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WASHINGTON, D. C., April 14 -- U. S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today urged creation of a President's Commission on the handicapped "to recommend ways private and public programs and funds can better serve the total needs of the handicapped person at the time and place he most needs help."

In his first major Senate speech, Dole said, "For many of our nation's 42 million physically, mentally and emotionally handicapped persons and their families, our efforts and money have helped them to better help and be themselves."

"Despite unparalleled achievements in medicine, science, education, technology and public attitudes," he added, "we in America are far from the half-way point of assuring that every person with disabilities can become as active and useful as his abilities will allow."

In his speech, Dole pointed out:

- * Less than 1/3 of the nation's children requiring special education receive it.
- * About 25 percent of America's disabled have not received rehabilitation services and do not know where to seek such help; at least five million persons may be eligible.
- * Only 1/3 of America's blind, less than half of the paraplegics and "only a handful" of persons with cerebral palsy who are of working age are employed.
- * Serious financial problems plague many handicapped persons and their families.
- * Other major problems include architectural barriers and insufficient health care facilities and recreation opportunities at the time and place the handicapped person needs them.

"As a result," Dole said, "some handicapped persons are disillusioned and disaffected. Some, who lack opportunity and encouragement to use their abilities, may be consigned to a life of despair and dependency, which can cost taxpayers as much as \$3500 a year for one person."

Pointing out the goal must be ^{to} secure "maximum independence, security and dignity for more handicapped persons," Dole said a presidential commission, composed of representatives of the public and private sectors, "could provide an overview of what we are doing and how well, and how we can do better."

An "overview" by the commission, Dole said, "could provide better help and more hope to the handicapped, aid Congress and the Administration in guiding programs and allocating comparatively limited funds and help private groups conduct their efforts more efficiently and effectively."

"Our handicapped citizens are one of our nation's greatest unmet responsibilities and untapped resources," Dole said. "We have done well, but we must do better."

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In his speech, Dole outlined eight areas a presidential commission might include for review and recommendation:

- (1) INCOME TAX DEDUCTIONS AND/OR OTHER FINANCIAL AIDS TO EXTEND ECONOMIC RELIEF TO MORE HANDICAPPED PERSONS AND THEIR FAMILIES "Many are aboard an endless economic treadmill trying to make ends meet and without further adding to the taxpayer's burden costs for complete care," Dole noted.
- (2) DIRECTORY OR CLEARINGHOUSE TO HELP INFORM THE HANDICAPPED PERSON AND HIS FAMILY OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE "There are many helpful handbooks and information sources available. Most are not comprehensive and are more accessible to professionals than to the handicapped who really need the help."
- (3) REMOVAL OF ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS "It's just as easy to build and equip buildings so that the handicapped as well as the unhandicapped person can use them. The federal government is doing this now for federally-financed structures.... Many persons cannot secure employment or fill their leisure hours because their disabilities bar use of the facilities.
- (4) MORE DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH CARE ON A REGIONAL OR COMMUNITY BASIS "This is a tough, but priority matter and one which cannot be accomplished quickly or inexpensively. But we must begin to move toward more adequate health facilities and personnel which serve each person at the time and place he needs them."
- (5) IMPROVEMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE HANDICAPPED.
- (6) BETTER SERVING THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE HANDICAPPED "Both the person and the nation suffer when any educable child -- handicapped or unhandicapped -- does not receive an education."
- (7) INCREASED DIALOGUE AND COORDINATION BETWEEN PRIVATE, VOLUNTARY GROUPS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO AVOID MULTIPLICITY AND DUPLICATION "What's at stake is not the pride or reputation of the agency, group, or the specific program. What's at stake is the future of the handicapped person with his own abilities and potentialities."
- (8) MORE ATTENTION ON THE FAMILY OF THE HANDICAPPED PERSON "What services can we provide to better help the other family members whose own lives and resources are deeply affected by the presence of a handicapped person?"