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**Nixon Vows to Seek Tax Credit
Legislation in Next Congress**

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Richard Nixon declared in a nationwide radio address that he is "irrevocably committed" to seeking tax credit legislation in the next Congress for parents of children attending nonpublic schools.

"In my judgment, the Constitution does not prohibit tax inducements to encourage and maintain diversity in American education, and we are prepared to fight to guarantee that that diversity remains," the President pledged.

"I believe that parents of school-age children should be provided the freedom to choose a religious-centered education for their children, if they desire, and I am determined to help guarantee that freedom of choice."

In a 30-minute political speech on "The Federal Responsibility to Education," President Nixon devoted several minutes to discussing the "special needs" facing nonpublic schools today and the "cost" to the nation if these schools fail.

Among the losses if these nonpublic schools fail, the President listed these: (1) the loss of diversity, (2) the elimination of freedom of choice for millions of parents, and (3) the new burden on the crowded public school system.

Another loss, the President added, "would be an irreplaceable and precious national asset--schools that have provided millions of American children with a moral code and religious principles by which to live.

"Nonpublic schools have served this nation and people faithfully and well by maintaining and continuing the religious traditions and beliefs that are so integral a part of our American heritage," the President said.

The tax credit proposal, endorsed also by the Democratic presidential candidate, Senator George McGovern, was reported out of the House Ways and Means Committee a few days before Congress adjourned for the campaign. It was too late in the session for a vote to be scheduled in the House.

Since the Senate Finance Committee has not held hearings, action in that body before adjournment would have been virtually impossible.

In brief, the bill approved by the House committee would allow a tax credit for tuition paid by a parent or a guardian to any private nonprofit elementary or secondary school. This tax credit would be allowed to cover actual tuition costs up to a maximum of \$200 per dependent.

In August during two weeks of hearings before the House Ways and Means Committee, John W. Baker, a spokesman for the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, opposed the bill. Baker charged that such aid to parochial schools would violate both the principles of religious liberty and of sound public policy.

When the Baptist Joint Committee met in semi-annual session in October, it adopted a statement requesting the Committee on Ways and Means to "refuse tax credits out of consideration to the American tradition of religious liberty and separation of church and state."

Now, with both presidential candidates committed to the tax credit proposal, plus the backing of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, the 93rd Congress is likely to place tax credit legislation high on its list of priorities, according to informed sources here.

David M. Gardner, Former
Standard Editor, Dies

DALLAS (BP)--David M. Gardner, editor of the Baptist Standard of Texas from 1944 through 1954, died in his sleep Oct. 25 at his home here. He would have been 86 on Nov. 12.

He had suffered a series of strokes more than a year earlier, and spent most of his time asleep. He could not speak, and was losing his eyesight.

Funeral services were scheduled at 2:00 p.m., Friday, Oct. 27, at First Baptist Church of Dallas where he was a member.

Officiating was W.A. Criswell, pastor of the church, assisted by E.S. James who succeeded Gardner as editor of the Standard, and John J. Hurt, the current editor. Both Gardner and James are listed as editor emeritus on the Standard masthead.

The Baptist Standard, the largest of the 33 Baptist state papers in the Southern Baptist Convention, enjoyed a period of unprecedented progress during Gardner's editorship, according to Hurt.

"He was strong in his editorial expressions and as quick to criticize Texas Baptist leadership as he was to speak against those outside the state," Hurt said. "He never evaded an issue."

Inheriting a circulation of 100,000, Gardner had almost tripled the circulation by the time he retired.

Total assets had increased from \$156,000 to more than \$1 million during his editorship. He purchased the downtown Dallas property where the Standard offices are located. He also started an endowment fund for the Standard, obtaining \$100,000 from a brother as initial funds.

Born in Milan, Tenn., in 1886, he and his family moved to Texas in 1894. He was a graduate of Baylor University, Waco, Tex., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

Although he planned to enter the pastorate when he left the seminary, L.B. Scarborough, then president at Southwestern seminary, enlisted him as a "seminary evangelist" to preach in Baptist churches and raise funds for the seminary endowment.

Later he became pastor of Baptist churches in Clarendon, and Memphis, Tex. He was pastor of Ensley Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., for nine years, and First Baptist Church, St. Petersburg, Fla., for 16 years. He left St. Petersburg in 1944 to edit the Standard.

He told the board of directors for the weekly newsmagazine that he would retire in 10 years and in 1954 yielded the responsibilities to James.

Since 1944, he and his wife, Sadie, had made their home in Dallas. Mrs. Gardner had been in good health until about a year ago, but is now confined to her home.

Other survivors include two daughters, Mrs. Earl Neelands of Jackson, Miss., and Mrs. Ned King of Dallas, a member of the Southern Baptist Convention's Executive Committee; one sister, and one grandson.



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