

Virginia Negroes Win Lunch Counter Battle

ARLINGTON, Va., June 23 (AP)—More than 45 lunch counters in northern Virginia drug, variety and department stores soon will be opened to Negroes.

Two drug chains, Peoples Drug Stores and Drug Fair, and two major department stores, S. Kanns Sons Co. and Lansburgh's, disclosed last night they intend to start serving Negro patrons in Alexandria, Falls Church, and in Arlington and Fairfax Counties.

The Hecht Co., a department store, and F. W. Woolworth and G. C. Murphy are reported to be preparing to inaugurate the

same general policy. One Woolworth store in Arlington opened its lunch counter to Negroes yesterday.

The decision of the stores constitutes the first major departure in Virginia from custom which has prohibited racial integration in public dining facilities.

It follows a series of demonstrations by Negro and white students which began June 9 in Arlington drug and variety stores. Similar "sit-in" demonstrations have occurred in leading cities throughout Virginia and the South during the past

five months.

Plans by the chains to afford Negroes lunch counter service could encounter difficulty in Fairfax County where Commonwealth Attorney Robert C. Fitzgerald last night reiterated his contention that Virginia law forbids integration in public eating facilities.

However, the Virginia attorney general's office declared last week there is no Virginia statute which would prohibit white and Negro customers from eating together so long as the proprietor does not object to them doing so.