

Historical compromise for minorities

Bakke decision affects you

by Marion Johnson

On Wednesday, June 28, the United States Supreme Court handed down a decision concerning the controversial suit of the Regents of the University of California versus Allan Bakke.

The suit challenged the constitutionality of an affirmative action program that reserved 16 out of 100 places in the freshman medical class at Davis for disadvantaged and minority applicants.

On that Wednesday the nine Supreme Court judges split almost down the middle and offered a compromise to the affirmative action dilemma. The decision stated two things: first, that quotas based on race alone were to be prohibited; and secondly, that race can justifiably be a fundamental principle in judging applicants to universities.

In a 5 to 4 decision, the Supreme Court maintained the lower court order to admit Bakke to the medical school at Davis because the affirmative action program was an infringement of a person's right according to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. But in another 5 to 4 decision the court announced that universities and colleges may continue to consider race as a factor for admission to the school.

The Justices were torn throughout the deliberation of the case and Justice Lewis Powell was the man in the middle. Justice Powell sided with associates Chief Justice Warren R. Burger, William H. Rehnquist, John Paul Stevens and Potter Stewart in upholding the California Supreme Court decision in Bakke's favor.

Powell also allied himself with Justices Thurgood Marshall, William Brennan, Harry Blackmun and Byron White in maintaining the second segment of the court's decision. The question remains, however, who is the true victor of the court's decision? Is there a victor?

In his dissenting opinion Justice Blackmun said, "I yield to no one in my earnest hope that the time will come when an affirmative action program is unnecessary and is, in truth, only a relic of the past. 'I would hope that we could reach this stage within a decade at the most. But the story of Brown versus the Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954), decided almost a quarter of a century ago, suggests that that hope is a slim one."

"At some time, however, beyond any period that some claim is only transitional in equality, the United States must and will reach a stage of maturity where action along this line is no longer neces-

sary. Then persons will be regarded as persons, and discrimination of the type we address today will be an ugly feature of history that is instructive but that is behind us.

"I suspect that it would be impossible to arrange an affirmative action program in a racially neutral way and have it successful. To ask that this be so is to demand the impossible. In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way. And in order to treat some persons equally, we must treat them differently. We cannot — we dare not — let the Equal Protection Clause perpetuate racial supremacy."

Justice Marshall, the first and only black person to ever serve on the Supreme Court, stated, "While I applaud the judgement of the court that a university may consider race in its admission process, it is more than a little ironic that, after several hundred years of class-based discrimination against Negroes, the Court is unwilling to hold that a class-based remedy for that discrimination is permissible."

"In declining to so hold, today's judgement ignores the fact that for several hundred years Negroes have been discriminated against, not as individuals, but rather solely because of the color of their

skins. It is unnecessary in 20th century America to have individual Negroes demonstrate that they have been victims of racial discrimination; the racism of our society has been so pervasive that none, regardless of wealth or position, has managed to escape its impact.

"It is because of a legacy of unequal treatment that we now must permit the institutions of this society to give consideration to race in making decisions about who will hold the positions of influence, affluence and prestige in America. For far too long, the doors to those positions have been shut to Negroes.

"If we are ever to become a fully integrated society, one in which the color of a person's skin will not determine the opportunities available to him or her, we must be willing to take steps to open those doors. I do not believe that anyone can truly look into America's past and still find that a remedy for the effects of that past is impermissible."

"It has been said that his case involves only the individual, Bakke, and this University. I doubt, however, that there is a computer capable of determining the number of persons and institutions that may be affected by the decision in this case."

As freshmen at Bennett begin their undergraduate academic journey, as sophomores and juniors enter deeper into their perspective majors and as seniors patiently await for acceptance letters from graduate, medical or law schools, the Bakke decision certainly affects each and every student. In this day and age where affirmative action programs are geared for minorities and women, the effect of the decision hit Bennett students in a two-fold manner.

Due to the outcome of the case, the question still to be dealt with is, "Will it still be as advantageous in the job market as well as in entering graduate level schools to be a black woman, as many persons now believe?" Now, more than ever, Bennett students as aspiring doctors, lawyers and other professionals must maintain high academic standards, an elevated level of motivation and an acute sense of black pride.

If students harbor a defeatist attitude concerning Bakke and the decisions deriving from his case, then the accomplishments of civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr., Jesse Jackson, Rev. Ralph Abernathy, and many others will have been in vain.

Vernon Jordan Jr., executive director of the National Urban League summed it up well in remarks in the August issue of "Forum" magazine.

"The issue of affirmative action is still alive, still very much in danger from insensitive jurists and a hostile public. All of which means that government, educational and business leaders must provide the leadership in implementing and enforcing effective affirmative action programs and in explaining their need and their use to a public that is misinformed and prey to racism."

No jobs; students are angry

by Donna Meacham

There are some angry and disappointed students on Bennett's campus, victims, as it were, of a breakdown of communication between two vital offices on campus — the Residence Life office and the Office of Student Affairs.

Students were, during last semester, instructed to forward applications for positions as residence assistants and assistant dorm directors to Ouida Scarborough, director of Residence Life. And they did.

When appointment time came, however, according to Dean of

applicants.

There is no question of the choices that he made. The extra time and manpower expended in selecting them would indicate that they are indeed qualified. But what of the original applicants who also took their qualification for the positions very seriously, and who thought that their applications were being reviewed over the summer?

None of them received so much as a letter of rejection or even explanation.

