

14 Charles Lane
New York, N.Y. 10014
March 17, 1976

TO ALL ORGANIZERS AND ANTIRACIST WORK DIRECTORS

Dear Comrades,

To date close to three hundred Black leaders and their supporters have endorsed the call for the April 24 national march and rally for school desegregation in Boston. This includes leaders from many segments of the Boston area -- student leaders, church figures, labor officials, and community leaders. Nationally the list includes members of the NAACP, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, women's groups, student organizations, labor officials, and Black elected officials.

There are only five and a half weeks to build this very important demonstration. The racists have not let up in their attacks on the Black community as the articles in the Militant have described. ROAR has scheduled a national demonstration on April 24 in Washington, D.C. This makes the April 24 pro-busing, pro-Black rights march in Boston even more urgent as a direct response to the antibusing action. Supporters of school desegregation must begin to present a strong public presence to begin to change the political atmosphere and eventually to alter the present relationship of forces.

Most people are still opposed to busing even though a majority of Americans support school desegregation. Education thus is a primary aim of this planned march: to clearly point out that busing and school desegregation go hand-and-hand. In the process of building April 24 it is important that supporters of school desegregation--NSCAR, NAACP, and others--step up the educational work on why busing must be defended against the racists. The branches should plan forums to explain the issues involved in the busing fight and to build April 24. Comrades should be encouraged to re-read the busing pamphlet and other literature on busing.

NSCAR chapters should be encouraged to organize similar educational forums and teach-ins on the campuses. The April 2-4 weekend, the date of Martin Luther King's assassination, is a key weekend to organize such educational activities.

As we begin to build April 24, where it is possible, we should seek to organize broader meetings of even April 24 coalitions to build for the march. In Boston, the Coalition for April 24 March on Boston has set up an office in the Black community and has begun to involve the broader community in building the action. In Washington, D.C. and Detroit similar steps are being discussed by NSCAR and endorsers of the April 24 march.

However, it is not necessary to initiate local April 24 coalitions in order to build the demonstration. NSCAR chapters should be encouraged to initiate campus coalitions and meetings

for the 24th right away. Comrades in unions, especially the teachers union where we are building the desegregation committee, should try and get resolutions passed in support of April 24 and to encourage their unions to send representatives to Boston and, if possible, to organize buses to go to Boston. Comrades active in other areas should also encourage those we are working with to support the April 24 march.

The most immediate task facing supporters of busing is to continue to send in names of national endorsers to the Boston coalition office or the Boston NSCAR office. The key to ensuring the success of this action is how broad it becomes. The influx of more and more sponsors each day to Boston can help give added confidence to local Black leaders and the Black community as a whole that they are not alone in the fight against the antibusing bigots. We should especially reach out to labor groups, churches, women's organizations like the National Organization for Women, student groups like the National Student Association, Black organizations, Chicano and Puerto Rican groups and others. We should encourage these other forces to buy bus tickets or even to rent their own buses to send their members and supporters to Boston.

In this line, we should especially try and get the endorsement of NAACP branches around the country. Presently, the Boston NAACP has not endorsed the April 24 march and Margaret Bush Wilson, the national chairperson of the NAACP, has informed the organizers of the march and rally that she cannot support the April 24 action because, in her opinion, pro-busing supporters should instead register voters for the elections. Different NAACP leaders have made it clear that they think the most important task in 1976 is to get President Ford out of the White House. We can expect this election-year pressure for Black rights supporters not to demonstrate to increase as the April 24 action gains more publicity.

This factor, however, makes even more important to try and get local NAACP branches and leaders to endorse April 24. We should explain to NAACP members and leaders we meet how a demonstration--like May 17--is needed to answer the racists and why April 24 is not counterposed to organizing voter registration and other electoral activities.

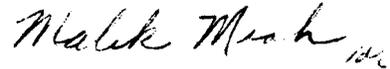
Although a few NAACP local leaders and branches have endorsed April 24, Wilson's letter may cause many NAACP branches not to support the action or even withdraw their endorsement. One local leader of the Boston NAACP, for example, has already done this.

Winning as many NAACP branches as endorsers of the April 24 march can help determine the size and breadth of the march and rally. As the most important and largest civil rights organization in the country, the NAACP's non-support to April 24 will limit April 24's potential impact. Thus, the more local and national supporters we can immediately get for the march may convince the Boston NAACP and possibly the national NAACP to support the demonstration.

It is also important for branches to encourage the Communist Party and YWLL to endorse April 24. The CP and YWLL sent an observer to the first Boston Coalition meeting (as did YAWF). This is the first time since last spring that the CP has shown any willingness to come to meetings where we have been involved to discuss how to build a movement to answer the racists. Since they withdrew from NSCAR a year ago, the CP has given little active support to the Black community and the busing struggle. As the action becomes more real, it is likely that the CP will become more involved in building the action. We should encourage them now to get involved. The April 24 building forums and teach-ins can be utilized along these lines.

Regular reports should be sent to the National Office.

Comradely,



Malik Miah
SWP Black Work Director