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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Graham Tells Rally  
Trip Was In God's Will**

By Jim Newton

**NEW ORLEANS (BP)**—Defending his involvement in a recent trip to the Soviet Union to participate in a peace conference, evangelist Billy Graham told 42,000 persons attending the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference he is convinced his Russia trip was "within the will of God."

Graham drew loud applause from a half-filled Superdome in his opening remarks, saying: "I knew I was in the will of God when I left (the United States), I knew I was in the will of God while I was there (in the Soviet Union), and I knew I was in the will of God when I returned."

Explaining he did not come to speak on world affairs or give a major address, Graham preached a typical evangelistic sermon, using a format he has followed for years.

An estimated 2,000 persons came forward after his appeal to accept Christ or make some other religious decision, prompting Southern Baptist Convention President Bailey Smith to say he was moved to tears by the response and SBC Pastors' Conference President Edwin Young to say he was "thrilled and thankful."

Actual preliminary count of decision cards indicated 487 professions of faith, and about 550 "other" decisions including rededications. But officials said many of those who came forward did not fill out cards.

Country music star Johnny Cash and his wife, June Carter Cash, preceded Graham with a concert, with Cash singing "The Old Rugged Cross" for the hearing and signing it for the deaf.

Graham preached an evangelistic message, starting by asking the crowd to recite with him the scripture, John 3:16.

He first painted a grim picture of today's world, saying we live in an age of fear, with the world going out of control. Pointing out that 15 nations now have nuclear weapons, Graham warned it would take only one accident, one crazy man, to start a nuclear war that would blow up the world.

"The chances of us ever living to the year 2000 are very remote unless God intervenes with a miracle," Graham said.

Graham said mankind will never find satisfaction in life until he finds fellowship with God through Jesus Christ, adding that all the problems of the world are basically moral and spiritual and that the solution to them is the love of Jesus Christ.

Vice President Defends  
Religious Right Aims

By Stan Haste

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Vice President George Bush defended the Religious Right Sunday night telling a crowd of 42,000 in the Superdome that the movement represents "a healthy development."

Speaking during the opening session of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference, Bush declared: "I think wisdom counsels us not to fear it, or to condemn it, but to welcome it, and I embrace the constructive contributions it can make to strengthening the United States as one nation under God."

Bush's remarks were among the most direct of any high Reagan administration official on the movement that includes Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority, Christian Voice and The Roundtable, a group headed by Southern Baptist layman Edward E. McAteer of Memphis, Tenn.

Defending the movement, Bush said it is not un-American or unprecedented for groups and individuals with religious motives to organize politically. He cited the temperance movement of the early twentieth century and such recent developments as Martin Luther King Jr.'s struggle for civil rights for blacks and "today's heartfelt concern on nuclear weapons" as examples.

To prolonged applause he declared that "the famous wall of separation between church and state is there to keep the state from interfering with the churches, not to keep the churches or individual religious leaders or ordinary church members from participating in our politics."

Further, Bush said, the rise of the Religious Right can be interpreted as a reaction to "highly controversial developments," including the legalization of most abortions, widespread use of drugs, proliferation of pornography and the decline of marriage.

"In such circumstances, it was surely to be expected that individuals whose religious beliefs have been affronted by the striking social developments of these past 25 years would band together to take political action in defense of their heartfelt beliefs."

Bush told the audience he would not be political in his remarks, but then went on to give the strongest statement of support for Moral Majority and other "religious right" groups ever made by a top official of the Reagan administration.

Bush's press secretary, Peter Teeley, said afterwards it was the first time Bush had publicly endorsed the religious right, and it was the first time "a top administrative official has tried to put into perspective the goals of the religious right."

Bush departed from his prepared text to "salute" evangelist Billy Graham, praising him for "taking the Lord's message across the world," implying endorsement of Graham's visit to Russia.

Graham spoke to the crowd at the Superdome after Bush.

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Trip To U.S. Hardly Routine  
For Missionary To Lebanon

By Bill Webb

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SAN LUIS OBISPO, Calif. (BP)--When Southern Baptist missionary Frances Fuller planned a month-long personal leave from Lebanon, she envisioned a quiet, uneventful time.

But the Israeli invasion of Lebanon wrecked her plans--scheduled for June 8--and forced her to consider several travel options. She'd planned an uneventful airplane trip home, but she finally caught a ride to Cyprus via a Greek freighter, then flew on to the United States.

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Taking the leave to attend daughter Cynthia's graduation from California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo, she had also accepted an invitation to teach two weeks at the Wheaton (Ill.) College graduate school.

"I knew if I could come (to fulfill the teaching commitment), I had to come," she explained, even though she was torn over the decision about whether to leave Lebanon and husband, Wayne, in the middle of fierce fighting.

"There's something about living with the people; you care about them," she said. "You don't feel it's appropriate just to leave when things get a little rough."