What does one do after hearing nothing concerning the progress of an application filed two months previously? One pays dearly in long distance phone calls to the college to find out exactly what is going on, according to applicant Beverly Randolph, a senior from New Haven, Connecticut.

Beverly also said, "I think qualification for each position and

financial need should have been given equal consideration. There were many people qualified, but there were even more who were qualified and really needed those tuition-paid positions (such as assistant dorm directorships). I hate to think that it's who you know that gets you anything at Bennett. The whole thing was handled very badly."

Another applicant, Romona Reid, also a senior and a native of Philadelphia, Pa., said of the situation, "The procedure that was used to make the present choices is totally unclear to me. I have no idea of what criteria were used, because past procedures were either discarded or ignored. It was very unfair. Someone should have informed us of something regarding our applications, one way or the other."

These sentiments were echoed by Deborah Tillman, a senior from Washington, D.C. "I feel cheated. I always thought that no matter whether you received appointment to a job or were rejected, that you should receive something in the way of correspondence. I happen to know that I received the proper recommendations for the job, and met the job specifications. I would feel better if I weren't qualified. I probably wouldn't feel the animosity that I do now. I feel that I was overlooked due to some inside disorganization, and I resent the mishandling of my application."

When asked for comment concerning the appointments, Ms. Scarborough replied only that she made none of the appointments this year and that questions concerning them should be directed to Dean Bragg's office.

When asked whether she had been contacted by the Office of Student Affairs for the purpose of procuring a list of student applicants, Ms. Scarborough replied, "No, I was not," adding that she had received a communication that a conference would be scheduled to discuss the appointments. Thereafter, she said, no communication followed specifying anything further.

Such a lack of communication between two offices essential to student life takes its toll on everyone involved, especially the students. The housing situation in the dormitories is, according to Dean

Bragg "a mess." Acknowledging the problems he said, "We have a messy situation for students which should not have been and is inexcusable. Students have enough hassles without our imposing unnecessary additional burdens on them. We have had problems with residence assignments for eight years, and eight years is enough!"

Dean's, Probation Lists compared

by Deborah Tillman

Over a three-year period, 1975-78, there has been a great correlation between the Dean's List and the Academic Probation List, according to Chelsea Tipton, dean of the college.

As the Dean's List decreased, 55 for 1975-76, 46 for 1976-77 and 45 for 1977-78, the Academic Probation List fluctuated, 67 for 1975-76, 93 for 1976-77 and 88 for 1977-78.

According to the dean, there are several explanations why this correlation has occurred. One reason is that the total class enrollment

changed during the three years, 597 for 1975-76, 632 for 1976-77, and 621 for 1977-78. The increase in the number of those on the academic probation list between the years 1975 and 1977 can be partially attributed to the increase in enrollment.

Another reason is that Bennett has accepted more Special Services students. But regardless of these reasons, Dean Tipton says, the core of the problem is that many students fail to strive for higher grades. They look for better social activities.

DEAN'S LIST

(Based on academic achievement for the Spring Semester 1977-78)

The students whose names appear below have been placed on the DEAN'S LIST because they have achieved the academic averages indicated in terms of the 4-point scale in the Spring Semester of the academic year 1977-78 without having any grades below "C" and/or incomplete ("I") grades.

Sophomores, 3.20 or above

Adenike Adejumbo
Linda Faye Anderson
Alisha Dionne Coachman
Earlinda LaRue Elder
Lisa Ann Johnson
Sharonlyn Jones
Tina Ruth Jones
Regina Ann Kiser

Tonya Kristen Martin
Nomathemba Nkomo
Estalinda Joyce Roberson
Beverly Ann Rumley
Doris Mae Sealey
Mary Jane Simpkins
Tonni Yvonne Sullivan
Angela Marie West

Juniors, 3.30 or above

Dino Michele Bradley
Angela Vernet Briley
Guila Betena Cooper
Melissa Lee Graves
Joann Mecheal Harper
Debra Ann Hodges
Melinda Renee James
Frances Penelope Kay
Valerie Eileen Littlejohn
Christine Elvira Lloyd

Loralyn Suzette Morman
Pamela Jean Morris
Barbara Gail Murphy
Laura Marie Perry
Jacqueline Almeda Ransom
Linda Beatrice Smith
Gwendolyn Denise Speight
Julia Lee Williams
Edwina Christine Wilson
Natalie Diane Young

Seniors, 3.40 or above

Eva Ablorh
Loretta Denise Bryant
Bertha Kay Dolberry
Belinda Jewell Foster
Marion Adair Johnson

Marcella Angela Miranda
Hattie Lynetta Purnell
Deborah Denise Tillman
Brenda Kay Watkins Tyson

Financial assistance? Gives generously

pledge card and a brochure to the alumnae explaining the matching challenge grant so they will fully understand the proposition that the Bush Foundation has made to Bennett.

Ms. Browning stated, "We try to get at least \$100,000 from 1000 alumnae members." She added that Bennett has four different awards clubs, the Century Club, the Silver Bell Club, the Golden Bell Club and the President's Club.

In order to be a member of one of these clubs, the alumnae must give a certain amount of money. The Century Club consists of alumnae members who give a total of \$100.00 to \$199.00, the Silver Bell Club consists of alumnae members that give a total of \$200.00 to \$499.00, the Golden Bell Club consists of alumnae members that give a total of \$500.00 to \$999.00 and the President's Club consists of members that give from \$1,000 up.

Some other donors who support Bennett are the United Methodist Church, the United Negro College Fund, corporations, foundations and others who work together to help keep Bennett alive.