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Anti-ROTC group holds protest

Armed forces discriminatory policies criticized

By Macheala Hocter
Herald Staff Writer

In the wake of UW system President Kenneth Shaw and Chancellor Donna Shalala's recommendations to allow the UW-Madison ROTC program to remain on campus, an anti-ROTC rally was held yesterday afternoon on the steps of the Memorial Union.

The rally was led by Jordon Marsh, university student affairs director of the Wisconsin Student Association. He is also a member of the Inclusion Coalition, a committee formed to fight all forms of discrimination on campus.

"There is no justice in taking tuition from gay students and saying what they can and can't do," Marsh said. He also said ROTC policy was

"blatant disregard for law" and "breaking state, city, and university law cannot be tolerated."

Inclusion Coalition member, Tim Young, spoke out at the rally calling for "less talk, more action." Young made a plea for help, asking students and faculty to get involved by signing petitions and attending an Inclusion Coalition meeting to be held on Feb. 4

Sociology Prof. Joseph Elder, co-chairman of the Committee Against Discrimination said the movement to disassociate ROTC has come a long way, but the "clock is running and the need for action has come."

"We won't stay silent," said Elder, "we shall overcome."

Dave Wilcox, member of the 10% Society, a support and advocacy group for gays and lesbians, called for an end to the "bigotry" and attacked Shalala and Shaw's reasoning for keeping ROTC on campus.

"They say we can't disaffiliate because of all the ROTC cadets that will lose their scholarships," said Wilcox, "but what about me and the 4,500 others who work so hard to get ourselves through school without any ROTC scholarships because of our sexual preference."

"If they could get out of people's bedrooms maybe they'd be able to see what's really happening," WSA Co-president Michelle Goodwin said.

Shalala needs to "prove her womanhood" and take a stand against her

male superiors, she said.

Anti-ROTC supporters responded throughout the rally with chants of "ROTC off campus" and "racist, sexist, anti-Gay, ROTC program go away."

International Socialist Organization representative Kim Raebock said the problem hinged on "economic reality" and minorities were forced to turn to ROTC in order to attend college. "Bigotry" in the ROTC is "not an accident," according to Raebock, due to its being a "part of the United States military and an instrument of the United States' ruling class."

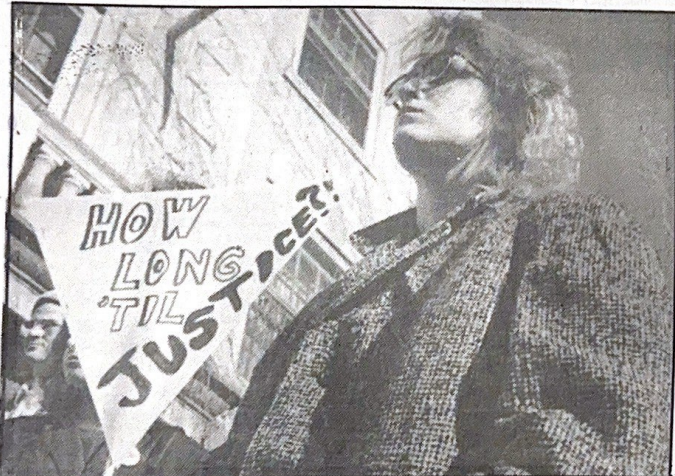
Garry Beck, UW-Madison Professor of Naval Science said he was "deeply discouraged" by such accusations against ROTC and the military.

"That's (Raebock's comments) the most foolish thing anyone has ever said," said Beck, "It's just not true — we are an equal opportunity organization matched with any other organization on earth."

Beck said the United States military efforts to eliminate racism were fifteen years ahead of the university and that the military has worked very hard to open opportunities to minorities and has been very successful.

"We need to respect each other's rights," said Beck, "and their rights to hold those opinions."

"We're tired of works — all we want is simple justice ... don't let it die," Marsh said.



Herald photo by Jenny Isaacs

A protestor at the Inclusion Coalition's anti-ROTC rally listens to a speaker.