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COMMUNIST BAPTIST HISTORICAL
 RESEARCH AND ARCHIVES
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President wins veto showdown over abortion-counseling ban

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The U.S. House of Representatives fell 12 votes shy of overriding a presidential veto on a bill that would have allowed abortion counseling at federally funded family-planning clinics.

The House voted 276-156 to override the Nov. 19 veto, failing to garner the needed two-thirds vote. As a result, a ban on abortion counseling will go into effect at clinics that receive federal funds.

Early in November, both chambers approved the bill (H.R. 2707) that would appropriate \$205 billion for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and related agencies for fiscal 1992. The bill provides funding for a number of programs, such as Head Start and biomedical research, but a single provision on abortion counseling has delayed its approval.

The Reagan administration proposed the ban on abortion counseling at federally funded clinics, and the Bush administration maintained it. In May, the Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the ban, which is not yet in effect.

Supporters of the Rust v. Sullivan decision say family planning involves information about conception, not termination of pregnancy. Opponents say the ban is a "gag rule" that inhibits free speech and violates medical ethics.

The bill would not provide federal funds for abortions but simply would block funds used to implement the counseling ban.

President George Bush told House members that he will sign an HHS bill that does not block the implementation of the ban.

Bush has not had one of his 24 vetoes overridden.

Rep. Vin Weber, R-Minn., spoke in favor of sustaining the veto. He described the bill as very fine legislation with one fatal flaw. Weber said the bill is about abortion, not gagging people's speech.

"Without the regulations against abortion counseling and referral in this bill, we will basically put the Title X program in the business of abortion referral and abortion promotion, and that, Mr. Speaker, is the

issue," Weber said. "Will we tear down the wall between family planning and abortion and establish a nationwide system of taxpayer-financed abortion referral centers?"

Rep. Jim McDermott, D-Wash., and one of two physicians in the House, urged colleagues to override the veto.

"The concept of a president saying to me, as a physician, what I can and cannot tell a patient of mine about life-and-death issues is the worst sort of government intrusion into people's private lives," McDermott said. "The doctor-patient relationship is built on trust, not politics...."

"Today the president wants to step between a physician and a woman faced with a critical medical decision," he continued. "This is a precedent that needs to be reversed. What is next? Who is next? Are we to sit back and allow medical care to be decided in the Oval Office instead of the doctor's office?"

Rep. Constance Morella, R-Md., said, "The gag rule is anathema to the founding principles and freedoms of our nation. With the imminent celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Bill of Rights, this threat to the freedom of speech should not be tolerated."

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-- By Pam Parry

Faculty losses hurt Southern,
but seminary perseveres

By Marv Knox

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- Despite 12 years of controversy and a spate of recent faculty resignations, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary is trying hard to steer a steady course through troubled denominational waters.

Changes already instituted at the Louisville, Ky, seminary -- Southern Baptists' oldest -- promise to produce a more conservative school in the future. But while a similar conservative changeover has brought turmoil to Southern's sister seminary in North Carolina -- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary -- Southern's leaders are trying to navigate the dangerous waters of theological transition with a minimum of disruption.

Fourteen professors have left the faculty since the spring semester of 1989. That was a landmark date in Southern Seminary history: Some of the school's most conservative trustees launched an attack on seminary President Roy Honeycutt and other faculty members they termed "liberal."

The tension of political stress and friction with trustees, however, has played a role in only six of those resignations, said Provost Larry McSwain. But those six include some of Southern Seminary's most noted teachers.

Andy Lester, professor of psychology of religion, left last summer for Texas Christian University. Allen Culpepper, professor of New Testament, has taken a two-year leave of absence to teach at Baylor University. John Jonsson, professor of missions and world religions, will head for Baylor in January, when Bill Leonard, professor of American Christianity, will depart for Samford University.

The latest announcement came from Page Kelley, a renowned Old Testament teacher who has taught at Southern for 32 years. Kelley, who said he is "tired of the controversy," will retire next year and join the faculty of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va., a new school founded by SBC moderate-conservatives displeased with trends in Southern Baptist theological education.

Many others also are "sitting loose in the saddle," one professor

observed.

"Who is responsible?" Leonard countered when asked about the leave-taking and faculty unhappiness. "Did we not think this would happen?"

