

A S S O C I A T E D B A P T I S T P R E S S

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Southeastern trustees want to make inerrancy part of governing documents

By Greg Warner

WAKE FOREST, N. C. (ABP) -- Trustees of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary voted Oct. 15 to include a commitment to biblical inerrancy in the school's new statement of purpose, becoming the first Southern Baptist seminary to adopt such an explicit endorsement of inerrancy.

During their Oct. 15-16 meeting, much of which was held behind closed doors, the 30-member trustee board also:

- tentatively approved a "faculty profile" that requires all new teachers to believe inerrancy;
- tentatively approved revised guidelines for selecting new faculty after refusing to reduce their own role in the process;
- and voted to begin the search for at least two professors to fill vacancies on the faculty, which will be reduced to less than half its size by a rash of recent resignations and retirements.

The purpose statement, selection process and faculty profile all will be sent to the faculty for its consideration before final adoption by trustees. The faculty is likely to object to the inerrantist terminology in the statement and profile.

The one-paragraph purpose statement says in part that the school "is committed to the complete veracity, inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible."

The issue of inerrancy, which has been at the heart of the 12-year controversy among Southern Baptists, also has been the focal point of a four-year effort by Southeastern's fundamental-conservative trustees to change the direction of the school.

The statement of purpose is the foundational document that defines a school's identity. It also is the standard by which a school's performance is judged by its accrediting agencies.

In 1987 Southeastern ran aground of its two accrediting agencies -- and stirred the ire of some Southern Baptists -- when trustees voted to hire only

biblical inerrantists for the faculty. Southeastern's president and top administrators resigned in protest.

Accrediting officials, who may yet withdraw the seminary's accreditation, have suggested Southeastern could have avoided some scrutiny if trustees had written inerrancy into the school's official documents before changing its hiring practices.

Trustees did just that Oct. 15, revising a previous purpose statement that made no mention of biblical authority. Several trustees said the changes were overdue.

"If we had gotten our act together (in 1987), we would have rewritten history," Robert Crowley of Rockville, Md., told fellow trustees.

The proposed revision affirmed the "complete veracity of the Bible." But Crowley made a motion to add the word "inerrancy" to the proposed revision.

William Delahoyde of Raleigh, N.C., chairman of the committee that drafted the revision, said the committee purposefully avoided inerrancy language "because of the political connotations that have developed around that word." Delahoyde and other trustees said "veracity" means the same thing.

But Crowley said he would "not back down" from use of the term. "This is our course. This is who we are. And let's say it. If this is not what this has been about, I've been under a rock all this time."

Crowley's amendment passed with only two negative votes. Trustees later added the word "infallible" as well. Southeastern dean Russ Bush told them "veracity" means the Bible is truthful, "inerrancy" means it is without error, and "infallible" means it is incapable of error.

The full statement reads: "Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary is an institution established and supported by the Southern Baptist Convention in order to preserve and proclaim 'the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints' through the spiritual development, theological preparation and practical training of God-called men and women for service in Baptist churches and other Christian ministries throughout the world. The seminary is committed to the complete veracity, inerrancy and infallibility of the Bible as an essential foundation for effective Christian ministry and service. The seminary emphasizes a wholesome, intelligent and intentional evangelism in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations."

The last two sentences -- on the Bible and evangelism -- were taken from a longer "implementation" portion of the proposed two-page statement. In the interest of simplifying the statement, trustees voted unanimously to move the rest of the implementation portion into a separate document that will interpret the purpose statement.

Trustees turned back an attempt to exclude women from studying for the pastorate at Southeastern.

Walter Lonis of Morrison, Colo., made a motion to amend the statement to offer "training of God-called men for the pastorate and God-called men and women" for other areas of service. "We need to say that this seminary is not about teaching women to be pastors," Lonis said.

But others said only local churches can decide who should serve in ministry roles. Trustee chairman Roger Ellsworth of Benton, Ill., ruled the motion out of order "because of connectionalism."

Although trustees will wait for input from the faculty before giving final approval to the purpose statement, it could be in place by the trustees' March meeting, when they are expected to elect several new faculty members.

Asked to predict faculty reaction to the statement, Bush told trustees, "Some will object to parts of it."

One faculty member who observed the meeting agreed. "Given the faculty reluctance to use the language of inerrancy, there could be some problem with

it," said Eugene McLeod, librarian and professor of bibliography. Faculty response to the original terminology of "veracity" might have been more positive, he said.

