



BAPTIST PRESS
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January 23, 1969

New Orleans Professor
Resigns Under Protest

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Professor Robert R. Soileau, after 11½ years on the faculty, has resigned his position under protest.

His resignation was announced officially, nearly two months after the resignation was submitted, in a joint statement released in late January by H. Leo Eddleman, president of the seminary, and A. Morgan Brian Jr., president of the board of trustees, both of New Orleans.

Eddleman and Brian said that the major complaints given by professor Soileau (pronounced "swallow") included what he termed "oppressive practices" by the administration and trustees, which resulted in his not being promoted for seven years.

The associate professor of theology, who now is studying on a doctor of philosophy degree at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, gave these three reasons for his resignation in a written statement to Baptist Press:

(1) A conflict with the administration over ideals and principles; (2) The deterioration of the academic climate of the school; and (3) The theological direction the seminary is taking toward a more conservative point of view.

On the first point, Soileau said that the conflict with the administration over ideals and principles "has resulted in administrative and economic pressure being applied to me personally in such a way as to make it impossible to remain. The nature of the pressure raises in my mind serious ethical issues...

"Second, the academic climate of the school has seriously deteriorated. Education is possible only in an atmosphere conducive to open inquiry...Where students are warned to avoid certain professors and books, where they are encouraged to challenge and even attack professors who present ideas different from their own, and where, in some cases, they are encouraged to walk out of classes where they do not agree with the point of view of the professor, the purpose of an academic institution and an education is completely thwarted.

"Such conditions now exist at New Orleans Seminary," Soileau continued...."This deplorable situation is due to the influence of one faculty member who has enjoyed favor and full support from the administration.

"Third," he said, "the theological direction of the school makes it impossible for me to continue. Many Southern Baptists remember the J. Frank Norris era. The bitterness and divisiveness of that period ought not to be revived.

"The administration's play for the support of certain extreme conservative forces has led to the present situation," he stated.

President Eddleman, in replying to these reasons stated in a letter of resignation, said that he would not even attempt to answer all of his statements in detail because "your letter of resignation is so replete with inaccuracies, quotations out of context, quotations without concomitant contingencies, not to mention conversations most assuredly projected in a conditional context of the subjunctive mood."

In their joint statement, Eddleman and Brian specifically replied to Soileau's complaint of not being promoted, giving these reasons:

"1. Eight other New Orleans Seminary faculty members served or now serve in the rank of associate professor for periods ranging from five to 13 years.

"2. The academic sources relied on most by the administration and trustees for initiating faculty promotions...did not recommend him for promotion."

Brian, an attorney affiliated with the New Orleans firm of Deutsch, Kerrign and Stiles, said in a telephone interview that Soileau had been carrying on an intensive letter-writing campaign since his resignation, requesting investigations of the matter by both the American Association of Theological Schools (AATS) and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the two agencies which accredit the seminary.

"We are not going to let the AATS put us on the witness stand over the fact that a faculty member has resigned," Brian said.

Contacted in Dayton, Ohio, the executive director of the American Association of Theological Schools, Jesse H. Ziegler, stated that the association has scheduled a regular ten-year self-study and re-evaluation of New Orleans Seminary this spring, in which the association will "look at all aspects of the life and operation of the school."

He explained that three years ago, the association decided to schedule all seminaries with doctoral programs during the first five years. "We are simply scheduling New Orleans Seminary this spring, and at that time, all aspects of the school will be examined," including the adequacy of the faculty, the quality of the student body, the quality of the administration, the tone of the school, and the resignation of professors.

Eddleman said after correspondence with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools that the case had been closed by that accrediting agency, but the executive director of the association, Gordon W. Sweet of Atlanta, said that the case never really had been opened, adding that the Southern Association does not have an adequate staff to conduct such investigations.

Reaction among the faculty members and student body here to Soileau's resignation was mixed, and difficult to determine.

Soileau said in a telephone interview the faculty members who had talked to him reacted with "disappointment, regret, and sympathy to his point of view."

When asked of faculty response to the resignation, Eddleman said they had been very faithful, and he had seen a perceptible intensification of their loyalty to the administration.

The student body appeared to be divided. A total of 240 of the seminary's 700-plus students signed a statement of appreciation for Soileau as a man "of the utmost honesty and integrity" and expressing "deep regret" for the irreplaceable loss caused by his resignation.

Another factor in his resignation, said Soileau in his written statement to Baptist Press, was a conflict with another faculty member "who has been promoted, pushed and rewarded for his attacks on professors, individuals, institutions, and agencies of the entire convention."

Brian, in an interview, said that if Soileau had a complaint, he should have come to the board of trustees and requested a hearing, instead of making oblique approaches, initiating a letter-writing campaign, and sending out his own news release.

Brian denied that the board or the administration had taken any kind of pressure, economic or otherwise, against Soileau or anyone else. "In fact, the Executive Committee voted to give him pay three months beyond his Jan. 13 termination date," Brian said.

He added that there "is a definite desire on the part of the trustees and the administration to be strongly conservative theologically," and "we are dedicated to that position."

Eddleman added that the board is only composed of members elected by the Southern Baptist Convention on the recommendation of the committee on boards, and this conservatism is a reflection of the makeup of the SBC.

Eddleman added that he did not feel that the views of Soileau, who comprised only one forty-fourth of the faculty, should carry much weight with the entire SBC.

