

The Goods on Pitzer

By the Editor's Special
Advisory Group
On Very Political Scientists

Late this summer the Stanford Trustees finally picked a president. Students weren't consulted, and it's a safe bet that most Stanford students don't know who Kenneth Sanborn Pitzer is. But that only shows that we are more than a couple of umbrella steps behind the oilmen, bankers, and aerospace industrialists who rule the Stanford roost.

Kenneth Pitzer brings to the Stanford Trustees just what they've been looking for. From his early days as a research chemist at Berkeley to his later posts as president of Rice University and director of the Air Force's RAND Corporation, Pitzer has displayed an ample amount of academic competence, administrative ability, and political savvy--precisely those skills needed by the chief organizers of what Senator Fulbright has clumsily labelled "the military-industrial-university complex".

Stanford has acquired a top administrator with well-greased connections to industry, academia, and the federal government, as well as a tough liberal. Pitzer can be expected to encourage coed housing and student participation in the new Academic Senate, while he segregates and subdues "a small hard core of extremists" who take Senator Fulbright's warning all too seriously.

But who is Kenneth Pitzer?

A-BOMB ADMINISTRATOR

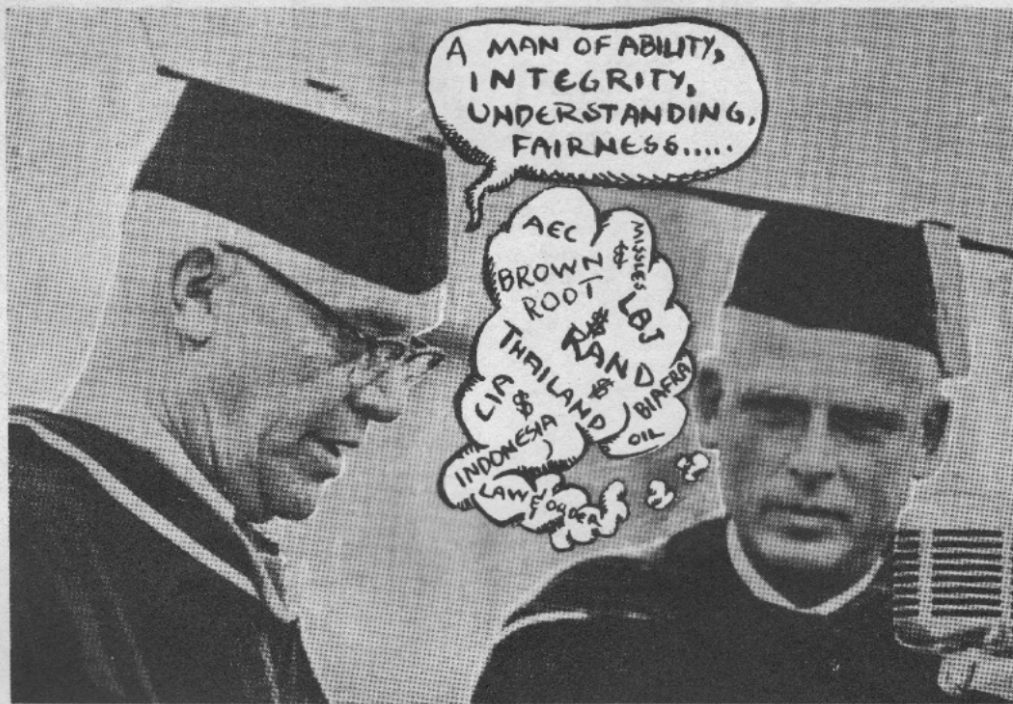
First of all, he is a scientist. Over a professional career of more than 30 years, Pitzer has developed a reputation as a leading research chemist and scientific administrator. In 1943, Pitzer first moved into a political-scientific career when he left a professorship at Berkeley to become scientific director of the Maryland Research Laboratory. There he and his colleagues developed incendiary and explosive devices for the Office of Strategic Services--the forerunner of the CIA. According to the US government's official history of the program, Pitzer himself studied the gas cloud formation resulting from large chemical bomb bursts. This was part of a pioneer attempt to find effective ways of spreading toxic chemicals, an effort presently continuing at SRI, the Stanford Research Institute.

While others who labored for the O. S. S. during World War II, notably Herbert Marcuse and William Sloane Coffin, turned away from the Cold War, Pitzer joined the effort to build America's atomic arsenal. As director of research (1949-57) of the Atomic Energy Commission, Pitzer was a vigorous advocate of the hydrogen bomb along with Edward Teller and Glen Seaborg. Serving in the early 50's as Dean of Berkeley's College of Chemistry, he helped channel scientists into working on the bomb. And in at least two important cases, Pitzer helped create the atmosphere which nurtured a nuclear foreign policy.