"Is the Southern Baptist Convention better off in 1991 than it was in 1979 at any level? No.... We've been saying Southern Baptists want change. Well, this is what Southern Baptists wanted. That's the reality of it."

That reality is "institutional instability," added Leonard, who has taught at Southern since 1975. "Southern Seminary is going to go on," he said. "Professors are like Rainbow Bread -- they have a limited shelf life. In three years, the student population won't know I was here. But when this many people leave an institution for whatever reason, we have institutional instability."

McSwain acknowledged the tension and trauma of recent years but pointed to the stabilizing effect of the majority of the seminary faculty.

"Seventy-four people have decided either to stay or to come here in the midst of the same situation of concern," the provost said. "I'd like to see an affirmation of the folks who chose not to explore other options or (who chose) to leave other places of ministry to come here.... We think that speaks volumes about the stability and future of the institution."

The seminary got an apparent boost toward stability last spring, when faculty and trustees approved a "covenant renewal" agreement.

The covenant softened rigid guidelines for faculty employment and advancement set in place by trustees in September 1991. But it also ensured that only "conservative evangelical scholars" will be added to the faculty until the school has achieved "faculty balance."

The seminary currently has five faculty vacancies -- three in Christian education, one in New Testament, and one in missions and world religions -- and no dean for the school of theology, McSwain said.

Selection of a dean is considered critical, since it will signal the direction of the school for years to come.

The degree of difficulty the covenant poses for filling faculty vacancies depends upon the teaching field. "In classical theological disciplines, we have competent people interested in coming here, with excellent educational backgrounds and outstanding credentials in teaching and academic publication," McSwain noted. "In highly specialized areas, such as Christian education, church music and some practical disciplines, that is more problematic."

"Thus far, we have had no one we really wanted to reject consideration on the grounds of the covenant. (But) we have not contacted some potential candidates whom we would have approached in an earlier time. We are self-selecting because we are committed to more theological constraints."

The events of recent years have "created a much higher level of anxiety within our faculty," he said. "That's partly because we are in a transitional period, and anxiety is higher in a time of change."

A professor's decision to stay or leave -- while lived out in a public arena -- is very personal, faculty members said.

"For me (the decision to leave) is cumulative," Leonard said. "The dean at Louisville Presbyterian Seminary said. 'You have to decide if you want to be known as an American church historian or someone who's always struggling with fundamentalists.'"

"I wrote my first article about this (controversy) in 1981 and have been writing about it since and have been in the middle of it at Southern for four years," Leonard continued. "If teaching is not simply a job -- it's a vocation -- do I want to spend another 10 years distracted from research and writing and vocation or do I want to go to a situation where I might be able to do that in a little different way?"

"I see this as reaping what we have sown," Leonard added. "You can't tell people for 12 years, 'We don't want you,' and not have it take effect."

Professors who are staying relate to those words. Gerald Keown, associate professor of Old Testament, acknowledged "outside pressures" create a climate void of much optimism. "We live from trustee meeting to trustee meeting," he said.

"But my ministry is viable," he added. "What happens in the classroom is exciting. I can put up with a lot of things as long as I have an opportunity to introduce students to what ministry is all about."

The future rests on what President Honeycutt calls the "fragile hope" of the covenant, Keown said. "Trustees must maintain a stable institution, keep the maverick members from taking potshots at the institution and become partners in what we're trying to do. The other side of the covenant is how adding 'conservative evangelical scholars' to the faculty will unfold -- how to add them and maintain stability among the faculty."

Within that context, the future of a vital Southern Baptist asset is at stake, said Chuck Bugg, professor of preaching. He came to Southern in 1989 after more than six years as pastor of First Baptist Church of Augusta, Ga., because he wanted to invest his life in "something important."

"To me, Southern Seminary is tremendously important," Bugg said. "I still have a lot of faith in the viability of the seminary."

And quality ministry training at an affordable price is irreplaceable, Bugg insisted. "What other options are available? If we don't maintain seminary education for students, we won't be able to train them for ministry. That will dramatically affect the kinds of leaders we will have for our churches."

Those leaders will find themselves in controversy, too, Leonard predicted. The seminary's own controversy, the disintegration of the convention "in chunks and pieces," and even financial uncertainty and clergy firings in local churches are "symptoms of the fragmentation that seems to be unending," he said.

