



BAPTIST PRESS

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SBC Cooperative Program Gifts Reach \$21.1 Million

NASHVILLE (BP)--Gifts through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program unified budget reached \$21.1 million in August, with an additional \$2.7 million needed to reach the total budget goal in one remaining month in the SBC's 1972 fiscal year.

In order to meet the denomination's \$23.7 million budget goal for the fiscal year ending September 30, Cooperative Program contributions during September must increase 19 per cent over September, 1971, gifts, according to Porter W. Routh, executive secretary of the SBC Executive Committee.

So far during 1972, contributions through the Cooperative Program have increased an average of 5.19 per cent over gifts for the same period in 1971, Routh reported.

"We always hope to reach the goal, but we believe we will reach all of the \$21.8 million operating budget, the \$97,360 balance due on the 1970 capital needs and the \$1,050,000 due on 1971 capital needs," Routh said.

He added that if the 5.19 per cent increase for this year continues during the month of September, the denomination should be able to provide a good part of the 1972 capital funds.

The 1972 fiscal year budget totals \$23.7 million for the nine month period of January 1 through September 30. The convention formerly was on a calendar fiscal year, but changes this fall to an October 1-September 30 fiscal year.

The \$23.7 million goal includes \$21.8 million in operating funds for 19 SBC agencies and organizations, plus \$1.9 million in capital needs for building construction. Most of the capital needs section is payment for construction authorized by the 1970 and 1971 budgets, but unmet by SBC receipts.

In addition to the \$21.1 million received through the SBC Cooperative Program for the first eight months of the fiscal year, Southern Baptists have given \$24.8 million to designated specific mission causes over-and-above the budget goal.

Designated contributions have increased \$2.1 million over the \$22.6 million received during the same period in 1971, compared to the increase of \$1 million in Cooperative Program receipts for the same period. Designations were up 9.48 per cent compared to the 5.19 per cent increase in Cooperative Program contributions.

Grand total contributions for the first eight months reached \$45.9 million, an increase of almost \$3.2 million or 7.46 per cent over the \$42.7 million received for all SBC causes during the same period in 1971.

August was a slow month, compared to giving trends for the August of 1971, the report indicated. Cooperative Program and grand total mission gifts for August were virtually the same as contributions in these two categories for August, 1971, while designated gifts for August decreased in 1972 compared to 1971.

Cooperative Program receipts during August totalled \$2.3 million, an increase of almost \$17,000 or .71 per cent over August, 1971. Designations totalled \$305,883, a decrease of almost \$4,000 or 1.22 per cent compared to designations in August of 1971.

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About a dozen of the 33 Baptist state conventions sent in less during August of 1972 than they did in August of 1971, several of them with nearly 50 per cent decreases. Two states sent in no funds during August of 1972.

The financial report includes contributions to Southern Baptist Convention national and world-wide mission causes, and do not reflect amounts given to support state and local missions efforts.

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Lines are Drawn in Battle
On Aid to Parochial Schools

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By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Roman Catholic cardinal for the first time in the nation's history testified here before a congressional committee asking for public aid for parochial schools.

Terence Cardinal Cooke, archbishop of the New York City Diocese, spoke in behalf of the United States Catholic Conference in favor of H. R. 16141, a bill that would provide "tax credit" for parents paying tuition in private schools.

The conference is the agency of the Catholic Bishops of the United States which represents the religious, educational and social services the Catholic church provides for the 48 million Catholics in the nation.

Appearing with the cardinal were Bishop William McManus, director of education of the Archdiocese of Chicago, Alfred Scanlan and Lawrence X. Cusack, Washington Attorneys, and Monsignor Joseph O'Keefe, secretary of education of the Archdiocese of New York.

In addition to the cardinal's testimony, the Catholic panel submitted a 19-page statement arguing for public relief for the financially stressed parochial schools of the nation.

The hearings were conducted by the House Committee on Ways and Means of which Rep. Wilbur D. Mills (D., Ark.) is chairman. The first series of hearings on the bill were held the week of August 14 prior to recess for the Republican Convention and the Labor Day weekend. The hearings resumed September 5-7.

During the first week of hearings many religious, educational and civil liberties spokesmen testified both for and against the proposed "tax credit" plan.

John W. Baker, associate director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, opposed the proposed aid to private schools.

Among those opposing the position of Cardinal Cooke in the second round of hearings were representatives of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the National School Boards Association, the American Federation of Teachers, the American Civil Liberties Union, and a coalition of eight national Jewish Organizations.

This display of such powerful forces on both sides of the question of public aid to the nation's parochial schools is indicative of the strength of the drive, both on the federal and state levels to establish new public policy concerning private schools.

Earlier in a speech to the Michigan Association of nonpublic schools, Rep. Gerald R. Ford (R., Mich.), House minority leader, declared "that federal aid to nonprofit nonpublic schools has a better chance of congressional enactment today than at any other time in the 24 years I have served in the House of Representatives.

"The reason I say this is that we have the President of the United States with us, and we have the chairman of the tax-law-writing House Ways and Means Committee in our Corner," Ford said.

In addition to the nearly \$1 billion of proposed aid to private schools, the bill provides for \$2.25 billion of aid to public schools through federal contributions to state education budgets.

Ford, in his Michigan speech said, "I understand why Hugh Carey (Democratic congressman from New York, a co-sponsor of H.R. 16141) tossed in the equalization aid for public schools.

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Garey figures it would improve the chances of the nonpublic school tax credit legislation if he packages with it a massive shot of federal funds for the public schools."

Closely related to the "tax credit" plan to aid parochial schools are the approaching election in November and hearings to be scheduled later on tax reforms.

Both major party candidates for the presidency have declared their intention to find ways to aid the parochial schools, an obvious move acknowledged by all political observers to woo Catholic voters.

In addition, the private school interests in many congressional districts are putting intense pressure on candidates for Congress to favor some form of aid to parochial schools. A similar situation exists for many candidates for state legislatures.

This explains in part why many Congressmen have sponsored similar legislation and have appeared at the hearings in favor of the bill. During the entire series of hearings no congressman spoke against aid to parochial schools.

Repeatedly during the hearings, those who objected to "tax credits" to parents paying tuition in parochial schools, were asked to explain the difference between this kind of help to taxpayers and deductions allowable on income taxes for contributions to churches. The Congressmen wondered aloud why the church-state separationists objected to one form of aid to tax payers but did not object to the other.

The House committee on Ways and Means will probably schedule hearings on a proposed tax reform bill either late this year or early during the 93rd Congress next year. This bill, among other things, proposed a repeal of many tax privileges now enjoyed by churches, their agencies and those who contribute to churches and charitable institutions.

Most Washington observers think that neither the tax credit plan to aid parochial schools nor the tax reform proposal will be acted on this year. This means that 1973 will be the big year on church-state issues involving parochial schools and tax benefits enjoyed by churches.



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