

BUILD the NEW CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT!

THIS IS A FIGHT FOR FULL INTEGRATION AND EQUALITY:

The civil rights march on April 1, 2003, the day the US Supreme Court hears arguments in the two University of Michigan affirmative action cases, is a commencement. April 1 marks the point of departure for the new civil rights movement. This new movement will open up a sustained struggle for full integration and equality - a struggle to realize the long- deferred promise of *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Our generation has learned from the Civil Rights Movement that came before. We will have set our aim at defeating - once and for all - the racist inequality and segregation, the discrimination and prejudice that characterize our society. Our generation is the one that will finally, decisively reject the racist lie of 'separate but equal,' the lie used to justify and maintain racist inequality for black, Latino and other minority people in the cities, barrios, reservations and rural areas of this country.

It is our intention not only to defend affirmative action and integration and all the gains of the previous Civil Rights Movement: We declare our determination to struggle for a society wholly free from the racist inequality and segregation, discrimination and prejudice, sexist abuse and degradation and fundamental inequality that stifles human potential and dulls the mind and spirit. We aim for an integrated society, a society of equality and sister- and brotherhood where the ability of all is developed to the fullest.

We will not be divided. We stand shoulder to shoulder - people of all races and ethnicities, people of all religious backgrounds.

The approaching 50-year anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education* will be marked by a massive struggle to realize the majestic promise of that decision - the promise of integration and equality in American education. The institutional inequalities of our society are simply no longer acceptable to the new generation.

We must fight to win these cases. It is clear that mass, integrated mobilization is the way to achieve that. The US Supreme Court has refused to hear by far the most important evidence of the case - the extensive, overwhelmingly uncontested evidence put forward at trial by the student intervenors in the University of Michigan Law School case of bias and discrimination against minorities in college admissions criteria that affirmative action partially offsets. The court must hear those arguments from the street; they must hear them loud and clear.

Victory and defeat in these cases hang in the balance. You must be the one to tip the scales. Throw your weight into this effort. When you return to your city, school, union, congregation, and organizations, make sure everyone that you know understands how critical building of the new civil rights movement over the next period of time is to winning these cases and to our collective future.

Win or lose, our movement for full integration and equality will continue to grow and struggle. Our strongest preparation for continuing the struggle after either victory or defeat is to fight as hard as possible beyond April 1 to build the new movement for full integration & equality.

Call to action for civil rights organizers:

- ▶ **Begin organizing regional demonstrations** between now and mid-June, after which, the US Supreme Court will likely rule in the University of Michigan cases.
- ▶ **Hold civil rights marches and rallies** anywhere any of the US Supreme Court judges appear. They must continue to hear the voice of the nation that stands for affirmative action and integration. The judges will be speaking at numerous convocations at colleges & universities around the country.
- ▶ **Come to the Conference of the New Civil Rights Movement** at the University of Michigan over the weekend of May 30, 2003 sponsored by BAMN, the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and other civil rights organizations (see www.bamn.com for more details).

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www.BAMN.com

WHY BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION IS AT STAKE:

These cases will determine whether or not *Brown v. Board of education* is a dead letter

Brown v. Board of Education means nothing - it is in fact a dead letter - if the separate education that *Brown* proclaimed could never be equal is not only a steadily worsening reality but all real methods that could change that segregation are outlawed. If affirmative action is barred by the US Supreme Court in the two University of Michigan cases, that is precisely what will occur.

In a society still characterized by as much racist inequality and segregation as ours, it is simply not possible to achieve meaningful integration without positive measures. Without active desegregation policies, segregation will not only persist, it will increase.

If all measures are outlawed that could change the segregation that *Brown v. Board of Education* condemned, the law itself is in practice nullified. Very literally, these two affirmative action cases will either institutionalize de facto segregation by outlawing any measure to counter it, or they will present our whole society with the possibility of moving forward toward full integration and equality.

Many do not yet realize the following **critical danger**.

The US Supreme Court could functionally outlaw affirmative action by upholding the court's 1978 *Bakke* precedent while overturning the two University of Michigan plans. Because the University of Michigan Law School's program is so conservative and minimal a policy, if the Supreme Court upholds *Bakke* but overturns the U of M Law School program, the court will have outlawed any effective measure that could achieve either desegregation or diversity in the real world. In other words, while pretending to maintain both *Brown* and *Bakke*, by overturning the U of M Law School policy the US Supreme Court would in reality turn both *Brown* and *Bakke* into meaningless legal fictions. Tragically, at present this is a likely outcome which only the power of a growing new civil rights movement can prevent.

The outcome of these cases will not only determine whether any affirmative action of any kind is legal. Any and every "race-conscious" measure of any kind will stand or fall on this decision; that includes the outreach, scholarship and retention programs now used in places like California and Texas, where affirmative action has been eliminated. Those policies that have constrained and mitigated the impact of banning affirmative action would be more or less quickly overturned. Many institutions have, shamefully, already abandoned these programs over the last several weeks. Programs, scholarships, etc., that target black, Latino, Native American and other minority students are already under a concerted, centralized attack.

What has - even with these "race-conscious" outreach, scholarship and retention policies - been a devastating drop in black, Latina/o and Native American enrollment at flagship schools of higher education where affirmative action has been barred, will be much, much worse if there is a ban on affirmative action coming from the high court.

The new civil rights movement is a struggle at the same time to save *Brown v. Board of Education* and to realize its fundamental promise - the promise of full integration and equality in American education. To that aim we commit ourselves irrespective of what this Court does.

March Chants

We demand equality and
integration in education;
Affirmative action
is the way,
Long live the fight of MLK!

We won't take
re-segregation
Equal quality education!

'Separate but equal' is a lie
Affirmative action
must not die!

Education is a right
By any means necessary
we will fight!

Black, Latino, Arab, Asian,
and white
United for equality
we will fight!

We'll fight for black
& white youth liberation
No separate, unequal
racist education!

Black, Latino, Arab, Asian,
and white,
No racist war
home or abroad,
Defend our civil rights!

They say Jim Crow
We say hell no!

Integration now,
Segregation never!

Integration is a must,
We won't tolerate
the back of the bus!

¡Adelante, adelante!
¡Los estudiantes*
están presente!

*Or: los trabajadores;
los inmigrantes;
la juventud; la gente

¡El pueblo unido,
jamás será vencido!

**COALITION TO DEFEND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION & INTEGRATION,
AND FIGHT FOR EQUALITY BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY (BAMN)**

JOIN BAMN! * FORM A BAMN CHAPTER AT YOUR SCHOOL * FOR MORE INFO, SEE:

BAMN

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