

CD-1043 Transcription

Introduces Billy Graham; Graham speaks to New York Board of

Rabbis with Q & A. 29 August 1991.

M1:

You see this is a humble place, as befitting our station, but it is a very beloved place, even like to think it could be a sacred place. And certainly today and in this hour. We just had a delightful and informal lunch together. Every time Dr. Graham spoke about his feelings of coming together here with us in New York, some of the problems of New York that he's going to be addressing and about which you're going to be hearing in just a few moments. I believe that it is important that we gather here together because we represent, at this moment, various interpretations of Judaism if you will, the Orthodox, the Conservative, [01:00] the Reform, the Reconstructionist. The so-called secular, the religious elements of New York City. And obviously we are all beset by many tensions and problems at this hour, and I therefore welcome the Reverend Doctor Billy Graham into our city in the hope that he will, and I know he will be addressing that, be able to reduce some of the tensions that we face, of course something that we have looked forward to. Today, we want to recognize the co-hosts with the New York Board of Rabbis of this meeting and they are the American Jewish

Committee, we're very happy to have them as part of our meeting here today, the Synagogue Council of America, and the Jewish Community Relations Council of [02:00] New York. We call upon these various groupings at different times for different issues and most often we need very much the sage advice and their council and their background, and so we're very happy to welcome them all here today. Now I'm going to introduce you to a person that doesn't need much of an introduction, and that's Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum. We were just reminiscing a little bit a few moments ago about Marc's relationship long-standing with Dr. Graham, and I told their story which if you don't mind, Dr. Graham says sometimes he tells a story a hundred times. Marc was once a member of the Jewish Center of Jackson Heights and I was once its rabbi, going back [03:00] at least 30 years that I can recall. And I remember when Marc told me he was going to North Carolina to meet Dr. Graham. When he came back, I was curious to know what the result of that meeting was, and he said, "And don't be frightened now, Dr. Graham understands this [filling?]." Marc's answer was, "Billy Graham is a *mensch*." (laughter) And, of course, he meant that in relationship not only with himself and what he has done to the Christian Evangelical movement [and for?], but in his relationship to the Jewish community of the past and of the present. And we did have a very free and frank discussion that we have just come through.

One of our vice presidents, Stanley David, made a very forthcoming [04:00] recommendation which I think Dr. Graham is taking seriously, he said he would, and I know that that's correct, with regard to the housing grant, or not grant, I'm sorry, the housing guarantee, which we're hoping the United States Government will be forthcoming with to the State of Israel, \$10 billion, which was be very crucial in the years ahead, that's over the next five years. So, when I introduce Marc Tanenbaum to you in this context you understand that the relationship with Dr. Graham is a very long one and distinguished one. It's my pleasure to introduce my former congregant, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum.

**Marc Tanenbaum:**

He was a good rabbi in Jackson Heights. It is a very real honor and [05:00] genuine privilege to be called upon to say a few words of introduction to the Reverend Doctor Billy Graham.

During the 30-some years of my service in the area, including Jewish community relations, I, on reflection, can say that the two highlights of my professional career were the periods of time spent in connection with The Vatican Council II, which literally lead to the historic transformation in the relations between the Catholic Church and the Jewish people, with all of the problems that continue to exist, and a fundamental historic

transformation. And the other highlight of my career, I would say, was the visit that I had with Dr. Graham [06:00] in Montreat, North Carolina, 1973 and some meetings both before and after that. And over the years since that time, during the decades, it became clear to me, and I'm going to say this, even though it sounds as an exaggeration, it is, in my judgment, a justifiable description. I've come to believe, as a result of very concrete actions and behavior, that Dr. Billy Graham is the greatest friend of the Jewish people in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. There has not been a single issue of Jewish concern in which he has not been present fully, all the time, always available, to the Jewish people and the State of Israel. And I hope someday, if I can get permission, to write a book about Billy Graham and the Jewish people. The materials that I've been [07:00] collecting on that. In relation to Israel, 1967 to 1973, he became a decisive influence for support of Israel in the White House, in the State Department, and elsewhere. [In time?], there's been some other Jewish leaders who were not able to have access as a result of tensions that were taking place. He has been available for the cause of Soviet Jewry, he literally helped us when Soviet Jewish families out who were denied visas for very long periods of time. He has consistently taken forthright and clear stands against anti-Semitism and as it will certainly come as a surprise to many in the Jewish community, he has been forthright

