

The Stanford

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 1970

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA

News Analysis

Negotiations: Veiled Bias?

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(Third in a Series)

Stanford's sole negotiator with the Defense Department on ROTC was the author of the Minority ROTC Report which the Faculty Senate rejected in February, 1969.

The negotiator, Vice Provost Howard Brooks, voted against the Majority Report's recommendations during Faculty Senate deliberations; nevertheless President Kenneth Pitzer chose him to implement those recommendations.

Pitzer explains the Brook nomination as "essentially a matter where I needed someone to do the job who was fully knowledgeable about the University administrative structure and who was high enough in the University to command personal attention."

Asked whether Brooks' opposition to the recommendations he was implementing tainted the nomination, Pitzer responded: "I respect that comment, but I can't regard it as adequate to disqualify him."

"He was a member of the Senate unlike the other members of the administration," he continued, "and he fully realized that his objective was to obtain approval for the Senate plan or to come as close to it as possible."

Early Summer Negotiations

Brooks began his negotiations early in the summer. In a June letter to members of the President's Advisory Committee he expressed optimism that "most if not all of the revisions desired by the Senate" would be included in an Army proposal.

Later, amplifying this statement Brooks explained, "We were close to the Senate recommendations then, and we got even closer." This indicates that as early as June Brooks considered limited credit and no change in the punitive clauses as allowable departures from the Senate guidelines.

The result of Brooks' work was the Army's October 22, 1969 recommendation for "revision of Army ROTC institutional and student contracts." This is the proposal that Pitzer later recommended to the Senate and which it adopted after a few changes.

The President's Advisory Committee began its examination of the Army proposal on November 20. In that and later meetings the academic credit issue became the leading point in dispute—or, as the committee minutes describe it, the "crunch issue."

For this reason, the committee members' attitudes toward the credit question were critical; and, since five of the members entered the deliberations in favor of some accreditation, the "crunch issue" was virtually settled before it was discussed.

Students Not Objective?

The report in yesterday's Daily focused on the three students on the committee, and showed that all three entered the deliberations in favor of giving ROTC some credit. Therefore, they disagreed with the crucial recommendation of the proposal they were implementing.

The appointment procedures that put these students on the committee remain in doubt. In fact, Council of Presidents member John Grube who is the only person who admits having a role in the selection of the students, stated yesterday that he was not sure any of the roughly 15 students who applied were interviewed.

Some elements of the appointment procedures for faculty also seem to be in doubt, though the doubts are philosophical rather than procedural.

Of the five faculty members appointed, two, Lyman Van Slyke, and Alan Maune expressed some opposition to parts of the Army proposal; two other members, Jean Mayers and Eugene Webb entered the deliberations in favor of some ROTC credit; and another professor, J. Keith Mann, started his committee work completely uncommitted.

Like all other faculty appointments, these men were chosen by the Faculty Senate's Committee on Committees chaired by C.L. Bach.

And, like members of all other committees, professors were chosen without regard to their interests, or views on the ROTC issue.

Bach explains, "We tried to avoid putting either extreme on the committee. We tried very hard to get people who were judicious, and as we do on all committees we tried to get different people involved in the committee system, and attempted to get a reasonable distribution of seniority and opinion on it."

"But, with most of the people we didn't know whether they were for or against it, and frankly we did not care," he said.

On the issue of academic credit the committee's faculty members consistently voted 3-2 in favor of limited accreditation. Perhaps the majority of the members of future committees charged with implementation of a decision should also be judged by whether they agree with the decision.

Attention to Credit

As the committee meetings continued, attention continued to center on the credit problem. The views of the members of the committee are summarized in this excerpt from the November 6 minutes: "Professors Maune and Van Slyke held the view that it (the proposal for limited credit), is contrary to Senate Recommendation No. 1 (calling for the termination of credit for participation in programs of military training and education)."

The minutes continued, "The opposing argument was that Recommendation No. 1 dealt primarily with courses taught by military in a military department with credit determined by the military."

Proponent of limited academic credit also argued that a campaign advertisement in the April 4, 1969 Daily, substantiated their argument because it mentions the possibility of credit being granted by the Committee on Undergraduate Studies.

Opponents of limited credit discount this add as campaign propaganda and charge that some of those who signed it had never read it. They also refer to paragraphs of the Majority Report from which the ROTC recommendations were made last year.

It reads: "A great number of changes have been suggested to bring the ROTC programs into closer conformity with accepted practice . . ."

"But even if all these alterations are in fact made, there will still remain a residuum of anomaly. In the Majority's view, the crucial question before the Stanford community is whether or not this residuum is compatible with Stanford University—or at least compatible enough to be acceptable."

Majority Conclusion

The conclusion of the Majority after weighing the evidence is that as a formal on-campus program, sponsored, sanctioned, and partially supported by Stanford University, the ROTC program is not compatible with the University. Moreover, this incompatibility is inherent in the very nature of the ROTC programs, and therefore cannot be removed by various changes which are from time to time proposed."

But the credit issue returned to the Senate on top of Pitzer's recommendation for limited accreditation. The importance of this recommendation in causing the Senate to alter its previous stand remains in doubt—and, so that we will turn on Friday.