Bends to white racism
Where RSB goes wrong on ‘Bakke’ fight

By Osborne Hart

How do you build a movement against the Bakke decision and in defense of affirmative action?

To most people, actions such as the march on Washington of 10,000 on April 15, called by the National Committee to Overturn the Bakke Decision, would seem like a step in the right direction. Such actions, which involve a broad range of forces—from students to black groups, unions, and women—are important and should be continued. Almost everyone involved in the struggle against the Bakke decision sees clearly the racist character of the decision.

So they might have been surprised to see an article that appeared in the April issue of the Young Communist, newspaper of the Revolutionary Student Brigade. The RSB is an organization of young people who until recently considered themselves in agreement with the Revolutionary Communist Party. Since that organization underwent a split some months earlier (see June 9 Militant for an account of the split) the RSB also split. Supporters of the Young Communist now consider themselves in agreement with the Revolutionary Socialist Brigade led by former RCP member Micky Jarvis.

The Young Communist article attacks the Young Socialist Alliance for its role in the ‘Bakke’ struggle. The crux of the RSB’s argument is that the YSA is trying to teach the truth on the racist nature of the decision. “The YSA . . . turn every issue into a question of racism,” the author complains, “so that each leaflet is indistinguishable from the past. Their strategy, as well as all the arguments, never attack capitalism.”

White rights?

This is a strange argument. The Bakke decision is an important centerpiece in the drive of the U.S. rulers against the most oppressed sections of society. The capitalists hope by attacking affirmative action to intensify racist and sexist practices everywhere. The YSA is helping to teach the truth on the racist nature of the decision. “The YSA . . . turn every issue into a question of racism,” the author complains, “so that each leaflet is indistinguishable from the past. Their strategy, as well as all the arguments, never attack capitalism.”

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Capitalism & racism

The RSB’s argument is based on a completely false premise. It’s true that capitalist society oppresses all workers. It’s not true that this oppression is exactly the same for all workers.

The ruling class tries to divide workers by granting limited privileges to some sections of the working class—such as white, male workers—at the expense of blacks, Chicano, women, and others. Blacks are oppressed not only as workers but as Blacks. They are hired last and fired first, forced into inferior schools, and deprived of needed social services.

These divisions hurt all workers. They make it harder to fight for better education and working and living conditions. They enable the ruling class to keep workers weak and divided.

Blinded to this divide-and-rule strategy, the RSB falls smack into the bosses’ trap.

In the Young Communist article actually refers to the most grotesque example of where their wrong position led the RSB. They complain that the YSA “was two years ago demanding Federal troops into Roxbury [Boston] during the fight to desegregate that city’s schools.” It’s true that the YSA demanded Federal troops be sent to Boston to defend black students from racist mobs. And we’re proud of it.

Is the RSB proud of its role in that struggle? They shouldn’t be. They opposed desegregation.

When the order to desegregate the schools in Boston sent black racist mobs screaming into the streets, the RSB and its parent group, then called the Revolutionary Union, did not condemn these attacks. They defended the white racists.

Both minority and white students must be won to fight against racist ‘Bakke’ decision

Third Denver killer cop acquitted

By Silvia Zapata

DENVER—Nearly a year ago, park tenants John O’Dell, Gary Graham, and Dave Neil killed two Chicanos in cold blood in a city park. A police sergeant stated, “Any court in its right mind would get off scot-free. Graham and O’Dell, who together pumped eight bullets into James DeSoto and another man, were cleared by a Denver grand jury last December.

The killings sparked spontaneous protests at the white park. Last August 1,300 Chicanos and Blacks marched on the city-county building, demanding justice for the two slain men. The families of the two men also sponsored a rally to demand prosecution of the cops and to demonstrate opposition to police harassment.

Since then, racist attacks by Denver cops have not ceased.

Sidney Whitecane, a Native American, died while in police custody. Whitecane’s head “somehow” hit a trash can as he was awaiting processing at the city jail on January 14. He died of brain injuries at Denver General Hospital two days later.

Irene DeSoto, a transsexual, was shot to death by an undercover cop this spring.

An anti-Chicano hysteria hung over the trial of Neil for Espinosa’s death. The Denver media played up cops’ talk of reprisals from the Chicano community.

The Rocky Mountain News reported tight security of police stations because “there are several trials going on that represent a kind of police versus community thing.”

A police sergeant stated, “Any police facility is susceptible to attack from subversives. We are under a real sense of awareness. These things can happen and will happen, especially in this area of this age with all your radicals. These are Soviet trained people.”

Resiben Espinosa, nephew of Arthur Espinosa, was not surprised by the not-guilty verdict. “What they said is the police have a license to gun down any individual or group of individuals whose lifestyle they disagree with,” he charged.

A leaflet passed out by the RU said, “We can’t write off all white resistance to the busing plan as just racist.” This was during the time when the slogan, “Niggers, go back to Africa,” was screamed on walls throughout South Boston.

Another leaflet put out by the RU complained that anti-white sentiment has grown in Black and Latin communities, expressing itself in the attitude “We’re gonna show those honkies we can go to their schools if we want to.”

Well, did the RU think Black students didn’t have a right to go to white schools? That was what their position amounted to.

Although they later made some “self-criticism” of their position, their racist formulations, the RSB to this day has not retracted its opposition to busing. In fact, while the RCP, RSB members participated in the Commit­tee Against Forced Busing. The news­letter of that group stated at one point that “forced busing is the single grea­test threat to our kids’ education.” Thus the newsletter objectively sided with the views of the racist antibusing forces.

Continued on page 23

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THE MILITANT/JUNE 15, 1978

21
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...Dallas
Continued from page 13
extension of its 1979 ratification deadline. White is also campaigning to overturn the Bakke decision and for full abortion rights.

When the Texas Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Dallas Independent School District had to desegregate its schools, White greeted the decision as a "victory for the Black and Chicano communities."

"The only practical solution to today's segregated schools is busing," he said. "Only when both white students and black and Chicano students are bused to each others' schools will the school board be forced to equalize education.

...Reid
Continued from page 6
powerful and united. To defeat them we must mobilize the power of women and our allies, especially in the Black and labor movements, into a united force, so powerful that our just demands cannot be ignored.

Our movement must be inclusive of all who support equality for women and all in the movement must be equal—there can be no second-class feminists.

Every effort must be bent to unite all supporters of the ERA in a massive campaign until the issue is decided in the courts and within the grassroots."

"In sisterhood, Willie Mae Reid"