McLeod added: "The statement as is doesn't reflect a traditional emphasis on academic excellence."

McLeod was one of two faculty members assigned to observe the trustee meeting but he said he could not speak for the faculty. The other observer, theology professor Robert Culpepper, could not be reached for comment.

As part of the seminary's pattern of "shared governance," the faculty also will have a chance to respond to the faculty profile -- the school's first -- and to proposed changes in the faculty-selection process.

The profile tentatively approved by trustees says in part that professors hired in the future will "affirm and teach the Bible as the infallible Word of God" and as "truth without any mixture of error." They also should be personally committed to "the historic evangelical Christian faith," intentional evangelism, "the lordship of Christ" and his "visible return."

The approved faculty-selection process is much like the one already in effect but gives seminary President Lewis Drummond more freedom in nominating candidates for election by trustees.

A search committee composed of the president, the dean, three faculty members and one trustee will develop a list of qualified candidates, designate which candidates it recommends, and submit both lists to the president. The president may choose a nominee from either list, not just from the recommended list as in the past.

The candidate is recommended to the faculty for majority approval before election by trustees. But, as in the past, the president can ask trustees to approve a nominee who lacks faculty approval.

Delahoyde said trustees should not participate on the search committee because such involvement early in the process has been criticized by Southeastern's accrediting agencies. A trustee was added to the search committee a couple years ago, he said, because faculty domination of the committee "was preventing the election of conservatives."

By giving the president more freedom in his choice and requiring only majority approval by the full faculty, the new process "has resolved the major impediment to bringing conservatives to this campus," he argued.

Delahoyde made a motion to delete the trustee and one faculty member from the search committee, reducing the committee to four.

Crowley objected, saying trustee input was necessary to avoid the "self-perpetuating faculty" that existed in the past. "Unless we put some processes in place...we are going to go down that same road again," he warned.

Delahoyde countered that Southeastern is under "vigorous scrutiny" by its accrediting agencies and should trust its president to represent trustees in the selection process.

Kenneth Stevens of Novi, Mich., argued for retaining trustee involvement a while longer. "Leave the splint on and let the limb grow straight," he said.

Delahoyde's motion failed by a wide margin, leaving trustee involvement intact.

After receiving faculty input, trustees hope to approve the new faculty-selection process by a mail ballot by the end of the year. However, financial problems at the school will prevent administrators from filling all the vacancies created on the faculty recently.

More than half of the 27-member faculty will have resigned or retired by the end of the school year, in part because of the seminary's new conservative direction. But the financial savings will only make up for the anticipated drop in income from the Southern Baptist Convention.

Southeastern's funding will suffer from sluggish giving to the SBC

Cooperative Program and another drop in Southeastern's enrollment -- down 11 percent from 489 full-time students last year to 434 this fall. While a reduced payroll will save the seminary an estimated \$1 million by 1993, SBC funding is expected to drop more than \$643,000 that year, putting additional pressure on Southeastern's \$6 million annual budget.

"We don't have a financial exigency problem if we don't hire anybody," Paul Fletcher, vice president for internal affairs, told members of the trustees' executive committee. "But, of course, we only have 13 faculty members left."

Dean Bush told the committee seven to nine more teachers are needed to cover the school's curriculum, but he added: "We cannot hire all these people at once without adjusting the budget. There is just simply not enough money to do it."

Instead, Bush and Drummond recommended hiring two professors -- in church history and Christian education -- and seeking a visiting professor for another slot. Adjunct teachers will be sought to fill additional needs. The recommendations were later approved by the full board.

Three times during their two-day meeting, trustees closed the doors to deal with "personnel matters" in private. Neither the chairman nor the president would say what the executive sessions were about, and no actions were reported.

Privately trustees said the sessions, which totaled three hours, dealt with Drummond's handling of several financial matters. At issue were the financial agreements Drummond negotiated with departing faculty members, which some described as "golden parachutes," and the money Drummond spent to remodel and redecorate his house and office.

It is not known what action if any was taken on either matter.

Drummond later said the issue of the house and office is settled. He would not release a list of the expenses, but information available to some trustees indicated more than \$200,000 has been spent on the seminary-owned house since 1988, including \$30,000 on drapes, and \$44,000 had been spent on the office.

In other action:

-- Trustees adopted a policy on academic freedom for the faculty. The policy, already in force and endorsed by the faculty, had never received trustee approval.

