

it had a nationwide impact, and showed people everywhere that the racist drive would not continue unopposed, it of course had the greatest influence in the city of Boston itself. The inspiration that everyone felt on that day has lived on in systematic organizing that has countered every racist thrust and made defense of the Black community a living reality, not just a political slogan.

Some groups in the left movement have demanded more federal troops in Boston, saying this is the answer to the racist violence. But the spirit of self-defense has been taken up by a growing number of progressive Bostonians, Black and white, and implemented on a practical level.

DR. EDELIN'S DEFENSE

Within a few months of the December 14 march, a new mood in the city could be seen. Within a day of his conviction, 2,000 people rallied to support Dr. Kenneth Edelin, a Black doctor convicted of manslaughter in a legal abortion. Many of the anti-busing racists had been behind the prosecution of Edelin, and the women's groups that rallied to his defense saw the connection between their struggle and that of the Black community.

This was followed in March by a significant defeat for the racist forces. They had predicted a turnout of 50,000 for a "March on Washington" against busing—

but only got 1,500, despite a massive publicity campaign led by Louise Day Hicks.

Meanwhile the economic situation in Massachusetts continued to worsen, with unemployment among the highest in the nation. But the efforts to turn working class anger and frustration over these problems against the Black people began to fall flat. On March 26, several thousand state employees marched very militantly through the state house demanding a cost of living raise. The next day, 200 militants vented their grievances at a public hearing on unemployment benefits.

Some of the most active people fighting for the workers' rights were also agitating for unity against the racist offensive, and this was not lost on the working class of Boston. Thus it was that, when the NAACP called for another large anti-racist march on May 17, hundreds of militant unionists, tenants' groups, and supporters of various liberation struggles formed a militant contingent, the Greater Boston People Against Racism, which marched under the banner, "Racism hurts all poor and working people."

RACISTS RESORT TO SNEAK ATTACKS

By this time the racists, rather than trying to organize the mass rallies they had been turning out