

Mao Tsetung's Immortal Contributions:

Part 3: Political Economy, Economic Policy and Socialist Construction



REVOLUTION

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Bakke Ruling

Legal Seal For Reactionary Onslaught

The U.S. Supreme Court decision in favor of Allan Bakke has given the judicial stamp of approval to the infamous lie of "reverse discrimination" and signals and lends "legal authority" to the intensification of real discrimination and national oppression on the part of the bourgeoisie.

Almost before the ink was dry on the lengthy decision, bourgeois commentators were calling it a "middle of the road" ruling—one that "reaffirms" the need for affirmative action programs but at the same time insures that such programs will not be "discriminatory."

This talk of "reverse discrimination" would be a bitter joke if it wasn't such a criminal line of attack. What it amounts to is saying that Black people and other minorities, especially since the Civil Rights movement (indeed, because of it), are given all the breaks when it comes to hiring, admission into college, etc., and that now they have more than their fair share of everything.

Is it true that Black people and other minorities have more than their "fair share" of some things? Yes, it is. They have more unemployment, more malnutrition, more rotten housing, more lousy schools, more deaths at the hands of the police, even higher blood pressure!

Open admissions, preferential hiring, affirmative action programs and the like were among the important victories won by Blacks and other minorities during the high tide of struggle against national oppression in the late '60s and early '70s. But from the very beginning the ruling class has hammered away at these gains, and long before the Bakke decision it had rendered many of these victories ineffectual, or token at best.

In some cases, such as the University of California at Davis (which denied admission to Allan Bakke, then encouraged him to file his suit against this denial) affirmative action took the form of quotas which insured that a certain number of minority applicants would benefit from the program. While in almost every case the quotas were pathetically low (for example, 16 out of 100 at Davis) and didn't begin to meet the needs of minorities, they were an important part of keeping affirmative action from being just one more broken promise.

Quotas

By knocking down the use of quotas based on nationality, the Bakke ruling effectively destroys the few teeth affirmative action ever had. Far from being "middle of the road," the Bakke decision is an open attempt to provide legalistic justifications for the bourgeoisie's growing wave of attacks on minority nationalities.

For Allan Bakke, it was a case of being in the right place at the right time. A ruling along the lines of the Bakke decision was important to the bourgeoisie in its drive to step up its special oppression of minorities and perpetuate and intensify

divisions among the masses based on nationality. If Allan Bakke hadn't been there, they would have dug up someone else. In fact, Bakke himself is nothing but a hapless jerk.

Bakke had already been turned down at more medical schools than you could shake a stick at when he applied at UC Davis. To suggest, as the Supreme Court does, that Bakke was the victim of "racial discrimination" not only ignores the facts, but shamelessly whitewashes the very real discrimination that permeates capitalist society. It is a disgusting and brazen appeal to chauvinism.

The NAACP and tired reformists like Coretta King have surrendered without

a fight before the delicate nuances and courteous assurances of the Bakke decision that "race is a legitimate factor" in determining college admissions. King says she's "satisfied" with the decision, which "came down on the side of affirmative action." Benjamin Hooks, Executive Director of the NAACP, called the ruling "a clear-cut victory for voluntary affirmative action"! Lester Maddox couldn't have said it better.

This dimwitted view of the Bakke decision is precisely what the bourgeoisie would have the people believe, and completely ignores the realities of national oppression in the U.S. It took a tidal wave of rebellion and mass action for Black people and

other minorities to wrest from the bourgeoisie the few concessions they now have in the area of affirmative action, and the Bakke decision paves the way for the floodgates of reaction to open up and spew forth challenges to minority admissions and hiring programs. No amount of pious promises of affirmative action or legal ambiguities in the Court's decision can change this fact.

"Interpreting" the Law

The so-called "constitutional questions" involved in the case have never been anything more than a ruse used by the bourgeoisie to hide behind as they adopt different policies according to changing conditions. The constitution was used to sanctify legal segregation following Reconstruction, then used to knock it down in the '50s when changing social conditions and the struggle of the masses demanded it.

Affirmative action itself was given the OK by the courts when the mass struggles won it in the '60s, only to have

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2nd Convention of RCYB

Firm Ground For New Advances

"Youth of America Dare to Say, Revolution Is the Only Way!" The chant rang out amidst thunderous applause as the second national convention of the Revolutionary Communist Youth Brigade (RCYB) in Austin, Texas, officially came to a close. This Austin location had historic significance. It was in Austin nearly 10 years ago that the Revolutionary Union (which played a major role in the formation of the RCP) first played a decisive part in the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) in combating the reactionary line of Progressive Labor Party (PL) with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Tsetung Thought.

