

DATE: November 8, 1988

TO: Chancellor Donna E. Shalala

FROM: Minority Coalition

RE: Minority Coalition's 10 Point Plan of Action

As a group of concerned students we came to your office yesterday to express our plan for dealing with the escalating number of racist incidents at the UW-Madison Campus. We expected an open door policy, but found your door locked. We were told to return today at 4:30 p.m. with an eight member delegation, but this delegation excludes the 300 other students who were with us yesterday. In the past these small closed meetings have failed to produce results. Therefore, we will not meet with you at this time.

You have our demands, we expect a response!

We of the Minority Coalition have joined a larger Coalition of Concerned Residents, Students, Community Based Organizations and supporters. We will continue our struggle by working with this group and it is in solidarity with this community-based group that we will be voicing many of our concerns.

10 Point Plan for Action: Minority Coalition

The recent events on campus demonstrate that the Administration is again at a loss in dealing with racist and sexist offenders. Three weeks have passed since the latest fraternity outrage was made public and the Administration has yet to take any decisive action. It is for this reason that the Minority Coalition has outlined the following course of action. In formulating the following plan, the Coalition has incorporated some of the concerns expressed by progressive white student groups, women's organizations and the Madison Black community.

- 1.) Because the Madison Plan has failed to adequately address the problems of racism on this campus, the Administration must revise this plan so that it more closely adheres to the recommendations of the Holley Report. The Administration must also expand the scope of the Madison Plan to address the problem of sexism. In improving and expanding the scope of the Madison Plan the Administration must actively seek the advise of minorities and women from the greater Madison community.
- 2.) The administration must establish a clearly defined policy which states that racism and sexism will not be tolerated by individuals or groups on this campus. This policy must be stated on UW registration and employment forms and signed by all students, faculty and staff upon registration or employment.
- 3.) The establishment of a Racism/Sexism Commission, comprised of minority and women from both the campus and the community, and at least one high level UW Administrator. This committee must have the authority and power to act swiftly and severely in dealing with individuals and groups involved in racist and sexist abuse. From the beginning, the Minority Coalition opposed the creation of WSA's Committee on Student Organizations and, as we anticipated, this committee has proven to be ineffective.
- 4.) The Administration must act immediately to provide an adequate and permanent Multicultural Center that minority students can call their own. This Center should not be housed as a part of a larger facility as is planned by the Administration, but should stand on its own as a symbol of the University's commitment to minority students.
- 5.) That the charges imposed on the eight students who chained themselves to the Zeta Beta Tau (ZBT) house must be dropped immediately. The actions of the "ZBT Eight" are in not nearly as offensive as the outrages committed by ZBT pledges who have not been charged with anything.
- 6.) The Chancellor must establish an ongoing committee comprised of members of the Madison minority community to develop long term goals regarding the recruitment and retention of minority students.

7.) The Administration must disassociate the ZBT fraternity as a student organization from the University and expel the students who participated in the "Slave Auction." In addition, the Administration must take court action to force ZBT to provide an unedited copy of the "Frat-Gate Videotape" so that the full extent of the racist and sexist outrage can be determined and adequately dealt with.

8.) The history of racial and sexual abuse on this campus has shown that the ZBT incident is not an isolated event, but part of a pattern that indicts the entire fraternity system. For this reason, we are calling on the Administration to impose a moratorium on all fraternity activities until a thorough investigation can be conducted on the fraternity system and some fundamental changes can be made. The outrages committed by the Fiji, the Acacia, and the ZBT fraternities are merely the tip of the iceberg which points a real "Nightmare on Langdon Street." A full disclosure of the extent of racist and sexist incidents committed by fraternities must be made. Student Organization regulations require that no organization discriminate according to race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, or disabilities, but fraternities, which were created and continue to operate as elitists institutions for White affluent males, are immune from the laws and regulations which other students and student organizations must abide by.

9.) That the administration prohibit all slave auctions and other similar racist/sexist activities.

10.) We demand that the Chancellor meet with a delegation of this group and develop a response to our plan of action.

Contact Persons: Alejandra Elenes 251-1679 and Peter Chen 256-4548.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MINORITY COALITION
FROM CHANCELLOR DONNA E. SHALALA

In response to your ten-point plan for action:

1. Yes. While we do not want to dilute the focus of The Madison Plan, we will use it as a model to step up efforts to eliminate sexism. This administration is committed to increasing the role of women at all levels of University activity, and stepping up efforts to combat sexual harassment and violence against women. We are particularly pleased that of the new faculty positions filled this year, 39 percent were filled by women.

Yes. We need advice from minorities and women in the greater Madison community. We already have initiated dialogs with a number of Madison community groups, including the Urban League, the NAACP, and other Black community leaders. They have given us specific outreach proposals, including new communication suggestions which we intend to implement. We will regularize our meetings.

2. Yes. We have established a strong statement of expectations for a nondiscriminatory environment. That statement was approved by the Faculty Senate last spring. We will distribute it to every student and employee.

The Faculty Senate also approved conduct rules for the faculty that prohibit harassing conduct of all kinds.

With regard to individual student conduct, the Faculty Senate revised disciplinary procedures and these revisions have been sent to the UW System Board of Regents for action. Once these rules take effect, they will be published in the Student Handbook.

The Dean of Students Office is directing an anti-racism and anti-sexism campaign.

No. The proposal that all students and employees be required to sign a policy statement is reminiscent of suggested "loyalty oaths" that have historically been used against dissenters of all kinds.

3. Yes. We must find ways to speed up the student organization disciplinary process so that there can be quicker resolution, immediate accountability, and greater confidence in the process.

No. We cannot support an approach to combatting racist and sexist behavior that leads to action ahead of fact-finding and we will not establish the proposed commission. The administration is committed to follow through with the new student governance process for disciplining student organizations. It is a new process, and of course we will be evaluating its effectiveness. But it is important to the integrity of our governance process that we allow the Committee on Student Organizations to exercise its responsibility.

4. Yes. In September we announced that we were committed to finding adequate space for the Multicultural Center by the end of the academic year. It is not likely to be a free-standing facility.

5. Yes. We have asked Mayor Sensenbrenner to drop the charges against the eight students who protested on ZBT property.

6. Yes. In response to this recommendation, today we establish a Madison minority community advisory committee to help us develop and refine our long term goals regarding the recruitment and retention of minority students. We welcome prompt suggestions for possible membership, so that we can name the committee by November 29.

7. No. We cannot unilaterally expel the students who participated in the "slave auction." Racist behavior and violence against women violates everything the University stands for. The University must uphold free speech. This is a dilemma of a pluralistic society. As a community we must approach this problem legally, and with sophistication, compassion and speed.

Negotiations are well underway to obtain the videotapes, and we look for quick resolution on this issue.

8. Yes. We are concerned that there have been so many incident of unacceptable behavior involving parts of the Greek System. Two weeks ago we asked the University Committee to establish a commission on the future of fraternities and sororities at UW-Madison. The charge to this commission and its membership will be announced at the end of the week. We note that IFC has already suspended the ZBTs pending the outcome of disciplinary proceedings.

9. No. We reiterate our opposition to all racist and sexist behavior. "Slave auctions" and similar activities are deplorable. Constitutionally, we cannot issue a ban on such activities. However, we should all exercise our personal First Amendment rights to deplore these activities and also to confront them when they occur in our presence. We must work together, as a community, to create a non-discriminatory environment in which such incidents would not occur.

10. Yes. We always have encouraged dialog with the Minority Coalition, and will be happy to meet with representatives to continue this dialog.