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April 6, 1990

90-50

Budget ahead of pace  
 needed to reach goal

N-CO

**NASHVILLE (BP)**--The Southern Baptist Convention's unified budget remains ahead of the pace needed to reach its 1989-90 goal.

Halfway through its October-September fiscal year, the Cooperative Program has received \$70,872,526, reported Harold C. Bennett, president and treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee.

If the second half of the budget year keeps pace with the first, the Cooperative Program would take in enough money to:

- Meet its \$134,787,543 basic operating goal.
- Fully fund a \$2.5 million "priority item" designed to pay off the debt on the five-year-old SBC Building in Nashville.
- Provide excess funds for a "program advance" section of the budget. All money that enters this phase of the Cooperative Program is distributed to the 18 recipient organizations according to the percentages by which they received allocations from the basic budget. For example, the SBC Foreign Mission Board will receive 50 percent of the program advance funds, and the SBC Home Mission Board will get 19.54 percent.

Cooperative Program totals for the last half of the fiscal year have been larger than totals for the first half twice in the past five years. In the other three years, second-half totals have been an average of \$1.17 million shy of first-half totals.

"This is going to be exciting, because we will make extra funds available to support Bold Mission Thrust, our campaign to spread the gospel around the globe by the end of the century," Bennett said.

The Cooperative Program's national receipts totaled \$11,000,030 in March, he reported. That total is \$1.6 million, or 17.06 percent, ahead of receipts for March 1989.

The \$70.87 million total for the first six months of the fiscal year is \$2.8 million, or 4.12 percent, ahead of receipts for the first half of the 1988-89 fiscal year. The current annual U.S. inflation rate is 5.3 percent, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The Cooperative Program supports evangelistic, missionary and educational ministries worldwide. It is funded by contributions from individual Southern Baptists. Their gifts are processed through the budgets of local churches and state Baptist conventions before reaching the Executive Committee for distribution to the receiving organizations.

Groups conduct  
D-FW meetings

By Toby Druin

N- CO  
(Texas)  
std.

DALLAS (BP)--Two diverse groups, both concerned about the future of the Southern Baptist Convention, met in the Dallas-Fort Worth area April 5 to discuss the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans, June 12-14.

One group of 20-25 people, including a dozen student pastors from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, met at South Hills Baptist Church there and were encouraged by W. Winfred Moore to continue involvement in and support of the SBC, to go the convention and take their laymen with them.

The other group, 15 pastors from nine states, met at the Dallas-Fort Worth Hilton Hotel and adopted a seven-point statement that included endorsement of Morris Chapman of Wichita Falls, Texas, for the convention presidency and the call for a broadened base of denominational leadership.

Moore, retired pastor of First Baptist Church of Amarillo, Texas, who now is teaching at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, spoke to the students and others at the invitation of Kyle Henderson, a student at the seminary and pastor of New Hope Baptist Church in Mansfield, Texas.

Henderson said he wrote to 70 student pastors at the seminary and invited them to come hear Moore in the hope they could be a "starting point" in "part of the solution" to the controversy in the SBC.

Moore, former spokesman for Baptists Committed to the Southern Baptist Convention, which has been a supporter of Atlanta pastor Daniel Vestal for the presidency of the SBC, never spoke directly about the presidential election, limiting his remarks to questions posed to him in the letter from Henderson asking him to speak to the students.

The former president of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and SBC first vice president told the students "there is a future for you in the SBC" and encouraged them to learn all they could about denominational struggles in the past, to go to New Orleans and to encourage lay messengers from their churches to attend.

He cautioned them about non-involvement in the denomination, a path he said he took for years until 1983, although his church all through his ministry was one of the national leaders in support of the SBC Cooperative Program unified budget.

In spite of the current controversy, Moore said, the SBC and the Cooperative Program still offer the best opportunity available for a church to be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Jack Graham, pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church in Dallas, arranged the meeting room for the pastors at the DFW Hilton. They were a "loose-knit" group, mostly "non-aligned" in the controversy, who were summoned together by telephone after the recent call for a broadened base of SBC leadership around a "perfect Bible" by John Bisagno, pastor of First Baptist Church of Houston, and by Chapman, he said. Endorsement of that philosophy by former SBC Peace Committee Chairman Charles Fuller of Roanoke, Va., and others prompted their get-together, said Graham.

