

Interview July 23, 1964

by Wesley D. Anderson

^{General}
S. B. Mason Jr, Pastor of Colonial Heights Baptist Church,
Jackson, Miss.

Rev. Mason is a moderate, well-mannered, sophisticated
S. B. minister whose knowledge of the C. L. workers
throughout the state (knowledge which he disclaimed to
have except what he read in the papers or heard on
T.V. but which he later admitted to having acquired
through one of his own parishioners, a lumberman who
travels extensively throughout the state) is pretty much
the stereotypical of ~~stereotypical~~, immoral, irreverent dis-
bodies who are too immature to be doing such work
and not mature enough to refuse or refrain from being
involved.

He warmed to the "opening observation" that perhaps
the students were being used and suggested that he
didn't realize anyone that had ever considered the possibility
after assurance that we were concerned at their
point, Rev. Mason talked freely about his impressions.
He had no idea that the S.C.C. was or went behind
the Miss. Summer project. His concern was more that
whatever or whoever was pushing the project would soon
go away. Such people as were involved had no idea
of an association with the regular "Cotton-field Negro"
and if they supposed that living with such people for
a whole summer was to be fun they had another
thought coming. He had heard they were teaching
French in one of the freedom schools and his reaction
was one of incredulity and ludicrousness.

My impression

I think it would be helpful for another contact to be made and if possible to locate and interview the lumberman ^(Parishman) who had acquired quite a large degree of knowledge about the life & workers throughout the state. Rev. Mason is one of the many sophisticated churchmen who believes these rebel-ravers (he wouldn't use the term) will soon be gone and Mississippi can return to serious Christianity.

I do feel that this man is a future valuable contact and as an influential pastor could be persuaded that the Delta Ministry has value if it were properly interpreted.