

## Our Readers Say

WE INTRODUCE a new department, "Our Readers Say" in this issue of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP. It has been the feeling for some time that pages of this Journal might well present opportunities for discussion of issues of current professional as well as Association concern. It is with this thought in mind that readers are invited to send to the Editorial Office:

1. Questions concerning or reactions to articles appearing in EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP. Suggestions for added magazine features are better implemented if group judgment functions. It is hoped that this particular department may share in this type of exchange of opinion and information.
2. Statements relative to general professional issues of current interest not necessarily included in issues of EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP. Members of the Publications Committee suggest that readers may have things which should be said about the schools' role in social action, the impact of education on the daily living of groups and individuals, the creation of an educational environment in which initiative and creative thinking (of both teachers and children) is fostered, the kind of supervision teachers want, a definition of basic skills for today's schools, problems of "professional splitting" illustrated in an attitude of *either-or instead of both-and* in the relationships among elementary, secondary, and college teachers; administrators, teachers, and supervisory staffs; and between men and women.
3. Reactions to ASCD policies and its official platform. "The Listening Post" this month summarizes answers to the questionnaire sent out by the Legislative Committee to ASCD membership in the spring. Undoubtedly, a number

of you will have reactions to the summary. We shall look forward to including these in early issues of the magazine.

On paper, the Association platform reads well. There may well be questions, however, about its actual implementation in learning situations. In this issue we present such a statement from the chairman of the Association's Committee on Appraisal and Plans, the committee which took major responsibility in drafting the platform. Not only Miss Miel's statement, but the *entire platform* merits your careful reading and consideration. Does it measure up to the highest possible goals for education in this modern world? Are we following it in terms of action or giving lip service only?

This official platform appears on the back cover. Please read it carefully in preparation for the following statement by Alice Miel, Chairman of the Committee on Appraisal and Plans, who says:

I AM CONCERNED. The ASCD platform makes some splendid statements about modern schools and the job they should be doing—giving youngsters "a chance to think and talk about our social structure and decide how it may be improved," providing a curriculum that has "meaning and significance for the youngsters." I have been looking hard for spots where our young people in elementary and secondary schools have such opportunities to deal with today's world and find that they are few indeed. I have located one elementary school where children run their own cooperative and maintain contact with a number of adult cooperatives, where they studied the possible impact on them of a threatened strike, where they compared the propaganda of a utilities company trying to head off municipal ownership

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# Changing the Curriculum

• A SOCIAL PROCESS •

by ALICE MIEL

WRITTEN for students of supervision, administration, and curriculum change, this clear-visioned study accepts the need for curriculum change as a determined fact, and concentrates on how desirable changes can best be brought about. After establishing curriculum change as a social process involving the same difficulties as any other effort to achieve directed social change, the text makes a thorough study of the possibilities of controlling social change and the nature of such a process. It then discusses the basic factors underlying social change, setting forth in detail the practical implications of curriculum change. \$2.25.

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with the reports published by city officials one year after the city had taken over the operation of the utility.

Undoubtedly there are similar examples of live curriculum experiences to be found in other elementary schools and at the secondary level but I am concerned that the total is so small. There are many more spots where teachers are enclosed in a neat framework of suggested or prescribed content for which there is plenty of reading material on the youngsters' level and which is safely noncontroversial. What can be done about this reluctance to grow along with youngsters in an "understand-

ing of what life is all about"—to quote the ASCD platform once more? How can leaders in schools be helped to desire for their teachers freedom to experiment in order that all of us may learn more about what our youngsters can profitably deal with? How can more teachers be helped to yearn for freedom from the units and course outlines that now enslave them?

Will we ever make substantial progress in the direction set by the ASCD platform until large numbers of teachers have achieved the freedom to experiment with a live curriculum and have learned to use this freedom wisely?

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