

DATE OF SERVICE IN MINISTERS' PROJECT 8/22 - 8/29/64

EVALUATION

1. Name: BICKEL, WILLIAM H. "BILL"
2. Church: BEAFO
3. Denomination: UNITED PRESBYTERIAN U.S.A.
4. Address: 4036 McDONALD AVE.
5. Area Canvassed: PALMER'S CROSSING
EATON PRECINCT. Amount of time spent 1 1/2 DAYS
6. Number of people visited: APPROX. 60 OR 65 PEOPLE
7. General Response: Very very little disinterest. People most cordial with many inviting me in and really wanting to talk. I found no evidence of hatred on the part of negroes toward white Missisippians. Most are optimistic & appreciate our help.
8. Did you have any contact with white community? Explain. I had contact with the Men's Club and ministers of the Westminster Presby. Church and with a white family on the fringe of the negro community around the Project. See below.
9. Did you have any contact with police? Explain. During my stay in Hattulung I had no contact with the police.
10. Give your impressions of community, evaluation of your work, what you think can be done.

Negro Community: I felt very safe and secure in the negro community. In all my contacts with them I felt they could be trusted and hoped that they felt that we could be trusted. There was noted that some few were afraid of reprisal if they showed a too active interest in the "new emancipation" movement; others realized that the time had come for them to press hard and they were most willing to do their part despite the risks involved. Many are persistent and determined that they will eventually get the justice and equality that has been so long denied them. This was so evident at the

On Tuesday, Aug. 24, 1964 Rev. "Tuc" Whitehead, Mark Lundeen and I attended a Mens Club Dinner Meeting at the Westminster Presbyterian Church on ~~an~~ invitation of the pastor, Rev. Cox, but were only received. It was necessary that we introduce ourselves and inquire about Mr. Cox. He examined himself after greeting us warmly to complete something he was writing. The men of the ~~our~~ church were clustered together talking about the Democratic Convention. As we tried to become a part of the fellowship the men would move elsewhere or break up in smaller groups. Finally, one of the men brought up the negro situation in Mississippi, and as the conversation was proceeding nicely, the pastor approached us and said the session had called a meeting and was inviting us to attend. It was immediately sensed that the meeting related to our presence. The pastor was apologetic and expressed his ~~personally~~ personal feeling that we were welcome to stay, but that some of the men felt that we were an offense to them, an embarrassment, and were unwelcome, but the decision to stay or leave was left to us. We left but not before exchanging views. A few days later, Mr. Lundeen & I had a luncheon date with Mr. Cox, and he's all right. He was very sorry that we were "kicked out" by his session, but said he had some others he could work with and these few were somewhat disturbed by our being rejected although they did not speak up in the meeting.

On Wednesday, Tucker Whitehead and I visited a white family - a man by the name of Davie & his wife, a Mrs. Groves and a Mrs. Brian. He is a filling station attendant. They were friendly and talked freely. Said the negroes were entitled to equal treatment but there should be no mixing of the races afraid of intermarriage. Mr. Davie agreed that most trouble, as far as violence was concerned, was usually caused by "hot heads" on both sides.

Community Center and mass meeting that I was privileged to attend. Many of the preachers I contacted were Christian people and have love in their hearts for their white brethren. Our ~~own~~ continued presence here has given them confidence and hope, and they hate to see each group go. Their image of the white race is constantly being changed by the interest and love shown to them by us. They have a strong faith in God - those who have talked to me in a religious vein - and they know that by themselves they can do nothing. They implore His help.

White Community. There are years and years of prejudice and hatred here hard to break through. It appears that every delaying tactic will be employed to forestall compliance with the Civil Rights Law.

I believe the work of the Ministers' Project in conjunction with COFO is bearing fruit. Through the efforts of both organizations the negro community has grown more aware of ^{the need of} a united effort on their part, that is, their own part, and the importance of the vote.

I believe a greater effort than I saw should be made to contact members of the white community. Since we have a rather bad image in the eyes of the white Mississippian, perhaps calling individual pastors and inviting them to be guests at a luncheon or a dinner date to present our business and purpose would be worthy of a try with the suggestion that one of the churches or a meeting of the Fellowship Association give us a hearing. Reaching the women of the church might be easier than reaching the men. Getting the women on our side could be a way of reaching the men.

If goal funds are available or could be made available, perhaps a testing of accommodations should be started. Mississippi will continue to put off as long as possible compliance with the Civil Rights Law.