In 1954, he joined in the McCarthyite effort to "get" J. Robert Oppenheimer by testifying at the Personnel Board Hearings that the famed physicist had dragged his heels on the H-bomb. Pitzer did not paint Oppenheimer red, nor was he as vindictive as Teller. But his testimony was effective, both in denying Oppenheimer security clearance and in escalating the popular fear of the enemy within.

Pitzer similarly testified against Linus Pauling in 1957, when Pauling's petition to halt all atomic tests, signed by 2000 American scientists, was the subject of Congressional hearings.

For his efforts, scientific and otherwise, General Eisenhower appointed Pitzer in 1958 to the General Advisory Council (GAC) of the AEC. He picked up experience there in dealing with the Palo Alto university-corporate community



Empire builder George Brown (left) of Brown & Root appeared with crony Kenneth Pitzer at a recent costume party.

when the university submitted plans for the Stanford Linear Accelerator in 1959. Then from 1960-62, Pitzer served as chairman of the GAC, top of the atomic energy totem-pole.

While he commuted from Berkeley to Washington D. C. in the 1950's, Pitzer found time to assist the General Motors-endowed Alfred P. Sloan Foundation in a program designed to orient university scientific work towards the corporate interests backing Sloan. Pitzer was one of the five scientists responsible for channeling Foundation funds into "appropriate" areas of research. And as his influence with the AEC grew in the early 50's, Pitzer took on a consultanthip with Union Carbide, one of the chief beneficiaries of federal atomic research funds. With a plethora of government and business contacts, Pitzer was now ready to take on a university presidency.

SPACE JOCKEY

Appointed president of Rice in 1960, he cemented the newly formed relationship between Rice, the Manned Spacecraft Center (located near Houston, partly on Rice land), and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Under Pitzer's guidance, Rice initiated the country's first department of space science, and with the cooperation of NASA, Rice launched its own earth satellite. Significant for Stanford and the trustees who have interests in many of the 200 companies that hunker around its edges is the educational philosophy which Pitzer described in his inaugural speech at Rice:

"The presence of the NASA Manned Spacecraft Center in Houston will assist Rice in this expansion of its graduate program by dramatizing the importance of advanced scientific education. In turn, Rice graduates constitute a select group including many with specialization in exactly the fields of primary interest in the NASA laboratory."

It was largely this relationship to the space program which determined Pitzer's fight to desegregate Rice. Yet, coming from Berkeley-Chevy Chase circles, it isn't likely that Pitzer

enjoyed presiding over a lily-white campus. Similarly, liberal educational principles probably motivated his efforts to upgrade Rice's humanities program. But it is doubtful that Pitzer would have pressed Rice's trustees and alumni if NASA and the foundations hadn't threatened to withdraw their research grants unless Rice began to admit blacks. In addition, top-flight scholars were refusing to come to a school that openly practiced racism.

At the same time, President Pitzer was no extremist. The trustees' court suit succeeded not only in changing the charter to allow blacks, but also to allow Rice to charge tuition, which immediately became \$1200. After four years of liberal quality control, the *S.F. Chronicle* reports that "Rice now has about five black students in its enrollment of 3000." When asked about Stanford's commitment to bring its minority group enrollment up to 350, or 3% of the student body, Pitzer's reply exuded Republican-like rhetoric: "We should digest what we've already promised before making more promises." There can be little doubt that he will wield all his power to maintain Stanford as one of an elite group of "private universities with select undergraduate student bodies" which are supposed to generate a trickle-down effect to reach the less-privileged masses.

LBJ AND VIETNAM

But this tokenism is the bright spot of Pitzer's politics at Rice. The Chairman of the Rice Board during Pitzer's first years there was George R. Brown, chief of the huge Brown & Root construction firm which has cornered the base-building market in Vietnam. Working largely through local congressman Albert Thomas, chairman of the House Appropriations subcommittee handling NASA funds, Brown brought the Manned Spacecraft Center to Houston and to Rice.

At the same time, Pitzer was building his own links to LBJ, helping to organize Scientists and Engineers for Johnson in the 1964 elections. Never one to shun a good friend, Johnson appoin-

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ted Pitzer in 1965 to the all-important President's Science Advisory Committee, a post which he will certainly continue to hold after the coming spate of elections.

