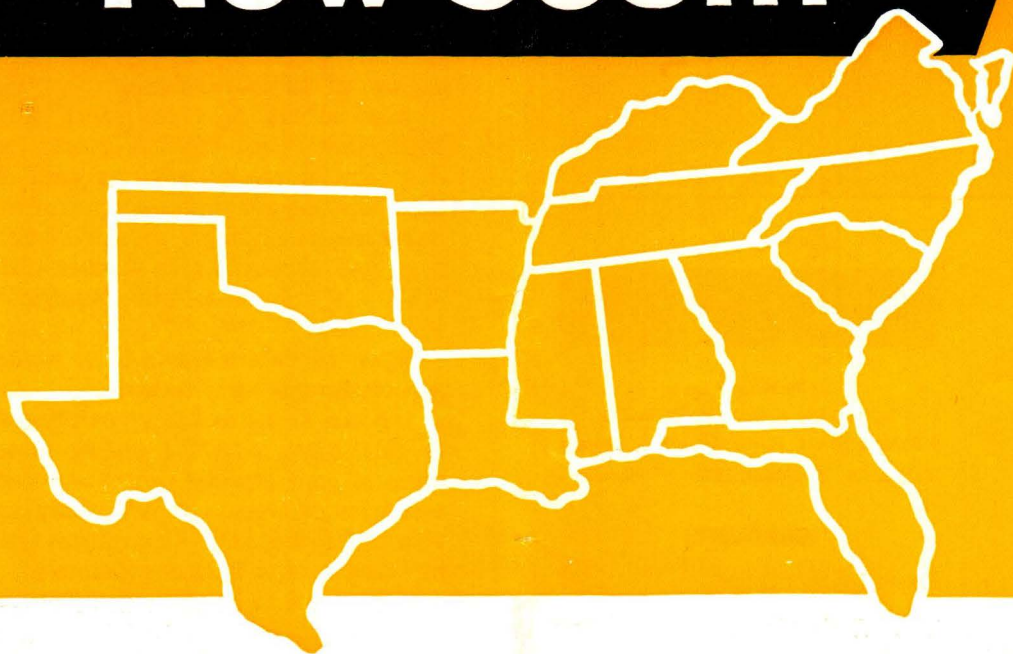


New South



THE OTHER MISSISSIPPI

MARCH

1963

Strictly Subjective

By MARGARET LONG

New South

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LAST FALL's wild disaster at the University of Mississippi and the continuously brutal public and private punishment of Negroes trying to register to vote seem to constitute a crisis from which that unfortunate commonwealth can only emerge soon into the civil rights and human decencies generally proclaimed and practiced in the rest of the United States.

And, in the light of recent pronouncements and random events, it may not be too sanguine to predict that Mississippi's intrepid, persistent and non-violent Negro revolutionaries may find themselves in a new and heartening alignment with aboriginal white allies.

Signs of conscience-stricken white support for law and brotherhood, such as the manifestos and sermons printed in this NEW SOUTH surely must come as grateful relief to uprising and sacrificial Negroes — particularly in view of the slow and seldom protection provided by our federal government.

Church voices heard in this issue— among many others raised in protest long before Oxford and frequently since — in godly denunciation of ghastly and ungodly oppressions of Negroes, seem to me the most literally Christian reproaches and appeals to come from any southern pulpits since the Negro movement for equal rights. For much milder and more evasive precepts, that churchmen should uphold law and order and keep public education, many southern pastors in other states have been deposed from their pulpits; but now in most recalcitrant Mississippi, these congregations seem to be hearing their prophets with less vengeful rage.

Another bright shaft of light in the darkness of crisis is the shocked report of the Mississippi advisory com-

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Day of Repentance

Ten young ministers of the Oxford, Miss., area appealed thus to their community and state in October:

WE, THE MINISTERS of the Oxford-University area, do hereby call upon the people of our community and state to make Sunday, October 7th, 1962, a specific time for repentance for our collective and individual guilt in the formation of the atmosphere which produced the strife at the University of Mississippi and Oxford last Sunday and Monday, resulting in the death of two persons and injury to many others. Further, we do urge that this be a specific time for turning from those paths of violent thought and action to the Christian walk of peace and good will, which turning is the heart of true penitence.

