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88-20

Record January Turns
CP's Downward Trend

N-10

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptists contributed a record \$15.5 million to their national Cooperative Program budget in January.

The big January total reversed a two-month downward trend in the Cooperative Program and brought the budget back ahead of the pace for the same period last year, announced Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the Southern Baptist Executive Committee.

The \$15,514,367 January receipts topped the previous monthly total -- about \$13.1 million in January 1987 -- by 18.63 percent, Bennett said. It brought total receipts for the 1987-88 fiscal year to \$45,630,004, or 3.55 percent ahead of the total for the first four months of last year's budget.

Cooperative Program total receipts had fallen to 2.81 percent behind the 1986-87 budget by the end of December. However, the strong January lifted the year-to-date total to within one percentage point of the current inflation rate, which is about 4.5 percent, said Tim A. Hedquist, Executive Committee vice president for business and finance.

The 1987-88 Cooperative Program has been hurt by financial difficulties among the 37 state Baptist conventions contributing to the program, which finances Southern Baptist missionary, evangelistic and educational ministries around the world, Bennett noted.

For example, he reported that in January more than one-third of the state conventions' Cooperative Program contributions were lower than those for the previous January. However, he contrasted that with the record overall receipts, noting the states that have begun to bound back from financial recession are doing so stridently.

"It is my strong hope that the trend of increased giving for the Cooperative Program will hold throughout this year," Bennett said. "Urgent needs call Southern Baptists to a consistent commitment to our cooperative mission work, despite financial hard times."

Hedquist sounded a similar theme of potential financial recovery. The Cooperative Program's late-1987 slump was indicative of year-end financial troubles in the state conventions, where administrators were forced to cut back to reconcile receipts and expenditures, he said: "Many states have tried to increase their national Cooperative Program contributions, but their receipts from churches have not gone up accordingly. In states which own and operate several institutions, that is difficult."

However, the strong January indicates the states, most of whom begin their fiscal years in January, are starting out stronger than they finished, he reported.

If the Cooperative Program follows its current trajectory, it could end its fiscal year Sept. 30 about even with inflation, Hedquist added: "It probably will go up, but we're going to have to overcome the slow start. We'll have to see the (states') budgeting processes and how receipts come in."

But looking at the record \$15 million total for January, he added: "We can talk about percentage increases. But dollars is what we live off of, and \$15 million is \$15 million. We can be very grateful we did catch up."

Baptists Continue Slow
Race Relations Progress

By Ken Camp

F-TEXAS

DALLAS (BP)--Nearly a quarter-century after a black Baptist preacher, Martin Luther King Jr., proclaimed from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial his dream of brotherhood, Southern Baptists continue to struggle with black-white race relations.

Many Southern Baptists churches will be concentrating on their relationships with blacks and other ethnic groups as they observe Race Relations Sunday Feb. 14. Even so, some Baptists who have spent their lives building bridges of racial and cultural understanding believe still more attention must be directed toward achieving the goal of racial harmony.

T.B. Maston, emeritus professor of Christian ethics at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, pioneered in Southern Baptist race relations, writing his first pamphlet on the subject in 1927. Later books on racial reconciliation included "Of One," published by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board in 1946, and two works released in 1959, "The Bible and Race" and "Segregation and Desegregation."

At age 90, Maston has no difficulty remembering days when "most Southern Baptists still thought of blacks as somewhat inferior, did not want them in their churches and did not feel free in fellowship with them." While he said he believes great progress has been made, he said Baptists are still "a good, long way" from making into a reality the vision of brotherhood embodied in King's dream.

"Both black churches and white churches need to open up more in their membership," he said. "If a black family moves into a predominantly white community, the church there should go after them like they would any other prospect. I say 'should.' I know we're not there yet."

Although he believes racially integrated churches are the Christian ideal, Maston realizes educational, socio-economic and cultural differences make these kinds of churches rare. Texas Baptists' current church planting strategy of established churches -- usually white -- helping start indigenous missions for other groups is appropriate. However, he advised caution.

"That's all right provided it does not contribute to isolation," he said. "Texas Baptists could do that and say, 'That's how we take care of our blacks or our Latins.' We have to watch, or it will just become a token thing if we're not careful."