COOL WAR GAMES

During these busy years at Rice, Pitzer developed his role as a defense intellectual, joining the Board of Directors of the RAND Corporation in 1962. RAND is an Air Force-created think tank, famed for its cool contemplation of mega-death nuclear war games. However, since the Pentagon has decided that it will be squaring off against peasants rather than the Red Army in the next decade, RAND thinkers have begun to focus on counter-insurgency projects, such as a study run out of Bangkok of "counter-guerilla surveillance systems" undertaken jointly with the Stanford Research Institute, Michigan, and Cornell. In addition to making the acquaintance of Stanford trustee William Hewlett at RAND board meetings, this directorship allows Pitzer to keep close tabs on government defense policy, since members of RAND's professional staff hold down a total of 269 government advisory panel and committee appointments.

MISSILES

Most of Pitzer's positions as a very political scientist can be readily gleaned from the voluminous droppings of the University News Service. But the PR men didn't quite get around to explaining why the Stanford trustees value these positions so highly.

Part of the answer, a scary part, is to be found in the person of trustee Roger Lewis, Chairman of the Presidential Search Committee. Mr. Lewis, a former Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, is now President of General Dynamics Corporation, which produces F-111 tactical fighters, Polaris submarines, and Terrier anti-aircraft missiles. Though General Dynamics and its brother corporations have been profiting handsomely from the war, Lewis and the other aerospace trustees--Ducommun of Lockheed, Jones of Northrop, Rogers of Aerojet, and Stewart of Pacific Airmotor--are worried that the race for space and the Russian nuclear threat have been buried in the furor over Vietnam and domestic insurgency. With Apollo contracts running out and Congress swinging a heavy economy axe at space and defense appropriations, \$45 million of which flowed out to Stanford and SRI in 1967, it is not surprising that the trustees have picked a man with impeccable government connections.

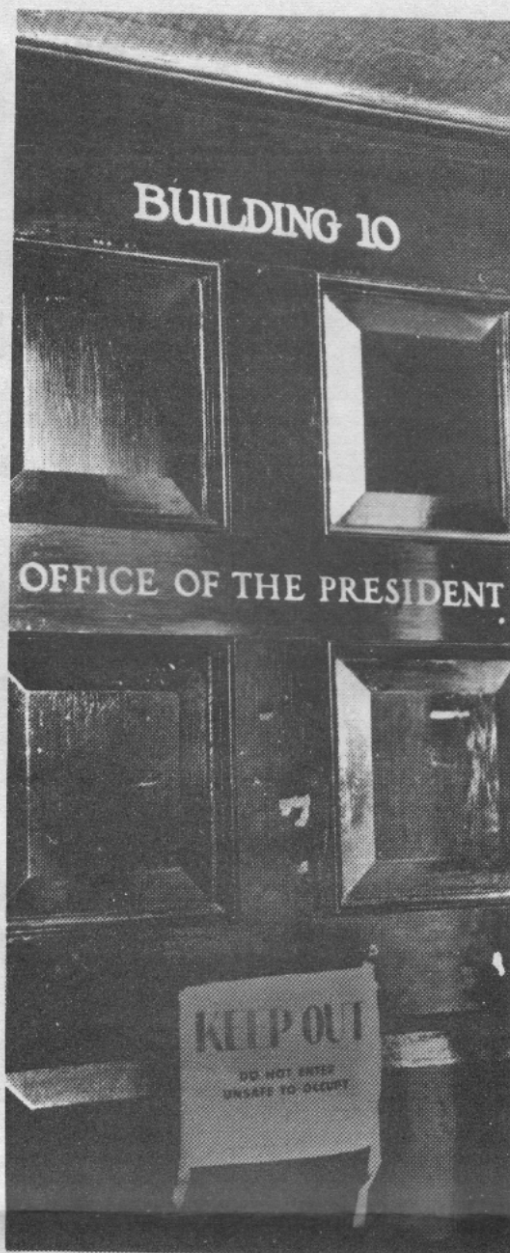
With Pitzer in the saddle at Stanford, the aerospace and electronics trustees settled in the Stanford Industrial Park have a better shot at the contract fallout from an expanded anti-ballistics missile system or from a dash to Mars. As the \$4.5 million Stanford Space Science and Engineering Building nears completion, Pitzer's appointment will strengthen the university's ability to channel the spill-over from federally financed aerospace research into firms in the Palo Alto area. Indeed, local aerospace firms will be linked up by TV with classes in the new building so their highly-paid workers don't have to take time off to drive to mid-morning lectures.

After his stints with Union Carbide and the Sloan Foundation in the 50's, Pitzer's policies at Rice looked not only to NASA but also to meeting the needs "of a growing range of industry in the rapidly developing Gulf Coast and Southwest Region". According to the Chronicle, Dr. Pitzer "maintained very close and friendly ties with Rice's business-oriented Board of Trustees." Besides construction-man Brown, Oveta Culp Hobby, of the Houston Post and the Hobby Foundation (a once-secret CIA conduit), and Stanford trustee and oilman Gardiner Symonds who sit on the Rice Board of Governors.

