



# Build a Mass Movement Against National Oppression



"Sharp disagreements among Supreme Court justices on the Bakke 'reverse discrimination' case are likely to delay a decision until near the court's adjournment date in June. Justice Harry A. Blackmun told a private group recently that the case is presenting such difficult issues that 'we wish it would go away.'" (US News and World Report, 4/24/78)

From May 6-13 the Supreme Court and the entire U.S. ruling class will see that Bakke won't just "go away" as tens of thousands march in the streets in a militant week of struggle. This shows the strength of the masses, their growing political consciousness and the weakness of the ruling class.

The anti-Bakke struggle represents one struggle against national oppression. At this time the struggle is one to defend and expand affirmative action and special admissions programs. But there are many other fronts to this same struggle, such as the fights against police repression in oppressed nationality communities, against cuts in social services, for decent housing, etc. The fight against Bakke is also a fight against women's oppression. Bakke can directly wipe out special training and affirmative action programs for women. Indirectly it can lead to the end of childcare programs and community health clinics.

U.S. imperialism is our common enemy. It constantly tries to increase its profits by increasing national oppression and women's

oppression. The Week of Struggle/Semana de Lucha will involve many more people in the struggle against inequality--whether on campus, in the community or on the job. The anti-Bakke movement is becoming a force capable of inspiring and bringing together the many different fronts of the common battle.

The May 13 West Coast mobilization in San Francisco is especially important for the nationwide Spring Offensive and the national week of struggle. The California Supreme Court handed down the Bakke decision, and the California legislature recently developed two measures patterned on the Bakke decision--the Anti-Bias Initiative and the Walsh Amendment. These proposed bills would outlaw all affirmative action programs for minorities and women in the schools, communities and in industry. The May 13 mobilization will be a protest against these initiatives as well as against the Bakke decision, and all other attempts to steal back the gains of the 1960's.

#### SUPREME COURT--NO FRIEND OF THE PEOPLE

The U.S. Supreme Court will probably rule on the Bakke case before June. All across the country the ABDC, along with other anti-Bakke forces, are preparing to respond with demonstrations and rallies immediately following the court's decision, as well as stepping up the day to day struggles. There are several possible decisions that the Court can make. It could overturn the Bakke

decision. This would be a great victory for the people. We would still face a tough fight to consolidate and expand our gains, however.

Because of the massive opposition which has developed against the Bakke decision, the Court probably won't uphold the Bakke decision in its entirety. They are more likely to make a limited ruling and try to soften its implications. They could uphold Bakke's charge of "reverse discrimination" and outlaw special admissions only within the University of California at Davis (which originally rejected Bakke's admission), or to the entire U.C. system. But this would still give the green light to the over 2000 "reverse discrimination" suits across the country waiting to be heard. It just means that the gains would be taken away piecemeal rather than in one bite.

Whatever the decision, it's important to maintain our vigilance and build our struggles, particularly for the week of struggle. We cannot rely on the formal court ruling to determine the fate of the special programs, or for any kind of justice. It can only be through mass struggles, such as those of the 1960's, that we will show the capitalists and their courts that we will not be pushed around again. It is the masses' turn to do a little pushing--to show the imperialists that our actions in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, New York and Los Angeles will help bring about the defeat of the Bakke decision. ★

## San Jose Students Fight Minority Firings

SAN JOSE, CA --Chanting "Affirmative Action Now!" the Third World Coalition at San Jose City College (SJCC) with other students, community groups and faculty protested the firings of ten faculty and staff at the college. Over 70 supporters, mostly Chicanos and Blacks, crammed into the small room where the Board of Trustees for the District hold their meetings. The trustees were visibly shaken by the strong support for the coalition. Since the April 4 protest, the support has grown.

The Board had no alternative but to allow the coalition and members of the community to speak. Representatives of the Third World Coalition, the Black Students Union and Somos Raza (the Chicano student organization at SJCC) read a list of 8 demands which included "The immediate establishment of a special committee whose primary responsibility shall be to formulate and supervise the implementation of an effective Affirmative Action Plan for the District...."; the immediate re-

hiring of all persons who were terminated" and the "re-institution of autonomous Black, Chicano and Native American studies departments." Among the groups which support the demands of the coalition are the NAACP, the Confederacion de la Raza Unida, the Chicano Employment Committee, the South Bay Mecha Central, the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition, and a Black women's organization.

