

F. Y. I.

BILLY GRAHAM

Montreat, N.C. 28757
August 4, 1972

H. note

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 dark ink, appearing to be "Bill Clinton", written in a cursive style.

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 'champion' falls short of defining his actual place in American society," according to authors Gerald S. Strober and Lowell D. Streiker.

"Graham is today the 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, Expto 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 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. A Governor, while also Protestant, is more identified with the influential liberal segment of the United Methodist Church.

"We're not saying a person necessarily votes by faith," Strober said of Graham 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."