SOUTHEAST ASIA

Symonds is chairman of the board of Tenneco, a \$3.5 billion conglomerate which has rushed to support Indonesia's military dictatorship in spite of the government's leading role in the massacre of an estimated 300,000 to 500,000 Indonesian Chinese and communists. Symonds' interests, which range from Venezuela to Biafra, are not just incidental to Pitzer and Stanford, for SRI has already sponsored an Indonesian Business Association Conference and long-range studies of Indonesia and Pacific Basin trade. And while SRI also aids the "Internal Defense and Development" program in Thailand, Union Carbide has staked out claims to much of the Thai tin treasure.

It is clear that government foreign policy experts and the corporation executives sitting in



university boardrooms have decided that SE Asia must be kept open to Western economic penetration and political influence. On the one hand, Japan can be shunted away from the huge Chinese market only if the US shields an updated version of Japan's pre-war Greater East Asian Co-Prosperity Sphere. On the other hand, American corporate Leviathans demand guaranteed access to the underdeveloped world, not only for highly profitable private investment (25% in Thailand), but also for a steady supply of raw materials and a promising consumer market for Chevrolets and war toys.

Former President Sterling, Cadillac-owner and director of the CIA-sponsored Asia Foundation, often spoke at conferences on the need to expand university involvement in such US-style "nation-building". Pitzer can be expected to continue this pattern, given his former role as a trustee of the World Affairs Council, a San Francisco-based group which sets the tone for

an expansionist foreign policy among Northern California businessmen.

UNIVERSITIES WITHOUT POWER

To Stanford's first president, pacifist David Starr Jordan, who vehemently opposed US annexation of the Philippines, such prospects might have seemed decidedly imperialistic. But today, Stanford's support of business ventures overseas and of the Free World's military umbrella seems natural, almost inevitable.

And it is just this sense of the inevitability of the goosestepping technostate that Pitzer encourages with his doctrine of student powerlessness. Railing against "a small hard core of extremists (who) have escalated their demands from the legal range to the level of kidnap and blackmail" is par for the administrative course, but Pitzer's insistence that professors hand down discipline along with truth has distinctly authoritarian overtones. In demanding that the faculty "should make every effort to prevent organized student groups from exceeding legal bounds in their efforts to influence either university or governmental authorities", Pitzer demonstrates a lack of understanding of last May's sit-in, when 700 students had to break university legal regulations in order to obtain a democratic judicial system.

But Pitzer's liberal rhetoric finally exhausts its credibility when he explains that:

"Throughout history, universities have suffered whenever and wherever they have become the tools of political or ideological power. In voluntary or enforced betrayal of their teaching role, these institutions ultimately helped undermine the intellectual heritage they were designed to preserve and enlarge."

Even the politically unlettered can see that Pitzer's positions at RAND and the AEC are inextricably tied up with Cold War political priorities. And it is just as clear that SRI's counter-insurgency work in Thailand and Peru, and Stanford's merry plans to build \$45,000 homes back in the hills while a housing shortage drives working people and students into east-of-Bayshore ghettos both indicate that Stanford has taken sides.

THE TOLERANCE OF POWER

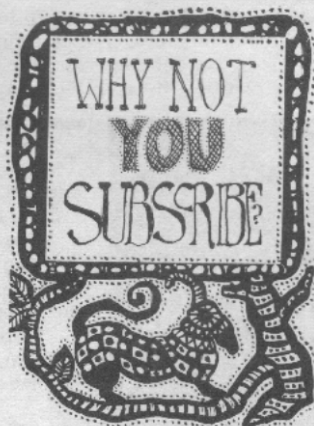
President-elect Pitzer clearly doesn't want students to take sides, except in "supporting their favorite candidate for election to the Presidency". And as long as students regard the university hierarchy, topped by the trustees who chose Pitzer, as sacrosanct, Pitzer's university, which never takes an explicit political position, will continue to provide manpower, ideas, and land to the established political and economic institutions responsible for unrepresable domestic ghettos and undefendable foreign wars.

Thus the real issue presented by Pitzer's appointment is not really his attitude towards students, or even the lack of student participation in his selection. An unlikely student vote to send Pitzer back to Rice will evoke more yawns than action from the Stanford Trustees. Far more important is the chance to challenge, dramatically and forcefully, the inevitability of any further integration of Stanford with government and industry, and to demonstrate a healthy intolerance for an alliance which increasing numbers of people are finding altogether intolerable.

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