

PATHFINDER

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Mississippi: Books, Negroes

Slightly more than half the population of Mississippi (2,010,000) is Negro. Members of the Mississippi Senate are, in keeping with Southern views, all white. Last week a law passed by the Senate and awaiting final enactment did nothing to foster good feeling between the races.

The law was to provide free textbooks in the public schools. Two provisions of the law angered Negroes. One called for storing books for Negro and white children in separate storehouses; this was advisable, according to one senator, because of "the prevalence of syphilis and tuberculosis among the Negro population."

The other provision established different sets of textbooks for white and Negro schools. Idea behind this, said the Senate Education Committee, was to eliminate instructions for voting from civic books to be distributed to Negro pupils.

Said an Oxford, Miss., senator in support of the separate textbook item: "Under the Constitution, the Negro is a citizen and, of course, we know and accept that. But he can never expect to be given the same educational and social privileges with the white man . . ."

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