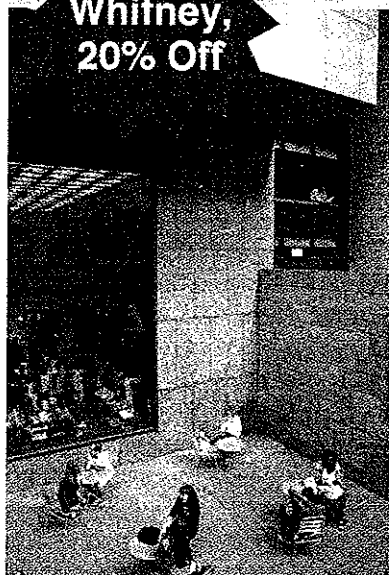


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LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA

## PROTEST STUDIES

*The state is broke, and Berkeley is in revolt.*

BY TAD FRIEND

The University of California has long been America's best public university, it's our immersion blender, whipping up the cream. Eight of its ten campuses made this year's *U.S. News & World Report* Top 100, even as nearly a third of U.C.'s students received Pell grants, reserved for the nation's neediest undergraduates. U.C. is also the country's most multifarious university, comprising five medical centers, four law schools, three Department of Energy laboratories—and, suddenly, two serious problems. It's as broke as the state that funds it, and many of its faculty and students are in open rebellion.

In July, after California voters rejected ballot initiatives that would have revitalized a state balance sheet that the California treasurer, Bill Lockyer, calls "a train wreck," Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a starveling budget that cut U.C.'s allocation by \$637 million, or twenty per cent. As a result, two thousand U.C. staff members will lose their jobs, and the remaining staff and faculty were asked to take furlough days amounting to pay cuts of four to ten per cent. This inflamed the worry that the best teachers would leave for richer schools, taking with them both the most promising graduate students and the university's prestige. The entire project of public education seemed in jeopardy.

In mid-September, U.C.'s Board of Regents discussed a budget-balancing plan proposed by the university's deeply unpopular president, Mark Yudof. The plan would increase undergraduate fees thirty-two per cent, to \$10,302 a year, and make an exception to U.C.'s own policy by raising fees in twenty-four graduate programs above those of competing public institutions. After a meeting where police had to clear the room of protesters, who chanted "Whose university? Our university!," the Regents agreed to vote on the plan when they met again, on November 19th. This gave the opposition

plenty of time to write fiery editorials and to organize protests. On September 24th, more than five thousand people walked out of their jobs and classes and rallied in Berkeley's Sproul Plaza, some of them naked except for signs that read "BUDGET TRANSPARENCY."

U.C.'s flagship campus, sometimes known as Berserkely, embraces all that is exuberant, communal, self-serious, and radical. This battle was made for it. In late October, Berkeley students convened a daylong Mobilizing Conference to Save Public Education. They hoped to counter the belt-tightening ideas being considered by the U.C. Commission on the Future, which include increasing student-faculty ratios, making some degrees three-year programs, and even instituting "distance learning," or online education. More than eight hundred people filled Pauley Ballroom: students from colleges all over the state, union representatives, and public-school teachers and parents. The fiscal mess was general, a radiant ooze. It contaminated the entire California Master Plan for Education, the three-tiered system established in 1960 by Clark Kerr, then the U.C. president, to make higher education universally available as "the prime instrument of national purpose." U.C. took twenty-three hundred fewer students this year, and the Cal State system will take forty thousand fewer, so the excluded students are trickling down to community colleges—which had their own budgets cut by eight per cent. In San Diego this fall some eighteen thousand students were turned away altogether.

All morning at Pauley, people proposed direct actions. A student facilitator summarized each idea on a projection screen: "rolling strikes"; "nationalize all universities"; "socialist revolution"; "a tent city in Sacramento"; "create a shadow Board of Regents"; "occupy Wells Fargo bank in downtown Oakland"; "worker-student control of the university"; "strike

in March"; "act now, fuck March"; and "capitalism is bad."

In the audience, Ananya Roy saw the verdict on capitalism and murmured, "That cliché will not get us anywhere." Roy, a thirty-nine-year-old professor of City and Regional Planning who grew up in Calcutta, is one of Berkeley's star teachers; this fall, some seven hundred students

enrolled in her Global Poverty course, and she had to turn away three hundred more. Unfailingly poised, she was wearing a knee-length blue dress that made her stand out from her T-shirted students and her bearded, sandal-wearing colleagues.



