defective children of military and Defense Department civilian personnel stationed at bases outside of the United States, have the same right to receive and accordingly should receive the same equality of educational opportunity provided through special education programs available and afforded to American children resident in the United States.

The National Federation of the Blind endorses and supports section 156 of H.R. 6230, to expand existing instructional media programs to include all handicapped children.