-- In response to a request from trustee Dade Sherman, Drummond reported the seminary's library contains 118 books on homosexuality and ministry to homosexuals. Although no action was taken, Sherman, a Southeastern graduate, said the books "are very objectionable and have no place in a Christian school."

-- Trustees heard preliminary reports on a recent campus visit by one of Southeastern's accrediting agencies and on the seminary's 10-year self-study, which is part of the accreditation process.

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European Baptist president offers
to resign over FMB-seminary flap

By Robert Dilday

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Southern Baptist missionary John Merritt, the first American to serve as president of the European Baptist Federation, offered to resign his EBF post in mid-October after the Foreign Mission Board eliminated funding for the EBF's seminary.

But EBF leaders refused to accept the resignation of Merritt, the

first non-European to hold the post, despite their concerns the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, will be crippled by the elimination of the FMB's \$365,000 from the school's 1992 budget.

Meanwhile, the decision by FMB trustees continued to spark criticism on both sides of the Atlantic.

-- Baptist leaders in Germany, the Soviet Union, England, Scotland, Sweden, France, Italy, Spain, Finland and Norway all protested the action.

-- Two Southern Baptist missionaries in Spain called the decision by their governing board "a radical measure that has negative influence on our cooperative ministries with Baptists in Europe." The denunciation came in a letter to the EBF from Robert Crider and David Dixon, both professors at the Spanish Baptist Seminary in Madrid.

-- The faculty of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary called on the FMB to reverse the decision, which the faculty said "will weaken significantly the ministry of that seminary at a time of unprecedented mission opportunity in Western and Eastern Europe." The faculty also defended Southern professor Glenn Hinson, who was "maligned" by FMB trustees who said his temporary teaching post at Ruschlikon was a sign of the school's liberal drift.

-- Hinson said he regrets being "used as an excuse" by FMB trustees who want to defund the school, European Baptists' only international seminary. He said his beliefs are not liberal but are consistent with "traditional affirmations of the church through the centuries."

But FMB trustee leaders held firm to their decision. "This board is not going to be impacted by the protests of a few Europeans," said trustee Paige Patterson of Dallas. Trustee chairman William Hancock said the issue may resurface at the FMB's next meeting but likely won't be reversed (see related story).

FMB trustees voted Oct. 9 to divert funds proposed for Ruschlikon to theological-education needs in Eastern Europe when they learned Hinson, a church history professor at Southern, is teaching one semester at the Swiss seminary. Hinson reportedly is teaching Latin.

Some trustees said Hinson's presence at Ruschlikon violates an understanding to retain more conservative professors there. However, other trustees and FMB staff argued the board should honor an earlier agreement to fund the school through 1992.

In addition to serving as president of the EBF, Merritt is general secretary of the European Baptist Convention, an association of about 60 English-speaking churches attended primarily by families of U.S. military personnel stationed in Europe.

Since 1974 the convention has been affiliated with the European Baptist Federation, made up of 32 Baptist bodies in Europe and the Middle East. Merritt, a 60-year-old native of Mississippi who has served in Europe since 1964, was elected EBF president during a meeting of the federation's council in September in Varna, Bulgaria.

"The decision of the Foreign Mission Board to eliminate funds for Ruschlikon put the European Baptist Federation in a very difficult position," Merritt said in explaining his action. He commented during a telephone interview Oct. 14 from his home in Wiesbaden, Germany.

"If my being a missionary of the Foreign Mission Board complicated the situation for European Baptists, I said to (EBF) General Secretary Karl-Heinz Walter that I would be glad to resign if this would help."

However, Walter and other European Baptist leaders told Merritt his offer "was out of the question," Merritt recalled.

Attempts to reach Walter in his Hamburg, Germany, office were unsuccessful. However, in a strongly-worded letter Oct. 10 to FMB president Keith Parks, the EBF general secretary decried the loss of Ruschlikon funds.

"We realize that the (FMB) board may have a legal right to make such a decision, but it was made without any respect for the students enrolled, and without any care for the faculty and staff," he wrote.

"It is morally impossible...to make such a decision on such short notice," he added. "In business life this procedure would result in immediate legal action, but this is not our way."

Walter added that leaders of some EBF-affiliated unions "question the trustworthiness of the FMB, especially in view of pending partnership agreements between the board and European unions."