Tokenism is also a pitfall that should be avoided by program and meeting organizers in Baptist life, he pointed out. Too often, he said, ethnic speakers or singers are used by program planners but are not given any ownership of those meetings through participation in the planning process.

Marvin Griffin, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, agreed with Maston at that point. Although he has held leadership positions at both the state and national levels through the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, he realizes he was one of the first -- and is one of the few -- blacks to have this kind of responsibility in the convention.

Griffin's life is a series of firsts. In the 1950s, he led his church to become one of the first black congregations to enter the Southern Baptist Convention and the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In 1955, he was part of the first graduating class from Southwestern Seminary to include blacks. Later, as a representative for the Home Mission Board, he became the first black to speak in many white Southern Baptist churches.

"We need to continue to struggle to build bridges of understanding and work together on programs of mutual interest, creating coalitions to work on issues that are common to us all," said Griffin. "By working together, we strengthen efforts to accomplish the evangelistic task that is ours."

Griffin stressed the cause of missions and evangelism is advanced both by starting new ethnic work and by making established churches more inclusive.

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"Indigenous work is possibly the best approach, as long as the doors continue to be open in established churches," he said. "If our objective is to reach the largest number with the gospel, it is not a matter of either/or. It is both/and."

Louie B. George, pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church in Fort Worth, said Southern Baptists have made tremendous progress since his seminary days in the early 1950s, when blacks were not allowed to live in dormitories on campus. Nineteen years ago, he led his church to become the first black congregation to join Tarrant Baptist Association.

"We have all grown since that time of very poor relations between blacks and whites," he said. He pointed to positive signs, including pulpit exchanges between black and white churches, ethnic speakers at statewide Baptist meetings and Texas convention support of black work through programs such as the Texas Baptist Black Scholarships.

Through gifts to the Mary Hill Davis Offering for State Missions over the last two decades, Texas Baptists have invested more than \$276,000 in the education of 288 black students attending the eight Texas Baptist universities and Southwestern Seminary.

Since 1982, Jim Culp has been black church relations consultant in the church ministries section of the Texas convention. In 1987, the state missions commission voted to create a black church relations section with Culp as coordinator. Currently 218 black churches and missions are aligned with the Texas convention.

"There is a good basis for feeling that we have made genuine progress in the area of race relations as Texas Baptists," said Culp. "The feeling seems to have turned from a thin veneer of friendliness to a deep, genuine attitude of concern."

The next step in race relations is to go beyond the pattern of paternalism to a feeling of brotherhood among equals, he said: "Our relationship should be fraternal, not paternal. Black churches and white churches share a common agenda -- to win the lost."

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Kennedy Confirmed
In 97-0 Senate Vote

N-BJC
By Stan Hastey

Baptist Press
2/5/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--Judge Anthony M. Kennedy, President Reagan's third choice to fill a vacant seat on the U.S. Supreme Court, was confirmed unanimously, 97-0, by the U.S. Senate Feb. 3.

Kennedy, for the past 12 years a judge on the 9th Circuit Court of Appeals in Sacramento, Calif., was praised by senators of all political persuasions in a brief debate prior to the vote as a conservative but mainstream jurist who will add luster to the nation's high court.

The overwhelming vote making Kennedy the 104th justice to sit on the court came after two earlier Reagan nominees faltered and more than seven months after Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. announced his surprise retirement at the conclusion of the 1986-87 high court term.

Reagan's first choice for the Powell seat, federal appellate Judge Robert H. Bork, was rejected by the Senate after a contested confirmation battle, while his second choice, appeals court Judge Douglas Ginsburg, withdrew as a nominee when revelations that he had smoked marijuana as a student and law professor, became public.

With Kennedy's approval, all three of Reagan's choices to gain confirmation to the high court have done so through unanimous votes. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the president's first appointee, was confirmed in 1981 by a 99-0 vote, and Justice Antonin Scalia won his seat in 1986 on a 98-0 vote. On the Kennedy vote, three senators were absent, including Judiciary Committee Chairman Joseph R. Biden, D-Del., who was ill. Presidential candidates Paul Simon, D-Ill., and Albert Gore Jr., D-Tenn., were on the campaign trail.

