

Interview

by Wesley A. Anderson

July 22, 1969

Wed 19-30 AM

Dr. Joe H. Totten from Calvary Baptist Church  
in Tuttle is a native of S. Carolina, has been in Jackson  
8 years and at Calvary 3 years. He is young (less than 40),  
personable, well-educated, immaculate, straight forward, and  
quite moderate.

His impression of the Mississippi Summer Project  
is that "it was creating a favorable community  
image rather of Loto, UCC or the students involved."

He said "the way it was handled has created a  
bad impression." "There was no attempt, or at least  
he knew of no attempt to co-ordinate this Christian  
task through local or state organizations." "We heard that  
from way to some people would come thinking up a way but considered by them  
from planning that we wouldn't get out with their name?"

He said that he assumed on the basis of the  
UCC and UCC pronouncements that there was

(Completely) an UCC project and seemed surprised  
when I told him it was not. He said that the  
community impression was that UCC was in large part  
responsible for it. In response to a question, he said  
that he didn't see how that poor, inaccurate image  
which the UCC has projected into Mississippi could  
be corrected. He said that psychologically, the  
Mississippians is individualistic and that by nature  
they distrust organizations (of any type or name), as an  
individual must retain their individuality.

In answer to a question, he said "this includes the  
White Citizens Council" <sup>(and S.D. Church)</sup> and that he knew of very  
few people who were involved in White C.C. and he  
in fact never heard any positive remarks about it  
from his Church members but had in fact heard  
several jokingly negative (sarcastic) remarks about the  
Citizens Council and expressed the conviction that the  
W.C.C. was the cause, of at least had any real power,  
was largely instrumental in slaying Barrett, but that  
Thomson was a political expression of a lingering of the  
W.C.C. game - Mein Kampf and he predicted the  
social unrest would be completely solved in 10  
years.

Re. the Civil Rights Law he said he anticipated no  
problem and thought Most Minnesotans would obey  
the law, many would do it gladly and there would only  
be a few "incubators."

Re. the place of the Church, he saw no value in  
Organizational Clergy action and in fact said that due  
to the before-mentioned individuality, such organizational  
action would only arouse suspicion and create distrust  
"a kind of what are they up to now?" attitude;  
they are trying to soften us up for integration" he  
said the school integration would be followed possibly

and gradually. It said there is a wholesome concern  
for the Negro in the South by Southerners which has  
taken the form of a "chivalric relationship to their parents"  
(and is not individual or exorcised by the individual)  
with some prominent gentle normal in family relationships  
in the total situation <sup>the father's action upon Negro education even the</sup> ~~poor~~ <sup>immense</sup> for S.C.

He said "there is a felt need for some breathing  
spell during which the Southerners could get out  
together with the Negroes the direction in which the  
C.K. law would affect their life together ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~people~~  
people" He saw like King coming down here cannot  
aid, but only disturb the situation and it would  
be better if he did not come, but regardless of the  
present situation, he is quite optimistic about the  
future of Mississippi, said only since the '40s has  
Mississippi economically recovered from the Civil war  
and that a need to understand the devastation & aftermath  
during that time could one understand the Southern position

He suggested that I contact W. J. Davis at the Baptist  
Ch. and I could get all the names of both black and  
white ministers needed for past interviews.

Re. the Negro Religious Situation  
Said the Southern Negro could attend New Orleans  
Baptist Seminary for the past 10 years that church supported  
historically was the will of the Negro after war (Civil) and  
that Colman Baptist gave \$1000 per annum to support  
higher church education <sup>(among Negroes)</sup> Specifically the Miss. Seminary  
in Jackson St. receives from the <sup>sec.</sup> (50%) receives their  
money. It is designed to aid ministerial education  
the need to show up the