

AN EDUCATION IN CITIZENSHIP

The amicus curiae brief submitted in the Mendez suit by Thurgood Marshall and his colleagues at the NAACP argued that segregation harmed all Americans, not just the targets of discrimination.

The segregated citizen cannot give his full allegiance to a system of law and justice based on the proposition that "all men are created equal" when the community denies that equality by compelling his children to attend separate schools. Nor can the white child learn this fundamental of American citizenship when his community sets a contradictory example.

Educational segregation creates still another barrier to American citizenship. It promotes racial strife by teaching the children of both the dominant and minority groups to regard each other as something different and apart. And one of the great lessons of human history is that man tends to fear and hate that which he feels is alien.

It is essential for the successful development of our country as a nation of free people that the sympathies and tolerance which we wish practiced in later life be fostered in the classroom.