It is our firm belief that obedience to the law and to lawful authority is an essential part of the Christian life. The outgrowth of this conviction in the situation in which we find ourselves can be no less than acceptance of the actions of the federal courts and wholehearted compliance with those as individuals and as a state.

Not only must we ourselves act in accord with these principles, but we must actively exert positive leadership and influence such as that provided on October 2 by certain businessmen of our state.

We issue this call mindful of the promise of our God: "If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." II Chronicles 7:14.

The Whole Gospel

October 8, 1962

A Message from the District Superintendents
To the Ministers of the North Mississippi Methodist
Conference
Brethren:

These critical days through which we are passing demand dedication, self-denial and sacrifice in preaching the whole Gospel without any reservations whatsoever, with the fear of God in our hearts, and without prejudice toward any man.

We whole-heartedly endorse the statement made by the ministers of Oxford on October 3 calling for "repentance for our collective and individual guilt in the formation of the atmosphere which produced the strife at the University of Mississippi and Oxford last Sunday and Monday which resulted in the death of two persons and injury to many others."

Furthermore, we endorse the statement of our Conference Board of Christian Social Concerns made prior to the rioting in Oxford.

We affirm the freedom of the pulpit. We have uttermost confidence in our ministers and support them in the preaching of the whole Gospel in the Spirit of Christ.

Signed,

S/H. L. Beasley
S/T. H. Ferrell
S/G. H. Holloman
S/J. E. Long
S/W. L. Robinson
S/K. I. Tucker

A Trail Through the Wilderness

by James B. Nicholson

THESE LAST FEW WEEKS in Oxford have made the will of God quite clear to each of us. There is no question. We must act now to see that His will is carried out. This "nigger" that caused all of this trouble must be hung on the goal post at our next ball game to show all Negroes in this state what will happen to all Negroes that step out of line. We must take these nigger-loving, power mad, Catholic Kennedy boys by the nape of the neck and shake some sense in their heads. We need to take these nine old men of the Supreme Court, who insist on communist decisions, and send them to Russia where their decisions will be respected. We must see that the U. S. marshal who shot that French newspaper man gets the state gas chamber.

This shocks you, doesn't it? . . . The thing that shocks you, however, is not what you just heard, for I am sure you have heard every one of these statements somewhere during these last few weeks. They did not shock you then. No, the thing that shocks you is where you heard this. You never expected to hear a thing like this from your pastor and especially from his pulpit. You see you do not expect me to resound the things you hear from man but you expect me to proclaim that which God puts on my heart. This is precisely what I shall endeavor to do. I know that some of you will disagree with me on this, but I pray that you shall at least hear me patiently and take what I have to say in the spirit of love.

Rev. Mr. Nicholson, pastor of Byram Methodist Church at Jackson, delivered this call away from false gods and to brotherly love to his congregation after the Oxford riot.

I. We must maintain or reestablish our communications with God so that we may clearly hear His voice in this hour of crisis.

This step must begin with repentance. I do not feel that we can clearly establish just who we can place the blame of the Oxford story on. I do feel that our hands are all filled with the blood of these dead and injured. We must stand before Him in repentance for what we are individually and collectively responsible for.

For the past eight years we have known of a well organized movement spreading a doctrine of hate. We knew this, yet we did nothing to offset this movement. We have let this group discredit our national government, the United Nations, the courts, the church, and some of our basic ideals. We sat idly by while this movement gained control of our press and state government. We Methodists let this pressure group force the state legislature and Governor to pass into law a bill designed to set up insurrection in the Methodist Church. We must stand before God in repentance for our neglect in this matter.

We have let prejudice shut out the Gospel and in many cases we have turned to the gods of segregation and white supremacy. We know that these two things have determined our actions and to some extent have controlled our lives. The Lord our God will not allow us to have these lesser gods. We must repent for this idolatry.

