

libraries of the North and West have responded to the requests of their readers for biographies, folktales, histories and current surveys on the "New Africa".

An odd development has followed the desegregation of public education in many of the border states. Prior to 1954, most all-Negro schools in this middle region as well as in the deep South, celebrated Negro History Week and felt that it was essential to give Negro children some appreciation of the achievements of "their" people. However, with the coming of desegregation, many of these programs have been abandoned. Some Negro school officials and community leaders immediately took the view that it would be wrong to continue such celebrations if the student body was mixed and above all, "since we were all now Americans." A decade of desegregation, however, has removed some illusions. On second thought, many persons now realize that all students (the whole community really) need to know about the struggles and achievements of the minority as well as majority groups, if we are ever to have mutual appreciation in an integrated society.

TELSTAR AND EARLY BIRD

Although the school is our principal institution for the systematic transmission of the culture, it is scarcely as important today as it once was in molding social attitudes. This leading role has been taken over by the media of mass communication. Perhaps the single greatest influence is television. We recall that twenty years ago it did not exist and, of course, was not even mentioned in our survey of 1944.

As has been suggested, the Negro Revolution has been, for the most part, a TV

story. And for many of our children as well as adults this is also true for the UN and the doings of our Presidents.

Television started out with the inherited racial patterns of radio and the movies. In the beginning, it was, like them, strictly jim crow where it was inconvenient to be exclusively lily-white. In the early days, the Negro on TV — if at all — was the familiar stereotype.

But part of the race relations rebellion is symbolic — revolt against suppression and exclusion not only in life but in the culture; in the images, news and opinions that are transmitted across the nation and the world. CORE, creatively, once stationed TV sets on street corners in Harlem and stood by with stop watches to demonstrate to passers-by that Negro faces seldom appeared and that when they did, they were most often in an unfavorable light.

The public pressures upon the television industry have brought about many progressive changes. So much so that currently whenever a personality or an interviewee makes a slip and uses a derogatory term for a minority, the station knows that its switchboard will be jammed with protests. Accordingly, "live" TV has been cleansed of epithets, slurs and slanders. Exceptions, of course, must be made for local programs of the deep South.

The "canned" or film shows do not come out so well. A large share of viewing time is given over to old movies on the "late" and "sunrise" TV. One can see re-runs of all those ancient melodramas that featured Stepin Fetchit, Hattie McDaniels, Louise Beavers, "Bojangles" and other minstrel actors and actresses. Perhaps a campaign against