

# **SMASH THE BAKKE DECISION!**

The U.S. Supreme Court is on the threshold of the most important and controversial civil rights decision since the 1954 desegregation ruling. It will affect the lives of the millions of minorities in this country. The case unfolds around the claims of one man, Alan Bakke, that he was discriminated against because he is white. But the implications of the Bakke case go far broader, and unlike the 1954 decision, the lines have been drawn well in advance with a growing popular movement to beat back the Bakke decision and all that it stands for.

The facts in this case are clear. Bakke was not discriminated against. He was turned down for medical school because there are too few places, not because some 16 out of 100 slots were reserved for minority applicants. A dozen other med schools turned him down, and many whites admitted to the U of Cal at Davis had lower scores than he did. Bakke was also beaten out by the children of several rich alumni who get special placement by the Dean.

If the issue was just one guy getting into med school, thousands of people would not be marching and demonstrating against the Bakke decision. If the issue was just Alan Bakke, people across the country would not be taking sides in a historic debate.

The basic issue is the discrimination and oppression that Blacks and all minorities in this country face. In the 50's and 60's, millions of Blacks and other oppressed nationalities turned their anger and desire for freedom into a storm of action that shook this country to its foundations. The struggle of millions won many advances—Jim Crow laws in the south were wiped out; affirmative action programs for minorities in education and jobs were won; millions saw the nature of discrimination and the demands for liberation by Blacks were just demands; and people of all nationalities joined in the demand and the movement that said the government and the owning class better do something about discrimination.

It was this mighty storm of struggle that forced the government and the owners to develop some affirmative action programs, giving some few openings to Blacks and other minorities in jobs and education. This was a significant advance—though they were often poorly funded, and often used to divide Blacks and whites, and always were too few and far between to make a big dent in discrimination.

The basic issue of discrimination and oppression of Blacks and other minorities has not ended. Not in unemployment, where Black joblessness is more than double that of whites. Not in wages, where Blacks earn far less on the average than whites, and the income gap is widening as the economy declines. Not in education, where Black schools are still the worst schools. And sure as hell not in medical schools—which is what this Bakke is complaining about. There is only 1 Black doctor for every 3,800 Blacks, and only 1 Chicanos doctor for every 30,000 Chicanos, compared to a national average of 1 doctor for every 700 people.

Now, with the Bakke case, the U.S. government is trying to take away the affirmative action programs. They are trying to take away one of the few concessions offered to minorities that did something, even though just barely, about actual discrimination. And they are accompanying this with a media blitz to create public opinion that it is just not "worth it" to be concerned about discrimination, not with the economy as bad as it is.

To take a stand against the Bakke decision is to take a stand against cutting minority programs in education and employment. It is to take a stand against the owners and their government who say that enough has been done about discrimination. It is to stand up against the attempts to divide working people—of all nationalities—and get us to fight each other for decent jobs and schools.

April 15th is the day when thousands of people throughout the country will be making this stand. Nationwide demonstrations on this day will be the most visible of all the protest activities and organizing. Real gains were won in the battles of the 50's—for minorities and for all working people. They must be defended. Racism and national discrimination are not friends of the working class. They are tools of the owning class to weaken the people and strengthen their rule. The Bakke case is a challenge, a test of strength on this key battle line. It must be defeated.