We need, more than ever before, to seek the power of God to free us from all that is in our minds and hearts

which keeps us from seeing the will of God for us in this hour of crisis.

II. If we are to solve our own problems we must think through and establish a doctrine of man that will be acceptable to God. I believe that this doctrine must be firmly planted on a foundation of brotherhood through the Fatherhood of God. This doctrine must be all inclusive in relation to man. In other words, what we think of the white man must also be true of the Asian, the Indian and the Negro. This belief will determine our action in this matter and in the other situations we will face in the future. It has now become essential that we establish what we believe about man.

III. If we are to face our own problems in this hour, we must maintain complete freedom of speech. We must be free to say what we think without reprisal or harassment. We must be willing to hear the ideas of others without cutting ourselves apart from them. We must not let smear tactics and gossip prevail against those with whom we disagree. It is only as we share our ideas that we can mold our ideas into a reasonable solution to our problem.

Our press must be kept free to give us a just account of the news and to speak its convictions in editorials. I uphold the right of every newspaper to express its convictions even though I may disagree with them vehemently. We must see that this basic right is never tampered with.

I believe in a free pulpit. The minister must be free to present the gospel as he feels God reveals it to him. It should be clearly understood that any pastor will say things with which his congregation will not agree. If this were not true there would be no way that the pastor could lead them in growth. It must be understood that a

pastor always, even if he may be wrong, seeks to reveal the message of God to his people.

IV. If we are to face the problems of race on a realistic level we must reestablish communications with the leaders of white and Negro peoples on the local level. It is only as we understand each other's positions that we can come out with fair and equitable solutions to the race problem. We have completely cut off such relationships. I believe that we ourselves can best solve our own problems and if we do not they will be solved for us by such pressure groups as the NAACP and the White Citizens Councils.

V. I believe that we must restore confidence in Government and in our courts. As I have already said we have allowed these pressure groups to undermine and tear down our confidence in Government. We, in America, know that we do not have a perfect government, but even with all of its imperfections we would not exchange our government for any the world has ever known. We know that we are responsible for its laws and we have come to settle our differences in the courts. We have learned to solve our problems in the courts and thus we respect the decisions of the courts. We must either continue this method of solving our problems or else we must turn to revolution and force. The latter cannot permeate our thoughts, therefore, we must accept all of the decisions of the courts, even if we disagree with them. If we believe laws are unjust we have means of removing them; may God help us to remain in this framework. Defiance of the law must be met with its consequences prescribed by the courts. Shall we keep our way of doing things or shall we turn to the ways of other nations and turn to rebellion?

VI. We must see that our institu-

tions of education are kept open. I do not believe that it is fair to the children of our nation to close our public schools as a solution to our problem. The education of our children is far more important than most of the political issues that rise and fall. It is certainly more important than the doctrine of segregation. If the time ever comes when the choice of whether my children go to school with Negroes or else have no school at all, my children will go to school with Negroes. The education of my children is this important to me. We must never use the possibility of closing our schools as a solution to this problem of segregation.

VII. We must come to the place where we dare to put our beliefs into practice. We have grown up to believe in the American creed in which we say that all men are created equal, that all men are endowed with certain rights and that we are a government "of the people, by the people, and for the people." We believe that our national sovereignty must be submissive to the ultimate and divine sovereignty. We believe that our laws are far more than rules written by man, they are in substance the submission of man to the will of God. This you see we all believe, yet there are so many points at which this does not come to be in our practice. The real and basic problem then is not merely a problem between the white man and the Negro . . . it is rather a problem between what we believe on the one hand, and what we practice on the other. This is our real problem . . . a conflict between what we believe to be right against what we practice . . . this is the thing that continues to nag at the very basement of our souls. This is also why we are so sensitive to the situation; we are afraid that our sins in this area, which we

have so cleverly concealed in selfishness, may be exposed. We are not willing to repent. Thus we seek the gods of the world to sustain us, yes, the god of segregation and the god of white supremacy. We even resort to the scriptures, unscrupulous preachers, and other sources to sustain our selfish position. We will seek to find ways of discrediting any church or pastor who dares to stir up these sins in our lives, that we have so carefully settled down in their self-satisfied complacency. We must face God in judgment, repent of those sins, let Him cleanse us of all this unrighteousness and create within us hearts capable of love.