This 1978 Austin meeting was one of consolidation and celebration over the defeat and ouster of a reformist and counterrevolutionary clique in the Brigade. It was a meeting of building off this victory to achieve new advances in leading revolutionary struggle among youth. Within the past six months this clique, part of the Menshevik Jarvis-Bergman gang in the Party, had attempted to turn the RCYB, the youth organization of the Revolutionary Communist Party, against the RCP—after being defeated in their attempt to turn the Party itself from red to white.

The founding convention of the RCYB in November 1977 represented a great advance for the revolutionary movement in this country. The proletariat now has a bold and open communist organization among the youth in the neighborhoods, campuses and plants. But the Mensheviks sought from the beginning to make this organization over into its opposite—a John Travolta-style social welfare club. In

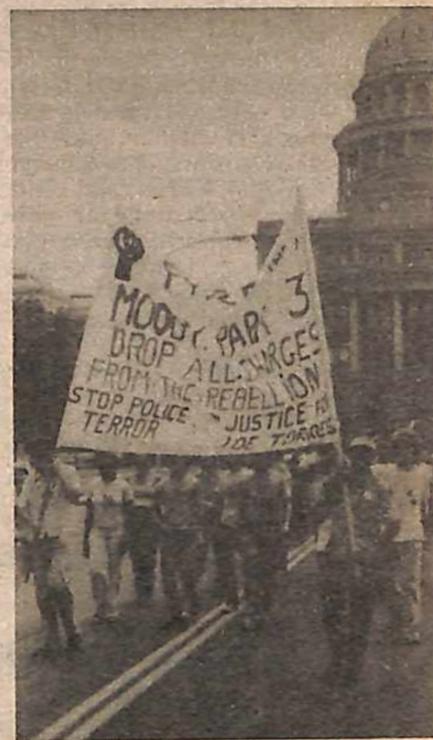
their view, American youth, especially working class youth, were too backward and brainwashed to ever be won to fighting for communist revolution. So what the hell, hold a reformist extravaganza or two around a current issue—say, jobs—then get down on the dance floor with the masses, and call that making revolution.

This revisionist line and the Menshevik leaders themselves were first repudiated by the RCYB at a critical meeting in Cincinnati in January 1978. At that time, plans were laid for the next few months to go deeply into this two-line struggle throughout the ranks of the Brigade.

This Communist Consolidation Campaign bore fruit at the recent Austin convention where far more was achieved than simply rejecting the Mensheviks' philistine reformism. Plans were made to translate these victories into revolutionary practice. And in the course of this the RCYB took new steps in functioning as a communist organization with all its members struggling to apply Marxism-Leninism on the convention floor, the working class youth making particularly important contributions.

This was not some kind of "performance," but testimony to the fact that people saw the life and death character of the questions being grappled with—whose underlying common theme was revolution vs. reformism—and the absolute necessity of struggling to achieve a correct understanding of them.

All of this was in stark contrast to the methods of the Mensheviks who sought to leave the important questions to a few hotshot "experts," while trying to rob the initiative from rank and file Brigade members who they considered



Austin RCYB Convention takes to the streets in support of the struggle in Houston.

capable only of carrying out the line. It must be said, however, that these "leaders" were unable to stamp out the revolutionary thrust of the Brigade nationwide. In spite of their interference, much good work has been done in the last several years, with the RCYB, and the Revolutionary Student Brigade which preceded it, rooting itself on many campuses and, more recently, in the neighborhoods, and leading important struggles.

Important Resolutions Passed

Delegates were chosen for the Austin meeting by all 43 chapters of the RCYB at six regional conferences held before the convention. The RCP had five delegates and the staff of the RCYB newspaper, REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST YOUTH (RCY) had one. A large number of other RCYB members also made the trip to be (non-voting) par-

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the constitution used to knock it down now as the economic crisis and the political situation has led to a new bourgeois offensive against the oppressed nationalities.

All this only underscores the criminal absurdity of those who, claiming to speak on behalf of the masses, are hailing the decision or calling for the struggle to be carried out in the courts. College administrators, public agencies and private employers have got the meaning of the Bakke decision loud and clear: a green light to step up their slashing away at any affirmative action programs that presently exist. Only relying on militant mass struggle—and not on any amount of legal briefs—will beat back these attacks or force the courts to once again “reinterpret” their reactionary constitution.

The mass outrage over the Bakke decision is growing daily, and the working class and masses of people must unite in ever greater numbers to fight this reactionary ruling and every attack on minority nationalities. The fight against discrimination in education and hiring must push ahead, and new affirmative action programs, with real content, must be demanded. Existing programs—already under attack—must be defended and expanded:

Within hours of the announcement of the Bakke ruling, people began organizing actions against it across the country. Demonstrations at federal buildings, sidewalk rallies, car caravans through college communities and other actions have taken place and are sure to continue. ■