

Bill Goodwin

Famous 1954 Photograph

Detailed description of a photograph taken on March 1, 1954, in which House Pages are bearing a stretcher carrying wounded Michigan Congressman Alvin Bentley down the steps of the Capitol to a waiting ambulance.

Interview recorded October 20, 2005

GOODWIN:

I remember—I remember that there were a lot of photos taken. In fact, the Capitol Police, they were requesting that no photos be taken. Well, in circumstances like that, it was pretty tough to keep the press from clicking their cameras, and can't blame them, of course. But they said, "No photos, no photos." And I remember Bill Emerson—in fact, in that famous photo there, that's what Bill's doing there. He's got his mouth wide open, and he's pointing, and he's yelling at the photographer, "No photos!" And that's exactly what he was yelling. I'm just standing there with—one of the guys is saying, "Leave it up to Bill to carry the full load." And Bill Emerson, he was talking about me. See, I got both my arms on it [the stretcher], I was carrying most of the load of it.

JOHNSON:

Right. {laughter}

GOODWIN:

And Emerson, he's just touching it, but we just teased each other about that. But that's what that was about. Bill was hollering at the photographer not to take photos, but you can't, it's like trying to stop a charging elephant. You can't do that.

JOHNSON:

Right.

GOODWIN:

We were coming down the Capitol steps, and of course it's freedom. I was told later on that that was...that photo was the most repeated photo of 1954, or the most well known photo of 1954.