VIII. Finally we must let love permeate our lives. Jesus said, "This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you." Can we love and hate at the same time? If we are to see man as God sees him, we must see the steadfast love that always reaches out . . . even for the worst of us our Master was willing to die. Paul tells us that "Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law." As we reexamine our own actions, can we say that they are an expression of love . . . do they do no wrong to a neighbor?

If we will really look at the matters before us we will find that all is not done in love . . . that it does wrong our neighbor. The other day I saw a sign far different from the signs "colored" or "white," it read, "NO NEGRO ALLOWED ON THIS WALK." This expresses what so many of us feel. But does it express what we believe to be right, or is it an expression of love?

I do not speak to you as one who has shed all of his prejudice for if I did I would not be telling you the truth. I have my fears and my doubts about the future but I do speak to you as one who is willing to open my mind and

heart to the will of God. I must come at least to say, if God loves one I must love him too. I must come to the place where I can say "Where he leads me I will follow!" I sincerely hope that each of us can come to this place also and we can abide in His love and this will be an overflowing love for all that He has created. Jesus speaks to us pleadingly, "This I command you, love one another."

Strictly Subjective

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mittee to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. Deep-rooted Mississippians all, committee members made a hair-raising report on police brutality and persecutions of colored people, in which they demanded federal action to protect Negroes from "terror," voiced "alarm at the direction which our society seems to be taking" and condemned state and local officials for frightful abuse of Negroes. This Deep South demand, for "outside interference" from the Justice Department and the Commission which has long delayed an urgent hearing on conditions in Mississippi, at the curious request of Justice, is perhaps as unequivocal a decency as has come out of any southern state in the segregation struggle.

More than two weeks before the Oxford riot, Editor Ira Harkey of the *Pascagoula Chronicle* uttered, in stunningly rational and angry tones, what seems to have been the first Mississippi newspaper editorial condemning Governor Barnett's ridiculous and ruinous resolve to defy federal law. Mr. Harkey has since continued to write furiously, mournfully and cajolingly, by turns, against the "schizophrenia" of official and majority Mississippi, and

for sanity, justice and progress. What seems remarkable in this demonstration of lonely reason, good will and great courage is that Mr. Harkey and his *Chronicle* have survived and, it appears, prevailed over the Jackson County Citizens Emergency Unit, a band of valiants who apparently rose up for the purposes of fighting the federals at Oxford and silencing the editor and destroying his paper. The *Chronicle* sustained a broken window from a night-time shot, temporary loss of advertising from business people threatened with economic and physical harm, and considerable bullying and harassment of Mr. Harkey. Due no doubt to Mr. Harkey's persistent editorial insistence on the truth and his impassioned persuasions to good sense and good feeling, and to a widespread dismay at the state's disgrace and danger, he has gathered support, including the public defense of him by President Claude Ramsey of Pascagoula, state president of the AFL-CIO, and less overt agreement and praise from fellow townsmen.

A sign that no society or community, however brutal its prevailing tone, is without its decent dissenters were the spectacular overtures to James Meredith from a handful of university students and faculty. To be sure, some of them were driven from this outlandish campus by vandalism and harassment; but their brave humanity amid hating hysteria, and the lasting friendship of several faculty members for Mr. Meredith, do stand as evidence of manliness of some Mississippians who may, by aligning themselves with the Negro cause of freedom, help redeem their state.

The audacious year-old *Mississippi Free Press* at Jackson, weekly presents four pages of civil rights news and editorials to some 6,000 readers

over the state heretofore innocent of these events and viewpoints, in what Reverend Mr. Gray of Oxford calls Mississippi's "paranoia." *The Free Press* is clearly an unquestionable ally of Negro aspirations, in contrast to most other segregationist dailies and weeklies, which usually under-play or mis-play news of Negro advancement and generally present Mississippi as a state of happy whites and darkies beleaguered by an enemy federal government and the incitements of "outsiders."