in expressing his love and respect for Judaism and the Jewish people and rejecting proselytization of the Jewish people and [08:00] the Jewish community. Take a moment. In 1973, after the height of the [Key '73 campaign?], Dr. Graham issued a statement saying the following: "I believe God has always had a special relationship with the Jewish people. In my evangelistic efforts, I have never felt called to single Jews as Jews. Just as Judaism frowns upon proselytizing that is coercive or that seeks to commit men against their will, so do I." And he has, perhaps, been in the forefront of developing a theology of Judaism, the Jewish people, and Jewish-Christian relations which I believe is as much a breakthrough development in the Evangelical community as some of the other documents by other churches. I will take a moment, and then conclude with this. In the introduction to a book that I was privileged to work on with Dr. Graham, a book called *The Jesus Connection*, an effort to repudiate anti-Semitism by [09:00] Leonard Yaseen, in a remarkable brief introduction, but clarion clear in his position, Dr. Graham wrote, "Evangelical Christians especially have an affinity for the Jews, because the Bible they love is essentially a Jewish book written under the influence of God's spirit. One theologian has said 'Remove the New Testament books written by the Jews and only two remain, Luke and Acts. Remove every Jewish concept, every Jewish influence from the New Testament, and only a

question here and there from a pagan source is left, scarcely enough for one short paragraph.'" Dr. Graham, his life, his career, his steady continuous unflinching friendship for Israel and the Jewish people. He deserves to be better known in the Jewish community. He is coming [10:00] to New York for his major crusades in New Jersey and in New York, we felt it would be important for us to have an opportunity to meet this great man of God. And, to do something which probably [has some of it?] been done before. Billy Graham, the greatest evangelist in the world, who has preached to more people with more competence in more places of the world than any other evangelist, literally, in history, has asked to me, and has come with open arms of friendship to me, with the largest rabbinic bodies in the United States, if not in the world, the New York Board of Rabbis. It's a very special privilege to bring his colleagues and associates who are with him today, T.W. Wilson, [Henry Musten?], [Dr. Akers?] and it's especially a great privilege to welcome one of the great friends of our people, [11:00] Dr. Billy Graham.

(applause)

**Billy Graham:**

I remember many years ago I was to address the general assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia. And I was coming down on an elevator at the hotel on my way to give the

address and a man got on board about the fifth floor and he said, "I hear Billy Graham is on here." And a minister, [Dr. Sid Binnell?], who many of you knew, probably, who was the Minister of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Presbyterian Church here in New York, was standing there and he pointed in my direction and he said, "Yes, there he is." And this man looked me up and down [12:00] for about 10 or 15 seconds and he said "My, what an anticlimax." (laughter) I don't know what he was expecting. Anything that I would say now would be anticlimactic. My longtime friend Rabbi Tanenbaum has just said in his introduction, I just couldn't possibly accept all these things that he has attributed to me. I feel extremely humble. And feel very inadequate to even speak to such a distinguished group of people as you here today. It's a tremendous privilege for me; you have no idea of how overwhelmed I am to have this privilege. I did not prepare an address, I didn't know this to be that type of an occasion, and I hope it's not. I expected to have a give-and-take discussion and questions and answers which we'll get to in just a moment. But it is [13:00] a great privilege to be a friend of Israel. And I remember the first time that I was there. It was back in the late '40s, and I had the opportunity of meeting some of the leaders and then, on subsequent events, occasions, to have contact with the government in a semi-official way. I was in the office of the Foreign Secretary of Israel the day General