English Baptists are reassessing a recently negotiated partnership with the FMB, while the status of other missions partnerships between unions and state Baptist conventions is unclear. Among them are agreements between Maryland-Delaware and Latvia, North Carolina and Poland, and Virginia and Hungary. Texas, which maintains a partnership with the European Baptist Convention, is currently discussing additional ties with Estonia and Romania.

The partnership question is likely to be discussed by FMB trustees at their Dec. 9-11 meeting, said Steve Hardy of Burlington N.C., chairman of the trustee committee which oversees work in Europe.

"I believe that the regional committee and perhaps the board will need to assess what the repercussions of the (defunding) action may be in terms of partnerships....," he said.

Merritt predicted continuing fallout from the trustee action.

"I think it will affect our whole missionary thrust as a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board," he said. "It will negatively impact missions in general. I hope the Foreign Mission Board will seriously consider reversing its decision."

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-- This story includes information from the Foreign Mission Board and the European Press Service.

Ruschlikon issue likely
to re-emerge in December

By Robert Dilday

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Elimination of funds for the Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, likely will be on the agenda of the Foreign Mission Board in December, trustee leaders agree.

Their Dec. 9-11 meeting will be the last opportunity to reverse the Oct. 9 decision eliminating a proposed 1992 allocation of \$365,000 to the Swiss school before the budget becomes effective Jan. 1.

Trustees took the action when they learned church history professor Glenn Hinson is teaching at the school. Some board members say Hinson, on sabbatic leave from the faculty at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., holds liberal views.

At their December meeting, trustees are expected to receive conclusions from a staff study of possible legal ramifications emanating from the decision.

Left intact was funding for three missionaries -- including seminary president John David Hopper -- serving on Ruschlikon's staff.

Board chairman William Hancock of Louisville said he expects some trustees will seek to reverse the decision in December but that the attempt will fail.

"At this point in time, I don't think it would pass," he said. "There

is a lot of emotion on both sides. It's hard to tell what will happen between now and December."

Steve Hardy of Burlington, N.C., chairman of the trustee regional committee which oversees work in Europe, said the issue will be discussed there and "the reaction of European Baptists will be evaluated." But he added: "I would be hesitant to say that will cause the committee to change its mind."

While trustee Paige Patterson of Dallas agrees discussion over Ruschlikon may arise, he said he believes the funding question has been settled. "If I were a betting man, I would bet it would not succeed," he said.

Patterson called the legal ramification study a "smoke screen" and said neither the results of the study nor the mounting protests from European Baptists is likely to have much influence on FMB trustees.

"There are no legal obligations," he asserted. "We divested ourselves of the property and this (the \$365,000 allocation) is a pure gift. Most of us have checked with our personal attorneys about that."

Patterson referred to the 1989 transfer of the Ruschlikon property, valued at \$17 million to \$40 million, from the FMB to the EBF and added it would be "hard for me to imagine that after the board has given them a \$17 million-to-\$40 million gift and continues to fund their president, that they would file suit."

Additional protests from European Baptists are likely only to increase trustees' resolve to stick by their decision, he continued. "This board is not going to be impacted much by the protests of a few Europeans," he said.

Some trustees maintain that European Baptist leaders' dismay at the elimination of funds is not shared by all Baptists on the continent.

In an Oct. 14 news story, California trustee Ron Wilson told a Foreign Mission Board newswriter some Europeans will "dance in the streets" when they learn of the defunding, especially many in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union who he said regard Ruschlikon as liberal.

But in a mid-October letter to Ruschlikon administrators, Soviet Baptist leader Gregori Komendant joined other European critics in condemning the "surprising decisions" to defund seminary's budget.

"They ought to inform the real reason for this decision," Komendant wrote.

"Ruschlikon is very important especially for all European Baptist unions in the time of reconstruction and reunification of Europe," Komendant added. "We do believe that the continuing participation of FMB in this project will receive a great appreciation of Baptists in the USSR."

How widely the opinion of Komendant, president of the Union of Evangelical Christians-Baptists in the Soviet Union, is shared by fellow Baptists in his country and throughout Eastern Europe is unclear.

FMB president Keith Parks noted that the September meeting of the European Baptist Federation Council was held in Bulgaria for the first time and attracted a number of East European Baptists. Ruschlikon seminary was "unanimously and overwhelming affirmed" at that meeting, said Parks.

"The only action registered by European Baptists -- including Eastern Europeans -- indicates confidence in John David (Hopper) and the direction the seminary is going, and expressing great dependence on the seminary as a key part of the accelerated leadership training that is of crucial importance at this time," he added.