Regal Dodson of Greenville, in a January letter to the *Delta Democrat-Times*, casts the light of historical perspective on the Mississippi struggle, reviewing several hundred years of world white supremacy now ending, and calls on Mississippi to share responsibility in meeting "the greatest challenge to the United States in its history" — a sharp break in the prevailing deception of Mississippians by politicians and leaders, and an intelligent expression of rising dissent.

A rather spectacular contribution to the unaccustomed truth in Mississippi was a five-part discussion of the Oxford riot, called "The Oxford Disaster . . . Price of Defiance" by State Representative Karl Wiesenburger in the *Pascagoula Chronicle* last December and reprinted in brochure form. Mr. Wiesenburger recalls the falsehoods and folly which paved the way to the fatal riot, asserts the law of the land and calls for "law and order" instead of "destruction, disgrace, disaster and death," in what Editor Harkey calls "a major contribution to the welfare of Mississippi . . . around which may rally all Mississippians who are appalled at what is happening in their state."

The Phi Beta Kappa Association at the University of Mississippi this winter adopted a resolution avowing

that "individual freedom and respect for human dignity are the lifeblood of a university" and asking the state to preserve the school's integrity and "venerate it as a community of free men and women devoted to the preservation, increase and application of knowledge." The Phi Beta Kappas also advocated punishment and dismissal of students whose behavior "discredits the University, and the state and the nation."

In Laurel, Metropolitan diva Leontyne Price sang a benefit performance at her home church, and received two standing ovations from an integrated crowd which overflowed to nearly every part of the church, in the first desegregated gathering in her home town, or maybe anywhere in Mississippi outside a Negro campus, an appreciation which demonstrates the possibility of natural and human associations there. A Jackson tribute to Negro football hero Willie Richardson — mayor's proclamation, gifts and greetings from business and civic leaders and a parade from city hall — was another surge of desegregated pride in Negro accomplishment.

The tragedy of Clyde Kennard, one of the most poignant martyrs of the Negro movement for civil rights, is a story of such bitterness that it is difficult to extract much hope or comfort from Mr. Kennard's release from prison by Governor Barnett because of the 34-year-old Negro's fatal cancer. After Kennard unsuccessfully tried to enter a white state school, he was sentenced to seven years for an alleged theft of chicken feed, put to hard labor and denied treatment and checkups for his cancer. But Governor Barnett's belated benevolence, presumably induced by a petition for clemency started by the *Free Press* and

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Paranoia, Guilt and Atonement

by Duncan M. Gray, Jr.

I'M SURE THAT ALL of us here today — a week after the tragedy — feel depressed, burdened, and sorrowful; as, indeed, we should. But, as Christians, we cannot let our reaction stop at this point. Fundamental to the Christian faith is the deep conviction that even out of worst tragedy, some good can come. What can we *learn* from tragic experience? (And God help us if we do *not* learn; for then we will only have it to go through again and again). But what can we do *now*? This is the real question.

The first thing we can do is to face up to our own *guilt* in the situation. You and I didn't go out there and throw the broken bricks and the bottles. You and I didn't go out there and fire the guns. Yet you and I, along with every other Mississippian, are *responsible* in one degree or another for what happened. For we are responsible for the moral and political climate in our state which made such a tragedy possible. Maybe you and I didn't do much to create this climate, it is certainly evident that we did all too little to dispel or change it. The "things that we have left undone which we *ought* to have done" should bother us every bit as much as the "things which we have done which we ought *not* to have done." The decent, respectable, and responsible people of Mississippi have *failed*, when events like those of last

Sunday night can take place within our state.