Eisenhower died, or, President Eisenhower died. And I remember he handed me a note that said, "Eisenhower has just died." And I remember rushing to the telephone and calling the president of the United States, Mr. Nixon, and I said, "I'm going to catch the next plane to Tel Aviv and I'll be there as quickly as I can." And I sat with Mrs. Eisenhower as she greeted the heads of foreign governments that day, that was the only [14:00] part that I had in the service, but I remember how tired I was from that long trip from Tel Aviv -- I don't adjust to jetlag very well. But there's so much that one could say in all of this. I have just come from the Soviet Union; three weeks ago we were there. And we held a meeting of 5,000 clergy and the University of Moscow. We boarded them at the university, and fed the university, and we sponsored it and they came from all of the republics, they came from all of the 11 time zones, and it was an opportunity to be on national television, on their Channel 1, which covers all the time zones, and to speak at prime evening time, to go to the Academy of Sciences, and to be invited to come back next year to lecture there. [15:00] This is just the before the coup, and we had no idea what was about to take place, and neither did anyone else. And I had an hour with Mr. Gorbachev, it was my full time to talk to him, and then an hour-and-a-quarter with Mr. Yeltsin the next day, which we hadn't expected, we were on our way to the airport. And to meet those



two men on that particular day, just before the coup took place, was indeed something that I will never forget. And I'm writing my memoirs now and I have some things now to put in there that may be of interest to people. Because I could detect that was something already. I didn't know how to express it, I didn't know how it was going to be expressed. I had met with the chief rabbi and others on previous occasions, every time I went to the Soviet Union, in Moscow, and in other cities. [16:00] I preached in the synagogue in Romania, Rabbi [Rosen?], maybe some of you know him, and the place was packed, and I remember preaching on the subject of who is Jesus Christ, and they listened very intently. And, of course, I underscored the fact that he was Jewish, which he was. And I think the best way to start with a group like you, is to say, I'm not here to try to cover up some differences that we have, I'm not here to be a hypocrite and say something that I am not, all of you know that I am a Christian and I'm a Christian evangelist and the word *evangelist* means a spreader of news, a spreader of good news, in this case. And the good news is that God loves us, whoever we are, and God is interested in us as individuals, and as families and as communities, [17:00] and God is willing to forgive our sins which are many, both corporately and individually, and which carries us to what we believe as both an Old Testament and a New Testament, a figure, and that is the cross, where we believed

that Christ died for us on the cross for our sins and that he rose again, and that he's going to come back and you're looking for the coming of the Messiah, and so are we. We believe that peace is not going to come to this earth until the Messiah comes. Every time we have peace conferences somehow they fall apart. And we've held hundreds of them and thousands of them. And I'm in favor of peace conferences, we ought to do everything we can to patch up this old body called the earth that we possibly can, whether it's from an environmental point of view, or whether it's from our human conflicts and differences. But it's not going to work until the Messiah comes. Now, to some of you, [18:00] it will be his first coming, to some of us, it'll be his second coming. And if we got into that discussion and get into a theological discussion, we'd be here for several days and I would be exhausted and we'd probably have run out of ideas. I'd have to go out here to the Union Theological Seminary and get some theologians to come in. But I wanted you to know where I stand, but at the same time, I have a little different idea about God's relationships with the Jewish world than some of my Protestant or Catholic colleagues. I believe that God has a special place for the Jew. You are God's chosen people; I would like to be a Jew. I was asked on television once, "If you weren't a Christian what would you like to be?" I said, "I'd like to be a Jew." Because I believe God has chosen the Jewish

people to bring his word to [19:00] earth and to spread his word, and to express his thinking to the world, and you have, you have the apple of his eye. And God is not going to allow you to be exterminated, as some people thought during the Holocaust. And it looked at times as though it might be. And we saw those horrible times that took place in Europe at that time. And we remember other times that Christians tried to get Jews to be converted at the end of a sword, or the muzzle of a gun. And I determined from the earlier days of my ministry that I would try to be a friend of the Jewish people wherever I went. I would not give up my own convictions, but neither would I stand aside to see Jewish people injured, verbally, or in writing, or in [20:00] person, if I had an opportunity to speak out. And so, I began to tour the world, and I've been in 84 countries now, I've preached in every country in Eastern Europe except Albania. I've had four preaching tours of the Soviet Union, and I have gotten to know a great many of the leaders of the world during this period of time. And I've known seven of the presidents of the United States. [Hugh Sidey?] was on the phone with me last night to interview me and he said "You know, I've been looking all of this up." He said, "You have been closer to more presidents than any other clergyman in American history." And I said, "Well, I've never looked that up, I've never thought about that." But he said, "I'm going to have it in *Time Magazine* this coming

