Old World and New make Virgin Islands one of most exciting places to teach

The U. S. Virgin Islands consist of three large islands: St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas, with over 100 islets and cays.

St. Croix with an area of 84 square miles has a population of 24,000.

The population has a representation of continentals from the mainland, natives from neighboring islands, Puerto Ricans, Europeans and a predominance of native black Virgin Islanders.

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There are two towns in St. Croix, Christiansted on the East and Frederiksted on the West.

The Virgin Islands is an exciting place to teach. St. Croix is unique as it is different, yet it is easily called "home."

Here one has the distinctiveness of Old World culture plus certain advantages that cannot be found at home.

Impressive governmental buildings and old plantation homes proudly proclaim a rich Danish heritage. A sprinkling of Dutch, French and Spanish adornment gives evidence of three other flags under which these Islands had been ruled.

The language is English, but 250 years of Danish colonial rule and other cultural influences have given these sun-drenched Islands a way of living to be found nowhere else.

There are varied opportunities for educators as the islands have more than 25 public, parochial and private schools.

There is both a white and a colored population, of which 85 percent is non-white, some of which are descendants of slaves brought over from Africa and some, of which, migrated from nearby English, French and Dutch islands; Puerto Ricans contribute large numbers to this non-caucasian group.

St. Croix has six public school plants serving a school population of more than 5,000 pupils, most of whom are black.

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Schools are patterned after "stateside" schools and the eight-four plan is employed. There is one high school with the five other plants serving elementary schools or elementary and junior high schools.

Several kindergartens, day care centers, and head start programs have been established. In 1961, the College of the Virgin Islands, a two-year junior college was founded.

Since then, they have developed a four-year teacher-education program in cooperation with New York University and the University of Connecticut.

Generally, the schools are not up to standards. In an effort to bring instruction and facilities up to mainland comparisons, new schools are being planned.

The American Federation Of Teachers through its St. Croix Local (1826), have been responsible for pointing out the weaknesses of the system, and offering constructive criticism and guidelines.

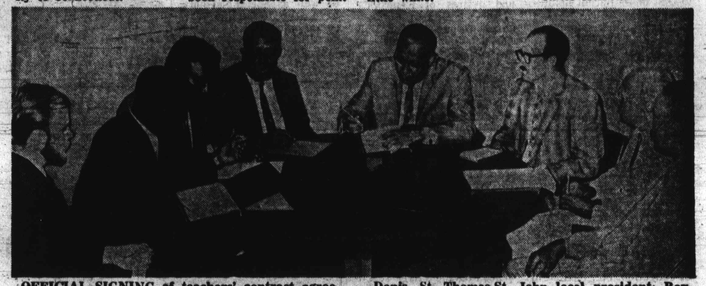
Because of the efforts of this dynamic local, there are signs of a coming reversal of the downward spiral of education in St. Croix.

Still, limited funds, vague leadership, and haphazard programs prevent the additional building of schools sorely needed and it is expected that sub-standard schools will continue for a little while.

It is not unusual for teachers to find supplies, equipment and other school facilities far below the standards.

However, improvements have been made. Largely because of the union efforts, class sizes have been reduced from a 51-1 pupil-teacher ratio to a ratio of 30-1.

Multiple grade teaching has been completely eliminated. The secondary schools are departmentalized, and the high school is certified by the Middle States Association.



OFFICIAL SIGNING of teachers' contract agreement last November in Government House took place as Gov. Melvin H. Evans and the commissioner of education met with representatives of the American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO. Watching the signing are, from left, Joseph Trunk, of the St. Thomas-St. John Local of AFT; Hugo Denis, St. Thomas-St. John local president; Raymond A. Moorhead, St. Croix local president; Phillip Gerard, education commissioner; Governor Evans; Bruce Delemos, executive assistant to the Governor, Asst. Atty. Gen. James Bough, and Rupert Ross, of the St. Croix local.

250 Negro Teachers Brought Their Careers to Miami for The 1969-70 School Year---

Join Them for The 1970-71 School Year---

Greater Miami — Dade County — is an exciting metropolis of more than a million people. It has twice received the All-American City Award.

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But Greater Miami is more — much more. Embracing 27 municipalities, it ranges from the Gold Coast of Miami Beach to the Industrial areas of Hialeah, to the rich farmlands of Homestead. Here is the flavor of thousands of Cuban refugees.... challenges spawned of the ghettos...the problems of the migrants. Here are more than 234,000 children — the advantaged, the disadvantaged — children who need and deserve good teaching.

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Salaries and Benefits

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Salary Schedule 1969-70

Rank	Minimum	Maximum
Bachelor's (Rank 3)	$ 6,900	$ 11,095
M.A. (Rank 2)	7,600	11,775
M.A. + 30 hours (Rank 1A)	8,140	12,315
Doctor's (Rank 1)	8,680	12,855

OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEGRO TEACHERS

Dade actively recruits Negro teachers from colleges and universities across the nation.

Opportunities for advancement await them in Miami.

Dade's assistant to the superintendent is Dr. Gilbert L. Porter, a nationally known Negro administrator.

There are an additional 120 Negro administrators including thirty-three school principals.

Dade is a totally desegregated school system . . . there are no "black" or "white" schools . . . only schools.

Teach in a system where the individual is of prime importance!

