

# Closing the doors on minorities

By Bill Sievert  
Pacific News Service

A year ago 17-year-old Andrew Gray, eldest of four children of a black, middle-class family in Richmond, Ca., was certain he'd be enrolling in college this fall. He dutifully had sent off applications to the University of California at Davis and less prestigious Hayward State University ("just in case my grades aren't hot enough for U.C.").

Last spring, Andrew received rejection notices from both campuses, a result of his B-minus grades and an unimpressive score on his college entrance exams.

His confidence shaken, he briefly flirted with a plan to apply to predominantly black Central State College in Ohio. But, he concluded "it would cost too much to live away from home."

A last-ditch plan to attend a local two-year community college caved in by mid-August. "I'm joining the Navy," he announced. "A community college would be like two more years of high school. Besides, I want some dollars in my pocket. The Navy will teach me computer programming or something, and they'll pay me. I can always go to college later."

Maybe. But, like many other black Americans of college age, Andrew Gray won't be heading off to campus this fall. And that has more than a few black educators worried.

After a decade of increased educational opportunities won through the civil rights struggles of the '60s, the doors to higher education for blacks seem to be slamming shut again. The result could be a serious reversal in the drive by racial minorities to achieve their slice of the American pie.

## Figures misleading.

The Census Bureau recently reported that, as of last fall, blacks comprised 10.7 percent of all American college students, more than double the 4.6 percent level of 1966.

With blacks representing about 11 percent of the American population, the figures seemed to indicate that black people were finally achieving equality with whites in college opportunities.

But black educators charge that the statistics are misleading. They point to another statistic in the same Census Bureau report: the number of black students showed no increase between the 1975 and 1976 academic years.

In fact, the federal Office for Civil Rights reported last year that the percentage of undergraduate minority students actually dropped in seven states between 1972 and 1974, the last year for which full statistics are available.

Of even greater concern the educators point out that black students are disproportionately represented in two-year community colleges and trade schools, while they remain drastically under-represented in the more selective four-year institutions.

And, as a result of the controversial Bakke decision of the California State Supreme Court (now under appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court) to end the University of California's special admissions program for minorities, the number of blacks applying to the prestigious schools of law and medicine has "declined drastically," according to university officials.

U.C.-Berkeley sociologist Harry Edwards, a black professor who recently won a contentious battle for tenure, notes that educational obstacles for minorities persist even in the highest ranks of academe. His research reveals that the number of blacks on the university faculty is declining generally, and that three-quarters of black faculty members are denied tenure, compared to just 37 percent of whites.



The bitter civil rights struggles of the '60s opened many opportunities for minorities. Here some 300 black students occupied the administration building of Boston University in April 1968 demanding more scholarship money for minorities.

**The real issue of access to minorities is not who goes to college, but who goes to college where. Blacks and other minorities are disproportionately represented in two-year and trade schools.**

Such statistics led the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education (NAEOHE), an organization of some 500 black college leaders, to warn that, for a variety of reasons, "our educational process is eroding."

A major reason cited by the group is the mounting political pressure to provide more financial aid to students from middle-class families, while reducing the funds available to lower-income students, many of whom are black.

Black students, the group charges, are systematically being "tracked" into cheap community colleges and trade-oriented schools, while prestigious four-year colleges remain as "elite" institutions for middle and upper-class whites.

## Who goes where.

"The real issue of access is not who goes to college, but who goes to college where," says Alexander W. Astin, professor of education and UCLA and

author of *The Myth of Equal Access in Public Higher Education*.

His research shows that up to 45 percent of the blacks who enroll in some kind of post-secondary institution attend either a community college or vocational school, such as barber colleges or computer schools.

A related problem involves the "reverse discrimination" attack on programs designed to make up for past inequities in graduate and professional schools, such as the California court's Bakke ruling.

Special admissions programs today account for an estimated 60 percent of all black students attending medical and law schools. If such programs are ended in other schools as a result of the U.S. Supreme Court upholding the Bakke ruling, educators expect a sharp decline in black enrollment.

Already, says Emma Coleman Jones, a law professor and member of the Law School Admissions Committee at U.C. Davis, "many members of minority groups have become discouraged from applying by the events that have followed the [Bakke] decision."

The number of blacks applying to the Davis law school has fallen by 50 percent, she says, and Davis' medical school and Berkeley's law school report similar drops.

At the Harvard Business School, which disbanded its special committee on black admissions last year, first-year black enrollment declined to just 39 students in 1976, compared to 47 out of a total of 750 students in 1972.

## Many obstacles.

Even before the Bakke case, in 1974, only 3.5 percent of all doctorates awarded in the country went to American born blacks; and nearly 60 percent of those were in one field, education. Less than one percent of all the post-graduate degrees awarded went to new black attorneys and physicians.

A recent study by the National Board on Graduate Education cites financial and motivational stresses as the main obstacles.

"Upon graduation from college," the report says, "immediate employment opportunities may appear more rewarding [to blacks] than advanced study in view of the prospect of further financial difficulties, the academic risk of graduate studies and labor market uncertainties."

These root causes often are cited to explain the serious high school drop-out rate, which annually disqualifies more than seven million blacks between the ages of 16 and 34 from attending any kind of college.

And, as the case of Andrew Gray illustrates, even those who do complete high school face a special set of problems when they attempt to enroll in college.

The college entrance exams and proficiency tests all students face have been attacked by various black organizations as "inherently racist" and "rewarding social and economic advantage more than they measure talent."

The Association of Black Psychologists and the National Education Association have both called for a moratorium or outright ban on all standardized testing.

Even those blacks who pass the tests and win admission often discover that "the college environment is not congenial," says Benjamin Payton, a former black college president who now works on educational issues for the Ford Foundation.

While 20 percent of the whites who enroll in college complete their degree studies, only 9.3 percent of the blacks do, according to the Census Bureau.

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## ORGANIZATIONS

## Ultra-militancy characterizes new organization

**By Dan Marshall**  
Over 1200 workplace activists, vowing to build a united workers movement and "turn every mine and mill into a battlefield, a fortress of struggle," gathered in Chicago Sept. 3-5 at the founding convention of the National United Workers Organization.

The convention, growing out of a July 4th demonstration of several thousand persons in Washington D.C. organized by the Revolutionary Communist Party, brought together workers from steel, auto, mining, electrical, garment and other major industries along with unemployed persons.

Featured speaker at the opening session was Buddy Cochran, a 30-year-old mechanic from Americus, Georgia, who drove his car through a July 2 Ku Klux Klan rally in Plains, injuring over 30, primarily spectators and members of the press. Free on \$50,000 bond, Cochran is awaiting trial on eight counts of aggravated assault.

In a deep Georgia accent that would rival Jimmy Carter himself, Cochran told the enthusiastic crowd how he was "touched off" when a KKK speaker called Carter a slang name. "I got into my car and, on impulse, drove towards

the platform," he explained to the *Chicago Sun-Times*. "The only mistake I made was misjudging my speed. I wanted to sideswipe the platform, not drive through it. It was not my intention to injure anyone. I wanted to disrupt the meeting."

Immediately after the incident, the Organizing Committee for a National Workers Organization set up a defense committee for Cochran, raised bail money for his release, and recruited lawyers from Birmingham, Alabama, to defend him.

Cochran's convention address, where he declared that he was "out to get the judge" that put him in jail, was greeted with chants of "Free Buddy Cochran" that rocked the Great Hall of the Pick-Congress Hotel.

Such militant, violent actions are a major preoccupation of the NUWO, both in their military rhetoric and past activities. On July 4th the Organizing Committee sponsored a demonstration in Columbus, Ohio, that ended up disrupting another KKK rally, resulting in several indictments and a local grand jury investigation.

In New York City, supporters physically broke up a meeting of the Advanced Management Research Institute, an

employer organization that sponsors training seminars around the country to instruct management in the techniques for avoiding or breaking unions. "Workers confronted these bosses, turned over tables, emptied water pitchers on three piece suits and set off stink bombs that postponed the conference for two days," they state proudly.

Their workplace activities have thus far consisted mainly of supporting individual strikes like the four-month rubber strike last year and past wildcats of coal miners, which they participated in through the Right to Strike Committee. They recently organized a public meeting in Johnstown, Pa. to protest layoffs at Bethlehem Steel, one speaker claimed, and led 100 workers who stormed into company offices the next week.

The basic purpose of the NUWO, as "summed up" in a pamphlet by the Revolutionary Communist Party, formerly the Revolutionary Union, is to unify "local fighters" into a nationwide structure that can wage campaigns around workplace or social issues. They believe that a small number of activists, using the "single spark method," can transform particular struggles, "those which have the potential to become major bat-

les of the class," into big fights that threaten capitalist power.

NUWO makes no distinctions between conservative and progressive trade union officers, denouncing them all as "company stoolies" and "traitors," who are "practically indistinguishable from the Boards of Directors of the major corporations." They also tend to idealize strikes as weapons the rank and file should employ "whenever necessary and possible, in a serious and disciplined way, to kick the companies and their lackeys running our unions in the teeth."

The extremely well-organized convention included a multitude of banners, extensive security procedures, heavy recording equipment and simultaneous translations in Spanish and Chinese.

On Sept. 5 delegates demonstrated in front of the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry to protest the city's voluntary school busing program, an attempt, they charge, to divide white working class people against blacks. Their action put them into conflict with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, Operation PUSH and other minority groups that support the plan.

