

STANFORD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD - Stanford Student Body President Denis Hayes and Stanford Daily Editor Daniel Snell today sharply criticized the appointment of Kenneth S. Pitzer as the University's sixth president.

Pitzer's record as president of Rice University was defended by student and faculty leaders there. Hayes said he had "grave reservations" about Pitzer, but would withhold final judgment until Pitzer meets with student leaders next week. The Associated Students will hold a referendum on his selection early this fall, he added.

Pitzer is slated to become Stanford's president Dec. 1. Snell urged reconsideration of the appointment in a statement he plans to circulate to the Stanford trustees.

Both student leaders strongly condemned the lack of student involvement in Pitzer's selection.

Hayes said: "The appointment... without the benefit of student participation or even student advice, represents a gross abuse by the Stanford trustees of the legal powers vested in them.

"No students were asked to meet Dr. Pitzer prior to his selection, nor were any of us granted access to his file. We were not even informed that he was under consideration, so that we could have conducted some research on our own.

"Further, there was no sampling of student opinion at Rice University concerning Dr. Pitzer's relationships with the student body at that institution.

"In an age where the relationship of a university president to his students is of such critical importance, this kind of investigatory negligence is inexcusable."

The campus-wide referendum "will provide an opportunity for all interested students and faculty to make a judgment on the man" Hayes said.

The Stanford student president said he had learned of the appointment only a few hours before its public announcement, but talked with Pitzer "at length" today by telephone.

He described Pitzer as "an unknown entity with many disturbing symbols adhering to his clouded image," but added that next week's meeting "will largely determine my stance next autumn" on whether to support or oppose Pitzer in the referendum.

"I am not impressed with his record at Rice on racial matters; I am worried by his association with the Rand Corporation; and I have doubts about his capacity to establish a much-needed rapport with the student body," Hayes said.

Daniel Snell, editor of The Stanford Daily, said Pitzer's appointment "is not in the best interest of the University because he has no recent experience with the problems of a major modern university, especially in the areas of race relations and student relations.

"From what I can gather from several sources, no students at all were consulted on his selection. No students at Rice were questioned about his relations with students there.

"Rice is a school that has about 10 Negroes in its whole student population of 2300, and no history of student unrest. His record there cannot be a barometer of his success at Stanford.

"The trustee and faculty selection committee, though, showed in Dr. Pitzer's selection that they are more interested in getting research money and other funding than in looking into the concerns of students.

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William P. Steven, former editor of The Houston Chronicle, said Pitzer "led the fight to get (Rice) opened up" to Negroes through a court change in its legal charter.

Pitzer helped create "a fine intellectual climate at Rice" and "brought national reach" to the institution, Steven added.

Rice Student Body President Charles Shanor said Pitzer "has been a tremendous aid in student reform movements on campus.

"For student leaders, there never has been any question that we were free to discuss student plans and proposals or to offer rationale for changes in student life at Rice.

"In many cases, President Pitzer was very sympathetic to changes we wished to make, and even in cases where there were disagreements concerning specific policy changes, the president was always willing to discuss each change on its own merits.

"Moreover, President Pitzer opened channels for constructive changes aside from his own willingness to talk about issues. He created a definite chain of responsibility in student affairs."

Virgil W. Topazio, dean of humanities and social sciences at Rice, said Pitzer "combines the three essential ingredients to be a thoroughly outstanding university president: he is a distinguished scholar and teacher, an exceptionally intelligent and efficient administrator, and a remarkably wise and understanding human being blessed with a sense of humor.

"With an understanding that belies his scientific background, he generously supported requests to build up the library holdings in the humanistic disciplines and ...encouraged the development of graduate programs in both the humanities and social sciences."

Rice History Department Chairman Frank E. Vandiver, a Civil War scholar, said Pitzer "realized when he came (to Rice) that humanistic studies were at a crossroads. Giving constant and unstinting support, he encouraged productive scholars, recognized good teachers, and worked to encourage research in all humanities subjects.

"These efforts led to growth and distinction. When he came he found promise; he leaves progress as his legacy. We will miss him mightily."

Stanford History Department Chairman David Potter, holder of the Coe professorship of American history and a member of the faculty's selection committee, said: "The university is appointing an administrator, but in so doing we are bringing to the head of a scholarly institution a man whose scholarship is notable, particularly in his own field.

"He is a very responsive sort of man, with understanding and with qualities which should make him effective in communicating and working with all the university's constituencies."

Prof. Richard Powell, current vice-chairman of the academic senate, UC-Berkeley, said: "From the beginning of his career, Dr. Pitzer has participated heavily in faculty business. I believe he was a member of every major faculty committee at Berkeley, and was very sensitive to everything involving the faculty. With his students, he was a wonderful man -- simply unbelievable -- particularly with undergraduates. He related well to them and had a wide range of interests."