

BILLY GRAHAM

June 4, 1956

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The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.



THE WHITE HOUSE
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Dear Mr. President:

As soon as possible after our talk in March, I went quietly to work among denominational leaders in the South. I had several private meetings with outstanding religious leaders of both races, encouraging them to take a stronger stand in calling for desegregation and yet demonstrating charity and, above all, patience. I met with excellent and overwhelming response. During the past few weeks I have addressed a number of annual Protestant religious conferences. I have also spoken at Negro universities. On each occasion I laid before them what I consider to be a sensible program for bettering race relations. I believe the Lord is helping us, and if the Supreme Court will go slowly and the extremists on both sides will quiet down, we can have a peaceful social readjustment over the next ten-year period. I am more hopeful now than I was when I talked with you in March.

I asked leaders of the three major denominations in the South to write you their plans, resolutions and statements. I believe they have done so.

I am somewhat disturbed by rumors that Republican strategy will be to go all out in winning the Negro vote in the North regardless of the South's feelings. Again I would like to caution you about getting involved in this particular problem. At the moment, to an amazing degree, you have the confidence of white and Negro leaders. I would hate to see it jeopardized by even those in the Republican Party with a political ax to grind. Your complete sincerity, honesty, fairness and religious conviction are going to carry you overwhelmingly back to the White House with a greater majority than in 1952. You don't need to yield to

any pressure groups. I agree with Governor Dewey who told a small group of us in the home of Mr. DeWitt Wallace last summer that you would go down in history alongside of Lincoln.

My constant prayer is that God will continue to give you physical strength and wisdom to carry out your tremendous responsibilities.

We started a thirty-day meeting here in Oklahoma City yesterday. In spite of bad weather, we had over 15,000 at the opening service.

Most cordially yours,

BG:L



Billy Graham

Skirvin Hotel
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma