

## REVEREND KENNETH BECK

At the time of this interview Beck was minister of the First United Methodist Church in St. Cloud. He talks about his family background and the history of the church.

INTERVIEWERS: James Robak and Dr. Cal Gower

DATE: August 3, 1977

SUBJECTS COVERED: Reel 1 Side 1

## PERSONAL BACKGROUND

- 010 Beck was born in Des Moines, Iowa
- 018 Beck's mother died when he was young
- 040 Beck was raised by his Swedish grandparents for three years
- 043 His dad remarried and they moved to Kansas City
- 044 His father and step-mother bought a business in Kansas City
- 050 It was the first of many moves for Beck and his family
- 106 His dad got another job in 1936, and they moved to Minneapolis
- 114 One year Beck went to three schools
- 120 It seemed more common for families to be moving around back then
- 126 Beck's father ran a miniature golf course; he ran it inside in the winter and lost a lot of money
- 153 Beck's parents did not believe in him going to college because they wanted Beck to go into business
- 160 Beck got out of the Swedish Baptist Church that he had been going to with his grandparents
- 169 His parents did not want anything to do with the Swedish because they were second-generation and they were trying to be anti-ethnic
- 189 Beck's parents went to the Julotta (a Swedish service very early in the day on Christmas Day) in the Swedish Baptist Church
- 198 Beck's dad brought him to church, but the dad would wait in the car
- 212 Beck became a Methodist during high school
- 220 For education his dad went through the fifth grade and to business college
- 222 His father was a CPA
- 237 His father pushed him towards business so that he could make money
- 303 Beck did not want to kill people during WWII, but he wanted to be involved in it
- 343 Beck was on a ship during WWII
- 365 His ship sailed to England
- 412 The immorality of the whole war made Beck decide to go into the ministry
- 425 Beck was not that pious before he went into a religious field
- 470 Beck went to a seminary that is affiliated with Northwestern University
- 497 He got a full-time job in Bloomington
- 539 They were in Bloomington for two years
- 543 Then Beck and his family moved to Raymond, Minnesota
- 588 The family moved to St. Cloud in 1963

## CHURCH HISTORY

- 612 The First United Methodist Church was started in about 1855  
 730 In 1946 to 1955, the church had a minister called *Huffman*  
 743 Huffman was interested in extra-sensory perception (ESP) and  
 reincarnation  
 827 Beck is the president of the Family Planning Center  
 831 Beck devotes much of his time to humanism  
 850 Since Beck has been the minister of St. Cloud, the church has  
 tried to take a stronger leadership role on social-justice issues
- 901 Beck feels the civil rights issue will pass  
 910 He feels the main thing is to have unity as human beings in the  
 sight of God

Reel 1, Side 2

- 004 The Methodist Church still has good cooperation with the Newman  
 Center, Methodist Campus Ministry, and the Lutherans  
 010 Beck has supported openly the Methodist position of freedom of  
 conscience  
 025 Beck and Hubert H. Humphrey are long-time friends  
 026 Beck helped Humphrey in his first election campaign for mayor  
 of Minneapolis  
 030 Beck was on CORE (Congress of Racial Equality)  
 032 They tried to integrate hotels and restaurants in Minneapolis  
 042 CORE was organized in 1946 (?)  
 049 Beck was involved in the freedom marches  
 062 Beck believes that justice has not been served, but the seeds have  
 been planted  
 117 The First United Methodist Church of St. Cloud has had a gradual  
 growth  
 118 The church has 1160 confirmed members right now  
 127 The church is in the process of starting an additional congregation  
 in the northwest section of St. Cloud area  
 137 The church owns 18 acres in the northwest area of St. Cloud  
 262 In the last ten years their denomination has lost over a million  
 members because of social-justice issues  
 277 The Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, American  
 Baptist, American Lutheran Church, and the Lutheran Church of  
 America have been losing members because of social-justice issues  
 285 The conservative churches have been growing  
 296 The conservative churches have grown mainly because of enthusiasm  
 300 His church has lost members because they tried to be all things  
 to all people  
 306 They have lost members because of blandness and because of  
 taking positions  
 336 It is still the old struggle of individual salvation versus  
 social welfare  
 364 Beck believes millennialism will grow as we approach the year 2000  
 375 Beck believes you should live all the days of your life whether the  
 world ends or does not end