Chairman Hancock said he has yet to receive "anything from Europe that is supportive" of the board's move to eliminate funds. "I've been told by three or four trustees there would be some jubilation from people over there, but I haven't gotten anything yet."

The chairman added that most Southern Baptists in the States who have contacted him concerning the matter have applauded the trustees' decision.

Pastors from "across the convention" have called, he said, and "most of what I've received (from them) is supportive of the board action."

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Seminary's future secure, BTSR president says

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- The future of the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond is secure, seminary President Thomas Graves told trustees during their recent meeting.

Graves said the Oct. 14-15 trustee meeting marked a turning point for the Richmond school, which was established in 1989 and began classes for 32 students this fall.

"We have become institutionalized more quickly than we ever anticipated," Graves told trustees, "and there is no worry now about the viability and survival of this institution. That is assured. What we are now doing is laying the groundwork to meet our goals of serving the Baptist churches of this region."

During its meeting in Richmond, the 14-member board elected one person to the faculty, one to the staff and four to the board. Trustees also approved the addition of one non-voting trustee position for faculty and one for students.

The new faculty member is Elizabeth Barnes, who was approved to begin in the fall of 1992 as tenured associate professor of theology and ethics. Barnes has taught theology at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., since 1983.

Barnes is the third former professor at Southeastern to join the BTSR faculty. She received a bachelor's degree from Meredith College, a master of divinity degree from Southeastern and a doctoral degree in theology and ethics from Duke University.

Trustees also approved Henry Crouch, pastor of Providence Baptist Church in Charlotte, N.C., as director of development for the seminary. Crouch will begin Nov. 1.

Dean Thomas Halbrooks reported searches are underway for a professor of missions and evangelism and a professor of worship and spirituality, both to be added in the 1992-93 academic year.

Board members elected four new trustees -- Nell Pusey, a member of First Baptist Church of Richmond who has been active in civic affairs; Joseph Smiddy of Wise, Va., a former Virginia Baptist president and chancellor emeritus of Clinch Valley College of the University of Virginia; Jean Kim of Berwyn, Penn., executive director of the Board of Educational Ministries of American Baptist Churches; and Ramonia Lee, associate minister for Christian education at Broadview Church in Temple Hills, Md.

The additions bring the board's membership to 18, including 10 clergy and eight laypersons. Seven members are women and 11 are men.

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Virginia budget proposes funds for Richmond seminary

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Virginia Baptists could become the first state convention officially to allocate money for a new moderate-conservative

seminary if their proposed 1992 budget is approved in November.

The proposed \$16.3 million budget of the Baptist General Association of Virginia includes \$25,000 for the Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond.

Classes began this fall at BTR, established in 1989 by the moderate-conservative Southern Baptist Alliance. The school leases parts of several buildings on the campus of Union Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian institution in Richmond.

Messengers attending the annual BGAV meeting Nov. 12-13 will consider the budget proposal, which is expected to draw considerable debate.

Some opposition to the allocation was registered in early October when the BGAV budget committee presented its recommendation to members of the Virginia Baptist General Board, who may advise the committee but do not approve its proposal.

"My biggest concern is that...it will increase fragmentation in our denominational life," said Maurice McCarthy Jr., pastor of Cambria Baptist Church in Christiansburg, Va. "By tying the BGAV to (the seminary) it widens the gap between some Virginia Baptists and others."

But budget committee chairman Ernest Boyd of Richmond described the line item as an "alternative for those who say they cannot support the six Southern Baptist seminaries."

He also cited the large number of Virginia Baptist students in the seminary's first class -- 17 out of 32.

The BGAV's denominational relations committee has endorsed the budget committee's recommendation. Committee chairman Raymond Spence Jr. of Richmond said the panel had considered suggesting additional ties to BTR -- such as electing some of the school's trustees -- but chose not to do so.

"Perhaps down the road at an appropriate time we need to come back and talk about a formal relationship, but this is not the time," said Spence, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Richmond.

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-- By Robert Dilday

Charges don't sway Senate;
Thomas narrowly confirmed

By Pam Parry

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- Despite sexual harassment charges by an Oklahoma Baptist woman, the U.S. Senate narrowly confirmed Clarence Thomas on Oct. 15 as the 106th justice to the Supreme Court.