For the students at City College, especially the members of Somos Raza who have been actively fighting the Bakke decision for over a year, the recent firings and the attitude of the Board read loud and clear--the effects of the Bakke decision have come to City College. The San Jose area has a population of just under 600,000, about 25% Chicano. Yet, as with all other colleges and universities, minorities have been the last hired and are the first to be fired. With shrinking annual budgets and increasing costs, community



Members of Somos Raza demonstrate at the District Board Meeting at San Jose City College.



# TWO WAYS TO BUILD A MOVEMENT

At the February 19 National Conference of the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC), all participants voiced their loud approval of a nationwide Spring Offensive, including a call for unifying all anti-Bakke forces for a demonstration in Washington D.C. One week later and with high hopes, the ABDC executive board representatives attended a meeting with the National Lawyers Guild, Black American Law Students Association, People's Alliance and the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision in New York in order to hammer out principled unity. The ABDC did not agree to limiting the planning of the Spring actions to only these 5 groups. ABDC insisted on a broad democratic planning committee open to all genuine anti-Bakke groups, including regional organizations such as MEChAs (Chicano student organization) and Asian Student Unions. This was a concrete application of ABDC's principle of unity: "Rely on the masses to overturn the Bakke decision"

After the first Planning Committee meeting, the ABDC representatives were fairly optimistic that the forces involved could reach principled unity. Although the ABDC entered the Planning Committee with a recommendation for a demonstration of April 22, they were flexible and agreed to hold a march and rally on April 15, the original date chosen by NCOBD. The Committee also agreed on the following: 1) The Planning Committee would be expanded as we moved toward the April 15th march date. 2) Common slogans and demands were agreed upon which would appear on all literature advertising the march on Washington, D.C. 3) The name of the April 15 Planning Committee would be used on all literature to show that the march and rally were being sponsored by a broad range of groups. 4) A common press release and poster were to be developed. 5) The Planning Committee was being set up just for the march on Washington, it was not to be an on-going coalition or "third force". There were other agreements as well, but these were the ones which the leadership of the NCOBD came to disregard through the course of struggle.

By the time the second meeting was called on March 16, it was clear that the NCOBD had other designs for the Planning Committee. They had not carried out the task of designing a joint poster with the April 15 Planning Committee name on it, indeed the Planning Committee name appeared on no literature at all, they never prepared a joint press release, they blocked all attempts to actually expand the planning committee in a democratic way, and finally they came to the meeting with a new stipulation. They insisted that no future planning for the march on Washington could be done with having a closed, 5-group planning committee on the West Coast. This committee would have the same composition as the April 15 Planning Committee. NCOBD wanted all Spring actions under control of this closed committee. The proposal excluded various regional groups who have been instrumental in building the anti-Bakke Movement. ABDC could not agree to this because it undermined the democratic procedures necessary to build a strong united action.

## Brooklyn College Students Fight Bakke

--from a correspondent

BROOKLYN, N.Y. --On April 6 the Zionist dominated student government at Brooklyn College refused to allocate money for buses for the April 15 anti-Bakke demonstration in Washington DC. They had \$9000 in unallocated funds and had recently given the fascist Jewish Defense League (JDL) \$1000 for buses for one of their demonstrations. Not surprisingly a majority of the student government had previously voted in support of Bakke's case.

At the April 6 meeting, student government members told the anti-Bakke forces "you people are making Bakke a racial issue". Then they rejected a compromise proposal on the bus money and attempted to adjourn the meeting and push past the more than 60 people there. Fighting broke out. Fists and chairs were flying as the people's righteous anger exploded. Racist students and deans who were protecting them were knocked down. Sisters played an outstanding role in the fighting. Later, angry students smashed in the doors of the student government offices.

After another demonstration April 7 police singled out Indio Alejandro and arrested him when he left the campus. He was charged with "assault". A few days later Richie Perez, a Puerto Rican Studies faculty member, was suspended from teaching and barred from the campus. On April 26 police arrested him for "criminal trespassing" and he faces a number of other trumped up charges as well.

As a result of this intense struggle the student government somehow came up with the \$1,000 to pay for buses. On April 15, Brooklyn College had a militant contingent of over 200 people at the Washington DC march.