week." And I said "Well, if you have researched it, you better go back and do some more research, because I'm certain that there are others that have greater claim than that." Some of them I would probably hang my head in shame over. [21:00] But all of those that I have known have been pro-Jewish, at least in their private conversations with me and my conversations with them. I have tried to influence them on certain points that I felt that they were wrong and headed in the wrong direction in regards to the State of Israel. Because my [aim?] is based upon the Bible and most of them believe in the Bible. They may not have shown it at times, like Lyndon Johnson. Lyndon Johnson would say some of the worst, use some of the worst language that you have ever heard, but then he would say, "How about praying for me?" And then he'd get right down on his knees, right beside his bed, and ask you to pray for him. And my wife and I spent, I think, 23 nights at the White House when he was president. And we talked about Israel many times because he said that his mother told him, she said, "Lyndon, you're going to Washington as the president of the United States, [22:00] don't you forget the Jews." And she got that from her Bible. And I got mine from the Bible because that's what I believe, that God wants us to have a special place in our hearts, and in our theology, and in our thinking for the Jewish people. And I feel that way and I have a special love every time I see a Jew. Every time that I

know that someone is Jewish, there's something warm in my heart that comes up. It's something internal and subjective that I cannot get away from, but I have fortified it with objective truth that I believe is in the scriptures. And so, it is indeed a privilege an honor for me to be here today. And it's interesting that the Rabbi said a moment ago, if you remove the New Testament books written by Jews, only two remain, Luke and Acts, because I had that to say right now. And one of our recent popes said spiritually, we're all Semites. [23:00] And the relationship of the Old and the New Testament in the foundations of American democracy. Rabbi Tanenbaum gave me this book a moment ago, *The Search for God at Harvard* by Ari Goldman, the new religious editor at the *New York Times*, whom I'm looking forward to seeing this coming week or week after next. And I can't wait to read this, because I've already read enough of it just at the table to realize that many things in here that he has, I have heard but never heard it verified, as he has done. But I believe that if the Scriptures today were proclaimed fearlessly and lived faithfully, our world would be changed for the better. And I've been following since I got home three weeks ago from the Soviet Union, what has been happening in Crown Heights. And I know a little bit of the tensions on both sides and I feel it, and I am hurt inside by what is happening.

[24:00] And I feel that we, as Christians, must stand up and

call for love and understanding between these groups. It's impossible for me to come here as an outsider and be so far removed from that local situation to try to tell them what to do or how to solve the problem, some of your people went to see the mayor yesterday and presented him a paper, I have a copy of it in my pocket, I'm going to see him tomorrow, and I will underscore those same points to him, hoping that it will have some effect. But I also will support the idea of a religious group of people in this city that will be religious leaders to be advisors to the mayor. Or to the President of the United States, or whoever it may be in political power. To advise him, and to help guide and direct when crisis comes, [25:00] because many times, we wait until the crisis bursts upon us and then we all gather together and we disagree among ourselves. And I was talking with one of my colleagues a moment ago, right after lunch and I said, "You know, to be here reminds me of some of the Protestant meetings I've been in. Because you have the Conservative, you have the Orthodox, you have the Liberal, you have the -- all of these different groups." And that's true among Baptists, somebody said that wherever you have two Baptists you have different kinds of Baptists. And that's true. And I'm a Baptist, I'm a Presbyterian in the beginning, I changed and became a Baptist sort of like a shotgun wedding, and then now, I go to a Presbyterian church, we worship in a

Presbyterian church, and have for 30 years, and the Baptists asked why I live in a Presbyterian community. I said, "I'm trying to missionary work among them." And that seems to satisfy the Baptists. [26:00] But I would not in any way claim to represent evangelism, because they would not claim me. I don't go to their conferences any more to speak as I used to, because I'm too busy in other parts of the world, preaching the Gospel to many people who have never heard of the Gospel before. And I believe that's my first calling. And this year, though, I'm going to take some of these invitations I have to speak at international Evangelical or Christian conferences. Yesterday, I had the opportunity, or the day before I've forgotten which, to speak to the staff of the staff at the National Council of Churches. And, I had a wonderful time over there and had a great reception from them. And I suppose that their denomination is one that speaks to them just as well as so-called evangelicals. Because, in every in every major denomination in the United States there's an evangelical wing. And, for example, I'm closer to the churches in Great Britain, or the United Kingdom, than I am to the churches in the United States. [27:00] The last two archbishops of Canterbury have made commitments to Christ under my preaching, both of them, to enter the ministry. And the present archbishop, Carey, his wife made her first commitment to Christ under my preaching in 1954 in London. And I have held