Ananya Roy, center, at the campus strike in November. Photograph by Ian Martin.

A facilitator named Luis Reyes, a voluble Berkeley senior with a serious case of bed head, led the crowd in a raucous call and response of "Se puede? Sí, se puede," the old United Farm Workers motto. Roy told me, "Is this going to be just about resolving this crisis, about restoring some money to the system—or is it about the gigantic structural change necessary for public education? We need not just to save the university but to transform it." She mentioned that one of her students, Zac Taylor, was racing to graduate in three years. "Zac is one of the most brilliant students we've had in Urban Studies—and he may not be able to finish up next semester. He is the crunch on the middle class." (As a third of student fees go toward scholarships, the poorest students may actually benefit from the proposed fee hikes, which would fall hardest on the middle class.) I'd met Tay-

little too much for him to be eligible for a Pell grant, but they'd just lost their house and bought a van as a fallback residence. "I'm of the generation of masochists," Taylor said. "We're used to the pain."

Roy, who is married but childless, mothers her charges like a broody, if pedagogic, hen. Last summer, she turned down a more lucrative offer from an Ivy League college to stay at Berkeley and stand up for public education. Yet even though she was scheduled to headline every major campus rally and teach-in that fall, she sometimes seemed more comfortable in the harbor of inquiry than on the seas of revolt. Roy was a stalwart of the faculty organization Save the University, but was only loosely affiliated with the more radical Solidarity Alliance, a coalition of union members, faculty, and students which organized the September 24th walkout at Berkeley. As the alliance worked to transform scattered protests into a hard-core movement, some of its members wondered if Roy would put her body on the line.

The mobilizing conference was being run by the General Assembly, a new stu-

dent organization without leaders. G.A. meetings often last for five hours or more, as issues of "critical representation" are thoroughly ventilated: is a strike a European tactic unsuited to students of color, who challenge the status quo simply by going to class? Zac Taylor told me, "We're filled with frustration that we can't seem to act as one body, that we can't be this army with pitchforks who go burn something." Yet Michael Cohen, a lecturer in American and African-American studies and the co-chair of Solidarity Alliance, observed the ragged proceedings in Pauley with approval. "The students are the masses; they bring the numbers and unimpeachable political and moral authority. The General Assembly—if it can keep from tearing itself apart—will be leading the movement in the next few months."

The assembly nearly tore itself apart after lunch. The facilitators' announcement that they would defer any discussion of demands to the next meeting provoked a cascade of boos, and, toward the end of the seven-hour discussion, the room erupted with shouts of "General strike! General strike!" Luis Reyes cried, "What is this, fucking preschool? Stop!" When it became obvious that the majority sentiment was for a strike and/or a march on March 4th, but that nine alternative days had still to be voted on, louder boos rang out. Reyes slumped in frustration, then raised his arms. "I know it's tedious, people, but this is how we build a statewide movement. This is democracy. This is how we do it."

Following the Mobilizing Conference, some hundred Berkeley students and members of AFSCME, the union that represents the campus's custodians and food-service workers, took two buses into the Oakland Hills to the rented house of the U.C. president. In September, Mark Yudof had been quoted in the *Times Magazine* saying that "being president of the University of California is like being manager of a cemetery: there are many people under you, but no one is listening." U.C. has two hundred and twenty-nine thousand students and a hundred and eighty thousand faculty and staff, and the corpse analogy infuriated many of them. It also provided protesters with a handy symbolic vocabulary. On this, the protesters' eighth visit, the plan was to build a

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mock cemetery on Yudof's lawn. (The president had prudently gone out to dinner.) Campus police were blocking the driveway, so the protesters arranged their tombstones on a nearby hillside, chanting "Whose house? Our house!" as local TV crews filmed.

Yudof, a roundish sixty-five-year-old who swims a bit in his pin-striped suits, keeps a photo of his doppelgänger Winston Churchill on his desk. Like Churchill facing the Battle of Britain, he is digging in to fight: he has cut the notoriously bloated office of the president by thirty per cent and proposed that the federal government support public universities with a program as vigorous as the G.I. Bill. Yudof is by many accounts a skillful manager and a good listener, but his vision of the university falls something short of Churchillian. He told me that he sometimes imagines a Super Bowl commercial for higher ed: "It would start off with someone who woke up in the morning and said, 'Thank God for my pace-maker,' turned on the television set to watch some program in color, sat down and had his Wheaties and strawberries, then got in his car and put on his retractable seat belt"—all technologies that he maintained had been invented at American universities.

