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By WILLIAM L. DANDRIDGE
Staff Associate

BOSTON — The black community's effort to secure the best possible educational experience for black children has seldom recognized one alternative that is increasingly available.

This alternative is the independent elementary or secondary, boarding or day school.

Much of this stereotype is based upon a past history of exclusion of black and other minorities by many independent schools.

Afros, dashikis, black studies courses and the freedom hand-shake are becoming as common on many independent school campuses today as the more traditional blue blazer, grey slacks and ties.

A quick survey of independent school publications will provide additional evidence of the growing presence and active participation of black students.

During the 1969-70 academic year, 7,600 black boys and girls attended 595 of the approximately 780 member schools of the National Association of Independent Schools.

Fifty-six per cent of these students received full or substantial scholarships and the funds for these scholarships were raised by the individual institution from contributions by their alumni, parent groups and foundations.

One indication of the interest in higher education and the ability of the independent black school student can be found in the 1970 National Achievement Scholarship Program for Outstanding Negro Students.

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Three hundred twenty-five students qualified as semifinalists, 78 were from 57 NAIS member schools.

For the vast majority this has been an unique and rewarding experience, although there have been problems.

The chief problem is the feeling of being isolated from the black community.

They are wrestling with the problem of trying to establish their identities in these predominantly white institutions and are examining the preparation that they are receiving and how it will help them serve the needs of the black community.

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They too often lack the support and the awareness of the black community. One of the principal requests made by many of these students is their desire to have black teachers.

Does this sound familiar?

The settings are quite similar — predominantly white student bodies, a handful of black students, all white teachers and administrators and too few black families in the local school community.

Today, many black teachers feel that the only area where their talents can be used in response to the needs of the black community are in the inner-city public schools.

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It seems to me that we are assuming that all black teachers are considered solely by their blackness to be effective in the public school situation.

Is it sufficient justification to assume that simply because the public schools will continue to attract the vast majority of all black children, this is the only place that a black teacher who has any concern for his community can make a contribution?

I think that a teacher must consider where he can make the most input, and for some black teachers this could be an independent school with a small black enrollment as opposed to a large inner-city school which is completely black.

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

Duluth is a city of 100,000 people located on the most northwestern shore of beautiful Lake Superior. There are approximately 25,000 students enrolled in our public schools and just over 1,000 teachers. We are trying to add more black teachers to our staff and will do considerable recruiting in predominantly black colleges this spring.

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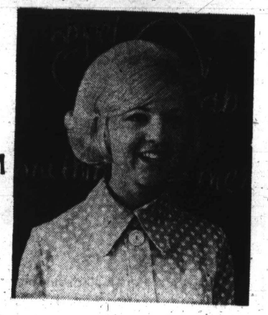

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Witch hunting...tale of the Antioch story

By WILLIAM H. SIMONS
Resident, Washington Teachers Union

WASHINGTON, D. C. — Throughout the history of the United States there have been cases where those embued with a sense of "patriotic duty" have employed methods commonly known as witch hunting to prove their "loyalty" to the nation.

Our colonial history is replete with such incidents.

During the 1950's, under the leadership of the late Sen. Joseph McCarthy, the citizens of this nation were subjected to an inquisition which imperiled their rights granted under the Constitution.

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With this background in mind it is not difficult to understand the circumstances which led to the request from an investigating subcommittee of the House District Committee for the names of all teachers in the public schools of the District of Columbia who had had any connection with Antioch College, of Yellowsprings, Ohio.

This special subcommittee of the House District Committee began its investigation of the public schools last spring.

This committee was chaired by Congressman John Dowdy, who is under indictment for allegedly accepting a $25,000 bribe.

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Congressman Dowdy has been described as not one of the more brilliant meteors to streak across the political spectrum.

He found it expedient to enter the hospital to avoid prosecution after his attempts to avoid congressional immunity were denied by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The purpose of the investigation has never been revealed.

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It can be assumed, however, that nothing constructive will result.

Information has been furnished to this committee by those who feel it their patriotic duty to inform these racists that there are Viet Cong flags in classrooms and that some teachers are introducing students to Karl Marx and other anti-American writers.

It is ironic and unfortunate that some of the sources of information furnished were employes of the school system.

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The request for the names of all personnel in the D.C. school system who have attended Antioch College, either in assembled classroom on campus, off campus studies, seminar, correspondence courses, undergraduate work, postgraduate work or by any other title, whether credited courses or not was sent to acting superintendent Benjamin J. Henley.

Each school was requested to send this information to the superintendent. Many of the schools did not indicate to teachers the reason for the information.

Since it is not uncommon for teachers to submit information concerning their college attendance no one was alarmed.

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When this matter was brought to the attention of the Washington Teachers' Union a memorandum was issued informing teachers not to comply with this request.

The Corporation Counsel was asked to give an opinion as to the validity of the request and whether or not it should be honored.

The opinion rendered was that the request should be complied with because the committee could subpeona the information.

• • •

At its meeting on Sept. 16, 1970, the board of education voted to submit the information as requested.

What motivated the board to abandon its protection for its employes and capitulate?

Perhaps the overriding factor is the preconditioning which has taken its toll over the years and has rendered at least five members of the board impotent.

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