Still, teaching is a "matter of faith," Keown added. "God has called me here, and I'm committed to ministering in this place."

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Another professor to leave
Southern over controversy

By Bill Wolfe

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- Respected professor Page Kelley will leave Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., next year to join a new Virginia seminary started by Baptist moderate-conservatives.

Kelley, a Southern graduate who has taught at his alma mater since 1959, said he has grown increasingly frustrated with "the continuing attacks that are being made on respected colleagues" by theological conservatives in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Kelley said "there's a lot of grief" in his move. But he said he has been thinking of leaving Southern for more than a year "because I was tired of the controversy."

He will be the sixth Southern teacher in the last year who has left or announced plans to leave at least partly because of a struggle between Southern Baptist factions.

The 67-year-old Kelley, a former missionary, holds the John R. Sampey chair of Old Testament interpretation at Southern. Although he is eligible to teach full time for two more years, he will retire in July and begin teaching in the fall at the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

That seminary was founded in 1989 by the Southern Baptist Alliance, an organization of Southern Baptist moderate-conservatives. It opened for classes for the first time this fall, with 32 students and three full-time and four part-time teachers.

Bill Leonard, who is the president of Southern's faculty association and has also announced plans to leave, called Kelley "one of the grand leaders of our faculty" and "a mentor to many of us and to students."

In a statement released by the Richmond seminary, its president, Thomas Graves, described Kelley as "one of the most eminent Baptist scholars in the Old Testament field."

Kelley began at Southern as a student in 1945, graduated in 1952 and spent seven years teaching in Brazil. He returned to Southern as a teacher in 1959.

Other faculty members who have left or will leave the seminary include Alan R. Culpepper, an internationally respected New Testament professor; Andrew D. Lester, a widely published psychology of religion professor; and John Jonsson, professor of mission and world religions. The seminary has about 75 full-time teachers.

Since gaining a majority on Southern's board of trustees in 1989, fundamental-conservatives have moved quickly to swing the institution to the theological right.

New hiring guidelines adopted by the trustees last year sought to require specific theological stands -- such as belief in a literal Adam and Eve -- for people seeking to be hired as faculty members and of faculty members who wanted to be promoted or granted tenure.

In an effort to ease tensions last spring, the board scrapped the guidelines and passed -- with faculty approval -- a covenant that called for the seminary to hire as faculty members only people who "reflect a clear evangelical orientation" in their view of the Bible.

Kelley decried the "demoralizing" effect of attacks on the seminary, which are "much broader than our own board of trustees."

He said he decided to teach at the Richmond school because "it strikes me as representing the spirit and ideals that I encountered at Southern Seminary in 1945," including academic freedom and "a board of trustees that's friendly and supportive."

Kelley said he respects Southern President Roy Honeycutt and other members of the seminary's administration and faculty and does not blame them for problems at the school. Honeycutt could not be reached for comment.

Conservative Southern trustee John Michael of Louisville said he is sorry to see Kelley leave and that he thinks relations between the board and faculty are improving.

He said the trustees worked with a "conflict-management specialist" at a recent retreat and that "it really improved our communications" with faculty and students.

"I would hope that professors would be inclined to stay rather than leave" Southern, Michael said. "I believe that Southern seminary is going to be a great place to teach in the future."

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-- Bill Wolfe is religion writer for the Courier-Journal in Louisville.

Grass-roots protest mounts
against Ruschlikon defunding

By Trennis Henderson

(ABP) -- Words like "flood" and "avalanche" are being used to describe the volume of protests aimed at the Oct. 9 decision by trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Some of the protests were predictable: from the Swiss seminary, which receives 38 percent of its funding from the FMB; from European Baptists, who depend on the international seminary to train leaders for churches throughout Europe; and from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, which employs the controversial professor whose "liberal" views were the target of the trustees ire.

But the vociferous response from grass-roots Baptists in the States has surprised leaders at the Foreign Mission Board and Woman's Missionary Union, the auxiliary that helps raise about half of the FMB's financial support.

Southern Baptists who two months ago had never heard of the tiny Swiss town of Ruschlikon have rallied around the seminary with surprising zeal. The reason, mission leaders suggest, is the unswerving commitment of Southern Baptists to foreign missions and the perceived threat to missions presented by the Ruschlikon decision.

