



# BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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March 1, 1978

78-30

## Wood Mounts Attack On Tuition Tax Credits

By W. Barry Garrett

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Baptist leader in Washington is calling on citizens of all faiths to mount a massive protest campaign to members of Congress against what he said is one of the most destructive tax proposals in the nation's history--the income tax credit plan for tuition paid to private elementary and secondary schools as well as to colleges.

James E. Wood Jr., executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, charged that "the bill is a threat to the basic guarantees of the First Amendment" to the U. S. Constitution and that "its consequences on the future course of American public policy are incalculable."

"Now is the time to express opposition to this plan of federal aid to parochial and other nonpublic schools," Wood said. He urged an immediate flood of communications to every member of the House of Representatives and of the Senate.

Wood is not alone in his opposition to the tuition tax credit plan. He is joined by the Carter administration, the Washington Post, the National Education Association, Americans United for Separation of Church and State and other forces dedicated to a strong public school education policy and to preservation of religious liberty and separation of church and state.

The Senate Committee on Finance, chaired Sen. Russell B. Long, D.-La., voted 14-1 to attach a tuition tax credit provision as a substitute for the provisions of H. R. 3946, a bill dealing with the rate of duty on certain coarse improved and unimproved wool.

Under the committee provision, refundable education tax credits would be allowed as follows:

--Effective Aug. 1, 1978, tuition payments for full-time vocational and college undergraduate students would be eligible for a tax credit amounting to 50 percent of the tuition payment up to \$500 (a maximum of \$250 per student).

--Effective Aug. 1, 1980, the tax credit would also apply to tuition payments for elementary and secondary students (parochial and other private schools). In addition, the amount of the credit would be increased to 50 percent of the tuition and fees up to \$1,000 (a maximum credit of \$500 per student).

--Effective Aug. 1, 1981, the tax credit would be extended to tuition paid for graduate and part-time students.

Recognizing that the proposal might run into constitutional problems on the grounds of separation of church and state, the committee amendment also provided for expedited court review of the constitutionality of the education tax credit.

Known as the Roth-Moynihan-Packwood Bill for Tuition Tax Credit, the proposal is advanced on the grounds that it will give income tax relief to middle-income taxpayers and will provide substantial aid to parochial and other private nonpublic schools. Similar proposals have passed the Senate on six previous occasions, but the House of Representatives has consistently turned down the idea of income tax aid to education.

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The Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs has opposed tax aid to the religious education programs of the churches on the ground that it violates separation of church and state and coerces the taxpayer into religious participation. The committee has testified at congressional hearings this year and in previous years against income tax credits for tuition as a form of government payment for religious education.

Wood points out that "the amount allowed for a tax credit would actually become a reimbursement from the federal government for one-half the tuition" up to \$500, which would be spent by the taxpayer for each member of the family in private schools.

Although the Carter administration is pledged to constitutional aids to private and parochial schools, it adamantly opposes the current Roth-Moynihan-Packwood tax credit plan.

Joseph A. Califano Jr., secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, in a statement issued on the action of the Senate Finance Committee, said, "The proposal stands the American tradition of public education on its head."

Describing the tuition tax credit under consideration by Congress as "a devastating blow to public school education in this country," Califano said the plan would provide "about four times as much money per private school student as it provides per public school student."

The new tax credit formula would provide parochial school students with \$500, plus \$55 to \$75 per student now received under existing federal programs, plus the tax deduction of contributions to churches for use in parochial schools, Califano said. "This compares with only \$128 per pupil for public school students," he continued.

The "Washington Post," in a lead editorial, opposed the tuition tax credit plan as one that "threatens to do incalculable damage to this country's public schools." The Post charged that the plan would be a "multibillion-dollar bonanza" for schools "serving every kind of ethnic and social separation--by race, by class, by national background."

The Post described the plan as a "bum bill" which would, for the first time in the nation's history, swing enough tax money into private schools to change fundamentally the balance between them and public schools. "The subsidy is big enough to start a rapid growth of every kind of private school," it said.

National Education Association President John Ryor has called on his members to convince Congress that the tax credit proposal is elitist, regressive, bad public policy and in violation of the constitutional principle of separation of church and state.

Andrew Leigh Gunn, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, denounced the Roth-Moynihan-Packwood tax credit plan as a violation of the First Amendment and as destructive of religious freedom. He especially called on black churches to join in the fight against tax credit legislation, because "black children would be the real losers" in the explosion of private schools.

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SBC Contributions  
Continue To Rise

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3/1/78

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Five months through the 1977-78 fiscal year national Southern Baptist receipts have yielded \$23,529,146 in Cooperative Program unified budget contributions and \$47,682,025 in total contributions.

The Cooperative Program figure, consisting of undesignated contributions for world missions needs of Southern Baptist Convention agencies, is running \$1,787,893, or 8.22 percent ahead of the same point last year. The total contributions, including the Cooperative Program amount and another \$24,152,879 in designated gifts, is \$4,037,545, or 9.25 percent ahead of last year.

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During February, the fifth month in the fiscal year, Southern Baptists contributed \$4,750,338 in national Cooperative Program funds--5.92 percent ahead of last year-- and \$20,254,520 in total contributions--10.42 percent ahead of last year.

