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**Carter Emphasizes Importance
Of Church-Related Colleges**

WASHINGTON (BP)--President Jimmy Carter took a strong stand here on the place of church-related colleges in American life, especially in the teaching of moral values.

Carter met in the Roosevelt Room of the White House with 20 representatives of 17 major denominational groups involved in Christian higher education. Ben C. Fisher, executive director of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Education Commission, coordinated the group, which represents about 75-million church members in their sponsoring denominations--and about 800 colleges and universities of the total of 3,000 higher education institutions in the nation.

"It is important that you use me and my name as an endorsement from the people of our country for the contribution that has been made, is now and will be made to our nation," Carter told the group.

He pointed out that "when I was governor in Georgia, I tried to meld together public and private colleges for the common good. I also served as a trustee of a small Baptist school (Norman College at Norman Park, Ga.) which was forced to close for financial reasons.

"I have long believed in the place of church-related schools...they have not always been understood or appreciated by the public," Carter declared.

The President authorized release of a statement drafted by Fisher and the other 19 denominational executives in Christian higher education. It was drawn from statements Carter had made about private education while he was governor of Georgia.

The statement said, "Our church-related colleges and universities have made contributions to our society far beyond that for which they have received credit. Imaginative steps must be taken to preserve our various institutions of higher learning and I am particularly concerned about our church-related colleges."

The statement also stated: "In endorsing such support we are further undergirding our pluralistic system of education in which there is a place for a religious view of man, his nature, his destiny and a commitment to religious values. One of the greatest needs of our society today is finding new ways to develop responsible moral education. The church-related college by its very nature should find in this an unique opportunity."

It added: "The church-related college also has an opportunity to espouse in a new and fresh way the dignity and worth of the individual, and to instill in the student the social sensitivity and the moral courage which good citizenship requires, and which this country and the world so desperately need."

The President met with the 20 denominational educational executives immediately after his historic session with Menahem Begin, prime minister of Israel.

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Fisher, speaking for the educators, expressed gratitude to Carter for three specific things: "Your goal of restoring integrity and probity in public life and in government; your stand on human rights at home and around the world" and "your deep concern for both public and private education."

The educators also extended to President Carter an invitation to be the major speaker at a National Congress on Church-Related Higher Education, to be held sometime in 1978 or 1979.

While waiting to speak with President Carter, the 20 educators conferred with Elizabeth Abramowitz, assistant director for education for the White House Domestic Policy Office.

She asked the group to share with her office suggestions for legislation related to higher education. She also asked for informal and structured "recommendations and reactions" on all educational matters before the government.

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Tax Credit Legislation
Sidetracked For Now

By Carol Franklin

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Tax credit for college tuition was killed for this session of Congress when an amendment to the Social Security appropriations bill attached by U. S. Sen. William V. Roth Jr. (R-Del.) allowing a \$250-a-year credit was severed.

The conferees had disagreed on the tax credit provision, thereby holding up passage of the Social Security bill. Under administration pressure to get the Social Security legislation passed before adjournment, the controversial tax credit provision was finally dropped.

Roth vowed he would renew his attempts to provide tax relief for parents of students in nonpublic colleges when Congress reconvenes next year. Hearing has been scheduled in January for a similar measure allowing tax credits for all nonpublic school students introduced by U. S. Sens. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-N.Y.) and Bob Packwood (R -Ore.)

The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has opposed all attempts at the federal and state level to provide tax credits for tuition. In August 1972, the committee testified against a similar measure before the House Committee on Ways and Means.

The testimony offered at that time opposed giving tax credits for tuition "because it is contrary to the traditional American principle of religious liberty and the constitutional separation of church and state, and because it would be an unwise and divisive public policy."

"What must not be lost sight of is that though the tax credits would be provided for parents or guardians of students in private nonprofit schools the purpose of the act is to aid schools rather than parents and to give substantial governmental aid to private school systems," the testimony continued.

It further stated, "There can be no escape from the conclusion that such infusion of public funds into religious education benefits the sponsoring church and that the net result is that the taxpayers generally are forced to join in subsidizing religion. It is our position that this is not the proper function of government in the American system."

The Baptist Joint Committee also participated in a friend of the court brief in 1972 asking the U. S. Supreme Court to rule that "tax credit for tuition paid by parents to nonpublic schools" is a violation of the establishment clause of the First Amendment of the Constitution.

The 1972 case challenged a New York law which provided for a tax deduction for parents paying parochial or nonpublic school tuition. The court overturned the New York statute on the grounds that "the effect of the aid is unmistakably to provide desired financial support for nonpublic, sectarian institutions." Critics charge tax credits would go primarily to middle and upper income families rather than lower income ones. It has also been suggested that schools might raise tuition in response to this legislation. Supporters deny the charges,

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