Protests from both sides of the Atlantic have prompted a Dec. 5-6 meeting of leaders from Europe, the Ruschlikon seminary, an FMB trustee committee and the FMB staff to "bring about a resolution" in the conflict.

Meanwhile, the reactions continue to pour in.

-- As of Nov. 21, the Foreign Mission Board had received 250 letters in response to the trustees' defunding decision, according to agency officials. The vast majority of letters were opposed to the decision, with only about 15 registering agreement. Telephone lines at the board's Richmond, Va., headquarters also have brought reactions from Southern Baptists, but those calls are not tabulated.

"I've been surprised at the volume of the response, which overwhelmingly has requested a reconsideration of the Ruschlikon decision," said FMB President Keith Parks.

Parks and other FMB officials have been reluctant to talk about the grass-roots reaction for fear of alienating trustees, who many observers now expect to reverse their 35-28 defunding vote when they meet Dec. 9-11.

-- Trustee chairman Bill Hancock of Louisville, Ky., also has received about 200 letters, he said, with only about eight in support of the trustee decision. Steve Hardy of Burlington, N.C., chairman of the FMB committee that oversees missions in Europe, said he has received about 50 letters, with only a few in favor of the Ruschlikon decision.

-- Leaders at Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala., have not kept track of the Ruschlikon response but report they have received "scores" of calls and letters from several states -- all opposed to the defunding decision. National WMU leaders who recently visited annual conventions in several states say state and local WMU members overwhelmingly reject the trustees' action.

Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director, said the response is linked to Southern Baptists' concern for ministry opportunities in Eastern Europe.

"In recent months, we have asked Southern Baptists to pray for the Christians in Eastern Europe," she pointed out. "Many Southern Baptists have been faithful in their prayer support and have sensed an openness and a new opportunity in Eastern Europe which hasn't been there before.

"It is in this context that many people are raising questions about the FMB trustees' decision, which seems to place a roadblock to evangelization efforts in that region of the world," O'Brien said. "The decision also seems to be hindering relationships between Southern Baptists and European Baptists."

National WMU leaders recently released an unprecedented letter which declared, "We cannot support the decision to defund the Ruschlikon seminary."

The two-page statement urged FMB trustees to "put political considerations aside and rescind this action," adding: "It seems that we ought to be stepping up support for an already-established institution which is producing Baptist leaders for the entire European and Eastern European region. Yet we find the FMB trustees doing just the opposite."

WMU archivist Eljee Bentley described the WMU protest as "the first time in recent history that national WMU leaders have issued a public, formal protest about a specific Foreign Mission Board trustee action."

-- On the state level, Baptist messengers in at least eight states and the District of Columbia adopted resolutions opposing the FMB action. Two state conventions -- North Carolina and Virginia -- voted to send funds directly to the Swiss seminary.

Southern Baptists also have freely expressed their views in state Baptist newspapers. By mid-November, at least 50 letters concerning the Ruschlikon situation have been published in more than a dozen state papers.

The letters oppose the FMB trustee action by a ratio of more than 10-1. Among the scattered affirmative letters, half were written by FMB trustees.

Here is a sampling of concerns.

Charles Harper of Missouri: "How ironic! While contemplating the future of mission work in Europe, trustees of the Foreign Mission Board (say they) are 'not going to be impacted much by the protests of a few Europeans.' What's next?"

Charles A. Smith of Alabama: "The board has displayed a lack of wisdom in international missions by violating a longstanding mission principle which says that it is not our responsibility to export to other countries a Baptist view stamped 'Made in America.'"

Steve Spangler of Virginia: "Our Foreign Mission Board trustees have created a 'wall' of mistrust where Southern Baptist involvement in Europe is concerned.... If we do not have a legal obligation in this matter, we most certainly have a moral obligation."

Walter M. Blackman of Mississippi: "The Foreign Mission Board has a responsibility to maintain integrity and keep its word."

Several of the letters complained that Glenn Hinson, the Southern Baptist professor hired to teach a semester at Ruschlikon, had been unjustly labelled "liberal" by FMB trustees.