Unlike the political uproar over Bork, a highly visible and controversial legal scholar who had published his views widely before being nominated, Kennedy's nomination hardly caused a ripple. His calm demeanor and straightforward answers during Judiciary Committee hearings earned the 51-year-old judge high marks by senators of all political persuasions.

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During a one-hour debate immediately before the confirmation vote, liberal senators joined conservatives in praising Kennedy. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, D-Mass., the senior Democrat on the Judiciary Committee, spoke of Kennedy's "distinguished tenure" on the 9th Circuit Court, adding the Californian "has demonstrated integrity, intelligence, courage and craftsmanship -- and a judicial philosophy that places him within the mainstream of constitutional interpretation."

The new justice is to be sworn in during ceremonies at the White House and Supreme Court Feb. 18 and will be on the bench when the high court returns from its mid-term recess Feb. 22.

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N-BJC

Broadcasters Adopt Code
On Financial Accountability

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
2/5/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--In the aftermath of alleged financial wrongdoings that rocked Jim Bakker's empire and congressional hearings that examined the tax-exempt status of television ministries, the National Religious Broadcasters adopted more stringent financial accountability regulations for its membership.

NRB members present for the organization's 45th annual meeting in Washington voted to form a nine-member Ethics and Financial Integrity Commission and to make NRB membership conditional upon compliance with the commission's code.

The code requires that a member organization that receives tax-exempt donations from the public:

-- Submit an annual audited financial statement prepared by an independent public accounting firm;

-- Have a board of directors of at least five people, with a majority of the directors not being family members, staff or employees of the organization;

-- Report salaries and other benefits paid to staff members to the commission. (The code does not require public disclosure of such payments.)

Although the original recommendation from the NRB board of directors included an exemption for organizations having annual donation income of less than \$100,000, members voted to increase the level for that exemption to \$500,000.

According to the new regulations, the commission is to issue a list of organizations that comply with the code, but not to disclose the names of those not in compliance. The code will not apply to non-NRB member organizations, such as those of Oral Roberts and Robert Schuller.

Although the final vote on adopting the code was nearly unanimous, discussion became heated at one point. At issue was a ruling by the presiding officer that two-thirds of the members present had voted to end debate, thus forcing a vote on the recommendation. Several members voiced emotional objections to the ruling.

Charles F. Stanley, NRB board member and pastor of Atlanta's First Baptist Church, urged the presiding officer to extend debate so as not to cause a division within the membership. "It will be very unfortunate if people walk out of here critical of each other," he said.

Stanley, who as Southern Baptist Convention president made a parliamentary ruling during the convention's 1985 annual meeting that sparked a lawsuit, added, "I've been in these situations before and I just think it's well worth our time."

After Stanley's statement, the NRB membership voted to continue debate the following day.

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Stanley Named To Religious
Broadcasters Hall Of Fame

By Stan Hastey

WASHINGTON (BP)--Former Southern Baptist Convention President Charles F. Stanley was inducted into the National Religious Broadcasters Hall of Fame during the organization's annual meeting in February.

The 55-year-old pastor of the 11,000-member First Baptist Church of Atlanta joins earlier honorees Billy Graham, Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, Charles E. Fuller and Walter A. Maier as recipients of NRB's highest honor. Presentation of the award was made by NRB Executive Director Ben Armstrong, who said it is presented annually "to the individual whose ministry represents the highest standards of integrity and service in communicating the gospel."

Stanley's extensive radio and television outreach, known as In Touch Ministries, includes daily radio broadcasts and weekly telecasts. His "In Touch" programs are heard on 450 radio stations, while the weekly telecast of the Sunday morning worship service of First Baptist, Atlanta, is seen on more than 125 television stations. The telecast also is beamed worldwide through the Armed Forces Radio and Television Network to all U.S. military bases abroad, U.S. embassies around the world and American ships at sea.

Additionally, in the United States, the weekly service is picked up by six cable satellite networks, making it available to thousands of communities across the country.

Stanley was elected president of the Southern Baptist Convention at the denomination's annual meeting in Kansas City, Mo., in 1984 and elected to a second term the following year in Dallas. He is a graduate of the University of Richmond, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Luther Rice Theological Seminary.