Lyn Hejinian, a Berkeley English professor who founded Solidarity Alliance, calls the U.C. president "obstructionist, imperious, and unapproachable." Others note that if Yudof, a longtime university administrator in Minnesota and Texas who has had the U.C. job only since 2008, didn't create the mess, he nonetheless epitomizes it. "You replace Yudof and you'll get another Yudof," Isaac Miller, an activist senior who helped erect the tombstones, said. "But he's such a perfect front man for making our case." After the students wound up their field trip, Yudof got an "all clear" call from the police and came home. He noticed the graveyard, he told me, but "I ignored it. You can protest, you can put up signs—at Berkeley they like to occupy trees and run nude—but the answer is *I still don't have any money.*"

The state of California, Yudof often observes, has become an "unreliable partner" in underwriting the next retractable seat belt. July's axe blow followed decades of whittling: in 1990, California contributed \$16,430 per U.C. student (in current

dollars); now it contributes just \$7,570. Dr. Harry Powell, the U.C. faculty's chief liaison to the Regents, said, "The legislators have told us, essentially, 'The student is your A.T.M. They're how you should balance the budget.'" Yudof told me he had to end the furloughs next May, and raise student fees correspondingly, or risk presiding over a mediocrity. "We tax Liz Blackburn"—the U.C. San Francisco researcher who recently won a Nobel Prize for chromosomal research—"too heavily, and, boy, do we have a problem if she leaves. I have to be very careful not to kill the golden geese."

Robert Birgeneau, Berkeley's gangly, staunchly liberal chancellor, told me, "I anticipated more enmity to us here on campus and less against Yudof. That enmity is totally misplaced." And Richard Blum, an influential regent who is married to Senator Dianne Feinstein, called criticism of Yudof "beyond ridiculous." Blum added, "If you tell me some union janitor doesn't understand it, O.K., but I don't understand why the *Berkeley faculty* doesn't understand that the problem is Sacramento." More philosophically, the longtime regent Odessa Johnson observed, "If Jesus Christ came down and raised the tuition, they'd stone his house, too."

In December of 1964, a twenty-one-year-old philosophy student named Mario Savio stood on the steps of Berkeley's Sproul Hall and gave the Free Speech Movement's most incendiary oration, lighting the fuse for the Vietnam protests to come. He looked, with his altar boy's forehead, like Art Garfunkel, but he lashed the crowd with the cadences of Bob Dylan: "You've got to put your bodies upon the wheels, upon the levers, upon all the apparatus, and you've got to make it stop." The Free Speech Movement's fight for the right to proselytize on campus for off-campus political organizations, particularly those which supported civil rights, was clean and quick. After some eight hundred students were arrested for occupying Sproul Hall, an overwhelming faculty vote in support of the students forced the administration to cave by early January.

Ironically, Savio's unruly language also helped elect Ronald Reagan governor of California, in 1966. Reagan campaigned on the promise to "clean up that mess in

## THE THINGS

When I walk in my house I see pictures,  
bought long ago, framed and hanging  
—de Kooning, Arp, Laurencin, Henry Moore—  
that I've cherished and stared at for years,  
yet my eyes keep returning to the masters  
of the trivial: a white stone perfectly round,  
tiny lead models of baseball players, a cowbell,  
a broken great-grandmother's rocker,  
a dead dog's toy—valueless, unforgettable  
detritus that my children will throw away  
as I did my mother's souvenirs of trips  
with my dead father, Kodaks of kittens,  
and bundles of cards from her mother Kate.

—Donald Hall

Berkeley," a place that in his mind was "a hotbed of Communism and homosexuality." The Reagan Revolution secured its legacy only after Reagan left Sacramento, when voters passed the Proposition 13 ballot initiative, in 1978. Prop 13 capped property-assessment increases at two per cent a year, amended the state constitution to require a two-thirds majority of the legislature to raise taxes or pass a budget—and, in effect, broke the government. As a result of Prop 13, and later ballot initiatives that pre-allocate nearly ninety per cent of the state's funds, California's annual budget process has been marked for decades by blown deadlines, furloughs for public employees, and I.O.U.s for the state's creditors. The recession and the rout in the housing market made everything much worse. The state has cut its budget more than twenty billion dollars since 2008 and begun furloughing its employees three days a month—yet still expects to end this fiscal year another twenty-one billion dollars in debt.