Diane Jordan of Tennessee: "Fellow Baptists in Europe must wonder about the petty squabble over one professor, especially when that person is a truly dedicated Christian who has been grossly misunderstood and called a 'liberal' unjustly.... Only in eternity will we know the damage being done to the kingdom of God by this move."

James L. Monroe of Florida: "I was chairman of the trustees at Southern Seminary when charges were made against a few of our faculty. Those charges were examined closely and honestly. To my knowledge, there was no question but what Glenn Hinson was doctrinally sound."

Dan H. Flowers of Louisiana: "The credibility of Southern Baptists has been tarnished by the act of 35 trustees of the Foreign Mission Board."

Travis S. Berry of Texas: "This action by the Foreign Mission Board undermines all efforts in finding grounds for cooperative ways in doing mission work and provides instead a stereotypical example of the ugly American. It was a short-sighted agenda-oriented decision."

Richard Walker of North Carolina: "As a former pastor in Wiesbaden, Germany, and a former president of the European Baptist Convention, I have witnessed the value of the Ruschlikon seminary.... The decision of the FMB must be an embarrassment and a hindrance to our European missionaries.... Such a decision made so quickly is irresponsible and insensitive."

Edward Clark of Kentucky: "This is not missions. It is mockery!"

Among those affirming the FMB action, trustee R. Reed Lynn of Oklahoma wrote: "Those trustees who voted to delete the funds for the seminary at

Ruschlikon did so with the understanding that its president had broken his pledge by requesting a professor whose published views place him far to the left of any professor this Oklahoma Baptist has ever studied under.... I believe many good people have formed conclusions based on incomplete data."

Jim Key of Tennessee declared: "When professing Christians teach other than wholesome words, we must withdraw our support. This is Christlike, loving and faithful to our Lord Jesus."

M. A. Seiver of Florida: "The FMB should not bow to blackmail, which certainly is insinuated in the threat to bar future missionaries (from Europe) if these European Baptists do not get their payment."

With the Dec. 5-6 meeting approaching and the rhetoric continuing to fly, FMB chairman Hancock outlined his objective: "I'm still committed to try to bring about a resolution between European Baptists and our trustees that will enable us to accomplish the one thing we do agree on -- that there needs to be theological education in Europe. Then we need to work at when and where and how that's going to take place.

"It is a very volatile matter," he added. "My objective and goal is to bring some semblance of balance and reconciliation to the situation. I believe that can be done, but that all depends on what posture the Europeans and staff choose to take when they come into the meeting on Dec. 5."

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-- This article includes information from Greg Warner

Baptist editors voice
concerns over Ruschlikon

(ABP) -- How widespread is the concern over the Foreign Mission Board's October decision to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland? Among 10 state Baptist editors who had addressed the issue by mid-November, all 10 strongly urged the FMB trustees to reconsider or rescind their 35-28 vote.

Recurring themes in the 10 editorials included concern over Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor Glenn Hinson being unfairly labeled a "liberal" without appropriate investigation, concern over the reputation of the FMB and Southern Baptists as a whole being smeared, and concern for future ministry opportunities throughout Europe.

Excerpts from the editorials include:

R.G. Puckett, Biblical Recorder of North Carolina: "The decision was wrong; the timing could not have been worse.... Trust and esteem have gone down the tube for the SBC Foreign Mission Board, not just in Europe but around the world.... Baptists and Christians around the globe will find it hard to believe us again, on any serious matter."

Bob Terry, Word & Way of Missouri: "At best the decision was arbitrary. Others would call it irresponsible. Trustees acted as if they were not bound by previous agreements between the FMB and European Baptists.... In our judgment it is the worst form of power politics and paternalism to attempt to impose one's will on another national body by the use of dollars."

Robert E. Allen, Baptist True Union of Maryland/Delaware: "Jerking funds less than three months away from Ruschlikon's fiscal year is reminiscent of the mockery of the 'golden rule' which states, 'He who has the gold makes the rules.'"

Marv Knox, Western Recorder of Kentucky: "In using Hinson's presence at Ruschlikon as a lever for defunding the school, FMB trustees convicted him without a trial.... Glenn Hinson has been counselor, friend, teacher and

mentor to countless students. We, whose love for Christ has grown because of our relationship with this beloved professor, repudiate the slander of his fine character."

