

Richard Nixon Presidential Library  
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Folder List

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>	<u>Document Date</u>	<u>No Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Document Type</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
7	59	8/7/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	White House Staff	Memo	From Butterfield "For Record" RE: phone call from Billy Graham. 2 pgs.
7	59	8/4/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Letter	Copy of a letter from Billy Graham to RN RE: recent Los Angeles Times article. Handwritten notes on original added by unknown. 2 pgs.
7	59		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Newspaper	Copy of an article explaining why RN's connection to Graham gives him an edge over McGovern in the election of 1972. 1 pg.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

August 7, 1972

ADMINISTRATIVELY ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~/PERSONAL

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Telephone Call from Reverend Billy Graham

Billy Graham placed a call to the President late this afternoon from Montreat. I took the call, because the President was meeting with staff members, and learned that Billy sought the President's advice about a matter which he described as "strictly personal". He said that he would tell me about it if I would keep it confidential and relay it to the President within the next hour or two. I assured him that the matter would be kept private and that I would do what I could to get back to him by 8:00 p.m. Then, he told me of his dilemma.

He had been called last night by Sargent Shriver, who asked him -- based on their long and close friendship -- to lead the prayer at his acceptance speech ceremony in Washington tomorrow evening (August 8). Billy told me that Shriver said, "I know that you're behind the President, and that you will vote for him. But I'm asking you this favor because you and I are such good friends and because you are the finest person I know in the Protestant ministry." Billy seemed to feel that since Shriver put it the way he did -- i. e. strictly on a friendship basis -- he should probably accept. Yet he admitted that if he accepted, he would have to reverse his earlier decision and attend the Republican Convention. He expressed the hope that he could retain a completely "bipartisan posture" throughout the early stages of the Campaign ... "at least until about October". He said that if the polls should indicate a close Presidential race during that last month before the Election, he could (in that way) throw his support to the side of the President more effectively. He went on to say that he was truly in a quandry about what to do and that he very much wanted the President's personal advice. He closed the conversation by assuring me that he would abide by any decision made at this end of the line -- that he would do nothing to hurt the President or to help McGovern.

- 2 -

In accordance with standard procedure, I tried to contact Bob Haldeman in California, but learned that he would not be in touch with the Western White House switchboard for "another hour and a half". That being the case, I mentioned the Graham matter to the President while chatting with him about some other things -- schedule proposals, etc. The President listened carefully, then answered firmly, "He should not do it. You call him back and tell him that it would be tantamount to his having attended the Democratic National Convention."

About a half hour later I called Billy and told him what had transpired. I could sense some disappointment. He asked me if I told the President about Shriver's having acknowledged that he (Billy) was a Nixon supporter and that he would be voting, of course, for the President. I told him that that part of the story had been made clear to the President. Then he referred to his father-in-law, "a staunch Nixon supporter and an ultra-conservative if there ever was one", saying, "He seems to think it would be perfectly alright for me to accept Shriver's invitation. After all, I'm a clergyman and I would be there only for the purpose of leading those people in prayer."

Because the President had tried unsuccessfully to telephone me only a few moments before, I told Billy that I would have an occasion to talk to the President once again, and that I would seek a confirmation of the earlier decision.

Needless to say, I did not mention the subject to the President when I spoke to him later that evening. He had made his point earlier in the day.

At 8:15 p.m. I called Bob Haldeman, ran the story by him quickly, got his agreement to the President's decision, and in the process learned more about Billy's early summer declinations to invitations to both major Party conventions on the basis of his wanting to hold to a bipartisan stance throughout most of the Campaign period. Like the President, Haldeman saw Graham's acceptance of the Shriver invitation as a radical change of position. There would be no hiding of his presence at the nationally-televised ceremony and so it would be taken by a great many Americans as a gesture of support.

At 8:35 I called Billy and reiterated the President's feeling (and advice). He said, "Fine. Then, that's exactly what I will do."

Alexander P. Butterfield

J. Y. G.

BILLY GRAHAM

Montreat, N.C. 28757  
August 4, 1972

*Handwritten note in a circle:*  
H note 4

RW

Dear Mr. President:

Enclosed is a copy of an article from the Los Angeles Times that is quite interesting. I have not read this new book "Religion and the New Majority" but it is being written up in newspapers throughout the country and being quoted on many television and radio shows. I think this brief review from the Los Angeles Times is worth your reading, not because of my own personal involvement, but because it does emphasize what I have been pointing out to you in a number of conversations we have had that there is an emerging evangelical strength in the country that is going to have a strong bearing on social and political matters probably for a generation to come.