What has been the climate in our state during the past several years? You know and I know that it has been one of fear and intimidation; one of defiance and irresponsibility. The official line of massive resistance to any form of desegregation and of last-ditch defiance of the federal courts was laid down, and anyone who dared to challenge it found himself in deep trouble. Calm and rational discussion of the matter was virtually prohibited, so that there was no chance for moderate men of both races to sit down in good faith and work out some reasonable and workable solution to the very real problems posed by the decisions of the Courts. Above all, the people of Mississippi were told by their leaders over and over again that the federal courts could be defied forever; that they would never have to obey the law of the land. And most of the people of Mississippi *believed* them. Mississippians have been thus deceived and misled by their leaders for nearly eight years now. Is it any wonder, then, that violence erupts when the issue becomes *real*, rather than academic, within our own state.

The freshman at Ole Miss today was only ten years old when the Supreme Court's decision on segregation was handed down. A senior today was only thirteen. Theirs is the generation exposed to the textbook and library censorship, mandatory essay contests on White Supremacy, and a

Rev. Mr. Gray's reflections here are part of several sermons delivered to his congregation, St. Peter's Episcopal Church at Oxford, after the September riot at the University of Mississippi.

massive propaganda campaign against the federal courts. Is it any wonder that they feel persecuted and oppressed? Seldom, if ever, have they been reminded that half of the people in Mississippi are Negroes and that they are people, too, with hopes, aspirations, and rights of their own. Think of the freshmen and upperclassmen as well who were out there throwing bricks and bottles the other night. Who could really blame them when the Governor of the state himself was in open rebellion against the law?

Think of the thugs and the toughs from near and far who did the most damage Sunday night and nearly all the damage Monday morning. What could you expect when supposedly responsible legislators were saying, "We will *never* surrender," and "The people of Mississippi know what to do!" What could you expect when so much of the Mississippi Press was voicing the same sentiment? It was an open invitation to every thug and tough for hundreds of miles around to come pouring into Oxford, for they had every reason to believe that the decent, responsible people of Mississippi would back up their action one hundred per cent. There are thugs and toughs everywhere, but they come in such numbers and with such violence only where they think they are wanted.

The major part of the blame must be placed upon our leaders themselves; *and* upon you and me and all the other decent and responsible citizens of Mississippi, who have allowed this impossible climate to prevail. It is for this that we pray God's forgiveness this morning.

But true repentance means more than just remorse. We must now give our all to salvaging the situation; to bringing order out of chaos, peace out of strife. We must accept the fact that

the color of a person's skin can no longer be a barrier to his admission to the University of Mississippi. I would hope that, as Christians we would accept this because it is just and right, whether we like it or not. But if we are not yet able to do this, at least we can be realistic enough and patriotic enough to accept this as the law of the land. To think and to act otherwise — to continue to breathe defiance and disobedience — will only bring more suffering and shame, violence and horror that has shocked us so deeply since we last came together as a congregation.

This is what worries me most about the efforts of so many Mississippians to pin the blame for last week's violence on the federal marshals. If we are not mature enough and secure enough to admit and confess our own guilt — if we continue to nurse and nurture our collective paranoia — then we will never get around to doing anything about the real root of our troubles: the moral and political climate in which we live. And we will have to go through again and again the horror of more violence and bloodshed. We will have learned nothing.

But I, for one, look to the future with faith and confidence. I am convinced that most of the decent and responsible people of the Oxford-University community have learned the lesson we *must* learn from last Sunday's madness. And from the statement of those 127 Mississippi businessmen released last Tuesday it is apparent that others have learned also. The fact that many other Mississippians have *not*, and that many of our political leaders are still making every effort to keep them from doing so should only spur us on to better and greater efforts. By God's grace, some real good *can* come out of this tragedy, and it is up

to you and to me to see that it does.

A little less than a century ago, our own southern forebears found themselves in the aftermath of a far greater tragedy. And there were those then who tried to redeem the times. Among them was our own L. Q. C. Lamar. Another, George Washington Cable, made his most memorable speech on the campus of the University of Mississippi. But, above all, there was the noble example of General Robert E. Lee. A devout Episcopalian, Lee was present in the Church shortly after the war, when a Negro Churchman came to the altar to make his Communion. The other people in the church, confused and resentful, stayed in their pews. Then General Lee quietly arose, walked up the aisle, and knelt beside the Negro.