many meetings at Cambridge, and Oxford, and those various universities, and have a great love for the Anglican church and perhaps feel more at home in the Anglican church than in any other church. But it's very interesting that the same thing that is happening in America is happening there, except to a greater extent, perhaps, in Britain. For example, in 1959 there was only one evangelical diocesan bishop in the Anglican Church. Today, there are 35, out of the 84. And the evangelical schools, the divinity schools, are filled. And the more radical [28:00] schools, or more theologically schools, are empty, and they can't get enough people in the pulpits or in the churches. And the same is happening in this country to some extent. It's the evangelical theological seminaries that are filled. And seminaries, even like Union in New York, don't have quite the number of students that they would like to have. I'm the chairman of the board of [Gordon?] Commonwealth Theological School in Boston, or just outside of Boston. And we don't have room enough for all of the students that want to come. And it's a high academic institution. And we feel that it plays a significant part in what's happening. We have had, just in the past 20 years, we have put more than 600 of our graduates in churches in New England alone. And they've taken over many of the pulpits of New England. [29:00] I don't mean they've taken over by force, but I mean they've been invited to be the



minister there and they've been trained in our school, and we're grateful for that. But I could talk on and on about all of this, but I would much rather get to what is bothering you. And I would like to underscore one point that Rabbi Tanenbaum made. I do not believe in proselyting Jewish people. I started that many years ago. I think, as I was praying and thinking about it, I believe God spoke to me about it, and I do not support these various groups that say that they're going to convert Jews to Christianity, and they are upset with me, they do not feel that they can cooperate with me usually in these meetings that we hold, which is all right with me. But I would much rather feel that I was obeying the Lord in this, which I believe I'm doing. Because I believe that we have to [30:00] love each other. And there's one distinguishing sign that a Christian should have, and that is, by this shall all men know that you're my followers in that you love one another. And that word love, (inaudible) is God's love. God's love through us to you. And there may be people we don't agree with, there may be people we don't like, there may be people whose customs, and culture, and language and color of skin is different, but we're to love them. And love, as used there, is not a passive word, it's an active word, we're to get involved with them. And I believe that that's one of things that I'm supposed to do as a believer. And I sense that reciprocal thing any time I meet with Jewish leaders, when they

understand where we're coming from, and they respond in such a marvelous way. And so, we're coming here to New York, we're going to hold four or five meetings in Byrne Arena in [31:00] northern New Jersey, which won't affect New York City much, and just one meeting in New York and that'll be out in Central Park. And people said, "Well you'll have as many people as Paul Simon." I said, "Oh no, there's nothing I can do about it." (laughter) We have different a different [counter?], too. (laughter) The police tells us that we could never get more than 400,000 in that place and so when they said they had 750,000 one of my associates said, "Well let's get that same counter." But we're not after a big crowd, and to say, we've had so many people and, we're looking for anywhere from 20,000-40,000 people, but not any more than that. And if more come we'll be happy, but we're there just to have a moral crusade and to call to community together, whether it's Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. And [Cardinal O'Connor?] has come all out in support of this event, and the Catholic Church is supporting it, and we would like as many Jewish people [32:00] there as possible, and I hope that what is said there, or done, will not embarrass any of you. We are there to talk about the problems as they exist, and what the answer might be in a new -- we talk about a new world order, I think we need a new city order. I spent a lot of time in past years in New York, and I always wonder when they're