She found that leaving also could be rough. She was allowed passage on the freighter on the condition that air attacks did not prohibit the crew from getting the ship ready to leave port. For the first few hours after the ship departed, an Israeli gunboat circled and its commander interrogated the freighter captain by radio. Israeli war planes buzzed the ship.

Finally, the freighter was allowed to proceed.

The missionary, director of the Arab Baptist Publications Center in Beirut, had explored other travel options such as taking a launch or hydrofoil service to Cyprus. But both services had been halted.

She secured a driver who would take her to Amman, Jordan, via the Damascus Highway through Syria, though her husband was reluctant because of reports of strong anti-American sentiment in Syria. That trip fell through as Israeli and Syrian forces prepared to clash along the highway.

Most of the remaining 16 missionaries in Beirut are staying in the area of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary located on a hillside on the outskirts of town, Mrs. Fuller said. Fighting has been centered in other areas.

"The scariest thing was the dogfights between Israeli and Syrian planes," she explained. "We just couldn't tell where they would fall. Stray anti-aircraft shells that missed their targets also have landed and exploded in non-combat areas, she said.

The human need in Lebanon, particularly in places like west Beirut, a Palestinian section, is incredible, she said. Thousands upon thousands of people have been left homeless and live on the sidewalks because they have no place to go.

"I would want Southern Baptists to pray our mission would be able to make a contribution to rebuild people's lives," she said. Many people have lost loved ones, homes and their livelihood. "They are heart broken."

Pray for peace, she added. "The people are so tired of war; they want peace."

She said she and other missionaries are grateful for prayers on their behalf. "We love the feeling we get when we know that people are praying for us."

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Bold Witnessing

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NEW ORLEANS (BP)--Approximately 400 persons participated Sunday afternoon in an evangelistic project by sharing Christian faith in the inner city of New Orleans.

Although the number was far short of the 5,000 anticipated, Earl Nobles, logistics coordinator for the event, said the group will be able to visit 3,000 to 4,000 households.

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"There was no way to know how many persons would actually come to participate," Nobles said. "We made plans for the number we felt it would take to saturate the city."

The committee planning the event engaged 75 buses to transport the visitors to 3,300 blocks of the city. When the smaller number arrived, about half of the buses were released to reduce expenses.

"We consolidated groups, eliminated some of the areas and reorganized the effort in light of the number participating," Nobles said. "But we feel we will receive a representative idea of the needs of the areas from the reports of the teams that did go out."

The New Orleans Baptist Association will benefit by the information, he said. "This will help us plan mission work in the city and find areas of greatest need. If 150 teams make 25 visits each, this will represent contacts with approximately 10,000 people."

In addition to gathering information about spiritual needs and witnessing of the Christian faith, the visitors extended an invitation to attend the Billy Graham rally Sunday night.

Ron Herrod, pastor of First Baptist Church, Kenner, was general chairman of Bold Mission New Orleans.

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Texas Convention To Aid  
Financially Troubled DBC

Baptist Press  
6/14/82

DALLAS (BP)--The Texas Baptist executive board voted 63-40 to provide \$3 million in special aid to alleviate financial problems at Dallas Baptist College.

The board's action is contingent on an offer of \$3 million in endowment from anonymous donors. Also, the proposal to the board was "in consideration" of a \$1 million pledge to Dallas Baptist College from Mary Crowley of Dallas, founder of Home Interiors.

The \$3 million from the convention includes a loan of \$2.5 million and a grant of \$500,000 to help reduce DEC's unrestricted current fund deficit.

Dallas accountant Alvin Burns, chairman of a special study committee probing the college's financial plight, said the school has reduced a \$1.9 million current fund deficit by about \$400,000 during the past year.

But Burns told the board the convention gift is needed to reduce the deficit adequately to satisfy the accreditation requirements of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

The \$2.5 million loan is interest-free for the first five years. It will draw eight percent interest per annum for the next five years unless DEC raises \$5 million in endowment funds in addition to the \$3 million offer from anonymous donors.

Burns said another option the committee considered was a merger with another Baptist college or university. He said two other schools had indicated they might consider the idea as a last resort if the convention paid off the school debt.

Former BGCT President Ralph Smith of Austin was one of the Board members opposing the convention loan and gift.

Smith said the school has come to the board eight times for special help and has already been given about \$1.5 million above the usual allocation for institutions.

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According to BGCT records, the school has been given \$1,650,000 above the usual allocations, not counting the \$500,000 gift. The school, which was moved to Dallas in 1965, has about 1,400 students.

Another leader, Travis Berry of Plano and a former chairman of the executive board, also opposed the action, noting that the board and the college are "not dealing with solutions but with hopes...."

Smith noted that he expects the board to "be faced with another request (for help) within the next two or three years" from the financially troubled college.

A DBC trustee, Wayne Allen, from Carrollton, said: "If you give us the opportunity, I believe DBC can become one of the great institutions of higher learning in the state."

Baptists sponsor eight institutions of higher learning in Texas, including Baylor University.