The plan, Graham and the others said, has potential for ending the denominational controversy in uniting people who have been unified theologically but who may have differed on "methods or timing for our denominational renewal."

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The seven-point statement affirmed SBC cooperative missions efforts, including the Cooperative Program; the Bible as "God's perfect word, 'truth without any mixture of error'"; the Peace Committee conclusion that the major source of denominational controversy has been over theological differences; the belief that the conservative movement the last 11 years was necessary to correct "a dangerous theological drift in our denomination"; a broadened base of denominational leadership "within the context of our theological moorings"; endorsement of Chapman; and encouraging churches to send messengers to New Orleans.

Attending the meeting and signing the statement were four Texans, Graham; Rick Scarborough, Retta Baptist Church, Burlison; Curt Dodd, Metropolitan Baptist Church, Houston; and Hal Kinkeade, Bethany Baptist Church, Dallas; two Floridians, Larry Thompson, First Baptist Church, Merritt Island; and Randall Williams, First Baptist Church, Tampa;

Two Louisianans, David Hankins, Trinity Baptist Church, Lake Charles, and Lawton Searcy, First Baptist Church, Baton Rouge; two Oklahomans, Claude Thomas, Council Road Baptist Church, Bethany, and Bobby Boyles, First Baptist Church, Moore; and David Bruce, Riverside Baptist Church, Denver, Colo.; Ronnie Floyd, First Baptist Church, Springdale, Ark.; Dwight "Ike" Reighard, New Hope Baptist Church, Fayetteville, Ga.; Jerry Sutton, Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville; and Jack Millwood, First Baptist Church, North Mobile, Ala.

Not attending but sending letters of agreement were Joel Gregory, Travis Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Worth; Mike Hamlet, First Baptist Church, North Spartanburg, S.C.; Phil Hotsenspiler, Applewood Baptist Church, Wheatridge, Colo.; Fred Lowery, First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.; James Merritt, First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga.; Joe McKinney, First Baptist Church, Albuquerque, N.M.; and Gene Smith, First Baptist Church, New Port Richey, Fla.

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Gore, Kennedy propose  
warnings on alcohol ads

By William Bole

N-CO  
(CLC)

Baptist Press  
4/6/90

WASHINGTON (BP)--Sen. Albert Gore, D-Tenn., and Rep. Joseph P. Kennedy II, D-Mass., have introduced legislation that would require health and safety warnings on advertisements for all alcoholic beverages.

"Labels on bottles and cans simply do not provide an adequate-enough warning," Gore said at an April 4 news conference in Washington.

Each year, 50,000 babies are born with serious birth defects known as fetal alcohol syndrome, he added, noting. "We must do everything we can to make sure that pregnant women get the message and fully understand the risk."

The government last fall mandated warning labels on containers of beer, wine and wine coolers and distilled spirits.

Joining Gore at the press conference, Kennedy pointed to the billions of dollars spent by the United States in the war on illegal drugs. "And yet, when we look at the issue of alcohol, we spend very little money as a nation," he said.

"Advertisements for beer, wine and liquor tell all of us, especially our kids, that drinking equals a good time," Kennedy said. "My two nine-year-old children will be exposed to 200,000 alcohol ads by the time they reach 21."

Citing statistics on deaths, injuries and disease related to alcohol, Gore said, "Obviously, we need to search for a way to change the way our country thinks about alcohol."

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To dramatize the health risks, the legislators stood alongside photographs of deformed children with fetal alcohol syndrome. They also displayed warnings that would be mandated by the bill, including one for print ads that reads, "Surgeon General's Warning: Drinking during pregnancy may cause mental retardation and other birth defects. Avoid alcohol during pregnancy. If you are pregnant and can't stop drinking, call 1-800-...."

The legislation would set up a telephone hotline to give further information about alcohol.

Both lawmakers distanced themselves from the Prohibitionist rhetoric of past alcohol reformers. "Nobody is talking about going back to the days of Prohibition," said Kennedy. But he added, "It is time to begin to ask ourselves fundamental questions about alcohol's effects on our nation."

