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**WMU leaders fear Ruschlikon issue
will detract from Lottie Moon Offering**

By Susan Todd Doyle

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--At the time of year when Southern Baptists traditionally focus on their support of foreign missions, some missions leaders are concerned the focus this year may be divided.

Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union leaders don't want to see Southern Baptists focus all their attention, energy and efforts on recent action taken by Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, said Dellanna O'Brien, WMU executive director.

They especially don't want the Week of Prayer for Foreign Missions and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions to get overshadowed by this issue.

"While the recent action by FMB trustees to discontinue funding to the Ruschlikon seminary is a critical issue, we cannot allow it to sidetrack us from the greater issue of unconditional support for our foreign missions force," said O'Brien.

FMB trustees voted Oct. 9 to cut all funding slated for the Swiss seminary. Trustees had earlier agreed to continue contributions to the school through 1992 and then begin a gradual decrease of funding. The action taken by FMB trustees will cost the seminary \$365,000 during 1992 -- about 40 percent of the seminary's total budget.

"The most important thing for Southern Baptists to remember right now is that we have committed to support more than 3,900 foreign missionaries in 121 countries around the world," she said. "We have promised to them that we will hold the ropes. We're not doing it if we don't provide for them financially.

"We cannot allow the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to be overshadowed by our family disagreements," O'Brien said.

This year's Lottie Moon Christmas Offering goal is \$84 million.

"This is not a self-serving plea," O'Brien said. "Our concern is for our missionaries." The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions is used entirely to support the work of foreign missions. None of the offering is received or used by WMU or the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

"Never before have I seen such a groundswell of response by Southern Baptists about a missions issue as I have seen in recent weeks. I am convinced that people are responding -- both pro and con -- about the FMB trustees' action because they care about missions," O'Brien said.

"I just hope Southern Baptists won't direct all their focus on this one issue, because there is a greater one at hand -- a whole world without Christ. We cannot not think about the rest of the world."

The receipts for last year's offering fell short of the \$86 million goal. But perhaps even more significantly, the receipts in 1990 were less than the receipts for 1989. This downfall in giving was the first time since 1937 that the gifts to the Lottie Moon offering were less than the previous year's offering.

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"If we don't meet this year's goal of \$84 million, it will be the 10th consecutive year the goal has not been met," O'Brien said.

"God forbid that we celebrate this 'anniversary' because our energy and attention were focused on Ruschlikon only."

This year's call for Southern Baptists to remember a commitment to support foreign missionaries is not a first. Pleas for support first began happening 103 years ago.

Lottie Moon, one of the best-known of all Southern Baptist foreign missionaries, was the first woman missionary to be fully appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. The year was 1873. Working in China without furlough, often alone, for 11 years, Moon requested the women of WMU to take an offering at Christmas time in 1888 to send two women missionaries to relieve her.

Receipts for that offering, taken in 1888, surpassed the goal of \$2,000. The final offering of \$3,315.26 was enough to send three women missionaries to China.

Within four years, the observance of the Week of Prayer was connected with the offering for foreign missions and became a yearly event in SBC life.

Years later, women again rallied around the name of Lottie Moon. In 1927, the FMB faced mounting debt. The financial drain caused FMB leaders to start bringing missionaries home.

This recall of missionaries "moved WMU to drastic action," stated Catherine Allen in "A Century to Celebrate," a history of WMU.

WMU designated \$48,000 of the next Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to send 40 missionaries back to their mission fields. WMU instructed the FMB to send back 20 older missionaries and 20 younger missionaries. WMU participated in the selection of these missionaries and guaranteed their salaries for the years ahead.

"It is like a mother caring for her children when the husband has met with reverses," said Kathleen Mallory, who was WMU executive director at that time.

By 1931, WMU's responsibility for supporting missionaries through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering had grown from 40 missionaries to 100. It wasn't until 1941 that WMU gave up the direct support of what was by then 125 missionaries and allowed the offering to go directly to the FMB for missionaries' salaries.

During the next two decades, WMU continued to be intricately involved in the allocation process with FMB leaders -- deciding how the money given through the offering would be spent.

Today, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions is a churchwide observance which provides about 45 percent of the total FMB budget. WMU leaders no longer participate in the allocation of the offering. However, WMU remains a primary promoter of the offering, along with Brotherhood and the FMB.

