



--FEATURES
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SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

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Determined Volunteer
Makes Things Happen

By Erich Bridges

TEMPE, Ariz. (BP)--Frank Callahan is a small man, wiry, like a bantam-weight boxer. A thin mustache outlines his square, jutting jaw, and he combs his hair straight back.

When he walks, he leans forward, like a determined man plowing his way through a snowstorm. His motto: "If you want me to do something, tell me I can't do it."

Actually the motto is a description of Callahan's life. Stricken with severe, disabling diabetes since childhood, he nevertheless managed to become a broker on the New York Stock Exchange, own and operate numerous restaurants around the South, make and lose several small fortunes, and sell "everything from vacuum cleaners to securities" before he reached age 35.

He lost both legs below the knee to diabetes at 40, and within six months was managing a restaurant from a wheelchair. More than 40 subsequent surgical procedures to fit artificial limbs have failed to exhaust his apparently limitless energy reserves.

But all his triumphs over adversity were meaningless, Callahan contends, before his encounter with Christ. "I ran from the Lord for years," he remembers. "I'd walk into hotel rooms and, before unpacking, stick the Gideon Bible face down in the bottom drawer and kick it shut." (He later became a Gideon.)

An invitation to church from an employee changed all that. Callahan went hoping to "get a home cooked meal out of it" and instead heard the Gospel for the first time. He responded by committing his life to Christ.

That was 10 years ago. In the time since, Callahan has enthusiastically witnessed, distributed Bibles with the Gideons, and served First Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., (including a stint as assistant to former pastor Sam Jones.)

In 1977 Callahan married Betty Davidson, a member of the church, and last summer the couple joined Mission Service Corps, the Southern Baptist program to field 5,000 mission volunteers in the United States and around the world.

Supported by members at First Baptist and several other churches in Alabama, the Callahans moved to Arizona in September as volunteer assistants to Mark Daniel, director of missions for the Apache and Estrella Baptist Associations surrounding Phoenix.

Daniel can use the help. The two associations span 5,000 square miles populated by 650,000 people, with another half million expected by 1990. Southern Baptists operate 55 churches and missions in the area, including 14 across the border in Mexico.

Daniel assigned Callahan to serve Faith Baptist Church in downtown Tempe as lay pastor. The 29-member congregation is fighting to survive and grow in a changing urban area, and Callahan has provided a needed infusion of life.

The Callahans have also launched a Bible study in their nearby trailer park, from which two couples have joined Faith Church.

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"I love to share the Lord," Callahan explains, "because for the first 35 years of my life, no human being ever asked me if I knew Christ."

"I suppose I could sit in a rocking chair on disability for the rest of my life and say 'Well, here I am, Lord. When are you going to call me home?' But when he calls me home, I want him to find me laboring in the field."

"There's a man a few trailers down from us who I've been witnessing to. He's under conviction, but he doesn't want anything to do with the Lord. That's okay; I won't give up on him. He reminds me of a fellow I used to know, name of Frank Callahan."

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Women's Evangelism Board
Reaches/Teaches Over 9,000

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ATLANTA (BP)--Members of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board's National Board of Advisors for Women in Evangelism trained more than 9,000 people in lifestyle evangelism last year.

"That's 9,000 more than I could have touched," said Laura Fry Allen, national evangelism consultant with women for the board's Evangelism Section. "And I'm thrilled that state evangelism directors are using them."

The 32-member group discussed strategies of ministry and evangelism for women, and supplemented their own training at its second annual meeting at Stone Mountain Park.

Allen trains board members to conduct lifestyle evangelism workshops, but admits the group "took the initiative to contact their state offices and seek opportunities to share."

"Last year, group members spoke at 16 state conventions and led 85 lifestyle evangelism workshops," he said. "The response has been tremendous."

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Reagan Sidesteps New Right
Criticism on Appointments

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WASHINGTON (BP)--At his first formal news conference since the inauguration, President Reagan declined to pledge that significant numbers of New Right conservatives will be asked to join his administration.

Asked how he assessed public complaints from some conservative Republicans over the lack of such appointments thus far, Reagan replied that some conservatives who had been offered jobs declined them. He went on to say: "But you also have to recognize, there aren't that many positions. After all, look how many votes I had. You can't reward them all."

Angry criticism by top leaders of the New Right over the absence of many long-time Reagan supporters in key jobs had surfaced two days earlier at a Washington seminar sponsored by Edward McAteer's The Roundtable.

Moments before his remarks on reasons why more such appointments have not been made, the president pledged to employ Hispanics and women, among other groups, to make his administration "representative of the country as a whole." He noted only 100 of approximately 1,700 positions in cabinet level agencies have been filled.

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Christian Life Commission
Intensifies 'TV Clean Up'

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A stepped-up campaign to combat immorality on television, using state Baptist newspaper advertisements, an extensive poll and a network of activists, has been announced by the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

The new plan intensifies a four-year effort by the moral concerns agency to clean up television.

Foy Valentine, executive director of the commission, said individual efforts to monitor television usage in the home, writing government representatives and registering both approval and disapproval with local television stations and the networks are important, but not enough.

"If Southern Baptists act together as a group to search out the facts, plan strategy and act in forceful unity, changes will take place," he said.

A key part of the new effort is the use of the Christian Citizenship Corps, a group created a year ago to help Southern Baptists apply the Gospel to the issues of life through responsible involvement in the political process. Currently, it numbers 1,300 members in 43 states.