Julian H. Pentecost, Religious Herald of Virginia: "We are angered and grieved because of these recent unwise and irresponsible actions of FMB trustees. Control of the 'jugular' in SBC life by fundamental-conservatives makes possible decisions that continue to repudiate our heritage and compromise our witness and ministry in the present."

Guy Henderson, Baptist Record of Mississippi: "Talk about throwing the baby out with the water. This smacks of burning the barn down to get rid of a wasp nest. The amount of money is \$365,000 or 40 percent of the seminary's total budget. The amount of damage is incalculable."

Fletcher Allen, Baptist and Reflector of Tennessee: "If Ruschlikon falls, who will train Baptist pastors and workers? Who will fill the gap? What groups will move in on cherished territory?... It is a bad time to send the message to European Baptists that we are unwilling to help them spread the gospel across Europe."

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-- By Trennis Henderson

State conventions ask FMB
to restore money to Ruschlikon

By Greg Warner

(ABP) -- Southern Baptists in seven states and the District of Columbia last week urged their Foreign Mission Board to reverse its decision to strip \$365,000 from a controversial seminary in Europe.

And Baptists in two of those states -- Virginia and North Carolina -- promised to replace some of the money themselves.

During state and regional conventions last week, Baptists in Kentucky, Louisiana, New York, North Carolina, Virginia, the District of Columbia and in the two-state convention of Maryland-Delaware decried the October vote of the FMB trustees which cut off all Southern Baptist funding of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

In October, FMB trustees said the cut was justified because the school, which serves Baptists throughout Europe, has not lived up to its promise to become more conservative. As evidence they cited the temporary hiring of Southern Baptist seminary professor Glenn Hinson, who is considered liberal by some trustees.

The FMB's decision nullified its earlier agreement to continue the funding at diminishing levels until 2007 and effectively ended the seminary's 42-year relationship with Southern Baptists, who helped found the school after World War II.

The action brought immediate protests from Baptists throughout Europe and threw relationships with future Southern Baptist missionaries into jeopardy. Baptist leaders in Germany and England said last week they will wait and see how the FMB responds to the protests before deciding on future mission partnerships with Southern Baptists.

Meanwhile, state and regional Baptist groups joined the chorus of protests during their traditional fall meetings, passing strongly worded resolutions in support of the Ruschlikon seminary and continued funding.

The state actions were not without some opposition, however. In at least three states, objections came from FMB trustees themselves, several of whom hinted the FMB already may be poised to reverse its decision and restore the funding when trustees meet in December.

In North Carolina, Baptists voted to send \$30,000 to the seminary immediately from a missions reserve fund. The money will be sent directly to Ruschlikon, bypassing the FMB offices in Richmond, Va.

Messengers also "respectfully requested" FMB trustees rescind their defunding action, which was described in a separate resolution as "insensitive and destructive." The deleted \$365,000 represents 38 percent of the seminary's budget.

North Carolina Baptists approved all those measures easily.

In Virginia, where Baptists already had designated \$1.6 million in their 1992 budget for the Foreign Mission Board, messengers earmarked \$100,000 of that amount for the Ruschlikon school. If FMB trustees restore the seminary's funding in December, the \$100,000 will be returned to the \$1.6 million fund to be used as the FMB sees fit.

The \$100,000 gift to Ruschlikon was suggested in an amendment to the budget by John Herndon, a former FMB missionary to Portugal who now serves as a pastor in Charlottesville. Later a resolution was approved that said the FMB's action toward the Ruschlikon seminary "has done serious damage to the credibility of the Foreign Mission Board" throughout Europe.

Both the resolution and funding were endorsed overwhelmingly, despite a warning from FMB trustee John Simms of Roanoke that the actions "will hinder our effort" to restore Ruschlikon funding during the next FMB meeting in December. Two other FMB trustees spoke against one or both of the actions.

In Louisiana, a resolution in support of the Ruschlikon seminary was criticized by Leon Hyatt of Alexandria, an FMB trustee who voted to defund the seminary in October. But Hyatt later said he will change his vote if trustees reconsider Ruschlikon funding in December.

Hyatt, a staff member of the Louisiana Baptist Convention, said he will "vote for what the majority of LBC messengers said they wanted." What they wanted -- and approved by a two-to-one margin -- was a resolution that labeled the FMB's defunding as "a serious breach of trust" and called for trustees to restore the seminary's money.