This great man set a standard which has never quite been forgotten by the South. It is to this standard that we must now repair. For, ultimately, it will be through countless small words and small deeds, done in the name of Christ by Christians, that this University, this community, and this state will yet redeem herself for the tragic events of last Sunday and Monday . . .

I think we should ask ourselves, first of all, if we are really sufficiently aware of the *deadly serious* nature of our present predicament. This may seem like a silly question in the light of the anxiety and concern which has burdened us all during the past several days. But one wonders if it is so silly when we see legislators joking, wearing Centennial uniforms to the floor of the house, and students cheering and laughing in a situation where even the Lieutenant-Governor said someone might get killed. I am afraid that there may be many who seem to put this whole affair in the category of waving Confederate flags and singing "Dixie"

at a football game; or standing up and proclaiming to the world that we are proud to be Mississippians.

As we all know, our University is on the verge of losing her accreditation along with all the other colleges in the state. But even if this is averted, the dignity and good name of the University have suffered damage it will take years to repair. For many years the University of Mississippi has been known as a venerable institution of sound learning, gentle manners and fond memories, and, more recently as the home of great football teams and beautiful coeds, neither of which hurt her a bit. Today, and perhaps for years to come, when Ole Miss is mentioned, the first image generated in the minds of millions everywhere will be one of lawlessness, racial strife, and reaction. The picture has been painted, and largely by native Mississippians who claim to love her. That picture will be hard to erase.

Of course, there are still those who talk of *closing* the University, as a last resort; and, again, this in the name of love and service to Mississippi. But, surely, we cannot be so blind as this. What greater *disservice* could we render to our beloved state than to close down her colleges and universities—we who need, perhaps more than any other state to *raise* our educational level, not lower it; we who need to keep and train our bright young people *here at home*, not drive them away to other parts of the country?

Even more serious than the threat to the University is the threat to our nation and our system of government posed by our continued defiance of the federal courts and the federal government. No government is perfect. But I sincerely believe, as I'm sure you do, that our system of gov-

ernment in this country comes closer to providing the Christian ideal of freedom and justice than any other system yet devised by the mind of man. So, then, it is as a Christian, as well as an American, that I want to see this system preserved. But we cannot long survive as a country if every state is free to decide which federal laws she will obey and which she will not. We found this out 100 years ago, and most of us thought the issue was settled then.

We know there are good laws and bad laws, good court decisions and bad court decisions; and, fortunately, under our system of government, we are free to protest the ones we don't like and to take every legal means to repeal or reverse them. We do *not* have the right to defy and disobey the law when it is established and in force. In trying to do this, we have brought upon ourselves the threat of anarchy, and, as Christians, we cannot and must not support this alternative to the democracy under which we live.

Finally, and most important of all, I ask you as a Christian people to consider the real moral issue which lies at the base of the whole crisis: are we morally justified in refusing to admit to the University of Mississippi any student who meets all the necessary requirements *except* for the color of his skin? Remember, the question here is not "What would I *like*?" or "What do I *want*?" The question is simply, "What is *just* and *right*?"

Our governor has said that the state's cause on this score is righteous and just; and I am sure he is sincere in his belief, as are many other Mississippians who share it with him. But in the name of reason and of Christian standards of freedom and justice, I ask you to consider the fact that *no*

university in the world would defend this position rationally, and no Christian church in the world would defend it morally. And I do not believe that any one of us here today could stand in the presence of Jesus of Nazareth, look Him squarely in the eye, and say, "We will not admit a Negro to the University of Mississippi." For it was our Lord who said, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto *me*."

Brethren we need to *pray*, for our University and our community, our state and our nation. Perhaps, above all, we need to pray for ourselves. The seeds of anger and hatred, bitterness and prejudice, are already widely sown, and, as Christians we need to do our utmost to uproot them and cast them out. You and I have a heavy responsibility in the days and weeks to come. Let us pray daily, even hourly, for God's guidance and direction, that we may faithfully fulfill this responsibility to the end that God's will be done.