An advertisement has been sent to the 34 state Baptist newspapers encouraging persons interested in cleaning up television to join their efforts in the organized campaign by joining the corps.

William H. Elder III, director of Christian citizenship development for the commission, said: "The machinery is in place and we are issuing the call to all Southern Baptists who are concerned about television to join with us. Together, we can have more of an impact than any of us can have individually."

Valentine noted the CLC has been campaigning against immorality on television since 1977, but "illicit sex, violence, alcohol consumption and profanity continue to be glamorized daily on television."

He added: "Aggressively immoral forces within the television industry, the misuse of cable television in promoting pornography, and the push for deregulation all signal that the worst in television programming may be yet to come."

The intensified campaign also features an extensive poll of Christian Citizenship Corps members, allowing them to register their opinions on such matters as television programming, deregulation and selective buying to influence television sponsors.

Elder said: "The results of that poll will be released immediately to the press and will be communicated specifically to television power points such as appropriate congressional committees, the White House, the Federal Communications Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, as well as to the television networks and cable television companies."

Valentine said the success of the clean up television effort depends on unifying the voices of Southern Baptists together with other concerned citizens of like mind.

"Television comes to us through the public airwaves," Valentine noted. "Television cannot exist without us, the consumers, and we have both the right and the responsibility to participate forcefully in decisions about which programs finally arrive in our homes.

"We must exercise that right and responsibility not just as individuals but as 13.6 million Southern Baptists working together for more responsible television programming."

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Friend of Former Hostage
Has Relived Own Experience

By John Wilkes

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BRUSSELS, Belgium (BP)--James Kirkendall, pastor of an international Baptist congregation in Brussels, followed the drama of the 52 American hostages in Iran with more than humanitarian interest over the past 14 months.

Kirkendall was on the search committee that brought freed American hostage William Keogh Jr. to Tehran to head the American school there. Keogh was taken hostage while on a return trip to Tehran to pick up school records.

As Kirkendall has tried to maintain contact with and encourage Keogh's family, vivid recollections of his own capture by a Palestinian group 10 years ago have forced comparisons of that experience with the more recent crisis.

Kirkendall at the time was a "circuit riding preacher" living with his family in Beirut. But rather than riding horse, he travelled the vast distances around the Persian Gulf in a jet aircraft, visiting Baptist families--usually associated with American oil companies--who were isolated from regular church attendance.

One day in early April 1970, while on a routine errand in Beirut, he made a wrong turn, drove into a guerrilla-controlled area, and was taken into custody by what a press report called "nonofficial forces."

"They thought they had captured a real live spy, when all they really had was a real live missionary," Kirkendall says in retrospect. "I didn't feel they were my enemies, yet much of what I went through in that 42-hour period, the hostages in Iran have faced repeatedly."

"We still suffer from it, and that lasted only a few days," he admits. "The former hostages will suffer (from their 14-month ordeal) the rest of their lives."

The guerrillas made no attempt to indoctrinate Kirkendall. "They just wanted me to confess I was a spy." He was forced to listen to screaming voices and machine gun fire, which he thinks were tape-recorded.

But other tactics were more intimidating. The guerrillas led him to a machine gun post, blindfolded him and left him standing through midnight hours. Later they made him lie prostrate in the open for 15 hours, with no covering against the night cold and daytime heat. One guerrilla tried to hand him a pistol with one bullet in the chamber, perhaps hoping a suicide attempt would give proof of the culpability he refused to confess.

He even recalls the hours he was guarded by a 12-year-old boy whose hand was bandaged because he had shot himself. "And there he sat, holding the loaded gun on me," Kirkendall says, which did not help his sense of security then or now.

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Three things Kirkendall says he prayed for--that his wife and (four) children would know he was physically unharmed, that he would not succumb to the efforts of the terrorists, and that he could communicate some of God's love to those of the guerrilla band.

"I had no way of knowing about the first, the Lord was gracious to me concerning the second, as to the third, I assumed I was the only missionary my captors ever had met and probably one of the few Christians any of them had spoken with," he says.

Lebanese friends suspected his capture and eventually their word "you have the wrong man" was channeled to the guerrilla group, which after checking the message released Kirkendall.

"But the moment of my release came almost at the hour when prayer meetings were being held in churches across America," he says. "People knew from morning wire service reports of my disappearance, and informed me afterward of their prayers for me."

"It's the quickest way in the world to lose 10 pounds," Kirkendall says today.

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After Three Rounds,
Church Proves Winner

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LIVINGSTON, Tenn. (BP)--Things happen in threes, so they say, and the First Baptist Church in Livingston, Tenn., appears to have demonstrated it again during the past 10 months. The congregation has had a three-fold encounter with Seminary Extension.

In March 1980 they called James L. Ryan as their interim pastor. Ryan is associate director for extension center education at the Seminary Extension Department in Nashville.

During the summer the local Riverside Baptist Association established a Seminary Extension center in the Livingston church and several church members enrolled.

In December the church called Ken Jordan, a Louisiana native, as pastor. Jordan earned a diploma in pastoral ministries from Seminary Extension as a result of 16 courses completed through correspondence study during previous pastorates in Louisiana, Arkansas and Tennessee.

The Livingston, Tenn., church seems to have profited from its exposure to Seminary Extension, but Jordan may have a feeling that events have come full circle. When he first began his studies with Seminary Extension in 1973, he was pastor of a church in Livingston, La.

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