going to fix these streets out here. And if they can't fix these streets, how are they going to fix the human heart? Maybe it has to be the human heart first. But problems here we faced when I was 16 weeks in Madison Square Garden every night in 1957, and we didn't have empty seats except one night and that was the second night. And thousands of people would gather on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and I would speak to as many out there before our regular service inside as I did inside. And it was a tremendous experience in those days. But the problems that they were wrestling with in '57 are still here, except they're more [33:00] magnified now. So this would indicate to me that my preaching hasn't done too much good. I heard about, when I was on the plane once, you know, I was going down to North Carolina. And a man got on board, and he was drunk, he was flirting with the stewardess, and he was pinching her as she went by and he was using the most obscene language, and people were disgusted with him, and the mayor of Charlotte, North Carolina, was sitting there across the aisle. And he whispered to him and he said, "Do you know who's sitting behind me?" And he said, "No, who?" He was so drunk that he hardly knew what he was doing. And he said, "That's Billy Graham, the preacher." "Oh!" He got up out of his seat, and he looked back in my direction and he said "Are you Billy Graham?" And I admitted that I was. And he said, "Put her there!" He said, "Your sermons have certainly helped me."

(laughter) So I hope that I [served with him too?], some people here in New York, and did to them. [34:00] But, thank you very much. (applause)

**M1:**

Dr. Graham, as you see, your sermons have helped us, that's true, and I wanted to just to comment by saying that, when Dr. Graham spoke about Central Park, you spoke of it as if it were way, way, way out somewhere, it's right on the end of this block. (laughter) (inaudible) Central Park. So, if you want a little warm-up, maybe we'll all go over there and go through the park. Plus we'll have to call the -- call some of the police first. Dr. Graham mentioned that, when there are two Baptists, there are two different opinions. You know, the well-known Jewish aspect of that, when there are two Jews, there are three opinions. And of course, I'm sure there are people here with many questions, and we're going to try to address some of those right now. At the luncheon, [35:00] you should know, Dr. Graham was so interested in the various aspects of New York, and the Hasidic community, that part of the luncheon was taken up with my trying to explain the difference between -- and Marc Tanenbaum and Gil Rosenthal -- between the Lubavitch, the Satmar, and the Bobover, and if you think that's easy...

(laughter) But he has a deep interest and we're very happy that

he's bringing his attention to tomorrow with Mayor Dinkins to try to focus on some of those problems. Incidentally, these photographers who you see taking all these photographs, this is not for the press. Dr. Graham asked, and we certainly agreed with that, that in order that our question period be an open and candid one that there be no press present. So don't look for this on your evening news tonight, or on your [36:00] evening TV station and so on, don't be disappointed. But I know that the questions he's posed for us and the answers that he's tried to afford us has given all of the sense that we are all talking very openly and very frankly to each other. I can imagine, for example -- there are no reporters present, right? I can imagine, Dr. Graham, if one were, after the address the headline, let's say, tomorrow would be, "Graham wants to be Jewish." Or something like that, and it would make a good headline, in certain newspapers I know it probably would be on the front page, but I'm sure we all understand the context in which it was placed. I just thought, maybe, for a brief moment I would respond to Dr. Graham in biblical fashion and try to put in context what it is that we're doing here today. You know, Dr. Graham, that we're in a special period now, it's the month of *Elul*, [37:00] in the month immediately prior to the High Holidays. And this Saturday night, we begin that season, a penitential season, in a formal way, it's already begun, and

then it leads up to Yom Kippur, the day of atonement when we fast all day and do many things of that kind. One of the things that we do on Yom Kippur is to read the book of Jonah, the entire book, at the service of the afternoon, and, there is a very incisive teaching about Jonah which I would like to cite for you, which I believe you are going to like very much and which is really the purpose of our all being here. And that is, that if you open to the third chapter of the Book of Jonah, when he finally goes to speak the people of Nineveh, he didn't want to go at the beginning, and then they do repent, he's very successful, the [38:00] rabbis and the Talmud make the point, the wish, actually, that "Brethren", they say there, "It is not written of the Nineveh, that God saw their sackcloth and their fasting, the outward signs of their repentance, but that," and here he quotes the Book of Jonah, third chapter 10 verse, "God saw their works that they turned away from their evil way." That the outward profession of it, the verbalization of it, is very important. That's what this period is for. But I dare say, applying it to the work that you're doing, that [*varaya hedit masa em?*], "God looked at their works." And we are hoping that for you, and for all of us, the work that we are trying to do together will be the [39:00] best emblem, the best guarantor for us. Let's pray for the new year, the New York Board of Rabbis, for you personally, in you efforts, and your work, and for the

tensions that we have in this city for the Household of Israel and all good Christians throughout the world, because it is necessary, not just to put on sackcloth and fasting but to actually *shavu mi'darkam*, to repent in the true word. So, with that in mind, we are going to move on the question and answer period, we have a few minutes, please make your question one that will be recognizable with a question mark at the end, and we're going to call on Abe Feldman first.