On May 2, more than 300 students from throughout New York City rallied at Brooklyn College to demand an end to police repression, no more cutbacks in ethnic studies, dropping the charges on Alejandro and rehiring Perez. The students seized a campus building to enforce their demands. Police viciously attacked the demonstration. One eyewitness told the RC, "It was an old fashioned 1960's police riot." The Brooklyn College administration hired football players and JDL members, armed them with clubs and used them to attack the demonstration.

Students at Brooklyn College have vowed to continue the struggle despite escalating repression. Only by relying on the strength of the masses and daring to struggle did students even get the buses. Only in this way can students fight for special admissions programs, ethnic studies, and stop the repression against progressive faculty and students. On campus activist told the Revolutionary Cause, "Either the schools will meet our needs or they will not be allowed to function."

You can help by sending messages of support and financial assistance c/o Indio Alejandro, Puerto Rican Alliance, 1205 Boylan Hall, Brooklyn College New York 11210

## San Jose Students...

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colleges all over the country are facing massive lay-offs. Courses are being eliminated, departments are being consolidated, and new faculty are being laid-off. At SJCC Chicano and Black Studies were among the first departments to be eliminated. Classes in those departments were absorbed by other departments. Courses that were not absorbed were simply eliminated.

In the vain hope that they will discourage student protest to their latest action, the District Board quickly made it known that any student that is arrested at a campus or district protest will immediately be suspended. To underscore their point the Board made sure it was protected by police at the April 18 district meeting. But neither the Board's threats nor the presence of the police can stop the students at City College. As the representative of Somos Raza made clear at the Board meeting, "We are here in numbers. We are strong and determined. We will not be intimidated. And we WILL win our struggle."

The Bakke decision has come to San Jose. But as long as there are students fighting it like the students at City College--IT WILL BE DEFEATED.

NCOBD leadership attended the ABDC National Conference. They made a detailed proposal for a joint Washington, D.C. action. They never proposed joint West Coast actions. If the NCOBD leadership was truly concerned with a unified action in the Spring, they should have raised their concern for actions in all parts of the country at the Feb 19 conference. Instead they chose not to participate as full delegates, they chose to participate as observers only. They were only concerned with how the rest of the anti-Bakke movement could plug into the plans which they had already made. The ABDC conference unanimously rejected NCOBD's proposed planning committee of only 5 groups. Even in the face of these maneuvers, ABDC offered to participate jointly in an open conference, with full NCOBD participation, in order to plan a united West Coast action for May 13.

ABDC has always held open conferences, democratically run. NCOBD--or members of their coalition--have always been invited and attended these conferences. Six hundred people and over 150 organizations attended the February National Conference of ABDC. The wider the number of groups and the wider the political input--the more successful the movement. In contrast, the NCOBD insists on closed conferences and a planning committee which excluded many anti-Bakke forces. The top leaders of the NCOBD act like they fear the participation of the masses in the planning of events. In their view "the fewer, the better". Such a bureaucratic approach can only restrict the movement and make it more difficult to unite all possible forces.

