

CPUSA Pushes Reformist Dead-End Nat'l Demos Target Weber Case

On January 2nd several thousand people demonstrated in various cities around the country against the Weber Case—the latest attempt to slash away at affirmative action programs, this time in industry, under the guise of opposing “reverse discrimination.” Under the slogans “Reverse the Weber Decision” and “Defend and Expand Affirmative Action,” a thousand people marched to the sacred halls of the Supreme Court in Washington where the case is presently pending. In Oakland, California over 800 people marched.

The thousands who came out on June 2 went right up against the lies of the bourgeoisie that admitting Blacks and other minorities into medical schools, the skilled trades, and so on, (in which minorities have been basically frozen out) is somehow “discriminating against whites.”

Doctor's Rx For Zionism

A young Zionist walked into a Boston hospital expecting to walk out with visa papers to go to Israel, but he found it wasn't quite so easy. When it came to signing the bottom line on this immigration paper that would allow permanent residency, the examining doctor, Jim Ryan, stopped short. He refused to sign, “I support the struggle of the Palestinian people to reclaim their homeland.”

The young Zionist flew into a rage, saying, “There is no Palestine and we will never give up our land.” After this very pious remark, he called in the B'nai Brith Anti-Defamation League, who charged the doctor and hospital with discrimination against Jews. These puffed up toad stools like to blur the clear distinction between a stand against Zionism and discrimination against Jews. Their real interest in doing this is to carve themselves a niche defending the imperialist Zionist state.

The hospital trustees went wild. “This is inexcusable! Politics and medicine don't mix.” They threatened

The Weber Case comes on the heels of the notorious Bakke decision of the high court a year ago which outlawed a University of California affirmative action program for medical students. Brian Weber is a technician at a Kaiser Metal plant in Louisiana who sued in court to be allowed into the apprenticeship program for the skilled trades, charging that the affirmative action program was denying him a place. This reactionary never had any intention of taking the job (he probably has much bigger ambitions!)—he readily admits he didn't have enough seniority to get into the program anyway and he is just trying to “test the legality of the program.”

Where Weber is coming from is clear from the many, much-broadcast media interviews he has given. In one such interview with a New Orleans newspaper he said, “I never agreed with making

the doctor, a member of the Norman Bethune Caucus of the Medical Committee for Human Rights, with firing and revoking his license. “This is no way for a physician to behave.” They demanded a written apology. These are of course the “professional colleagues” of the trustees of the Boston City Hospital who only last week murdered a baby because of understaffing. This, however, is not political.

But these are the very politics that will bring more and more professionals to stand up to this imperialist system. In his written response the doctor said, “My refusal to sign was based solely on my support for the rights of hundreds of thousands of Arab Palestinians who have been driven from their home by Zionism to resettle in a free Palestine.” He went on to say that he would take the same stand in support of oppressed people anywhere—“be it Palestine, Zimbabwe or South Africa.”

The charges against the doctor are still pending. ■

restaurants serve Blacks. If you choose not to serve them, it's your business.” This reactionary comment helps to clarify what the Weber Case is all about, which goes far beyond cutting back on the crumbs given Blacks and other minorities during the struggles of the 1960s.

What the ruling class is most hoping to get out of legal cases like Bakke and Weber is to spread a lot of poison that discrimination against minorities is a thing of the past. Others even have the gall to claim that Blacks have infringed on the rights of whites. The wretched conditions in which so many have to live are their own fault because they are not as “qualified” and intelligent as whites, the argument goes.

No, the Black liberation struggle of the 1960s and the fight of other oppressed nationalities never won a “fair share of the pie.” Reforms like affirmative action never affected more than a small percentage of minorities. What the struggle of the '60s *did* do was indict the capitalist system and the vicious inequality and oppression that it breeds and it gave rise to powerful sentiments and movements aimed at *overthrowing* this system of exploitation and oppression. So today when the hullabaloo of “reverse discrimination” is raised, it is not mainly to make room for reactionaries like Bakke in medical schools and the skilled trades, or even mainly to take away the few crumbs that were won a decade earlier. While they certainly do want to rip away any gains won in the '60s, most of all, the capitalists, with their sacred court system leading the way, are trying to reverse the verdict that the movement of the '60s placed on the rotten capitalist system, and the discrimination and oppression it breeds like a cancer.

Leadership of Demonstrations Misdirect Movement

Unfortunately, the demonstrations were not as powerful a blow against the oppression of minorities as they could have been due to their leadership. Many unions took part in the demonstration (and some even mobilized a few of their members, for once!), but they brought the same kind of faith in capitalism to the demonstration that they exhibit all the rest of the time. Some leaflets for the demonstration were titled, “Want A Decent Job?” which only served to foster the illusion that the affirmative action programs really can provide a solution to inequality in American society. Other leaflets said, “Our right to a decent job is under attack!” Tell that to the unemployed! There is no such right under capitalism, for Blacks, or whites, with or without affirmative action. A big force pushing this myth is

the Communist Party, USA which had a significant influence on the demonstrations. The CP has long ago given up even the thought of revolution and instead preaches that it is possible for a decent society to be achieved by slow, steady “progress” and the good intentions of the capitalist rulers.

Key to their strategy is to promote an alliance at the top between trade union hacks, so-called “leaders of the Black community” (meaning those few who have received cushy jobs with the government or business in return for trying to cool out mass resistance) and “enlightened” members of the capitalist ruling class (like Kennedy or McGovern). It is this type of politics they imposed on the anti-Weber actions. They preached that the key to solving inequality and discrimination is action by the trade unions coupled with legislation.

For example, the organizers of the demonstration in Oakland made the point of getting the Oakland City Council to endorse the demonstration, which they did unanimously as well as fork over \$1200 to help build it. This reflected two things: the large opposition to the Weber Case in the largely Black city, and, secondly, that the honorable Council felt assured that the demonstration would be kept respectable and offer no serious challenge to the capitalist rulers. This is in stark contrast to the attempts of the Oakland city government to prevent this year's revolutionary May Day march and the harassment of the march by the same pigs who treated this demonstration with kid gloves. (One interesting side-note is that the only abstention on the city council came from an executive from Kaiser, the company which is allegedly opposing Weber!)

In contrast to the dead-end road promoted by the CP and others, the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (youth organization of the RCP) raised the banner, “Fight Imperialism—The Source of National Oppression!” at the Oakland march. While uniting with the fight against the Weber Case, the RCYB made clear its views that the fight must take a different direction—it must be aimed at the capitalist system. Fighting attacks like the Weber Case and to defend and expand affirmative action can be an important component of such a movement against national oppression and its source. ■

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