**Abe Feldman:**

[fast forwarding of tape] ...there was a group organized, and referred to as the Mayor's Committee of Religious Leaders. Goldberg is a very active, I was a member of it. Represented on it were the New York Board of Rabbis, the [40:00] archdiocese, the Council of Churches, and for a while, it seemed to be effective until the mayor began to use it as a [passive?]. And then, one of the mayors, I won't mention his name, began to select his own committee, as it were, who would tell him he was doing the right thing. And they completely bypassed this committee, which truly was representative of the different groups in New York City. May I suggest, it becomes a question, may I, that we suggest Mayor Dinkins, [needed?] to revive this kind of committee, but that they be truly representative of various groups including the New York Board of Rabbis, who would

have freedom. They dropped the name Mayor's Committee because it was misunderstood, and called it just the Committee of Religious Leaders. We made many recommendations, most of which were ignored, and rarely, in recent years, that we had an opportunity to meet with the mayor (inaudible). But I think a committee at that kind, truly [41:00] representative and autonomous -- or free to express their opinions be designated, and I think that might help with your...

**M1:**

OK, if you don't mind, what I think -- thank you, Abe. We're going to take a few questions and then if you don't mind answering them together, would that be OK?

**Billy Graham:**

That's fine.

**M1:**

OK. Yes, [Arieh?].

**Billy Graham:**

And I'll take into account what you said just then because I think that's very important.



**M1:**

Yes, no question about it, yes, oh yes. [Hebrew], as a matter of fact I spoke to Dr. Graham about that earlier today and we do hope that that would be adopted and that would be taken. Yes, ArieH?

**ArieH:**

There has been a general acceptance of the fact that anti-Semitism has taken a big turn and that rapidly, anti-Semitic is anti-Israel, and Israel is the -- has been singled out, not only as individuals, like Jewish people, but the whole state, and the family of nations. I'd like to ask you, [42:00] in your connections, and in your working with churches, what have you found to be the attitude of church groups towards Israel as a state, and what are your objections to those?

**M1:**

OK, let me take one more question and then we'll answer those if we have time. I'm going to ask you, of course, to remain when the answer period, the question and answer period is over, because our executive vice president, Robert Gilbert Rosenthal, has a presentation to make to Dr. Graham that I think you'll want to be present for. Yes?

**M4:**

Dr. Graham, there are some various conferences and various (inaudible) groups which are reportedly pressing the media discussing about putting in a principle about not being in favor, or being rather against proselytization of Jews, and yet, sometimes these things are not accepted, they have to water it down to be accepted. The same is true of support for Israel. What can be done, either from the Jewish side, or perhaps from your side, to turn to these various groups, encouraging them to take a more [43:00] forthright stand, both in regard to Israel and also to be opposed to proselytization.

**Billy Graham:**

I would like to answer the first question first, if I might. In my contacts, in the circle that I seem to be thrown with, I hear very little anti-Israel or anti-Semitic voices. I read about them, and hear about them in some of the magazines, but I don't see that, and don't feel that. I think that Israel, as a state, sometimes bears the same give and take with other governments of the world and political circles, and of course, I'm not prepared to get into all of that, though I'm very pro-Israel and always take up for it if it's in a small discussion or in a group like this, and try to present the Israeli side of it. I have not been as close to Israel in the past few years as I used to be,

[44:00] because nearly all of my friendships were with the Labor government when they were in power, and under the Shamir government, I have not been that close, and do not have as close of friends, even though Defense Minister Rabin is one of my very good friends in Israel and I have other friends there, but not as much as I had, say, 15 years ago. And that is partially my own fault, because I haven't attempted to keep up some of those contacts that I should have. And will try to remedy that with the help of some of you. The next question had to do with what can these various groups do, and what can we in supporting Israel as a state in public statements. And...

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