Strictly Subjective

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signed by many Mississippians, does suggest a more human political climate in which the Governor can profit by permitting Kennard to die in freedom and such comforts as medical care provide.

These expressions from white Mississippians, samples of increasing sanity and generosity, by no means indicate that the overlord population is reaching with outstretched hands to lift dark brothers to freedom and equality; but they do point to the possibility of informed, rational dissent and moral leadership which can work with Negro neighbors for a civilized and democratic state.

That All Men Are Brothers

CONFRONTED WITH the grave crises precipitated by racial discord within our state in recent months, and the genuine dilemma facing persons of Christian conscience, we are compelled to voice publicly our convictions. Indeed, as Christian ministers and as native Mississippians, sharing the anguish of all our people, we have a particular obligation to speak. Thus understanding our mutual involvement in these issues, we bind ourselves together in this expression of our Christian commitment. We speak only for ourselves, though mindful that many others share these affirmations.

Born of the deep conviction of our souls as to what is morally right, we have been driven to seek the foundations of such convictions in the expressed witness of our Church. We, therefore, at the outset of this new year affirm the following:

- I. The Church is the instrument of God's purpose. This is His Church. It is ours only as stewards under His Lordship. Effective practice of this stewardship for the minister clearly requires freedom of the pulpit. It demands for every man an atmosphere for responsible belief and free expression.
- II. We affirm our faith in the official position of The Methodist Church on race as set forth in paragraph 2026 of the 1960 Methodist Discipline: "Our Lord Jesus

Christ teaches that all men are brothers. He permits no discrimination because of race, color, or creed. 'In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith . . .' (Galatians 3:26)"

The position of The Methodist Church, long held and frequently declared, is an amplification of our Lord's teaching: "We believe that God is Father of all people and races, that Jesus Christ is His Son, that all men are brothers, and that man is of infinite worth as a child of God." (The Social Creed, Paragraph 2020)

- III. We affirm our belief that our public school system is the most effective means of providing common education for all our children. We hold that it is an institution essential to the preservation and development of our true democracy. The Methodist Church is officially committed to the system of public school education and we concur. We are unalterably opposed to the closing of public schools on any level or to the diversion of tax funds to the support of private or sectarian schools.
- IV. In these conflicting times, the issues of race and Communism are frequently confused. Let there be no mistake. We affirm an unflinching opposition to Communism. We publicly concur in the Methodist Council of Bishops' statement of November 16, 1962, which declares:

This January manifesto of 28 young ministers of the Mississippi Methodist Conference was issued in January and published in *The Mississippi Methodist Advocate*, with an *Advocate* editorial asserting freedom of the pulpit.

"The basic commitment of a Methodist minister is to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. This sets him in permanent opposition to Communism. He cannot be a Christian and a Communist. In obedience to his Lord and in support of the prayer, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven,' he champions justice, mercy, freedom, brotherhood, and peace. He defends the underprivileged, oppressed, and forsaken. He challenges the status quo, calling for repentance and change wherever the behavior of men falls short of the standards of Jesus Christ."

We believe that this is our task and calling as Christian ministers.

FINDING AUTHORITY IN THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF OUR CHURCH, AND BELIEVING IT TO BE IN HARMONY WITH SCRIPTURE AND GOOD CHRISTIAN CONSCIENCE, WE PUBLICLY DECLARE OURSELVES IN THESE MATTERS AND AGREE TO STAND TOGETHER IN SUPPORT OF THESE PRINCIPLES.

Jerry Furr	Marvin Moody
Maxie D. Dunnam	Keith Tonkel
Jim L. Waits	John Ed Thomas
O. Gerald Trigg	Inman Moore, Jr.
James B. Nicholson	Denson Napier
Buford A. Dickinson	Rod Entrekin
James S. Conner	Harold Ryker
J. W. Holston	N. A. Dickson
James P. Rush	Ned Keller
Edward W. McRae	Powell Hall
Joseph C. Way	Elton Brown
Wallace E. Roberts	Bufkin Oliver
Summer Walters	Jack Troutman
Bill Lampton	Wilton Carter

New South