Thomas won Senate approval 52-48 after a second round of confirmation hearings to explore sexual harassment charges brought by University of Oklahoma law professor Anita Hill, a member of Antioch Baptist Church in Tulsa, Okla. Since 1983, Hill has been a member of that congregation, which is affiliated with the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A.

She said Thomas repeatedly asked her out on dates and initiated conversations about sex, including his own sexual prowess, when she worked for him in two federal jobs. In the early 1980s, Hill worked for Thomas at the Department of Education and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Thomas categorically denied all of the charges.

The Senate Judiciary Committee held the second round of hearings Oct. 11-13 after Hill's allegations became public. Hill said she talked to the Judiciary Committee only after she was contacted by Senate staff members.

She asked that the information be kept confidential.

The FBI investigated the charges and forwarded its report to the Judiciary Committee chairman, Sen. Joseph Biden, D-Del. Biden and ranking minority member Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., discussed the report with the full committee prior to its Sept. 27 vote, which deadlocked 7-7 on a favorable recommendation of Thomas.

The nomination went to the full Senate without a recommendation.

The Senate was scheduled to vote on the confirmation Oct. 8, but when the charges were leaked to the news media, the Senate postponed the vote. The Judiciary Committee came under fire from fellow senators, because many of them heard about the allegations from news reports.

Biden defended the committee's actions. Senate rules require that such FBI reports remain confidential. Committee members said they also wanted to honor Hill's request for anonymity, but an unknown source leaked the report to the press the weekend before the scheduled vote.

The Senate has called for an investigation of the leak.

"I believe we did the right thing in handling Professor Hill's charges as we did," Biden said. "But I am deeply sorry that our actions in this respect have been seen by many in this country as a sign that this committee does not take the matter of sexual harassment seriously. We emphatically do."

Thomas began the first day of hearings with a rousing speech denying the charges and defending his character.

"I have never in all my life felt such hurt, such pain, such agony," Thomas said. "My family and I have been done a grave and irreparable injustice.

"Mr. Chairman," Thomas said, "in my 43 years on this earth, I have been able with the help of others to defy poverty, avoid prison, overcome segregation, bigotry, racism and obtain one of the finest educations available in this country. But I have not been able to overcome this process. This is worse than any obstacle or anything that I have ever faced."

In her opening statement, Hill told the committee, "It is only after a great deal of agonizing consideration that I am able to talk of these unpleasant matters to anyone but my closest friends. Telling the world is the most difficult experience of my life."

Some questioned Hill's credibility because she made the accusations nearly 10 years after the fact.

"I was aware that he could affect my future career and did not wish to burn all my bridges. I may have used poor judgment; perhaps I should have taken angry or even militant steps both when I was in the agency or after I left it, but I must confess to the world that the course I took seemed to me to be the better as well as the easier approach.

"I declined any comment to newspapers, but later, when Senate staff asked me about these matters, I felt I had a duty to report."

She said she does not have a "personal vendetta" against Thomas. She fended off suggestions that she was delusional, a civil-rights zealot who was being used by special-interest groups or that she wanted to write a book or make a movie.

She said she simply wanted to tell the truth.

Thomas claimed the Judiciary Committee and the confirmation process harmed him and his family, making strong accusations of racism. He called the hearings a "high-tech lynching" that had "gone far beyond McCarthyism."

"This is a circus. It's a national disgrace."

He told the committee that he was incapable of "proving the negative" -- that he did not harass Hill -- and that he would never be able to restore his good name.

The White House maintained its steadfast support of Thomas.

Thomas will be the second black man to sit on the nation's high court, succeeding Justice Thurgood Marshall, who was the first.

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Supreme Court rejects church-property dispute

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to intervene in a church-property dispute involving a Delaware congregation and a church conference with which it recently severed ties.

The high court declined Oct. 15 to review a lower court injunction giving members of the Mother African Union First Colored Methodist Church in Wilmington, Del., use of a building that had been seized by the Conference of African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church.

In May, the Delaware Chancery Court issued the injunction permitting both parties access to the property until a final ruling on the congregation's claim that title to the property rests with the church's trustees, not the conference.

The conference was denied relief from the injunction by the Delaware Supreme Court and also was rebuffed in efforts in U.S. District Court to stop the trial in chancery court.

Thomas Neuberger, attorney for the congregation, said trial on the merits of the congregation's claims occurred in chancery court in September and a ruling is expected within two months.