During debate, Hyatt decried the "pressure campaign" he said has been mounted against FMB trustees. "We do not need additional pressure from this convention," he said. "We need your prayers but not your pressure."

But Shreveport pastor Jon Stubblefield, a member of the resolutions committee, said the FMB's defunding decision threatens the work of Baptist missionaries in Europe and violates a previous FMB agreement to continue funding the seminary. "The matter is one of trust and commitment," he said. "Do we keep our covenants to others?"

Louisiana messengers seemed determined to consider the Ruschlikon resolution, defeating first a motion to set the resolution aside and then a motion to adjourn the session before the resolution could be considered. With time for business running out, messengers voted to skip over three other resolutions to decide the Ruschlikon matter.

In Kentucky, messengers voted 418-97 in favor of a resolution that called on FMB trustees to reconsider their October defunding action and "find a more amicable solution."

Another FMB trustee, Bill Hall of Danville, spoke against the resolution, saying, "The (FMB) board is already doing what this resolution calls for." He cited a planned Dec. 5-6 meeting between trustees and seminary leaders, which some observers expect will produce an agreement to restore Ruschlikon funding.

Hall denounced threats by some FMB critics to withhold their mission gifts from the FMB because of the Ruschlikon decision. "To hold our missionaries hostage is unconscionable," he said.

In Georgia, supporters of the Ruschlikon seminary failed to get any money to replace funds deleted by FMB trustees. Two attempts to divert money from the state convention budget to the seminary were ruled out of order by

convention officers on the advice of the parliamentarian.

However, in the convention's closing session, messengers passed without debate a motion to go on record asking FMB trustees to reconsider their defunding action.

Elsewhere, actions in support of the Swiss school passed without acrimony or serious opposition.

Messengers to the District of Columbia Baptist Convention passed a motion asking FMB trustees to rescind their decision and restore Ruschlikon funding. The motion, introduced by D.C. pastor Charles Worthy, passed overwhelmingly with almost no discussion.

In New York, a similar resolution was adopted by Southern Baptists meeting in Niagara Falls. It also asked trustees to restore Ruschlikon funding. After extended discussion, it was approved by a wide margin.

In the two-state convention of Maryland-Delaware, messengers approved a resolution asking FMB trustees to "reconsider" their defunding action. The original version of the resolution asked trustees to "rescind" the action, but it was amended to "reconsider" before passing overwhelmingly. Later, a motion to send money to the seminary was referred to the convention's general mission board.

Many of the resolutions approved by state conventions mentioned the fall of communism and the opportunity it has created for the spread of the gospel in Europe. The resolutions, or those who supported them, accused FMB trustees of "closing a door" to Eastern Europe at a time of unprecedented opportunity for witness.

The Ruschlikon school -- European Baptists' only international seminary -- has trained 400 pastors for work in Eastern Europe since its founding, according to the seminary's president.

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-- This article includes information from Robert Dilday of Virginia, Marv Knox of Kentucky, Pam Parry of Maryland, R.G. Puckett of North Carolina and Lacy Thompson of Louisiana.

State meetings give BJC
more good news than bad

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- For the Baptist Joint Committee, there was more good news than bad coming out of recent state Baptist conventions, according to Executive Director James Dunn.

Baptists in Texas, Virginia, Kentucky and New England voted to send money directly to the Baptist Joint Committee in 1992, while Baptists in Missouri and the two-state convention of Maryland-Delaware deleted funds earmarked for the BJC in their budgets.

Funding of the Baptist Joint Committee has been a hot topic among Southern Baptists, particularly since messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention eliminated the last \$50,000 in SBC support from the controversial agency, which lobbies in Washington on religious-liberty issues.

Dunn said he was pleased with recent state actions that will help his agency recoup some of the lost SBC funding, which once was more than \$400,000 a year. "We did well in every state except Missouri and Maryland," he said.

Direct contributions from organizations, churches and individuals in Missouri and Maryland will compensate for defeats there, he added. "In the

long run we'll be better off in both those cases," he said.

-- In Texas, \$63,000 earmarked for the BJC was approved as part of the state convention's budget.