I enjoyed talking with you on the phone the other evening. I had just walked in the door from California.

For what it's worth, I would seriously question the wisdom of your becoming personally involved in the campaign before early September. If the polls and the mood of the country continue as is you may be wise to do only a

minimum of campaigning. I think Senator McGovern is perfectly capable of making further mistakes. However, I think the greatest problem you may have to face is apathy and complacency.

Be assured of my constant prayers on your behalf.

Most cordially yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bill", written in dark ink.

The President  
The White House  
Washington, D.C.

Enc.

# Billy Graham Values Seen Key to Election

## Nixon's Affinity With Evangelist Gives Him Start on McGovern, 2 Authors Say

BY JOHN DART  
Times Religion Writer

The presidential candidate whose values seem closest to that of the Rev. Billy Graham stands the best chance to win in November, suggests a new study of the evangelist's effect on "Middle America."

By that yardstick, President Nixon has a running start on Sen. George S. McGovern because of the former's close association and ideological affinity with Mr. Graham.

"Any analysis which perceives Billy Graham to be either the greatest revivalist of his time or White House 'chaplain' falls short of defining his actual place in American society," according to authors Gerald S. Strober and Lowell D. Streiker.

"Graham is today the

leader of the politically decisive majority," Strober and Streiker said, "the man who more consistently than anyone else articulates the aspirations and fears of the bulk of his fellow citizens."

Strober and Streiker are authors of "Religion and the New Majority," published before the Democratic National Convention by Association Press.

Streiker, an author of several books, is on the faculty of the Temple University religion department. Strober, a Presbyterian lay minister, worked nearly four years for the interreligious affairs department of the American Jewish Committee, which has extensive relations with U.S. Christian bodies.

"Our analysis," Strober said in an interview this

week, "would suggest that Graham's theological constituency numbers about 30 million." (That has been the estimated number of conservative, evangelical Protestants in the United States, regardless of denominational affiliations.)

"Added to that are many millions who would not agree with Graham's theological position, but would agree with his analysis of the problems and potential of American life," Strober said.

"For example, they would support his rejection of extremism," he said. "They would agree with him that America has been singled out both for special blessing and special responsibility."

### Work Ethic, Not Reform

"They would agree with Graham's stress on individuals and the work ethic—in contrast with those programs that seem to stress mass social reform and to be concerned with manipulating masses of people."

That constituency can be "quite progressive when it comes to individual concerns, such as higher Medicare and Social Security, but they become quite suspicious about social theory talk," Strober said.

"I think it will be very difficult for McGovern to prevail in the election," he said.

"To this new majority McGovern appears to be an advocate of mass social change," said Strober while conceding that the Democratic nominee

might change that image somewhat during the campaign.

Strober, who studied at two evangelical schools, Gordon College in Massachusetts and Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, also has been active in politics. In 1968 he served as coordinator of Clergy and Laymen for the late Sen. Robert F. Kennedy in New York State.

McGovern forces are counting on heavy favoritism by young people, but Strober questions that image.

### 2nd Most Admired

At the evangelical youth gathering, Explo 72, in Dallas last month, a sampling of the more than 75,000 registrants by a Dallas newspaper showed that 57% backed Nixon, 11% favored George Wallace and 11% liked McGovern. Strober, who attended the event, said he found only two persons out of the 100 he talked to at random who said they would vote for McGovern.

Gallup Polls have shown Billy Graham to be the second most admired American behind whoever

is President at the time, Strober said.

"One of the reasons for the Graham rise has been the decline of the major denominations," Strober said.

Graham's moderately conservative positions in religion and social matters have a broad appeal, including sizable numbers of Catholics who have appreciated his opposition to abortion in most cases and his favoring of prayer in schools.

"Nixon has made a very concerted effort to identify with Graham over the last couple of years," said Strober, citing the President's appearance at Graham's Tennessee crusade in 1970 and the White House services at which Graham has been the only repeater.

"I don't think Graham is letting himself be used, because they have a real af-

finity in their analysis of the issues," Strober said. "Both men have said that what America needs most is individual moral and spiritual awakening in order to solve problems."

Graham and Nixon apparently see eye-to-eye on religious matters as well. Nixon having been raised in a conservative, evangelical Quaker tradition. McGovern, while also Protestant, is more identified with the influential liberal segment of the United Methodist Church.

"We're not saying a person necessarily votes for faith," Strober said of McGovern and Streiker's conclusion "but there certainly is a tendency for those who believe in personal salvation to vote for the candidate who seems to stress the role of individuals and their responsibility to society."