Reform or Revolution

Which Road for the Anti-Bakke Movement

On October 8 and 15, 1977 roughly 12,000 people nationwide demonstrated against the Bakke decision. This clearly shows the growing anger of students, oppressed nationalities and workers against the racist bakke decision, but the demonstrations were split into two different coalitions. After the two coalitions are planning separate demonstrations for spring, 1978. Why can't the anti-bakke movement unite? Aren't we all fighting for the same goal? Both coalitions oppose the bakke decision, but there are entirely different visions on how to defeat it. These different visions aren't just aabbled among left groups, but represent two fundamentally different lines on the future of the anti-bakke movement. They represent the difference between victory or defeat.

Many honest individuals and groups have joined the National Committee to Defeat the Bakke Decision (NCOBD). They have worked hard to defeat the bakke decision. All leaders of the NCOBD have led the organization into reformism--that is into preserving the system. They liquidate the special oppression of the oppressed nationalities. To better understand these differences, we will examine the history, political line and practices of the two coalitions: the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision and the Anti-Bakke Decision Coalition (ABDC).

California statewide MEChA's initiated the call to form ABDC in June, 1977. At the founding conference in San Jose, California there were 300 people and 70 organizations from all over the state. MEChA, Asian Student Unions, and other student groups attended. Others attending included caucuses within the Steelworkers Union, within the United AutoWorkers, and individual members from the Black autonomists, ILWU, glassworkers, culinary workers and many more. Representatives from several women's organizations and community groups came. What is significant is that through democratic discussion all of these groups united on a single program to fight racism. The principles of unity developed at the conference uphold the firm principle that Bakke will be defeated only through resistance of workers and peasants--people rather than reliance on liberal politicians or lawyers.

End to National Oppression

Education in China

As more and more people in the US take up the struggle against the bakke decision, a question is frequently asked: is it possible to have an educational system that is non-racist racial? The answer is yes. The Peoples Republic of China is making a great socialist revolution. The Chinese socialist revolution eliminated the material basis for national oppression and exploitation. Before liberation less than 15% of Chinese youth completed three years of school. Those that did attended the schools of the ruling classes. The modern class today it is still physically impossible for a developing socialist country like China to provide higher education for everyone. Still by this fall colleges will enroll more than 20,000 students.

In addition, specifically to help the political, economic and cultural development of the minority areas, 9 national Minority Institutes have been set up. These schools have 4 main areas of work. The political department trains national minority cadres in political theory so they may take an active part in leading the government and party and helping to solve the national problem thoroughly. The languages department trains interpreters and translators who may later go to the factories. The industrial board and are paid whatever wage they were making in the state. The departments of music, art, and literature provide art for the workers, peasants and soldiers in the style characteristic of the minority nationalities.

But the Chinese educational system is not a utopia. As long as classes exist, class struggle will continue. Under the leadership of the Gang of 4, the Chinese educational system suffered great setbacks. New universities graduated students who were incompetent doctors, technicians, etc. Under the leadership of Chairman Mao, China is today struggling to produce proletarian intellectuals who are both red and expert. To prevent the development of privilege, all students and instructors go to the factories and farms for practical social investigation and practice. Specifically, they visit national minority areas to make sure what is taught in the classroom serves the needs of the proletarian and national minority peoples.

In all these ways the Chinese socialist education system helps develop the unity of different nationalities. The Chinese have overcome their reactionary government and established socialism. The struggle against the bakke decision in the US is one important battle for democratic rights and an end to national oppression. But the US educational system will never eliminate its racist practices entirely. This will never teach the real history of workers and oppressed nationalities. Only by joining with workers and other oppressed peoples can students help make a socialist revolution which lays the basis for true equality among people.

The ARDC plans to unite all groups and individuals who can be united around the points of unity and demands (see box), as well as to deepen their outreach among workers and women's organizations. To coordinate all of these efforts a national office will be immediately set up in the San Francisco Bay Area. A national conference will be held in San Francisco on February 11 which will bring in organizers from all over the US whose task will be to continue building for a national demonstration on April 29. Local actions to build for this demonstration will be held on February 25.

The lively Fresno meeting heard solidarity speakers from the Fresno State Third World Student Coalition the MEChA Chico State student organization, the Iranian Student Association and the Punjabi Committee (a strong group of Janata fighting poor living conditions in Fresno). All speakers expressed solidarity with ABDC. One of the things that the ISA speaker pointed out was that the "Bakke decision was the basis for the intensification of national oppression" and that the struggle must continue under the leadership of the ABDC.

The conference ended with chants and shouts to "build the struggle nationwide and "down with bakke!"

PRINCIPLES OF UNITY

1. Rely on the masses of oppressed people to defeat the Bakke decision.
2. Oppose both the US Supreme Court and the UC Regents as equal targets.
3. Oppose the systematic oppression of Third World people.
4. Defend and expand all Third World programs, affirmative action programs, and all special programs for women and working people.

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