Gore said that while an "over-reaction" characterized the Prohibition era, Americans now exhibit a serious "under-reaction to the threat by turning a blind eye to the effects of alcohol consumption."

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission endorsed the legislation with a written statement at the press conference.

"Despite the claims of the alcohol and broadcast industries, advertising does increase consumption, and education alone is insufficient to curb alcohol-related problems," said CLC Executive Director Richard Land.

"The Christian Life Commission gives an unqualified and enthusiastic endorsement of the 'Sensible Advertising and Family Education Act.' We promise to work long hours for its passage. We commend Senator Albert Gore and Congressman Joseph Kennedy for their authorship of this bill. We call upon our brothers and sisters within the American faith community to support publicly and to work vigorously for the passage of this bill."

Mentioning that he has close friends in the alcohol industry, Gore said, "There are a lot of good people in this industry, and I hope they will be able to change their minds about mandatory warnings on advertisements."

At the end of the news conference, staff members of the Association of National Advertisers handed out press releases saying the organization "strongly objects" to legislation on alcohol warnings. The organization said it "firmly believes that alcohol abuse, not alcohol use, should be the target of any effort to combat the problems associated with the misuse of alcohol products."

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William Bole is the Washington correspondent for Religious News Service.

CLC urges letter writing  
to fight broadcast indecency

By Louis Moore

N-CO  
(CLC)

Baptist Press  
4/6/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has asked Southern Baptists to take quick action to urge the Federal Communications Commission to enforce the federal laws banning indecent broadcasting over radio stations.

The action comes in the wake of the FCC's extension until April 19 of the time period for public comments regarding the regulation of indecent radio broadcasting. Letters supporting this ban must be received in Washington by that date.

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For more than a decade, the FCC has been at the center of ongoing public protest regarding the regulation of radio programming. In 1988, the U.S. Congress, in passing an appropriations bill for the FCC, directed the agency to enforce the ban on indecent broadcasting for the full 24-hour broadcast day, as required by existing law. Media interests have worked against the ban, particularly its application to the full 24-hour broadcast period.

Prior to Christmas 1988, the FCC announced that it would begin enforcing the ban. At that time, "shock radio" was beginning to blossom on the nation's airwaves. Shock radio is the name given radio programs that use profanity and suggestive language.

Now, this latest period of public comment comes just months after what Baptists leaders see as encouraging developments related to indecency in broadcasting. Last summer, the new FCC chairman, Alfred Sikes, promised in hearings to fight the airing of indecent material.

In the fall, the FCC fined four radio stations for airing indecent material and initiated disciplinary action against four others.

"The public comment process is a part of the FCC response to federal court action, which has temporarily prohibited the enforcement of the full 24-hour ban," said James A. Smith of the Christian Life Commission's Washington office.

"At issue are the late-evening and early-morning hours, which are less available to children and youth," he said. "The legal rationale for banning indecency in broadcasting relates to the widespread availability of radio to youth and children. Indecent broadcasting is held by federal law to be harmful to children."

Recent discussion has focused on indecent broadcasting in the context of the anticipated listening audience, Smith said. Opponents of the indecency ban argue that during late-evening and early-morning hours the listening audience contains few children and youth.

"Therefore, they argue, what is indecent to an adult audience in those hours is less restrictive than during daytime and early-evening hours, when children are listening," Smith said.

CLC Executive Director Richard Land said, "This is a tremendous and timely opportunity for Southern Baptists to express their opinions to the FCC and to let them know that we view the public airwaves as a public trust and that we do not want that public trust betrayed by the broadcast of indecent programming at any hour of the day or night."

Smith has been told by FCC officials the agency "needs factual, substantial, reasonable statements for why it should enforce the ban, not just a simple request to keep the ban," he reported. He urged Southern Baptists to document their complaints carefully with specific charges, citing stations, times and offenses.

Comments urging enforcement of the indecency ban should be sent to the Federal Communications Commission, Donna Searcy, Secretary, 1919 M St., N.W.; Washington, D.C. 20554.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is the second of a three-part series on adult Sunday school.

Literature, teaching methods  
facilitate adult Bible study

By Frank Wm. White

F-SSB

Baptist Press  
4/6/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--WANTED: Teacher for weekly adult class. Need strong Christian commitment. Must be caring individual willing to be trained and rely on available resources."