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19 Kazakh business interns
stay in homes of Baptists

By Jim Newton

Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--Nineteen business interns from the Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan studied American market economy principles and lived in the homes of Atlanta Baptists as part of a two-week exchange program that participants said changed their lives and perceptions.

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Fifteen of the 19 Kazakhs stayed with members of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta. The four others stayed in homes of other Atlanta Baptists.

Southern Baptists initiated the project through the Central Asian Foundation, a non-profit corporation which promotes educational and cultural exchange, humanitarian aid and economic development in Kazakhstan and other central Asian republics of the Soviet Union.

Organizers of the Atlanta business intern project said the results exceeded their expectations and hopes, primarily because host families became involved in the lives of the interns who stayed in their homes.

Jim and Jane Warren, coordinators for the project, agreed "this has changed both the lives of the host families, and the lives of the interns, as they developed close friendship ties across cultural and international barriers."

Warren, a member of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church and president of Spear Contract Services Inc., said 31 volunteers responded within three days after the pastor, Bryant Wright, asked church members to volunteer as host families.

During a fellowship meal for the interns and their host families at Johnson Ferry church, Wright answered a score of questions from interns about Christianity and religion.

Wright said the project offered an exciting opportunity for Baptists to demonstrate the love of God by showing how Christians live their faith in their work and in their homes.

The 19 Kazakh interns went to work each day with their host, and studied market economy principles and American business organizational methods. They toured the international headquarters of Coca-Cola and Chick-fil-A Inc and attended executive international business seminars at Emory University and sessions of an international conference sponsored by former President Jimmy Carter.

They also attended a basketball game between Georgia State University and the Soviet Army team from Kazakhstan. Several of the Kazakh interns assumed the roles of cheer leaders for the visiting team from their hometown, Alma-Ata.

Former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young told the group he was especially pleased Atlanta was chosen as the host city for the project as Soviet leaders study ways "to move from a Marxist economy to a market economy."

Young, former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations and a former Disciples of Christ pastor, urged the interns not only to study American business methods, but to learn about the values of family and faith in God.

The Atlanta project is a follow-up to the first Kazakh-American Cultural Festival which took place in Alma-Ata, the capital of Kazakhstan, June 21-July 6. About 330 Americans and more than 100,000 Kazakhs participated in the festival. A second cultural festival is being planned in Pennsylvania and other states, May 10-25, 1992, when about 300 Kazakhs are expected to travel to the United States.

"He inhabited our hearts," host family says of Kazakh intern

By Jim Newton

ATLANTA (BP)--Fay Runnion wept unashamedly when she said goodbye to her Kazakh friend, Timour Jankobaev.

In just two weeks, the 24-year-old Kazakh business intern had become an adopted member of the Runnion family.

"We opened our home to him, but he inhabited our hearts," Mrs. Runnion sniffled as Jankobaev boarded the plane to return to the Republic of Kazakhstan in the Soviet Union.

"I'm not going to say goodbye," Jankobaev told the Runnions at the airport. "We will always be together, because you are in my heart, and I am in yours."

It was an emotion-packed moment at Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport when 19 business interns from Kazakhstan said goodbye to the host families. The interns spent two weeks studying market economy principles practiced by Atlanta corporations.

It was amazing how the Soviet interns and their host families bonded in friendship during the brief period, said Jim Warren, president of Spear Contract Services Inc. and coordinator of the project sponsored by the Central Asia Foundation. All the interns stayed in the homes of Baptist families, most of them members of Johnson Ferry Baptist Church in Marietta, Ga.

Jankobaev's experience with the Runnion family was typical.

Every day, Jankobaev went to work with Dan Runnion, a senior vice president at the American Security Corp., an international company which specializes in insurance and financial services to consumer banks.

Each evening, Jankobaev went home with Runnion and became a part of the family. He played Chinese checkers nearly every night with 11-year-old Jennifer, and chess with 12-year-old Andrew. "If anything, he saw love in our home, and that seemed to surprise him so much," said Mrs. Runnion.

The project also personalized international relations for the Runnions. "I no longer think of the Soviet Union as a country," Mrs. Runnion confided. "Now the Soviet Union has a face, and it is the face of Timour Jankobaev. They are just like us. Timour sounded just like Dan Runnion at age 24."