Southern Baptist Convention agencies are working on a \$55,080,000 operating and capital needs budget for 1977-78 and an additional challenge budget of \$8,320,000 for unmet missions needs. The SBC has also voted to set a goal to double total Cooperative Program contributions in the states and nationally by 1982 and then double twice more by the end of the century to fulfill the SBC's Bold Mission Thrust goal to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to every person in the world by the year 2000.

The national Cooperative Program portion amounts to about one-third of what state Baptist conventions receive from more than 35,000 Southern Baptist churches. The churches send eight to 10 percent of their contributions through state conventions for Cooperative Program causes.

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2nd World Conference On  
Baptist Men Set April 5-9

Baptist Press  
3/1/78

INDIANAPOLIS (BP)--Speakers and participants from around the world will be featured at the Second World Conference of Baptist Men, which meets April 5-9, under the theme "God Working Through You," in the Indianapolis Convention Center.

Advance registrations, which must be made through Baptist World Alliance headquarters in Washington, indicates an attendance of about 4,000 persons from 60 countries, according to Stephen Steeves of Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, who serves as chairman of the BWA Men's Department, sponsor of the conference.

Program personnel, according to program chairman Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., include Ambassador Francis Dennis of Liberia; BWA president, David Y.K. Wong of Hong Kong; Jimmy R. Allen of San Antonio, Texas, president of the Southern Baptist Convention; Steeves; Cooper; Erling Oddestad of Sweden; Grand Ole Opry star Jerry Clower of Yazoo City, Miss.; Roberto Laredo of Chile; Samuel Prato of Venezuela; and Isaac Malafa of Cameroon.

Others include Gardner Taylor, pastor from New York; Manuel Scott, pastor from Los Angeles; John W. Williams, pastor from Kansas City, Mo.; Mrs. Marie Mathis of Waco, Texas, president of the BWA Women's Department; Robert Denny of Washington, general secretary of the BWA; Robert C. Campbell of Valley Forge, Pa., chief executive of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.; Glendon McCullough of Memphis, Tenn., executive director of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission; Dale Moody of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville; Dr. Robert Hingson of Pittsburg, founder of the Brothers Brother Foundation; Jack Stanton, director of the Institute of Evangelism, Southwest Baptist College, Bolivar, Mo.; Aldo Broda, director of the (Southern) Baptist Spanish Publishing House, El Paso, Texas; Norman Cheung of Hong Kong, chairman of the Men's Department, Asian Baptist Fellowship; Samuel P. Gomez of Venezuela, vice president of the Pan American Union of Baptist Men and former president of the Venezuelan Baptist Convention; and Ernest K. Martin, president of the Cameroon Baptist Convention in Cameroon, West Africa.

Gene Sutherland, minister of music at Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville, will direct a music program for the conference, which includes around-the-world talent.

Soloists include Jimmy Smith, baritone, Louisville; Robert Bradley, baritone, Nashville, Tenn.; Russell Newport, tenor, Springfield, Mo.; and Galo Viteri, tenor, Brazil.

The famous duo of Robert Hale and Dean Wilder will appear on the program twice. Wilder is a professor of music at William Jewell College in Liberty, Mo., and Hale is an opera singer with the New York Civic Opera Association.

Registration information is available from the Baptist World Alliance, 1628 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

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**How Do Missionaries Survive  
In Hunger Racked Nations?**

**By Michael Duduit**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--How does a Christian missionary survive in the midst of extreme poverty and starvation?

Jim McKinley has wrestled with that question for 20 years--since going to the Asian nation of Bangladesh as a Southern Baptist missionary in 1958. The tiny country received world-wide attention in 1974 and 1975 as a series of natural disasters led to mass starvation.

McKinley, currently on furlough and enrolled as a special student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, says the situation is better today, thanks to a string of good crops and an absence of natural disasters. Yet he says, "bloated stomachs of children are the accepted thing...small arms and small legs. People die daily of malnutrition."

Such a situation is difficult to accept and McKinley says "There is a degree to which we all suffer from culture shock. I don't think a Christian could ever grow totally accustomed to the situation. It gnaws at you at times."

Admitting it may sound insensitive, McKinley explains that he retains his sanity by attempting to "tune it out."

"You have to," he says. "You couldn't live 24 hours a day in the midst of poverty if you were emotionally overwhelmed all the time. If you're going to stay there you have to control your emotions."

Sometimes the controls break down, "when you give in and you are emotionally overwhelmed. But you know if you're going to stay there you've got to get up and go." Despite the horrible conditions in which the people live, he believes that Bangladesh is an "ideal place for a Christian missionary to serve."

Missionaries there are experiencing unprecedented freedom to preach and to minister to the people's needs. McKinley says his most recent term on the field was "by far the most exciting and to me the most productive."

"For the first time in decades we are seeing response to the gospel. Dozens are being baptized--not in the hundreds as yet," McKinley says.

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Louisiana College  
Given \$100,000

Baptist Press  
3/1/78

PINEVILLE, La. (BP)--Louisiana College has been awarded a \$100,000 grant from the Frost Foundation of Shreveport, La., college president, Robert L. Lynn announced.

The grant, which will be given over a four-year period, will fund a new management information planning system designed to help the college in its long-range planning process. The new system will assist the college in human resource development, institutional planning, decision making and institutional research.

Lynn said the school's capital funds campaign has raised more than \$1.4 million for the college.

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