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Although churches throughout the Southern Baptist Convention constantly are looking for teachers to lead adult Bible study sessions, they may not know what qualities are most needed.

A personal relationship with Christ coupled with a love and compassion for people are essentials on the list for Johnny Ross, associate director for adult work of the church program division at the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

"The caring is more important than the knowing. Teachers should strive to be more effective and get training," Ross said.

"Teachers do not have to be the source of all knowledge. They are a guide, a facilitator, a fellow learner. The source of knowledge is the Scriptures. The resources are out there to help," said Larry Shotwell, manager of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's adult Sunday school program section.

Adequate resources should be available in the curriculum to help teachers prepare, Shotwell said. Also, many teachers rely on the commentaries prepared for the various curriculum lines, the quarterly "Biblical Illustrator" and the teacher's book as well as the member's book, he added.

In addition to those resources, a Bible dictionary and atlas also are helpful. The advantage of a media library at many churches is the availability of additional resources, Shotwell said.

A Wednesday weekly workers meeting may be one of the greatest resources for teachers other than prayer and personal Bible study, said Dennis Parrott, minister of administration and education at Green Acres Baptist Church in Tyler, Texas.

Parrott, a former president of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association, said teachers bring different commentaries to his weekly workers meetings and share together.

The teacher's book is a commentary that should serve as one source among others, pointed out Mike Harton, associate professor of adult education and the J.M. Frost Sunday School Board professor of Christian education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

He encourages teachers to start first with the curriculum's approach, rely on the same Scripture selections and seek other views.

"One problem teachers often have is they don't look ahead to see the direction of study. If you give your whole pitch on missions involvement one week only to learn that the next three weeks focus on missions also, you've got a problem," he explained.

After spending time carefully preparing for Sunday morning, many teachers lose the effectiveness of Sunday school by lecturing, Harton added.

"Some adults prefer lecture, but it takes a variety of teaching approaches to reach everyone. Adults need to be involved actively in the process," Ross said.

Lecture is only one of several teaching methods that should be used with adults, Shotwell said. "Teachers need to use approaches to get adults to do things that help them learn," he added.

He suggested question-and-answer, case studies, brainstorming and other approaches that get class members involved.

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More adventurous teachers may want to try creative writing, drama, role playing and other creative arts. Many adult class members will do creative activities if only the teacher will ask them to, Shotwell said.

"The teacher's role is to give instruction on what he wants the class members to do. Adult class members may have more to say than the teacher. To say that only the teacher has information to report does not use the adult mind," he noted.

When the teacher cares about the class members and reaching others and relies on available resources to direct the class in effective Bible study, he said, Sunday school can achieve its purpose.

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BP photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by SSB bureau of Baptist Press

Prayer conference set  
in New Orleans, June 7-9

N-SSB

Baptist Press  
4/6/90

NASHVILLE (BP)--A national prayer conference for people interested in deepening prayer ministries in their churches, states or associations will be held in New Orleans prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting this summer.

Sponsored by the National Prayer Corps of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the prayer conference will be held June 7-9 at Hardin Student Center at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Conferences and sessions will focus on solemn assemblies and the spiritual awakening movement, as well as the importance and necessity of prayer for individuals, churches and the convention. Pastors, prayer coordinators, associational prayer leaders and others interested in developing a prayer ministry are invited to attend.

A three-hour prayer session will be held Friday night, June 8. The next morning, participants will have a chance to share their personal experiences with solemn assemblies, said Avery Willis of the Sunday School Board's discipleship training department.

SBC agency prayer leaders on the program include Henry Blackaby of the Home Mission Board; Minette Drumwright of the Foreign Mission Board; Doug Beggs of the Brotherhood Commission; and T.W. Hunt and Willis of the Sunday School Board.

On Saturday afternoon, participants will be encouraged to become involved in the New Orleans witnessing effort sponsored by the Home Mission Board.

A \$25 registration fee includes a notebook. Housing is available at the seminary's Providence House at \$14 for a single room or \$20 for a double room per night. Registrants may send their housing and conference fees to Paul Robertson, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans, La. 70126-9988.

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