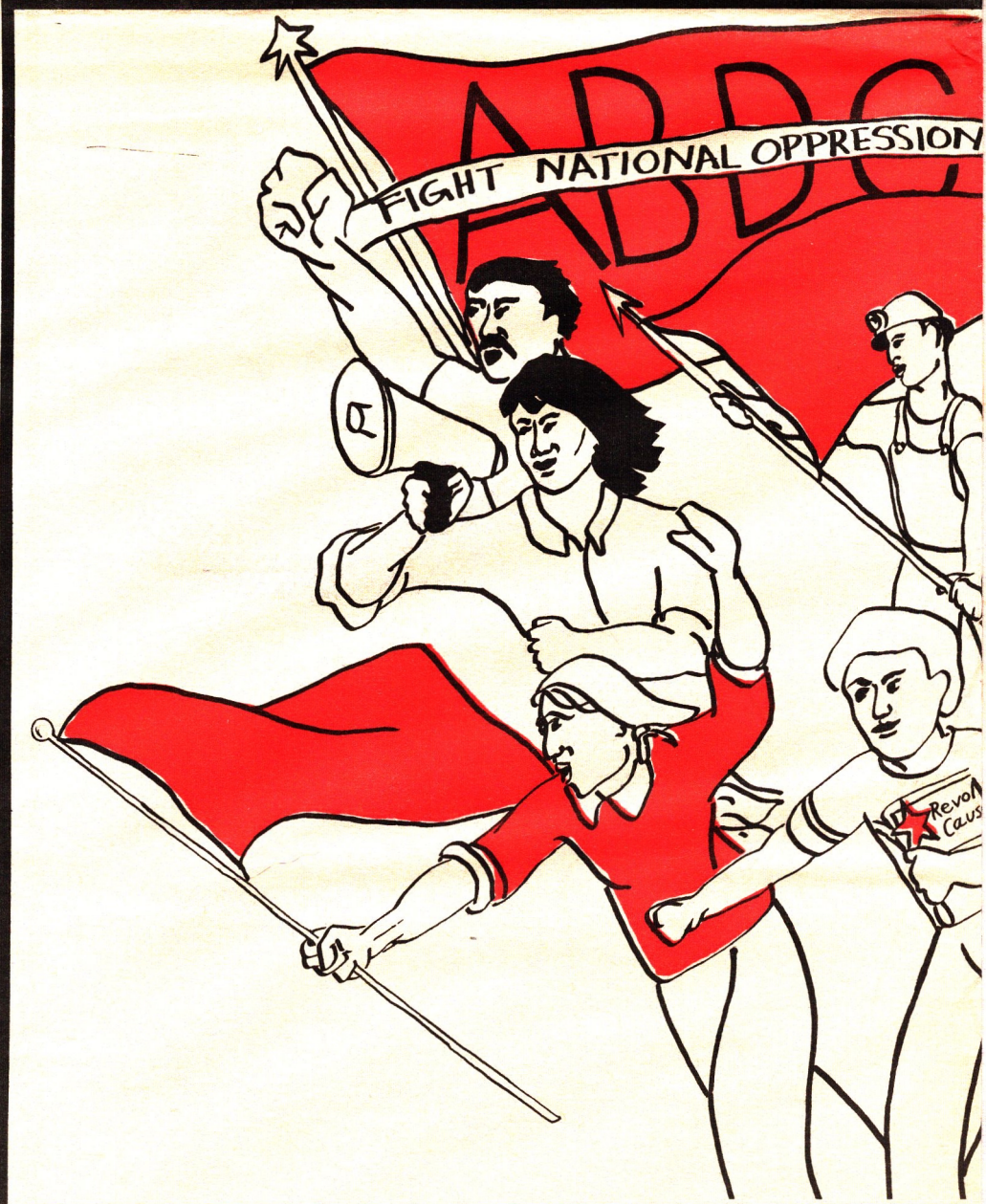
After the third Planning Committee meeting, the NCOBD leadership decided to walk-out because they couldn't force a closed planning committee for the West Coast, they formed a new committee and excluded ABDC. Despite this blatant act of splitting, ABDC still called for people to attend the April 15 demonstration. In fact, ABDC led a contingent of over 1000 people for that event.

The 15,000-person turnout on April 15 was a sign of the mass hatred for the Bakke decision. People traveled from the South, East Coast and Mid-west to attend. The large showing certainly put the ruling class on notice that trouble is brewing if they rule in favor of Bakke. Unfortunately, the speakers and political emphasis of the march failed to represent the views of the masses.

The main speakers did not represent the many major organizations which have built the anti-Bakke movement. The National Lawyers Guild, BALSA, East Coast Asian Student Unions and ABDC were not allowed to speak at the main event. Instead the marchers were treated to long-winded speeches by reformist politicians, representatives of the revisionist Communist Party USA and of the Trotskyist-initiated National Student Coalition Against Racism--none of whom have done much to mobilize the masses against Bakke.

The dissolution of the Planning Committee weakened the anti-Bakke movement. The top leadership of the NCOBD is primarily responsible for the split in the Planning Committee. With the Bakke decision to be handed down any day now, it is not in the interests of the masses for the NCOBD to have behaved in such an irresponsible fashion.

There are many individuals and groups within NCOBD and within the anti-Bakke movement who wish to see future unified anti-Bakke actions. Today we stand ready to participate in principled joint actions. In particular we urge principled joint actions in major cities when the Bakke decision is handed down. These actions cannot be based on scheming and maneuvering, they cannot be planned by excluding the masses. We must build a unified front against the Bakke decision and against national oppression. ★



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