



BAPTIST PRESS

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September 11, 1973

Texas Baptists Pick James Landes As Chief Executive

DALLAS (BP)--James H. Landes, pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Tex., since 1968, has been elected executive secretary by the executive board of the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The executive board represents about 4,400 Southern Baptist churches and missions, with two million members, in the largest state Southern Baptist convention.

The name of Landes, a former first vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention, was presented to the 192-member board by Jimmy R. Allen, pastor of First Baptist Church, San Antonio, and chairman of a 14-member nominating committee.

Landes is expected to succeed T.A. Patterson, who retires Dec. 31 after 13 years service, the longest continuous term in the office since a Baptist convention was organized in Texas in 1848.

As executive secretary for Texas Baptists Landes will serve as administrative head of widespread missionary, benevolent and educational ministries coordinated by the executive board.

In an advisory capacity, he will work with the administrators and presidents of nine schools, four children's homes and eight hospitals owned and operated by Texas Baptists and undergirded by the annual Cooperative Program budget.

Landes, a native of Lewisville, Ark., was president of Hardin-Simmons University, a Baptist school in Abilene, Tex., 1963-66, and he has served as pastor of three other churches in Texas and one in Birmingham, Ala.

He was graduated from Ouachita Baptist College (now Ouachita Baptist University) in Arkadelphia, Ark., and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth. He holds honorary doctorates from three schools.

Landes has served as Texas Baptist Convention president and as a member and chairman of the Texas Baptist executive board.

He and his wife, the former Irene Pearson of Fayetteville, Ark., have one daughter, Ruth Pitts, a teacher in Richardson.

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BP PHOTO mailed to state Baptist paper editors

Annie Armstrong Offering
Goal Set for \$7,200,000

9/11/73

BIRMINGHAM (BP)--Southern Baptists have set a goal of \$7,200,000 for their special offering for home missions in 1974.

The goal was set by Woman's Missionary Union, the Southern Baptist auxiliary which sponsors the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for Home Missions, in consultation with leaders of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Miss Alma Hunt, WMU executive secretary, said the 1973 offering, which closes Dec. 31, has reached \$6,515,000. "We hope funds will continue to come in so the 1973 goal of \$6,600,000 will be reached," Miss Hunt said.

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The current total is an 11.5 per cent increase over total offerings at this date a year ago. A comparable percentage of increase for 1974 would exceed the goal of \$7,200,000.

The Annie Armstrong Easter Offering will be launched by a week of prayer for home missions, March 3-10, 1974. The theme for the observance will be "In Him is Life."

The home missions emphasis is promoted in churches by WMU and the SBC Brotherhood Commission, the missions organization for men and boys.

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Wrapup

Black, White Baptists
Make "Great Strides"

9/11/73

By the Baptist Press

Great strides have been made in closer relations between Southern Baptists and the Progressive National (black) Baptist Convention, L. Venchael Booth, PNBC president said in an interview in Jackson, Miss., following the black body's annual meeting there.

The 12th annual meeting of the 550,000-member PNBC, which has been described as a convention of "firsts," met at the same time two other nationwide black bodies held annual conventions--the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., in Los Angeles, and the National Baptist Convention of America in Chicago.

Booth told Jay Thrasher, religion editor of the Clarion-Ledger in Jackson, that the Southern Baptist Convention has long had a department for work with black Baptist groups at the SBC Home Mission Board but that there had been very little contact between Progressive National Baptists and that department so far.

"Our philosophy is we help ourselves first, then go to others for help," said Booth in explaining the PNBC's policy of "not running to anyone with our hand out."

Progressive National Baptists have become significant in number in Southern Baptist areas only recently, he said, noting that the early membership was concentrated in the Northwest and Midwest.

Resolutions and speeches at all three conventions, each of which has a few churches dually aligned with Southern Baptists, touched on the Watergate controversy, according to reports from Dan Thrapp of the Los Angeles Times and Clarence Page of the Chicago Tribune.

Joseph H. Jackson, president of the 6.4-million-member NBC, U.S.A., Inc., largest black denomination in America, said in Los Angeles that Watergate reflects America's sins upon other countries through such procedures as spy networks, now being turned by certain officials against the American public.

Watergate, he said, has spawned a "civil struggle" and "this struggle, if not checked, can impeach more than the President--it can impeach our American legacy."

But James C. Sams, president of the 2.5-million-member NBC of America advised some 2,500 messengers in Chicago to pay less attention to the Watergate scandal.

"We hear more about Watergate than we do about Jesus," he said. "Don't spend your time worrying about what's going on in Washington. Are all thieves in Washington? I admonish you all, advising you to go back and clean up your own homes, town and churches. Watergate is a small part of God's judgement which we all must face."

Among the firsts occurring during the four-day PNBC gathering in Jackson, was the first luncheon meeting for black Baptist leaders hosted by a president of the Southern Baptist Convention.

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SBC President Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., told black leaders at the luncheon that he has personally witnessed significant progress in relations between black and white Baptists in recent years, including a strengthened sense of brotherhood on his own part.

