Free Speech: Faculty Influence Was Decisive

The recasting of the University's position on outside speakers which University President Pitzer accomplished this week prevents an important shift in a long-standing University policy which always held practical working control over most student organizations. Because the University's position on outside speakers was written into the University's By-Laws, the decision to allow speakers to appear on campus must be approved by the Senate. The Senate, in turn, must act in cooperation with the Faculty Committee on University Welfare.

Pitzer's decision was made in part due to the influence of the Faculty on the Senate. The Faculty, particularly the University's President, plays a significant role in the decision-making process regarding outside speakers. The Faculty also has the authority to make recommendations to the Senate, which in turn must act on these recommendations.

Although the Faculty's influence was evident in Pitzer's decision, it is important to note that the decision was ultimately made by the President. The Faculty's role is advisory, and the President has the final say in these matters. This highlights the importance of the President's leadership in guiding the University's policies on free speech.

In conclusion, the decision to allow outside speakers on campus was a result of the interplay between the Faculty and the President. The Faculty's influence was evident, but the decision was ultimately made by the President. This decision underscores the importance of the President's role in shaping the University's policies on free speech.

AN EDITORIAL

A momentous precedent

President Pitzer's acceptance of demands by the SA and The Thresher as well as influential faculty members that the University abandon its intellectually untenable and absurd positions on the freedom of students to hear as well as to speak represents much more than a single concession on an isolated issue.

For one, this is a precedent which definitely establishes as clear fact that students can "get things done" on an order of importance somewhat higher than resolutions on the methods of electing beauty queens and similar childish preoccupations of the typical sandbox-political "student government."

For another, the President's about-face may lead to a more mature and fruitful relationship between Rice's associated students and the University. In particular this demonstration that the University can indeed change its mind—that the President did in fact admit that the policies he defined on two occasions in the last few months were, in fact, not wise—is encouraging.

The policies are things of the past; the new constitute undeniable indications that Rice has the flexibility to pry itself loose from at least one of the potentially ruinous policies it has followed or is still following.