A dispute with the conference and its bishop, Delbert Jackson, resulted in members of the congregation voting 68-10 in April to sever ties with the conference. Trustees of the congregation then filed a lawsuit after deeds purportedly transferring the congregation's properties to the conference were recorded and locks were changed, keeping members out of the church.

In granting a preliminary injunction preserving the congregation's rights to use the facilities, chancery court vice chancellor Jack Jacobs noted that while the church and the conference have maintained some kind of relationship for many years, the two were always separate entities.

The conference based its claim of title to the property upon its contention that it is a hierarchical organization whose member congregations, including the Mother Church, are subordinate.

In its appeal to the Supreme Court, the conference argued that courts must defer to the highest applicable church authority in settling a property dispute in hierarchical churches, a view rejected by the chancery court.

In issuing the preliminary injunction, Jacobs found that the congregation's certificate of incorporation indicates that the property is owned by the Mother Church.

The case is *The Conference of African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church v. Mother African Union First Colored Methodist Protestant Church* (91-291).

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--By Larry Chesser

World hunger report offers solutions to stark problem

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- More people are hungry today than ever before, but world hunger can be eradicated, according to a report released Oct. 16 here.

Bread for the World Institute, a Christian citizens' movement that works to eradicate hunger, released its second annual report on the state of world hunger, "Hunger 1992," at a press conference on World Food Day. In 1979, World Food Day was founded by the United Nations to raise public awareness. More than 150 nations reportedly observe it.

The report indicates that more than half a billion people suffered from chronic hunger in 1991 while even more people are "vulnerable to hunger." More than 1 billion people are too poor to obtain proper nutrition, facing primarily a lack of iodine, iron and Vitamin A, according to the report.

The report covers the period of 1990-91. It identifies the 10 greatest setbacks for hunger in 1991 and offers 10 "ideas that work" in overcoming hunger.

"The principal barrier to ending world hunger is neither lack of resources nor insufficient knowledge," the report says. "It is the failure to put ideas that work into practice on a broad scale."

According to the report, hunger's 10 greatest setbacks in 1991:

-- The Persian Gulf War. The war created a new group of hungry people. Many Kurds who fled Iraq were middle-class people who had never experienced hunger before. The war also impacted Asia and Africa as foreign workers lost their jobs.

-- Global recession. Many developed nations suffered from a weak economy, including the United States. More than 23 million people -- a record high -- collected food stamps in the United States.

-- Economic decline in Africa and Latin America.

-- War, drought and turmoil in the Horn of Africa.

-- Civil wars in Liberia, Angola, Mozambique, Sri Lanka, El Salvador, Cambodia, Afghanistan and the Philippines.

-- Floods in China and Cambodia.

-- A cyclone and political unrest in Bangladesh.

-- Cholera and economic deterioration in Peru.

-- Political and economic changes in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union, Mongolia and Nicaragua.

-- Soviet aid no longer going to Cuba, Afghanistan, Mongolia, Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos.

The report also noted reasons for hope. For example, even though more people are hungry today, the proportion of the population that is hungry is decreasing.

"Hunger 1992" also offered ideas that are working to eradicate hunger, such as food aid, agricultural development and political activism.

"The point is not to suggest panaceas, but to attempt to learn from practical experiences," the report says.

The 10 most successful ideas:

-- Food banks, pantries and advocacy efforts to help meet some emergency needs.

-- Food aid that is an immediate response to famine or other emergencies, providing more than a Band-Aid solution.

-- Integration of environmental and developmental issues in food production and for other basic needs.

-- National economic policies to reduce hunger.

-- Demilitarizing and meeting basic needs of people.

- Economic planning by governments.
- Grass-roots community development.
- Partnerships that help low-income communities become self-reliant.
- Intensive grass-roots organization to create political power for the poor.
- Organizing for political change.

Hunger is complex and has no single cause or miracle cure, the report states. However, some general propositions hold true in combating hunger. One proposition is that hungry people need to be involved and have ownership in working for a solution. Another proposition is governmental involvement and support, including demilitarization.

The report "also shows the need for governmental policies that are humane and just," wrote David Beckmann, Bread for the World president, in the report's preface. "The combination of individual, private and collective public efforts is the way we must work together to solve world hunger.

"The wars in the Persian Gulf, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Angola and Cambodia reminded us this past year of the effects of militarization and arms sales on poor people... and showed us what can happen when food is used as a weapon," he continued.

"There is hope," he added. "We can make a difference. Our combined moral vision and practical action can eliminate mass hunger in our lifetime."

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-- By Pam Parry

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