

# Ford, Disputing Graham, Denies U.S. Has Lost 'Moral Compass'

By MARJORIE HUNTER

Special to The New York Times

CHARLOTTE, N. C., May 29 — Vice President Ford, disagreeing with the Rev. Billy Graham, said today that he did not believe America had lost its "moral compass."

While reiterating his earlier views that the transcripts of White House conversations on Watergate "do not confer sainthood on anybody," he said that he had faith "in the basic morality of the American people."

Mr. Ford's comments came at a news conference here this morning before he joined Mr. Graham, the evangelist, in a foursome in the Kemper Open Invitation Golf Tournament.

In a statement issued yesterday, Mr. Graham expressed his concern over what he saw as the nation's loss of its "moral compass"—a phrase that Jeb Stuart Macgruder used last week in reference to himself after his sentencing for his role in the Watergate cover-up.

In his statement, Mr. Graham said that he could not "but deplore the moral tone implied" in President Nixon's conversations with White House aides about the Watergate affair.

In a news conference about

a month ago in Myrtle Beach, S.C., the Vice President said that the President reflected in the tape transcripts was not the man he had known as a personal and political friend for a quarter of a century.

Today, at his news conference at Quail Hollow Country Club, he was asked if he agreed with Mr. Graham that the country had lost its moral compass.

"I don't think that the country has lost its sense of morality," Mr. Ford replied. "I think we're going through a very difficult period in Washington. I indicated that before."

"It's my judgment that we're very fortunate that the institutions we have, both in the courts and in the Congress, are strong enough to take care of any of the problems that have arisen, and I have great faith in the basic morality of the American people."

Mr. Graham, interviewed by newsmen on the golf course, declined today to discuss his statement in detail but said that he was "sticking exactly with it."

**GIVE A KID A BREAK.  
THE FRESH AIR FUND.**