

# The Blumenfeld Education Letter



"My People Are Destroyed For Lack Of Knowledge" HOSEA 4:6

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EDITOR: Samuel L. Blumenfeld

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The purpose of this newsletter is to provide knowledge for parents and educators who want to save the children of America from the destructive forces that endanger them. Our children in the public schools are at grave risk in 4 ways: academically, spiritually, morally, and physically — and only a well-informed public will be able to reduce those risks.

"Without vision, the people perish."

## Why the Latest Campaign Against Illiteracy Will Fail

Everyone who reads newspapers or watches TV is now aware that illiteracy is a major growing problem in America. In fact, the business community, worried about our economic competitiveness, is so alarmed that it is organizing all sorts of seminars and symposiums to deal with the problem. The latest such symposium took place in Washington, D.C., on Sept. 8. It was sponsored by the American Newspaper Publishers Association and the International Reading Association.

Anyone who knows anything about the International Reading Association (IRA) knows that this organization of professors and teachers of reading and editors of basal reading programs, is the chief cause of the problem. To expect the IRA to help solve the illiteracy problem is like asking the Mafia to help solve the problem of crime. The IRA is responsible for institutionalizing the educational malpractice that passes for reading instruction in American schools. It has a strong vested interest in maintaining the very teaching methods that produce functional illiteracy.

Incredible? Perhaps. But we can prove it.

Americans first found out about this malpractice in 1955 when Rudolf Flesch, in his famous book, Why Johnny Can't Read, told the American people:

"The teaching of reading -- all over the United States, in all the schools, in all the textbooks -- is totally wrong and flies in the face of all logic and common sense."

He then explained how in the early 1930s, the professors of education changed the way reading is taught in American schools. They threw out the alphabetic phonics method, which is the proper way to teach children to read an alphabetic writing system, and put in a new whole-word, look-say, or sight method that teaches children to read English as if it were Chinese, an ideographic writing system. Flesch explained that when you impose an ideographic teaching technique on an alphabetic writing system, you get reading disability.

Flesch, incidentally, was not the first to discover this. Back in 1929, Dr. Samuel T. Orton, a neuropathologist at Iowa State University, reached the same conclusion after diagnosing many children with reading problems. In

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