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Annuity Board Proposes
New Insurance Programs

Baptist Press
2/5/88

DALLAS (BP)--Annuity Board trustees unanimously voted in their Feb. 1-2 meeting to ask the Southern Baptist Convention and its Executive Committee for approval to develop new property and casualty insurance programs and new retirement plans.

If the proposals are approved, the Annuity Board expects to begin offering new insurance programs including church-owned property coverage, general liability, workers' compensation, bus liability, day-care liability and minister's malpractice insurance.

Also, if approved, the proposals would allow the Annuity Board to offer retirement plans under "tax-qualified" plans rather than "not for profit" plans.

The insurance recommendation requires Southern Baptist Convention approval since it requires a change in the board's program statement. The proposal is expected to be acted on during the SBC Executive Committee's Feb. 22-24 meeting in Nashville.

Darold H. Morgan, Annuity Board president, told trustees he does not anticipate any problem with amending the program statement since the SBC Executive Committee had requested the Annuity Board to study the program.

In the retirement plan proposal, the Annuity Board is seeking approval to charter subsidiary corporations which would offer "tax qualified" retirement plans to SBC institutions. The charter and bylaws currently permit the board to offer only 403(b) plans, which are specifically for not-for-profit organizations.

Baptist institutions such as hospitals and colleges sometimes prefer to use 401(a) and 401(k) tax-qualified plans which are under ERISA (Employee Retirement Income Security Act) guidelines. Passed in 1974, ERISA established minimum standards for company pension plans. The 403(b) plans such as the Church Annuity Plan and Convention Annuity Plan are free from ERISA provisions.

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In his 1987 report Morgan told the trustees that expanded Church Annuity Plan adoptions topped the goal of 10,000 well before the end of the year and by the end of January adoptions stood at 13,736.

By adopting the expanded Plan, a church makes available to its ministers and staff members significant benefits such as matching retirement plan contributions from churches and state conventions, supplemental life and disability insurance and survivor protection.

"Our efforts to convince churches that the \$33.34 per month plan is inadequate has succeeded. More than 75 percent of the applications in the expanded Church Annuity Plan are significant upgrades in pension premiums," said Morgan.

After seven years of Annuity Board research, planning, development and promotion, the expanded plan went into effect Jan. 1.

Despite the stock market collapse in October 1987, Treasurer Harold Richardson reported that all Annuity Board funds ended the year with positive performance.

Investment income totaled \$112 million.

The Fixed Fund was credited with 9.5 percent in 1987 and will be credited 8.8 percent in 1988. The Balanced Fund earned 3.25 percent, while the Short-Term Fund earned 6.64 percent. The Variable Fund unit value was up two cents to \$6.28 per unit.

The year saw assets rise above \$2 billion for the first time, and \$55.8 million in retirement and relief benefits were paid.

Contributions to member accounts rose from \$125.6 million in 1986 to \$132.2 million last year.

Trustees elected a new chairman and vice chairman. B.J. Martin of Houston was elected chairman of the board, succeeding W. Gordon Hobgood Jr., who resigned to accept election as executive vice president/chief operating officer. Martin, who was trustee vice chairman, presided over the meeting. He is vice president of church and denominational relations at Houston Baptist University.

Hobgood, 55, who was elected by the trustee executive and administrative policy committees in December, was managing director for the trust line of business at First RepublicBank Corporation in Dallas. He had been a trustee of the Annuity Board two years.

George H. Ballentine Jr., of Greenville, S.C., was elected trustee vice chairman.

Trustees also approved a number of personnel and organizational changes. Senior vice president Doyle Maricle was elected director of a new benefits/planning division. Maricle, a 30-year Annuity Board veteran, will direct strategic planning, research and records management.

Richard Farr, who has been with the Annuity Board for 20 years, was promoted to senior vice president and director of a new Retirement Services Division.

Curtis D. Sharp and Harvey J. Wright, both regional directors in the marketing division, were promoted to vice president.

Trustees elected Terry Wade to the executive staff as vice president-actuary. Wade, an enrolled actuary, is a Fellow of the Actuarial Society. He will direct the actuarial services department and benefit services area.

The duties of an actuary include calculating premiums for insurance and projecting retirement plan benefits. Wade also will be involved in designing Annuity Board insurance and retirement plans.

The next scheduled meeting of the Annuity Board trustees will be July 25-26 in Little Rock, Ark.