

CIVIL RIGHTS:

Strength or Weakness?

As the U. S. courted the favor of South American and Asiatic peoples in the fight against Kremlin imperialism, the world watched our progress in guaranteeing civil rights and equality for all races and religions. For every instance of U. S. failure to fulfill its promise of civil rights is seized upon by our critics, weakens our efforts to offset Red propaganda in much of the world.



Texas U.'s Sweatt



Okla. U.'s Fisher

Civil rights in the U. S. cover a broad field—freedoms of speech, press, religion, assembly, opportunity, guarantees of equal justice. In the battle for Asia's races, and to prevent the welding of the Americas into a solid democratic front, anti-U. S. forces have concentrated on bad relations between our white and Negro citizens, and on the unequal treatment of Mexican farm workers.

Targets of Opportunity

Asia's newspapers strongly played up the rioting that followed attempts by a Negro to move his family into a Cicero, Ill. apartment house, formerly occupied by white families only. Mexican newspapers harp on prejudice against Latin - American farm workers.

Radio Moscow noted the warning by a Ku



MacLaurin—inside the Okla. U. door

Klux Klansman in Gaffney, S. C., that there will be bloodshed if Negro students attend white schools. But it ignored the admittance of 1,000 Negroes to colleges in 15 Southern and Border states, schools formerly for whites only.

This breakdown of segregation occurred last year after the Supreme Court ordered Oklahoma U. to admit Ada Lois Sipuel Fisher and G. W. MacLaurin as full-fledged students on a non-segregated basis, and Texas U. to admit Heman Marion Sweatt (*opp. p.*) to its law school. Other states fell into line. Yet in all 15 states most undergraduates still go to segregated colleges.

Strong efforts are being made in the South to bet-



Changing times: "Mexicans Welcome" at a Snyder, Tex., cafe



G.I. Forum at Corpus Christi, Tex., maps aid for Mexican farm workers.

ter race relations. Example: A Southern governor, Sid McMath of Arkansas, went before a convention of the Urban League—an organization devoted to improving Negro opportunities—to detail efforts for removing discrimination in education, housing, employment.

As with Negroes, discrimination against Mexicans in the Southwest, West and Midwest runs to housing, eating places, hotels, schools. State and civic agencies say they are making headway in eliminating these inequalities. Example: The G.I. Forum of Texas, made up of U. S. war veterans of Latin-American descent, has successfully attacked efforts to keep Mexicans out of many public eating and recreation spots.

Fulfilling America's Promise

Thus, by court order, by civic group attack and by state directive, the U. S. is seeking to fulfill its promises of equal opportunities. Insofar as America succeeds, it strengthens itself against the pointing fingers of Red propaganda. Wherever America fails, and discrimination occurs, it weakens its traditional promise of justice and equality for all men.

Civil Defense Lullaby

Department store chimes playing Brahms' *Lullaby* drowned out air raid warning whistles during a Birmingham, Ala., civil defense test alert.

Quick

NEWS WEEKLY • SEPT. 24, 1951

OldMagazineArticles.com