Although Eddleman said he felt Soileau was "anti-denomination", the resigning professor said that his resignation was not from the denomination and its program. "My roots in Baptist soil are too deep to be destroyed by outside divisive reactionaries," said Soileau.

"Silence, under the present conditions, would signal consent," he concluded. "The very thought of consent under existing conditions is intolerable."

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Survey Finds Unexpected
Amount of Malnutrition

(1-23-69)

WASHINGTON (BP)--Malnutrition exists in an "unexpectedly large proportion" of a sample population of the United States, according to the first part of a government survey on malnutrition among poor Americans.

Officials who have studied the preliminary data based on medical tests of 12,000 individuals in Texas, Louisiana, Kentucky and New York declare that conditions are "worse than expected."

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Senator George McGovern (D., S. Dak.), chairman of the Senate select committee on nutrition and related human needs, said he was "shocked" by the report.

Arnold E. Schaefer, chief of the nutrition program of the U. S. Public Health Service, told the Senate committee that the study thus far has turned up results "similar to and in some cases worse than" those found in developing countries of the world.

No cases of actual "starvation" have been found, Schaefer said. But the condition of some pre-school children makes them "prime candidates for starvation," he added.

The nutrition expert cited seven cases diagnosed by physicians as kwashiorkor, a severe protein and multiple nutrient deficiency, and marasmus, primarily a choleric deficiency. "We did not expect to find such cases in our survey," he said.

The public health report to the Senate committee studying malnutrition was based largely on preliminary data from Texas, where the nutrition survey has been completed. From 20 to 25 percent of the data came from Louisiana where the study is still in progress. The remainder (about 15 percent) is from Kentucky and New York.

Within each state, extensive medical tests were made in a random selection of families in low income areas. Over 50 percent of the families examined had incomes under \$3000. One half of these had four or more family members. Of the sample tested so far, 55 percent of the families have been Negro and 25 percent Spanish-American.

Schaefer labeled as "nutritional risks" from 15 to 20 percent of the poor persons examined to date. This means that they are lacking in one or more nutrient essential to noursih life.

Specifically, the preliminary data in the nutrition survey show the following:

* Anemia - One third of the children under six years of age had hemoglobin levels less than that considered by physicians to need treatment. Of the total group tested, 15 percent were anemic.

* Growth retardation - Children between birth and three years of age fell below the average height reported for children in the U.S. Retarded bone growth was found in 3½ percent of these children.

* Vitamin A deficiency - One-third of the children from one to six years had unacceptable levels. Of the entire population sample, 13 percent were deficient.

* Vitamin C deficiency - Serum Vitamin C levels were less than acceptable in 12 to 16 percent of all age groups. Four percent of the total had scorbutic (related to scurvy) type gums.

* Vitamin D deficiency - Of children from birth to six years old, 3.7 percent showed evidence of this deficiency. Eighteen cases of rickets were diagnosed.

* Goiter - Five percent of the population examined showed an enlarged thyroid gland associated with low iodine intake. In Texas the studies found that 40 percent of the local markets failed to stock iodized salt even though there is no price differential.

Dental problems - Most of those examined had dental conditions related to undernutrition and/or inadequate medical attention.

The national nutrition survey was authorized by Congress in 1967 after reports of wide-spread malnutrition were made by private citizens. Other states included in the first phase of the survey are Michigan, California, Washington, South Carolina, West Virginia and Massachusetts.

Schaefer said the ten states were selected to represent broad geographical representations and rural and urban populations. The diversity of economic, ethnic and socio-cultural patterns were also considered.

Other factors influencing the advisory committee's choice of states were the concentration of migrant labor, infant and maternal mortality rates and the variation in types of food distribution and welfare programs.

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New Teen Radio Program
Produced By Baptists

(1-23-69)

FORT WORTH (BP)--The Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission here has launched a new half-hour musical teen-talk program called "PowerLine" in an effort to minister to the modern teenager through his close companion, the transistor radio.

"PowerLine," divided into three segments to permit drop-in commercials, follows the "top-40 format" that captivates the ear of so many teenage listeners, commission officials said.

It features the song hits of the week from the "hot 100" charts published by Variety, Billboard and Cashbox, plus several "'PowerLine' chargers," the program's picks of coming hits.

Interviews with top recording artists are woven into the show, and there's a liberal sprinkling of chatter about the latest tunes, trends and fads, said commission officials.

On the serious side, a noted youth counselor gives hints on how to cope with the kinds of problems every teenager faces in today's world.

The first programs feature Charlie Shedd, author of *The Stork Is Dead*, and a nationally-known authority on teen sex problems.

"'PowerLine' majors on timeliness," said Paul M. Stevens, director of the SBC Radio and Television Commission here. He explained that the show is recorded on Friday and air mailed free to the stations using it for broadcast Monday through Friday of the following week.

The show is offered to only one "top 40" station in each market area. "Top 40" stations feature especially the hit songs popular among teens.

Stevens said that "PowerLine" represents an expanded use of the strategy adopted by the commission years ago with the production of the adult music-interview variety program called "MasterControl". This strategy, he said, calls for program formats and content that meet people on their own ground, entertain them, get them interested, and then lead them gently to think about their relationship with God.

When teenagers write in to the commission responding to the new program, they will receive not only expert advice from a trained counselor on their particular problem, but also will get materials designed to enrich their lives, Stevens said.

"PowerLine" has as its motto, "Presented in the hope that teenagers will find in each program sources of power for living life to the fullest, morally and spiritually."



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JAN 24 1969
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