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## FOREWORD

**B**EFORE I SAW NEIL SULLIVAN'S BOOK, I was indeed discouraged about school integration. My dream that one day in this country little black boys and girls and little white boys and girls would learn side by side in school had grown dim, as had many of my dreams of racial equality. At the rate school integration is progressing in the South, I figured that it will take 97 more years to bring it to accomplishment. I saw little more progress in the North where, although there is slightly more will and effort being applied to the problem, the task grows greater as the ghettos expand in impoverished, fenced-in numbers.

Then in May, 1967, I came to Berkeley to speak on the University of California campus and saw my friend, Dr. Sullivan. I heard his words and read in his book how, by a peaceful struggle through "the process of community change" as he calls it, total school integration in Berkeley, California, will hopefully be brought about by September, 1968. Hope returned to my soul and spirit.

I said as I addressed those 5,000 students, "There are times when you take a stand which is not safe nor politic nor popular. You take it because it is right." I was speaking of my opposition to the war in Viet Nam. Neil Sullivan, who also speaks out against our involvement in Viet Nam, is talking in this book about our deeper, our righteous, our non-violent struggle for democracy at home. His stand, like

that to which I am now giving my energy, is not safe, nor politic nor popular. Only a few school superintendents the country over have the stamina and the skill to undertake the massive struggle for meaningful and full school integration.

But this Berkeley superintendent must win. He took his stand first in Prince Edward County, Virginia, where, against tremendous odds, he opened the Free Schools for Negro children deprived of education for three years because the county refused to integrate. He took his stand again in Berkeley where, just as he came in 1964, a strong drive to recall board members who had taken the first step in school integration was in progress. Three and one-half years later he was able to say, "The Board of Education has committed itself to total integration no later than September, 1968, and we shall make history on that day."

I am proud to know that it is my fellow Negroes who have pressed hardest for this victory supported by committed white parents. I am proud to know that they are willing to take on the greater burden.

"Now is the time" they told Superintendent Sullivan and he knew it well. I am honored that Dr. Sullivan has thus entitled his book. I repeat again and again what I said on that day of hope at the March on Washington, August 23, 1963, "Now is the time. Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy."

That promise has not been realized. We do not wait for its fulfillment; we work for it night and day. I believe that our schools must and can take the lead in this mighty effort. I believe that leaders like Dr. Sullivan can point the way.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

*September 1967*

## *Introduction*

**I**T IS WITH DEEP FEELING that I name this book from the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. His urgent plea "Now is the time! Now is the time to make real the promise of democracy" has strengthened me as I have sought to fulfill that promise in the public schools. At times of discouragement I get out my record of the March on Washington in 1963, listen again to his ringing speech of hope, and am heartened to continue the struggle.

I first met him in 1962. He was speaking in Great Neck, Long Island, and I drove over to hear him from Old Westbury-East Williston, Long Island, where I was Superintendent of the school district. This evening marked the beginning of a series of events that impelled me to join the active fight for school integration. After he spoke, I asked his advice about bringing some Negro children up to our schools from Prince Edward County, Virginia—children who had not been in school for three years due to the county's refusal to integrate. Our schools had been sending clothing to Prince Edward, and textbooks for the use of northern teachers who flew down during weekends and vacations to give the children intervals of schooling.

Through Dr. King I later met Robert Kennedy, who, as United States Attorney General, had been ordered by President Kennedy to find some way to reopen the schools for Prince Edward County's Negro children, and was in the

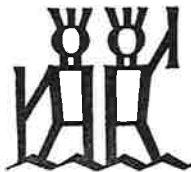
**INTEGRATION IN THE BERKELEY SCHOOLS**

*by*

*NEIL V. SULLIVAN*

*WITH Evelyn S. Stewart*

FOREWORD BY MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



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