

1,000s Set To March Vs Bakke Case

Washington, D.C.—Thousands of people marching in Washington denouncing racism. Hundreds of cases in the courts contesting alleged discrimination. Newspaper editorials debating what the future holds for minority Americans. Controversy in schools, factories and communities about race. 1963? No, 1978!

On April 15, thousands will march in Washington, D.C. in what is shaping up to be the biggest civil rights march of this decade. They are marching against the Bakke decision because it is the thin edge of the biggest attack on Black and other minority people of the decade.

Some time in the coming weeks the Supreme Court will be handing down a decision in this case. At issue is the legality of affirmative action, minority quotas, and special government programs that, in a limited way, have cut away at the brutal discrimination against minorities. The Bakke Case is the most prominent of the challenges by school administrations, corporations, and the press to these programs.

The Bakke case has also brought forth another opposing wave—the organized force of people of all walks of life and all nationalities to demand: Overturn the Bakke Case; Defend and Expand Minority Admissions.

THE BAKKE CASE

The case centers around Allan Bakke, an unsuccessful applicant to the University of California Medical School who claims he was discriminated against because he was white. The problem that kept Bakke and hundreds of other ap-

plicants of all nationalities out is that med schools admit too few students, not that 16 out of 100 positions at Davis were reserved for minorities. A dozen other schools also turned Bakke down and many of these admitted white students with lower test scores. Several of the students accepted at Davis were kids of rich alumni who got special placement by the Dean.

In the recent months, the media has been preparing the groundwork and drumming up support for a pro-Bakke decision or a ruling that leaves the question unsettled. They've been raising cries of how it's an issue of "reverse discrimination" or that Blacks are pushing whites out of jobs and schools. It's become a rallying cry for those who want to reverse the gains won during the civil rights movement, the freedom marches, the Black Liberation struggle, and the ghetto rebellions.

But in cities around the country anti-Bakke forces have been in motion. Meetings and conferences have been held in schools and communities. In March, two colleges in San Francisco and Berkeley staged a sit-in and a strike to protest the case. And on numerous campuses students have jammed the administration to supply buses for the upcoming demonstration.

DEFEND THESE PROGRAMS AND WHAT THEY REPRESENT

Affirmative action itself is a product of the great turmoil and movement among Blacks and other minorities in

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BAKKE

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this country rebelling against centuries of oppression. Starting in the late 1950's, minority people demanded their rights through militant protests, boycotts and strikes. Millions first marched peacefully and then openly rebelled as the ghettos became hotbeds of struggle. The upsurge ripped away illusions and hit hard at the very core of our system.

It was in this context of mass struggle and the political turmoil that the gains were won. Formal, legal equality was won. Blacks could sit anywhere on a bus. Schools were forced to open their doors to minorities and set up special programs to see that this actually happened. Some companies were forced to set up training programs for minorities and change their vicious discriminatory practices.

But these changes did not end the daily oppression of minorities. Far from it. And from the day these programs started, the school administration, employers and the government started chipping away at them. Programs were underfunded or cut back. Black, Latin and other minority people continued to be driven into the worst and lowest paying jobs and into unemployment lines at two or three times the rate of white workers. Ghettos today are

bleaker than they were ten years ago.

The Bakke case is once again opening people's eyes and moving people into struggle for their freedom and liberation. Some forces in the anti-Bakke movement have been working against this potentially powerful resurgence. They've tried to narrow the issue strictly to the Alan Bakke case, failing to hit it as the leading edge in a broader attack on Black people and other minorities. In addition they've tried to channel the movement into being a legal pressure group only aimed at the courts without looking to how struggle can take huge steps in building the continuing fight of oppressed minorities for equality and freedom.

The demonstration in Washington will go a long way toward countering the ruling class' attempts to create a political climate that will allow continued and stepped-up attacks on minorities. It will help tear away the respectability the current Bakke case is giving to the lie that Blacks are the cause of this country's mounting problems when they are among the foremost victims. The march on April 15 marks not the end of a campaign but the beginning of a new movement against racism and the oppression of millions of people.