REPORT OF TASK FORCE TO STUDY
WILLIAM MONROE TROTTER HOUSE DIRECTION

Members:
Reginald Burks
Elizabeth Davenport
Nancy Fontus
Dorothy Goeman
George Goodman
Jesse Jones
Ann Lyons
Jenny Partee
Randy Potts
Bobbiette Swanson
Marguerita Torres
Leroy Williams
Suzanne Young

Ex Officio
Chairperson: John Powell,
Assistant Director
Office of Community Services
INTRODUCTION

Following the resignation of Ms. Beulah Sanders as Director of the William Monroe Trotter House, a taskforce was appointed to study the future directions of the House. An interim structure was set up to facilitate programming until a permanent director was found and the taskforce had completed its work. While activities have been occurring at Trotter House, and programming continues, there is much concern regarding the lack of total utilization of the facilities. It is imperative that a well-defined focus be formed prior to the employment of another director.

The original responsibility of the taskforce was to look at directions for Trotter House. The charge to the taskforce was as follows:

1. To study and define a focus and/or foci for Trotter House

2. Do a needs assessment of minority students to determine a program within the context of services offered to the general student population;

3. Define program content and implementation stages of program; and

4. Design a program (administrative) structure in Trotter House which would be most efficient and productive.

This charge was later modified to: define goals and objectives of Trotter House and to give some recommendations which could be utilized when a new director is employed.

The following pages will outline problem areas, goals and objectives, and suggested directions.

PROBLEMS DEFINED

The primary problem confronting Trotter House is its image as a House for Black students. This has been internalized by Black students; thus, others do not see the House as serving their particular needs. Only recently has the House been utilized by Hispanic students. Several other problems confronting
the House are:

1. publicity gap between Trotter House and students
2. lack of concrete administrative support within the University
3. a history of bad publicity
4. the poor physical condition of the facility
5. poor location of the facility (of marginal importance)
6. lack of coordination between Trotter House and minority lounges in dormitories.

Of the problems listed above, it appears that the lack of effective coordination between dorm lounges and Trotter House poses the greatest difficulty. Any future programming will need to rectify this situation if Trotter House is to become an effective programming facility.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In assessing the current needs of students, the taskforce reviewed the concerns expressed in an informal meeting of Black students held February 25, 1979, (attached). Additionally, the assessment brought out the following needs:

1. inter/intra cultural exchange
2. building community among minority students
3. a place for Black students to socialize
4. providing a meeting place for minority students
5. to have a self-control facility which provides opportunity for programs developed by minority students
6. faculty/staff legitimacy
7. a central communication network for minority programming on campus.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

After much discussion, the following goals and objectives are established for Trotter House:

Goals: To develop a vital and dynamic Minority Student Center which provides expanded programs designed to enhance minority students experiences while at the University (Note: the taskforce affirmed that the Trotter House is a multi-ethnic and multi-racial facility which serves all minority students.)

Objectives:

1. to provide a forum focusing on the struggles of Blacks and other third world peoples
2. to create an environment for multi-cultural awareness exchange

3. to provide an environment for minority students to enhance the awareness of their culture, to provide an organic link between minority people and their culture

4. to provide an environment for minority students to maintain their ethnic/cultural identity

5. to provide a place for minority students to socialize

6. to be able to function independently of other programs, while having the options to call upon them when needed

7. to provide a facility which encourages programs developed by and for minority students

8. to provide a place for minority students to gain support to deal with the University.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee reviewed the previous job description of the Director of Trotter House and felt that it was congruent to the foals and objectives as stated. While the taskforce feels that iron-clad programming recommendations should not be made until a new director is hired, it does feel that some recommendations are in order which will help facilitate expanded programming.

The recommendations are as follows:

1. renovate the present facility
2. provide more funding
3. set up a student advisory committee on programming and involve students in programming
4. establish an advisory committee composed of University administrators and students to oversee operations
5. establish programs in conjunction with dorms and academic departments.

CONCLUSIONS

It is hoped that the work of the taskforce will prove beneficial in providing effective programming for minority students on campus. The Trotter House is a needed facility at University of Michigan and must be recognized as such by University personnel if it is to be a success. While this report is short,
it, nevertheless, provides the basic for innovative programming. The task-
force is committed to assisting in any way possible the implementation of
effective programming in Trotter House.
Meeting February 25, 1979

Attendance-40

I. The meeting was opened by a presentation of the general problems facing the Trotter House. In addition to not being used by Black organizations on a regular basis, the Trotter House also faces the threat of "elimination" and "diversification". This opening presentation also pointed out why Black students cannot afford to have the Trotter House eliminated by the University.

II. Open discussion on strategies to save the Trotter House.

Among many salient points made during this discussion were:

- accountability: Black students must begin using the House on a regular basis.
  - offices of Black student organizations should be established
  - Black programs should be held at Trotter House
  - study groups, tutoring, and classes should be held at the House
    (coordinated with CULS, CAAS, etc.)

- the Trotter House's problems should not be viewed in isolation from the problems of cutbacks and elimination facing other programs for Black students. In our efforts to save the Trotter House we should therefore engage the efforts of representatives from other Black programs.

- consciousness: The problems confronting Trotter House need more than just an organizational solution, but also an ideological mobilization of Black students (and administrators, faculty, etc.) to become more concerned about the plight of Black people generally. It was suggested that we become concerned with "the liberation of the mind, the body and the spirit".

III. Suggestions for action.
- establishing a Trotter House organization.
- explaining the Trotter House situation to dorm groups.
- publicizing the Trotter House among new students.
- establishing offices for Black organizations at Trotter House.
- contacting CULS about study groups and programs at Trotter House.

IV. Next Meeting:
Set for Sunday, March 11, 1979 at 5:00 P.M.
A letter was sent to Mr. John Russ II, Director of CULS, asking him to attend.