

At long last — President signs civil rights measure

The most far-reaching civil rights bill in United States history, spelling out such fundamental rights as voting and employment, became the law of the land last week.

President Johnson signed the measure as the nation marked the 188th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence which first proclaimed the "unalienable rights" of mankind.

The bill passed the House of Representatives early this year and then underwent nearly three months of Dixiecrat filibustering in the Senate. Final passage was assured in mid-June when the Senate voted cloture to limit debate and for the first time in history cut off a southern filibuster against civil rights.

CLOTURE and the Senate's final passage of the measure by a 73-27 vote reflected a long campaign by minorities, labor and other progressive forces. It stemmed from a groundswell of Negro protest and from such signs of united support for civil rights as last year's massive March on Washington.

All but a small fraction of the Senate's Republicans joined with northern Democrats in the election year approval of the measure. Twenty-one Dixie Democrats and six Republicans, including the party's prospective Presidential candidate, Barry Goldwater, made up the entire no vote on Senate passage.

Labor and civil rights leaders hailed the legislative victory but warned that there must be concrete action to translate the law's principles into reality. "Let us recognize," said AFL-CIO Pres. George Meany, "that a law is the beginning of justice, not its fulfillment." Civil rights leaders planned immediate action to test the statute.

MEANY WARNED that the "battle was not waged to win equal rights to unemployment or an equal distribution of poverty... for equal opportunity to be realized we must have full opportunity. And full opportunity means jobs and good wages for all."

The bill will punish violators found guilty of criminal contempt by fines of \$1,000 or six months imprisonment. Its provisions are:

1. Racial discrimination in qualifications for voting is outlawed. The bill speeds legal redress for those who suffer voting discrimination and restricts "literacy tests."

2. **THOSE** discriminated against or segregated in such places of public accommodation as hotels, motels, restaurants, theaters, sport arenas or service stations may seek relief in the courts. Private clubs and small rooming houses are exempted.

3. The attorney general has authority to file civil suits to end discrimination or segregation in state or local government-owned facilities except schools. The injured person must initiate the complaint.

4. The U.S. commissioner of education must survey the effects on equal educational opportunity of public school discrimination and segregation and must report to the President and Congress within two years. The attorney general is authorized to protect the rights of persons complaining of discrimination.

5. **THE** Civil Rights Commission is empowered to serve as a

national clearing house on all facets of discrimination and segregation and to hold hearings.

6. Discrimination in any Federally-assisted state or local project is outlawed. If discrimination is not ended voluntarily the government can cut off aid.

7. Effective one year from now, discrimination in hiring, wage practices and union membership is forbidden. An Equal Employment Opportunity Commission is to investigate such discrimination and may sue for compliance.

8. **THE SECRETARY** of commerce is to compile voting and voter registration statistics, based on the 1970 census, in areas recommended by the Civil Rights Commission.

9. The attorney general may intervene in civil suits filed to protest denial of equal protection of the law as a result of discrimination. He is to intervene if he finds the case is of "general public importance."

10. A community relations service is established to work with local communities and individuals, to assure compliance with the law.