Cooper, who also spoke at the black Baptist meetings in Los Angeles and Chicago, told PNBC messengers that he foresees more extensive coordination between the two bodies in the future.

He said an excellent project for the PNBC would be to send missionaries to Nigeria, a country now closed to new SBC missionaries.

"We can no longer go into Nigeria, but I believe you can," he said.

"We envision a cooperative effort with the Southern Baptist Convention in areas where they're no longer permitted to serve," Booth told Thrasher in accepting Cooper's challenge.

"In the area of foreign missions, we were able to make a substantial contribution to the starving nations of Africa, which was one of our objectives," Booth said.

"We have laid groundwork," he continued, "for the development of a full-time executive secretary to be selected and installed in home mission work. In the past, this has been more of a volunteer, non-professional role."

Other firsts recorded at the PNBC convention included the passage of the first retirement plan for full-time employes of the denomination's churches, the first national convention of blacks ever held in the capital city of Mississippi, the largest convention (some 3,500 registered messengers) in the denomination's brief history and the largest convention in Jackson history.

Aaron Henry, president of the Mississippi chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, told PNBC messengers that tremendous progress has been made in recent years in the area of race relations and predicted little or no trouble during the PNBC visit to Jackson.

Booth, a native of rural Covington County, Miss., said, "Many of the people now feel uplifted because of the hospitality shown in Jackson and, as a consequence, many people will now be returning for other activities.

"We made great strides not only in achieving some of our convention objectives, but we made great strides in having come to Jackson and introducing many people to an area of the country that they had only read and heard about and had many false impressions of," Booth said.

Booth, now pastor of Zion Baptist Church, Cincinnati, Ohio, was honored by Mississippi Governor William Waller at a pre-convention session with the Governor's Outstanding Mississippian Award in recognition of his "international leadership" in the field of religion.

In Los Angeles, another NAACP leader, the body's executive director, Roy Wilkins, said a sinister movement exists to label black children genetically inferior to white children.

"A very present danger is the mobilizing of the idea that black children...will never be equal to whites," Wilkins said at an NBC U.S.A., Inc., banquet for youth.

"In the prestigious universities of this country and in England and in forbidding tomes in scholarly journals on the printing presses, this poisonous and wholly untrue thesis is being readied for use in more popular journals, in boards of education and in legislation," he said.

Jackson said "there are many of us (blacks) today who still believe in the superiority of whatever is white, and we often display this negative attitude by worshipping what is black.

"This is an aspect of an inferiority complex," he continued. "It is reflected by American citizens who now believe they can best serve as first class citizens of the United States by holding citizenship in another country."

Jackson later explained he was referring to "those among us who advocate adding to American citizenship, that of say, Uganda or Liberia."

"In the category of responsibilities, one cannot be loyal and trusted citizen of two countries," he said.

By projection he added that black Baptists, many of whom hold "dual memberships" in the National Baptist and some other Baptist denomination, may be mistaken in doing so.

"Negro Baptists with dual membership want two sets of privileges without bearing two sets of corresponding responsibilities," he said.

"The church must do more than serve as a protest unit of society," Jackson noted. "It must help people create units and movements and structures that can be used and used well in the cause of production."

He added that "an anti-white philosophy does not render any people pro-black...If Negro Americans are to meet together in the cause of freedom, they must find a constructive, dynamic and creative common denominator that will restore unity.

Both Wilkins and Los Angeles' black mayor, Tom Bradley, talked about responsibility of the church.

Bradley credited the church with placing him in office in a city with less than 20 per cent blacks in its population. He said his election "happened because the church has laid the stepping stones for where we are today."

Wilkins said the church and the NAACP have been "partners" for more than 60 years.

"The church and the NAACP have a mission," said Wilkins.

He defined the mission as raising the median family income for blacks from the present \$6,854 closer to the white median of \$11,549, pointing out that the gap between the two is widening rather than narrowing.

He asked too for help "in equalizing access to the best education" for blacks, in obtaining decent housing, unrestricted as to location, and in fighting crime.

"Every statistic shows that Negro Americans suffer more at the hands of criminals than any other segment of the population," Wilkins said.

"We will be helping ourselves, as well as society generally, if we not only condemn crime, but turn our faces against it and actively work to cut crime to the minimum."

Wilkins said that the current figure of 2,600 elected black officials in this country "should be doubled," and urged the church to help in voter registration and in marshalling "the full power of our electorate, not only to elect qualified black men to office, but to elevate good government for the whole community."

Conceding that America is "in trouble, bad trouble," and that "we are sick and uneasy as a nation," Wilkins said that the trouble may stem from too much trust in the system and in public officials.

Jackson called for renewed faith in America and for Negroes to develop programs of fresh creativity and responsibility.

"God wills to save America," he assured his audience.

"But if he cannot save us with plenty, he will visit us with famine, floods and other privations that will bring us to our knees, and show us we cannot make it without him."