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SBC World Mission Gifts Top \$50 Million, But Miss Budget

NASHVILLE (BP)--For the first time in history, Southern Baptists passed the \$50 million mark in gifts to world mission causes through the denomination's Cooperative Program and through designated offerings to SBC mission causes.

In spite of the record gifts, the denomination fell short of its overall Cooperative Program budget goal by \$932,926.

Gifts through the Cooperative Program unified budget totaled \$27,925,302 for the year--enough to pay in full the 1970 SBC operating budget goal, the balance of \$650,000 due on 1969 capital needs, plus \$117,074 on 1970 capital needs. A total of \$28,858,119 would have been needed to meet the overall goal.

The 1970 total budget goal included \$27,158,119 for operating funds of the 19 SBC agencies receiving Cooperative Program funds; \$650,000 in capital needs to finance building programs approved for 1969 but not distributed that year; plus \$1,050,000 in 1970 capital needs.

Under a clause in the 1971 SBC Cooperative Program budget adopted by the convention in Denver last June, any 1970 capital needs funds not distributed in 1970 will automatically be added on to the 1971 goal as a second priority to 1971 operating budget distributions. Another clause indicated that if 1970 receipts did not meet expectations, the SBC Executive Committee might revise downward the 1971 budget goal.

In its September meeting, the Executive Committee voted to delay until its February, 1971, meeting consideration of whether or not to revise the 1971 budget distributions after SBC seminary presidents had urged a delay in any decision. The implication was that if receipts for 1970 were down, the budget goal for 1971 might have to be revised in February.

The final tally indicated that Cooperative Program contributions for 1970 increased 1.79 per cent over 1969 gifts--a dollar increase of \$491,862.

John Williams, financial planning secretary for the SBC Executive Committee, said that the increase was even less than expected because of a "bad December" in Cooperative Program giving.

During the month of December, Cooperative Program gifts were nearly six per cent less than December of 1969. During the last month of 1970, Cooperative Program contributions were \$2,041,985 compared to \$2,171,888 in December of 1969, a decrease of \$129,903.

Porter W. Routh, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee, said that all Baptists should rejoice that the total mission gifts have gone over the \$50 million mark for the first time.

"The disturbing fact is," Routh continued, "that we finished 1970 still owing \$932,726 on 1970 capital funds approved by the convention."

Routh said that statistical projections indicate that if 1971 gifts increase at the same rate as 1970 contributions, the SBC "will complete 1971 with a \$2 million deficit in capital funds, a \$722,000 deficit in total operating funds, and even a \$191,000 deficit in the 7.32 per cent safety valve voted by the convention."

"A great new concern and surge in Cooperative Program gifts will be needed in 1971 to avoid these deficits and make possible continued growth in missions and education," Routh said.

While Cooperative Program gifts during 1971 increased nearly half-a-million dollars over 1969 contributions, gifts to designated causes during the year stayed at virtually the same level as 1969 designations--up only .03 per cent.

Designated gifts for 1970 were \$22,305,174 compared to \$22,297,719 in 1969, an increase of \$7,455.

Of the \$50 million in total gifts, more than \$41 million went to support Southern Baptist home and foreign mission efforts.

During 1970, the SBC Foreign Mission Board received a total of \$30.8 million, including \$14.1 million through the Cooperative Program \$16.7 million in designated offerings, most of it through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

The SBC Home Mission Board received \$10.8 million during the year, with almost equal amounts--\$5.4 million--coming from the Cooperative Program and designated offerings.

The total amount reflected in the report from the SBC Executive Committee included only funds given to support national and worldwide SBC mission causes, and did not include amounts given to local and state mission efforts by Southern Baptists.

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Home Mission Board Appoints
Three As Career Missionaries

1/5/71

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ATLANTA (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board here approved the appointment of a married couple as missionaries, and upgraded an associate missionary of several years to career missionary status.

Mr. and Mrs. Alton Harpe were appointed directors of student work at the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. Fermin Whittaker, a pastor for six years, was promoted to career missionary.

The Harpes are student work veterans having served at the University of Miami for four years and Florida State University six years. Harpe, a native of Columbus, Ga., attended the University of Georgia, Columbus Branch, and graduated from Howard College (now Samford University) Birmingham, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Mrs. Harpe is a native of Phenix City, Ala. She was employed for several years by Southern Bell Telephone Company and has recently been Forward Program secretary at First Baptist Church, Tallahassee, Fla.

Whittaker is a native of Colon, Republic of Panama. In his seventh year as pastor of Primera Iglesia Bautista Del Sur (First Southern Baptist Church), Pico Rivera, Calif., he was previously lecturer in Spanish at the Toronto Baptist Seminary, Toronto, Canada and pastor of Churchill Baptist Church, Palgrave, Ontario.

A graduate of Toronto Baptist Seminary he also holds a bachelor of arts degree from California Baptist College, Riverside, Calif. Whittaker has been a missionary associate since 1969.

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