Runnion said he tried to get Jankobaev to focus on the values of integrity and honesty in business. Jankobaev said it was a scary responsibility to try to take such concepts into a society where they do not understand such issues and where a mindset of fear must be confronted.

When he asked Runnion how he could have integrity in his business in Kazakhstan, Runnion told him, "You have to have a faith that is unshakable."

At the visit to Chick-fil-A Corp., Jankobaev heard Truett Cathey, the president, talk about the Christian principles upon which he founded and operates his fast-food outlets. Runnion told Jankobaev that Cathey has found "the key" to running a business with integrity, and that key is faith in God.

Throughout the visit, Jankobaev told the Runnions he considers himself "a good Catholic," even though he had never attended worship or mass at a Catholic church. He said he reads the Bible and believes it is a "book of wisdom for practical living."

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Jankobaev attended worship services at Johnson Ferry Baptist Church where Runnion is a deacon, and took notes when the pastor, Bryan Wright, said Jesus Christ is the greatest gift God has ever bestowed upon mankind.

Jankobaev told the Runnions later that he likes the Bible as a book of wisdom, but he could not "accept Jesus as the cornerstone."

Mrs. Runnion asked Jankobaev what would happen if the cornerstone were removed from a building. Jankobaev, whose father is in the construction business, admitted that the building would collapse.

"Well, if you reject Jesus, you might as well just throw the whole Bible out," Mrs. Runnion responded.

As going-away gifts, the Runnions gave Jankobaev a photo album with 200 pictures of his trip, a leather-bound Bible with his name engraved on the front, and a Sony Walkman with a cassette recording of Handel's Messiah. They urged him to listen to the Messiah, and to read the Gospel of John on his 20-hour plane trip back to the Soviet Union.

"We had a divine appointment for two weeks," Mrs. Runnion said. "This stranger came into our lives who had never been in a Christian home before. And none of us will ever be the same."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Atlanta bureau of Baptist Press.

Baptists attend Soviet nuclear
site closing, deliver supplies

By Beth Sammons

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ALMA-ATA, Kazakhstan (BP)--Six Southern Baptists recently joined in celebrating the closing of a nuclear test site in the Soviet city of Semipalatinsk.

The Christian delegation also introduced a sampling of approximately \$1 million worth of medical supplies sent by Southern Baptists to Soviet Central Asia. The delegation represented the Southern Baptist aid organization Cooperative Services International, which works through the Central Asian Foundation in the Soviet republic of Kazakhstan.

They attended the nuclear test site closing ceremonies in October at the invitation of the Union of Nuclear Tests Victims and the Nevada-Semipalatinsk Movement. The trip gave the Southern Baptist workers an opportunity to visit an area children's hospital and observe the effects of nuclear testing on people, said Ed Mason. Mason is a Southern Baptist volunteer from Tallahassee, Fla., who works in Kazkhstan.

Other delegation members were Mason's wife, Vi, and fellow volunteers Kitty Bird from Asheville, N.C., Kevin and Kristina Buss of Corpus Christi, Texas, and Lou Richie of St. Petersburg, Fla.

Mason was invited to speak several times during the ceremonies. He congratulated the people of Kazakhstan and explained the medical gift from "Christians in America."

"The purpose of the medicine is to help alleviate suffering, but it also opens up the opportunity to share Christ's love with the people -- people who for 70 years have been told there is no God and that religion is just an opiate," he said. "I feel anything we do in the way of humanitarian aid gives us good acceptance into an area in which we want to share Christ's love."

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Semipalatinsk is located in the eastern part of Kazakhstan, the second-largest republic in the Soviet Union. The nuclear testing, which began in 1949, has affected the Semipalatinsk, Karaganda and Pavlodar regions. The population of these regions totals approximately 3 million people.

Between 1949 and 1989, when testing was stopped, the overall yield of test explosions was 2,500 times that of the Hiroshima bomb, according to information compiled by the Nevada-Semipalatinsk organization.

More than 500,000 people have been exposed to constant radiation of various doses, and the rate of leukemia deaths in the Semipalatinsk region has grown seven times. The number of deaths due to respiratory cancer has doubled in the past decade. Health officials also have observed a considerable rise in mental retardation.

