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Making the Right to Read a Reality

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Editorial Comment

MAKING THE RIGHT TO READ A REALITY

In September of 1969 Dr. James E. Allen, Jr., who at that time was U.S. Commissioner of Education, announced that "we should immediately set for ourselves the goal of assuring that by the end of the 1970's the right to read shall be a reality for all—that no one shall be leaving our schools without the skill and the desire necessary to read to the full limits of his capability." It is now 1972. What has been done to achieve this goal?

The United States Office of Education has given the "right to read" effort top priority and has assumed the responsibility of coordinating the resources of the *professional* sector in the country and of focusing the nation's attention on reading. A National Reading Council has been appointed by President Nixon and charged with the task of marshaling the efforts and resources of the *private* sector. A National Reading Center has been established to stimulate the *public* sector to make reading improvement a community project. The International Reading Association and the Parent Teacher Association have worked diligently in many ways to make their contributions toward solving our nation's reading problem. A beginning has been made. But we are still far from our goal.

It appears to many of us that the Right to Read program is doomed to failure unless every individual throughout the land becomes personally involved. National and professional organizations alone cannot achieve the goal. Each of us must work toward literacy for all. Therefore, it seems pertinent to ask, What are YOU doing to make the Right to Read a reality?

Dorothy J. McGinnis
Editor