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Churches Urged To Assume Lead

Positive Role In Racial Problems Asked By Oxford Pastor

JACKSON, Miss., Feb. 4.—
(AP)—The Rev. Duncan Gray
of Oxford said Monday the
University of Mississippi de-
segregation riots point up need
of leadership by Mississippi
churches against racial preju-
dice and violence.

The Rev. Mr. Gray was one
of several persons who spoke
on racial problems and re-
ligion at a meeting of the Mis-
sissippi Commission on Hu-
man Relations at Tougaloo
College near Jackson. About
100 persons attended.

"Some persons say the
church shouldn't be involved
in riots and politics. The
church was and is involved in
everything that happened that
night," he said.

The Rev. Mr. Gray, an Epis-
copal minister, was on hand
the night of Sept. 30 when the
admission of James Meredith
under Federal court orders as
the first Negro knowingly to
attend the university touched
off a bloody battle.

"The number of uneasy con-
sciences in increasing stead-
ily," the Rev. Mr. Gray said.

"We all bear the burden of
guilt. The integrationist is no
less a sinner than the segre-
gationist, though the segrega-
tionist's sin is more obvious.

"But here the church must
be more positive, not just con-
demn, but love and redeem. If
it cannot speak truth and love,
it had better be silent," he
said.

Dr. Perry Nussbaum, rabbi
of Beth-Israel Temple in Jack-
son, rose to praise the Rev.
Mr. Gray: "I would like to ex-
press my admiration — when
you men were exposed up
there."

The commission is sponsored
as an autonomous unit by the
Southern Regional Council of
Atlanta. The Mississippi group,
similar to ones in other South-
ern states, was discontinued in
1957, but re-established last
May.

Norman Kurland of the
United States Commission on
Civil Rights outlined the scope
of his group, which was or-
ganized in 1957.