## IN BRIEF

## New evidence unearthed in Sacco-Vanzetti case



**By Sidney Blumenthal**  
New evidence unearthed in the Sacco-Vanzetti case strongly suggests that the prosecution may have conspired with other authorities in manufacturing a fraudulent case against the two Italian radicals. (IN THESE TIMES, Aug. 17.)

Disclosure of the new evidence came as Massachusetts celebrated Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti Day, Aug. 23, on the 50th anniversary of their execution. It was officially proclaimed by Gov. Michael Dukakis, who declared that their trial for the murder of a South Braintree paymaster and guard had been "unfair."

Ballistics experts at the 1921 trial linked a shell fired from Sacco's gun to a shell recovered from the scene of the crime. This key shell was one of four shown to the jury. The possibility now exists, how-

ever, that the crucial shell, instrumental in convincing the jury of Sacco and Vanzetti's guilt, may have been fabricated.

A few months before the trial, Harold Williams, assistant district attorney of Norfolk County, prepared notes stipulating that only three shells, not four, were discovered on the site of the South Braintree murders. Williams's handwritten notes say that a policeman, John Shay, recovered the shells. Yet the jury was told by the prosecution that a machinist, James Bostock, had found them, a sharp discrepancy that casts doubt on the prosecution's integrity.

Williams's notes were accidentally discovered in Harvard Law School's archives by Lincoln Robbins, an independent historian who has devoted the past two years researching the still-controversial case. Robbins claims that the fourth shell was fired

through Sacco's gun by the authorities in order to tie him conclusively to the Braintree crime. Robbins also contends that the prosecution suppressed the real identity of the shell's discoverer so that the false evidence could be successfully introduced and accepted in court.

Robbins's hypothesis is conjecture, despite its logic. There is little way of proving it, since almost all the principals in the case are now dead. Williams's notes, however, definitely indicate a disturbing omission in the prosecution's presentation.

Not all of those who played roles in the dramatic affair have passed away. The sole living juror, Harry E. King, 91 years old, appeared recently on a Boston television program devoted to a discussion of the case and offered some revealing views.

King vividly recalled that Sacco and

Vanzetti confessed at their trial that they were "Bolsheviks" and "Communists." Unfortunately, the court transcript does not uphold this version.

King also said that a railroad crossing guard, a key prosecution witness, had identified both Sacco and Vanzetti in a speeding get-away car. Actually the guard claimed to be able to identify only Vanzetti, who, incidentally, could not drive—a fact the defense counsel failed to point out.

King's erratic memory may be attributed to the effective manner in which the jury was manipulated by the prosecution, or senility. At a distance of 50 years after the execution, it is difficult to discern which is responsible for his illusions.

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## Infant formula promotion provokes Nestlé boycott

With "Crunch Nestlé Quick" as their slogan, members of the national Infant Formula Action Coalition (INFACT) began a nationwide boycott of Nestlé products last month.

Nestlé is the largest seller of commercial baby milks in the Third World, and the focus of the campaign against infant formula abuse for the first time.

To use the formulas safely a parent must have access to clean drinking water, sterilization equipment, refrigeration, literacy and enough money to mix the expensive powder in sufficiently-nutritional concentrations.

However, such conditions are rare among the people Nestlé aims its ad campaigns at in the Third World. Thus the bottle formulas become breeding grounds for bacteria, leading to infant diarrhea, malabsorption, malnutrition and death. A recent survey of the hospital in Freetown, Sierra Leone found that 713 of 717 babies admitted for malnutrition were bottle-fed.

Meanwhile, human milk is wasted. Breast milk, called the "original convenience food," is always available, sterile, nutritious and free. Most Third World women still carry their infants with them while working at home, in the village or field, and only a small percentage are unable to nurse for medical reasons.

The alarming rate of switchover from

breast to bottle accompanies aggressive and often misleading promotional campaigns, which aim to convince mothers that the way to health, beauty and status is through bottle feeding. These campaigns use extensive media coverage, company-sponsored "health and education programs" to promote their products, sales personnel dressed as "milk nurses" or "mothercraft workers," false implications of medical endorsement, and the wide-spread dissemination of free samples in hospitals and clinics.

The February 1977 issue of the Brazilian publication, *Modern Supermarket*, reveals that processed infant and baby foods have a profit margin of 72 percent—three to four times the profit margins of nearly every other item in the supermarket.

The boycott demands an end to all promotion of Nestlé's artificial formula—through mass advertising, distribution of free samples, milk-nurses and promotion in the medical profession. It also demands that artificial formula be prevented from getting into the hands of people who lack the means or facilities to use them safely.

People who boycott are urged to write letters of protest to Nestlé Co. Inc., 100 Bloomingdale Road, White Plains, N.Y. 10605.

—Liberation News Service