-- In Virginia, a \$76,000 BJC allocation in the budget went unchallenged.

-- In Kentucky, messengers voted 331-195 to include the Baptist Joint Committee as a line item in the convention's budget for the first time. Dunn estimated the budget formula will provide his agency \$20,000 in 1992.

-- In New England, the multistate Baptist convention voted to send \$200 to the BJC after an amendment to delete the allocation from the \$1.2 million budget was defeated 53-36.

-- In Missouri, however, messengers voted 890-700 to delete a \$15,000 allocation for the BJC from the proposed budget. Last year they defeated a budget amendment that would have added a \$15,000 allocation.

The day after this year's vote, however, members of the moderate-conservative Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Missouri pledged \$16,070 to replace the rejected funds.

-- In Maryland-Delaware, messengers voted 210-169 to cut a \$3,600 line item for the BJC. The allocation would have matched the two-state convention's contribution to the BJC in 1991.

-- In Ohio, messengers voted down an amendment to the budget that would have sent \$3,000 to the BJC. Only 13 messengers of the 600-plus registered voted in favor of the amendment.

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-- By Greg Warner

Louisiana Baptists establish
covenant with state paper

By Lacy Thompson

LAFAYETTE, La. (ABP) -- Messengers to the Louisiana Baptist Convention agreed last week to enter into an unprecedented covenant relationship with the denomination's state newspaper, affirming their support and protection of a "free flow of news and information" through the publication.

Messengers overwhelmingly approved the covenant, which appears to be the first agreement of its sort between a state convention and denominational newspaper.

The agreement upholds the idea of the believer's right to know, affirms the editorial and leadership role of the newspaper editor, calls for any discussion related to the termination of the editor to be held in open sessions, and cites the importance of electing persons committed to such ideas as trustees of the newspaper.

"This covenant says that the Baptist Message will tell the truth and trust the people and that Louisiana Baptists will support and protect the paper as it does its work," Editor Lynn Clayton explained to messengers.

The approval of the covenant marks the end of more than a year of tension and threatened controversy over the state publication.

The tension arose in August 1990, when Clayton and trustees of the Louisiana Baptist Message entered into a contractual agreement defining how and why the editor could be removed from his position.

Supporters insisted the document was needed to protect the integrity of and freedom of the newspaper. Critics argued the contract was unprecedented, unneeded and extravagant in its severance terms.

Last fall, as the 1990 annual state convention drew near, speculation

grew that critics of the agreement would seek to move against the newspaper in some way. In response, Clayton announced to convention messengers that trustees had agreed to restudy the document.

In the ensuing months, a trustee committee engaged in personal interviews and commissioned a survey on what kind of newspaper Louisiana Baptists desired. In a called meeting in September, the newspaper board and Clayton agreed to rescind the contract and ask convention messengers for a covenant agreement.

The proposal was presented to messengers during the state convention Nov. 12-13.

Clayton told messengers that research showed "an overwhelming majority of Louisiana Baptists believe the Baptist Message should be primarily a news publication providing a responsible free flow of news and information pertaining to Baptist work."

Clayton noted the covenant is not a legal contract but follows the biblical concept of people of faith entering into an agreement of trust.

Raymond McDaniel of Shreveport, chairman of the newspaper's trustees, said Louisiana Baptists have had an attitude of openness toward the newspaper since its founding in 1885. "Improper restraints and demands on this flow of information through the state paper would dim the light of knowledge and should not be tolerated," he said.

McDaniel added that trustees embrace the need for Louisiana Baptists to be fully informed so they can be fully committed. He said replacing the contract with a covenant demonstrates "we have found a fine line where freedom and responsibility are evenly balanced."

Messenger John Traylor of Monroe said the trustees "have exhibited the spirit of Christ. They have acted in love to defuse controversy. I believe our loving response would be to embrace wholeheartedly -- unanimously I hope -- this covenant."

Before it was approved, the covenant encountered one more obstacle. The convention's three parliamentarians said it should be ruled out of order since it could only properly be considered as a resolution. But LBC first vice president Mark Sutton, who was moderating at the time, ruled the covenant was proper, since past conventions had approved other motions of affirmation "time and time again."

The covenant agreement subsequently was approved on a standing vote by an estimated 85 percent of messengers.

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