Black teachers must forget 'bourgeoisie' school role

By JEANNE WALTON

EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Walton is a graduate of Boston University and holds the master's degree from Bank Street College of Education. She has taught for 22 years in Boston, New York City and Washington, D.C. She is presently on leave from the D. C. School System to serve as field representative for the Washington Teachers' Union. She is a member of the board of the Morgan Community School.

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There was a time when teaching was almost the only profession open to black women and one of the few available to black men. Upwardly mobile black parents worked hard to send their daughters to teachers' colleges and into the middle class.

In some of the segregated school districts, the black bourgeoisie controled promotion ino the supervisory and administrative ranks and created little fiefdoms for their families and friends.

However, there are still impelling reasons for young black people to enter the teaching profession, particularly those who do not think in terms of middle class status.

Our schools, some say, are not successful. Actually, our schools have been unusually successful in doing what they are established to do.

The upper class does not send its children to the public schools, but its members make many of the decisions that affect public education. They are schooled to do this.

The children of the middle class soon learn that the schools exist for them, and only for them. But, to maintain the fiction of free public education for all, we must let the children of the poor enter through the pearly gates.

And when they come, they are schooled into acceptance of their place in society.

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They are taught to be polite, meek, thankful and obedient. They are taught to refrain from seeing, hearing, talking, thinking, feeling and communicating. They are taught not to protest, not to fight.

They are taught that this is the best of all possible worlds and that they are to blame if they are not successful.

To help maintain this fiction a handful of the deserving poor are allowed to enter the ranks of the middle class.

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Those who do not conform are pushed out of school. These alienated youths are now rebelling and some of us are becoming alarmed.

Many critics of public education ask only that the schools do two things — teach the children to read and prepare them for jobs or college.

Is this enough?

Education, then, is more than literacy and the ability to get a job.

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Yes, students must read.

Yes, they must be prepared for jobs.

Yes, but there is something else.

If we concern ourselves only with reading and job skills we will be forgetting that which is the very essence of education.

Education is change. Education is liberation.

The educated person is

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one who can see what is wrong in his society and work to change it. True, he must have knowledge and skills, but the mere acquisition of these is not education.

Education is manifested through the use of knowledge and skills.

All schooling involves choices made by those in authority. All schooling, therefore, is to some extent, indoctrination.

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Those university students who are now challenging the deans and presidents, who are questioning the subsidizing of research by government and private industry, who are fighting CIA and military invasions of their campuses, who are demanding black studies workers — these are the young people who should come into the teaching profession.

The students who have been clubbed and jailed by the police will not lie to the children about the nature of our society.

While they may and should reject much of the philosophy and rhetoric of the educational establishment they must be willing to learn that teaching is more than "rapping" and that future revolutionaries must be able to read, think and create, must have tough, sharp minds, great facility with the tools of communication, and an in-depth knowledge of math, science, technology, of history and the other social sciences, of languages, literature and cultures.

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The need now is for a new breed of black teachers — teachers who are sufficiently well trained to teach children the basic skills, but also sufficiently well educated to teach children about the society in which they live.

The need is for teachers who are questioning, challenging and learning, for only such teachers can stimulate children to question, challenge and learn.

This new breed of black teacher is needed in the classrooms now. This teacher is also needed in the teacher union movement.

Young, black teachers must join the teachers' unions and work to move them forward.

Teacher's rights need not, indeed cannot, be achieved at the expense of the rights of the children and of the community.

Community control does not guarantee good education or good administration. It does, however, provide the opportunity for teachers and community to work together to develop new forms, new models for the liberation (education) of black children.

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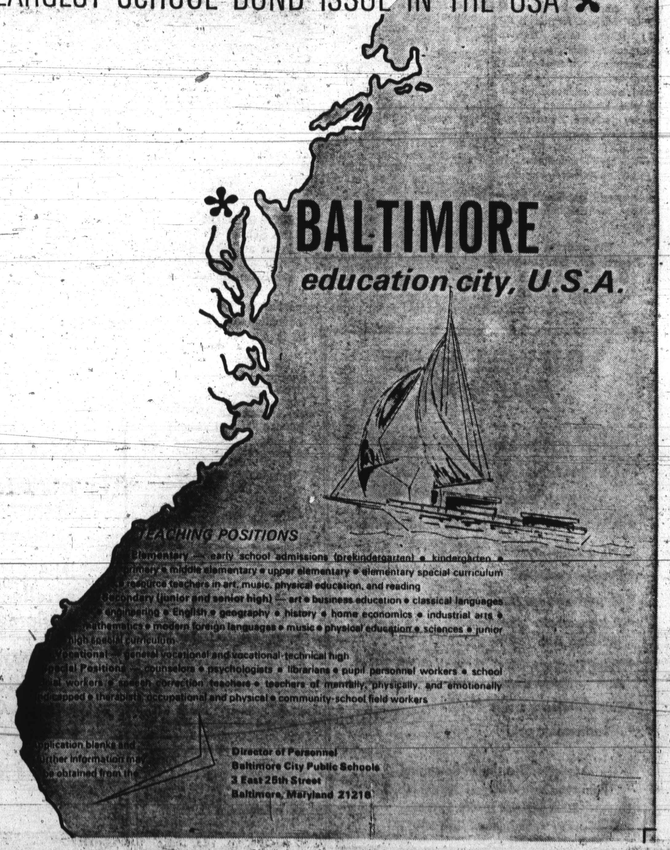
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