

# Pitzer ROTC Position Unclear

3/6/70

By BILL FRIVOCEL

(Last in a Series)

**QUESTION:** "President Pitzer, did you support last year's faculty Senate decision on ROTC?"

**ANSWER:** "I did not make any categorical recommendations a year ago. I was new on campus then so I listened to the Senate's debate and commented on a few subjects."

**Q:** "After you became acquainted with the University did you support their decision?"

**A:** "I think what is being proposed now is an improvement over what was proposed then."

**Q:** "Did you support the Majority Report (the report that recommended the proposals the Senate adopted) last year?"

**A:** "I think that this is enough detail. I had a press conference with your editor and some of the people on your staff a few weeks ago, and you could have asked that then. I just haven't been thinking about this whole thing this week. I am not familiar with the documents now, and I am not prepared to comment on it now."

\* \* \*

Ten people controlled the implementation of the February, 1969 Faculty ROTC decision. The most influential was President Kenneth Pitzer.

Fast articles in this series have considered the other men and women involved. Eight were on the President's Advisory Committee on ROTC. Five of these either disagreed wholly or in part with the faculty Senate's "no credit" plan.

The ninth man was Vice Provost Howard Brooks who conducted all of the negotiations with the military over the proposed individual and institutional contract changes. Brooks had been the author of the Minority ROTC Report (which was rejected by the Senate), and he voted against the Senate recommendations he was chosen to implement.

The 10th man was Pitzer. And the compelling question is where he stood during the months prior to his January 19 letter to the faculty Senate in which he strongly recommended the adoption of the Army's ROTC proposal.

In that letter Pitzer described the Army proposal as "reasonable and acceptable, and very close indeed to the recommendations adopted by the Senate on February 13, 1969." That evaluation seems a bit forced in light of some of the President's later statements.

Pitzer has not been vocal on the ROTC issue so any insights into his beliefs are based on fragmentary evidence. His first substantive statement on the issue was in an

unexpected appearance November 6, 1969 at a meeting of the President's Advisory Committee.

The minutes read: "President Pitzer then discussed the importance of the ROTC question to many members of the Stanford community, including Trustees and alumni. He stated his understanding of the intent of the Senate's action on ROTC, namely that ROTC could continue on a basis satisfactory to the faculty on academic matters."

"On the other hand, he must take into account the student vote and the Trustee's resolution on the subject. He also reported conversations with various Defense officials, including Mr. Packard, and commented on difficult congressional attitudes, noting that the chances

## News Analysis

are decidedly dim for legislative correction of such problems as the 'punitive clauses' in individual contracts.

"Mr. Pitzer also discussed his view that ROTC programs which placed the emphasis on the reserve aspects are more compatible with educational institutions than are those emphasizing career preparation."

The subject of outside pressures arose again at a press conference in late January following the Senate's reconsideration of the issue. At that time Pitzer acknowledged that limited credit for ROTC represented a compromise with disgruntled alumni, trustees, and other outside friends.

"This is one area in which all sorts of friends of the University are concerned," he said. "So, I thought that if it was possible to compromise with these groups it was best to do so."

"A University is not a self-supporting institution. It can thrive only on support of the outside community's gifts and tuition," he added.

Statements like these led to some speculation that defense department and alumni pressures had influenced Pitzer's decision.

In fact, one member of the President's Advisory Committee said privately "When nearly everyone in the University is some way involved in military-industrial complex, the one fellow doesn't need to hit the other over the head to make him change. It only takes one comment by a guy like David Packard at a cocktail party, with a martini in his hand, to make the point."

Following a similar line of argument, some ROTC critics have noted that Congressional pressures to reduce spending to universities where ROTC is under attack may have affected the President's willingness to stand by the decision.

This criticism has some basis in fact. At the November 20, 1969 Advisory committee meeting Brooks noted the President's concern over just such funding cuts.

The minutes read: "Mr. Brooks indicated the reasons for the President's concern about ROTC and the University's external relations, pointing to the narrow margin by which the so-called Rivers amendment to the DOD appropriations bill was defeated in the Senate-House Conference Committee after having been passed by the House. He emphasized that there are very real problems, and that the President needs the Committee's counsel in these matters."

Many have analyzed the pressures on the President and concluded that his strong action resulted from it. But such a claim is debatable since it assumes that Pitzer needed to

be pressured to decide as he did.

In fact, the opposite could be argued on the basis of Pitzer's limited statements.

As Chairman Mannic said in an interview last week, "For you to ask me what effect I think Defense Department pressure had in affecting Pitzer's decision is to assume that he at one time agreed with the original Senate decision. I don't know that he did. I choose to judge his attitudes by his actions," he said.

For whatever reasons, the President did strongly recommend the Army plan to the Senate and that body approved it. The effect of his recommendation on their adoption remains a matter for speculation.

From February 1969 to January 1970 the faculty Senate had decided that "there should be no academic credit received for participation in programs of military training and education," meant limited credit.

What caused this change?

There were undoubtedly many contributing factors; but it can not be ignored that ten men controlled the original policy's implementation and seven had some reservations about it.

One of the seven was the President of the University and that may have been a large part of the difference.

\* \* \*

Ballots for the Army ROTC issue are being mailed today to members of the Academic Council, according to Academic Secretary H. Donald Winbiger.

The ballots must be returned to the Office of the Academic Secretary by March 25.

Written arguments by Council members relative to the issue may be submitted to the CAMPUS REPORT. If they are received by March 12, 1970, they may be printed in CAMPUS REPORT.