



BAPTIST PRESS

News & Advice of the Southern Baptist Convention

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October 25, 1973

James V. Lackey Resigns
Stewardship Commission Post

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NASHVILLE (BP)--James V. Lackey, executive director-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission since 1971, has resigned.

The Stewardship Commission's executive committee, which met here to consider the resignation, announced "regretful acceptance." They also designated Michael L. Speer, associate executive director-treasurer, as acting executive director-treasurer while they seek a replacement.

Paul Cates of Lubbock, Tex., executive committee chairman, stressed that there was "no moral or legal involvement" in the decision but that Lackey, who joined the commission in 1962, "simply felt that this was the Lord's will for him at this time."

Lackey explained, "For some time I have felt mentally and physically drained and in fairness to the Stewardship Commission, whose work and ministry I believe in and support, and in the interest of my family and for my own well-being I felt it best to resign."

"It was a difficult decision to make, especially after having been in denominational work for more than 20 years, including 11 enjoyable years with the Stewardship Commission," Lackey said. "Yet I believe God will bring good to all concerned from my decision. I am in no hurry to announce specific future plans until I have had time to rest."

Lackey, 44, a native Oklahoman, spent more than nine years as superintendent of young people's work in the Sunday school department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board before joining the Stewardship Commission as director of stewardship development.

Before that Lackey, son of T. B. Lackey, former executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, served churches in Oklahoma and Texas as educational director.

He is a graduate of Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee, and holds master and doctor of religious education degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

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Radio-TV Commission
Begins Program for Blacks

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10/25/73

FORT WORTH (BP)--"Soulssearchers," a 30-minute rhythm and blues program designed specifically for black audiences and playing primarily on black stations, made its debut in late October on seven radio stations.

Produced and syndicated by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, the black-oriented show has a black co-producer, Don Huggins. Roy Lee Johnson of Fort Worth's KNOK Radio and Willie Monroe of Dallas-Fort Worth's WBAP-TV, are the show's co-hosts.

"The Radio and Television Commission has turned its production personnel and facilities to 'Soulssearchers' in an attempt to respond to requests from black Christians for a radio program aimed at the black community," said Paul M. Stevens, Radio-TV Commission president.

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"We have conferred from the start with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board concerning the type of gospel-centered program that is needed. It is our desire to let this be the beginning of a relationship with our black Baptist brethren."

"Soulsearchers" is fashioned loosely after the style of "Powerline," a Radio-TV Commission show for youth which has proven so popular with the industry that it is heard on 777 radio stations.

Both "Soulsearchers" and "Powerline" have strong religious messages and problem panels to answer questions from listeners. The "Soulsearchers" panel is composed of blacks enlisted from throughout the nation to answer questions related specifically to the black experience.

Johnson, in KNOK's public relations department, joined the station after graduation from high school in Fort Worth, a stint in the Air Force and broadcast training at Trimble Technical Institute.

Monroe, who grew up in Los Angeles, was graduated from the University of California at Berkeley, worked on a San Francisco newspaper and traveled in Europe and Africa. His involvement in a summer study program at New York's Columbia University led to his position as newscaster with WBAP-TV.

Both men are pleased about "Soulsearchers" but recognize possible pitfalls to be avoided.

"There's the problem of appealing to young blacks and delivering a message in their language and culture without being phoney or condescending," said Johnson. He continued firmly, "We are not going to condescend."

"The young blacks I've talked with need models, someone achieving, whom they can observe and say to themselves, 'I can aspire to that.' We want this program to relate, to encourage, to inspire and, if necessary, to educate," said Monroe.

Stations where "Soulsearchers" has already been scheduled include WCAR, Detroit; WRNO-FM, New Orleans; WSGN, Birmingham; WLOU, Louisville, Ky.; WNAZ, Nashville; KDNT, Denton, Tex., and WKRO, Cairo, Ill.

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Seminary Professor
Speaks for Amnesty

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10/25/73

By James Lee Young

NASHVILLE (BP)--Though Southern Baptists have some people who speak prophetically, "my own denomination won't even say it's for amnesty" for conscientious objectors who fled military service during the Vietnam War, Henlee Barnette, professor of ethics at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., said here.

Lamenting that Southern Baptists waited until "it became safe to do so" to take a stand for racial justice, Barnette said, "If our 12 million people (Southern Baptists) would take a stand for amnesty, it would make a great difference in this country."

One of several speakers at an Interfaith Consultation on Amnesty at George Peabody College here, Barnette said he is a "selective conscientious objector," adding, "We were all against Hitler and Nazism. There was a vast difference between that war and the Vietnam conflict," he said.

The seminary professor and author said one of his own sons "resisted the draft and refused to participate in the Indochina War." Barnette quoted his son as saying, "When faced with the choice of taking human life unjustly or leaving my country, perhaps forever, I did not hesitate to do the latter." Barnette's son and daughter-in-law were granted residence in Sweden.

Another son was a captain in the U.S. Air Force who served honorably with tours in Vietnam. Barnette said both of his sons showed courage to stand by their convictions.

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Noting that "Baptists have always been patriotic Americans," Barnette said most Baptists supported the Revolutionary War "because they were a persecuted group and had a goal of freedom."

He continued, "We have some people in our denomination able to perceive when politicians are leading us into unjust wars. Politicians ought not to be given blank checks."

Calling for Southern Baptists to take a positive stand on the issue, Barnette said, "Amnesty is as American as apple pie. . . Presidents George Washington, John Adams, Abraham Lincoln, Andrew Johnson, Teddy Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Calvin Coolidge and Harry Truman all granted amnesty to persons guilty of desertion, insurrection and other offenses."

"Most major denominations in this country are on record for amnesty," Barnette continued, "and even the American Legion and some other veterans' organizations are for some form of amnesty for Vietnam war draft resisters."

His comments were made during a question and answer period following the professor's discussion of theological and ethical dimensions of amnesty. He was joined on the program by George Edwards, professor of New Testament from Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, who discussed "An Amnesty Hermeneutic."

Southern Baptists have not taken a firm stand on amnesty in convention since 1946 when they passed a resolution urging the President of the United States and the military authorities to "grant amnesty at the earliest possible moment to the conscientious objectors still held in camps or prisons." Later another SBC resolution simply called on Southern Baptists to individually study the amnesty question and make personal decisions on it.

At the 1972 SBC annual meeting in Philadelphia, a resolution on amnesty was ~~passed~~ ^{proposed but} tabled noting that "many young men, some because of religious beliefs, have conscientiously opposed this (the Vietnam) war to the extent of going into exile in foreign countries to avoid the draft that supports the war. . ."

The resolution further stated, "We urge Southern Baptists to study carefully and prayerfully, in the Spirit of Christ, the various amnesty proposals, including the post-World War II policy of considering individual amnesty cases on their merits, and other methods of reconciling Americans within our boundaries with those who have chosen exile, in order to ensure justice for all. . . It further resolved that Southern Baptists be urged to communicate their views to their legislative representatives and the President."

Barnette in his talk here said, "Amnesty is a religious and ethical issue as well as a political one. When there is a conflict between the claims of Caesar and of Christ, the Christian must obey Christ. . ."

"There are some things that belong exclusively to God such as one's loyalty and conscience. . . The Bible and tradition clearly teach that God alone is the Lord of conscience," Barnette said.