

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1995 3

## Bible-toting Tar Heel makes FBI's list

■ **Convicted child abductor Rickey Allen Bright is the newest fugitive on the FBI's list of the ten most wanted – and the only one from North Carolina.**

*The Associated Press*

CHARLOTTE – The Bible-toting man presented himself as a minister and would visit Baptist congregations in the North Carolina mountains, cautioning children to avoid a life of crime.

Rickey Allen Bright seemed soft-spoken and earnest.

Now he is considered among the most dangerous men in America.

A convicted child abductor, Bright is the newest fugitive on the FBI's list of the ten most wanted – and the only one from North Carolina.

"With your help, we can get this guy," John Morley, the FBI's special agent in charge in Charlotte, said Monday. "He's badly, badly wanted."

Bright joins accused murderers, drug traffickers and the two Libyans wanted in the bombing of Pan American Flight 103, which killed 270 people over Lockerbie, Scotland, The Charlotte Observer reported today.

The FBI said Bright, who is active in the Baptist church and frequents country music bars, has said he will not be captured alive. He has been prone to fits of anger and "should be considered armed and dangerous with suicidal tendencies," the agency said.

He is wanted on a federal charge of interstate flight to avoid prosecution for an Oct. 8 crime in the rural

Wilkes County community of Hays.

During the night, someone slipped into a trailer along a lonely gravel road where a 9-year-old girl and her mother were sleeping, the FBI and sheriff's officials said. The man stole the girl without waking her mother, then raped her over the course of the four hours she was held in a 1987 Chevrolet Cavalier.

The man released the girl only after she promised not to tell anyone, authorities said. Her mother found her wandering along a country road about a mile from her trailer.

"Imagine the worst thing that could happen to a little girl. It happened," Morley said.

Bright was convicted in 1979 for the kidnapping and attempted rape of a 7-year-old girl he abducted from a Gastonia bowling alley where he worked. He was sentenced to life plus 15 years, but was paroled in January.

Bright was born Jan. 13, 1954, in South Charleston, W.Va. The FBI described him as blue-eyed with thinning reddish-brown hair, white, 5 feet 10, and weighing 175 pounds.

People who recognize his picture should call authorities and not try to approach him, the FBI said.

Bright was particularly dangerous because his unthreatening appearance led people to let down their guard, Wilkes County Detective Mike Farrington said.

"If you didn't know his background, you'd think he was a good neighbor," Farrington said. "People who didn't know him didn't see any harm in him."

After fleeing North Carolina in October, Bright traveled to eastern Kentucky and Charleston, W.Va., the FBI said.