The Southern Baptists were told virtually everyone in the region suffers from dental problems as a result of the nuclear fallout. A high infant mortality rate exists as well. While visiting the children's hospital, the Baptists observed a number of patients suffering from cancer. They also were disturbed to find the hospital filled with 340 patients; it was originally built for 180.

The hospital in Semipalatinsk was one of several in Kazakhstan to receive a portion of the medicine shipped by Southern Baptists. Hospitals in Pavlodar and Karaganda, other cities affected by the nuclear testing, also have received supplies.

Zaisan, a Soviet city on the Chinese border devastated by an earthquake last year, also will receive aid. Like Semipalatinsk, Zaisan has received very little help from the Soviet government or international community, primarily because of past government secrecy.

While the group was in Semipalatinsk, they were told the humanitarian aid from Southern Baptists was the first to be received. Southern Baptist volunteers also have concentrated their efforts on Aral'sk and Kzyl Orda, two cities surrounding the dying Aral Sea. They reportedly brought the first Christian aid to these areas as well.

Future plans for humanitarian aid include the possibility of bringing Christian doctors and specialists to Aral'sk and Semipalitinsk.

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Beth Sammons, a Southern Baptist, works with the Central Asia Foundation in Kazakhstan.

Baptist vice president
opens doors in Peru

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
11/27/91

DALLAS (BP)--Just as he facilitated the distribution of medical supplies donated by Texas Baptists when a cholera epidemic hit western South America, Carlos Garcia hopes to continue using his position as Peru's second vice president to open other doors in his country for evangelical Christians.

Garcia was in Dallas recently to present to Texas Baptist Men a certificate of appreciation for the more than \$4 million in medical supplies and other aid Texas Baptists sent to Peru earlier this year. He also came to share with TBM Executive Director Bob Dixon the goals of a non-profit ministry organization he has formed.

As a trained attorney and a Baptist pastor, Garcia is equally at home in the legislative and the religious spheres. He served six years as a pastor in Colombia while studying at the seminary in Cali and 16 years in Lima, including two terms as president of the Peruvian Baptist Convention.

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In June, 1990, Garcia was elected to the second vice presidency in an election that also resulted in four evangelical Protestants being elected to the predominantly Catholic nation's Senate and 14 to its House of Representatives.

"It was an historic occasion in my country, unique in all its history," Garcia said. "It was the first time evangelicals successfully entered into the political process.

"People were discouraged and disappointed in the traditional political parties with their close ties to the Catholic church. The people put their confidence and hope in a new people and a new movement."

Since the constitution of Peru calls for two elected vice presidents but does not assign them specific administrative duties, Garcia has the time to continue his ministries and the freedom to write his own job description as an associate head of state.

Garcia said he hopes to integrate the social and political realm of his life with the spiritual side. For example, as he discovers needs in his country that can be met by Christian organizations, he wants to introduce his Christian contacts to his governmental contacts.

Apart from the office of the vice presidency, Garcia currently is spearheading a nationwide Scripture distribution effort as part of Peru's "Year of the Bible" celebration. The interdenominational effort to distribute 800,000 Bibles and New Testaments coincides with the 500th anniversary of Columbus' discovery of the Americas.

"Just as Columbus discovered the New World 500 years ago, we want this to be a year of discovery as millions of Peruvians discover new life in Jesus Christ," Garcia said.

While volunteers from more than 30 denominations distribute bibles door-to-door, Garcia personally is targeting governmental officials, business leaders and professionals who might otherwise not be receptive to a gift of Scripture.

Garcia also has founded a non-profit ministry organization, Cooperative Development for Latin America (CENCADES in Spanish) to assist evangelical church leaders in Peru. The organization has its international headquarters in Lima, Peru, and a branch office in Atlanta, Ga.

Goals of the organization include: developing a nationwide health care network in Peru with strategically located medical clinics staffed by Christian doctors; distributing food to hungry people; offering training opportunities to church leadership; and helping Peruvians develop economic development strategies.

"It's exactly what we've been doing along the Texas-Mexico border for years through River Ministry," said Dixon. He shared with Garcia many of the procedural manuals developed by the Texas Baptist River Ministry.

Dixon said he and Garcia are exploring with Southern Baptist missionaries in Peru specific ways that Texas Baptists may become involved in supporting the goals of CEDCADES.