Ananya Roy arrived at Berkeley as a graduate student in 1992, early in California's long slide. In Calcutta, her parents, a businessman and an exacting high-school English teacher, had raised her to question every unsupported premise, so she fit right in. After Roy earned a Ph.D. in City and Regional Planning, she joined Berkeley's faculty in 1999, was awarded tenure in 2006, won prestigious teaching awards—and, in the spring of 2009, got into her first scrap with the administra-

tion, resigning her associate deanship in International and Area Studies after the division lost its dean to budget cuts.

Then came this fall, when Berkeley's budget was reduced by \$148 million. Roy could see the squeeze everywhere: the sixty new faculty members hired in an ordinary year shrank to fewer than ten, and garbage was being taken out from offices only twice a month. Annie McClanahan, a graduate student in English, said that the budget for freshman composition had been pared such that "there's not a single instructor who doesn't have seventeen students in a class, ten on the wait list, plus five who are in tears because they can't get in."

Roy's students kept asking her how to make sense of it all. One afternoon, I met with eleven student leaders, eight of whom had taken or were taking Roy's class in Global Poverty. After several hours of wide-ranging conversation, they all agreed that the rhetoric and tactics of the Free Speech Movement were basically irrelevant to their fight. Ashoka Finley observed, "California is so different now—it's become like a developing country. We're being dealt with the same way the I.M.F. deals with its client countries, having our social services cut and being forced to exercise fiscal restraint." Carlo De La Cruz nodded and said, "We have to change the language of the university from an economic exchange into the language of public good." You no longer need a Weatherman to know which way the

wind blows: you need a meteorologist, an economist, a political scientist, a psychiatrist, a linguist, and a rabble-rouser.

With state support withering away, many divisions and departments of the university have felt increasing pressure to pay for themselves, either by attracting research grants or by raising corporate or private endowments; four years ago, a twelve-million-dollar gift turned Berkeley's poli-sci department into the Charles and Louise Travers Department of Political Science. Yet this approach, known as "privatization," can introduce outside agendas and limit academic freedom. It doesn't seem to disturb Harvard University that its medical school has three professorships in sleep medicine endowed by the sleep-medication manufacturers Cephalon, Respiroics, and Res-Med. But there was an outcry at Berkeley two years ago when the oil company BP promised the campus about three hundred million dollars for an Energy Biosciences Institute in exchange for significant controls over the research done there.

Another danger is that privatization can turn a university into a glorified trade school. Business programs and computer-science departments will attract wealthy supporters, but who will bankroll poetry? This concern is heightened because English—a high-enrollment, low-teaching-cost department—actually subsidizes disciplines such as nuclear physics and engineering, which require expensive equipment. Colleen Lye, a Berkeley English professor, says, "We have the No. 1-rated graduate department in the country"—according to the *U.S. News* survey—"yet our faculty and students feel second-class. For example, most humanities departments lost their phones this fall, while most science departments haven't."

As the semester began, Ananya Roy became uncomfortably aware that even as she denounced privatization she was serving as education director of Berkeley's Blum Center for Developing Economies, endowed by the regent Richard Blum, an investment banker. The center gave out a hundred thousand dollars in travel grants last summer and sent sixty students abroad, including Zac Taylor, who went to Nairobi; it also funds the Global Poverty and Practice minor—the most popular minor on campus—which Roy chairs. "The Blum Center is a wonderful oasis," Roy

told me. "But what good does it do if I can give one of my students a travel grant and he has to drop out because he can't afford the fees? What good is having built these programs if the institution one believes in is falling to pieces?"

One of Roy's favorite instructional concepts is the double agent: she encourages her students to think of themselves as actors complicit in large institutions—the World Bank, America, Berkeley—who can effect change from within, even while recognizing that "there are always compromises and betrayals." Worried that she'd been compromised by her own double role, she began to ask her students if she should resign from the center. Richard Blum told me he was perplexed by Roy's ambivalence: "If the university had said, 'Gee, Dick, we love your idea, but we don't want your thirty million dollars—we'll do it,' nothing would have made me happier. But if I didn't do it no one would. People accuse us of privatizing the university—I say, 'No, the state is privatizing the university.'"

Roy began to voice her students' dismay in sharp, sloganeering phrases, declaring, for instance, that they were threatened with a "subprime education." At a panel discussion on "The Crisis of Public Education," in late October, Roy framed the crisis in a new way. In her piping voice, she defined the "experience of generalized vulnerability and marginality that so many Americans and Californians now face" with a phrase she repeated, elegiacally: "We have all become students of color now." Heads dipped and swayed around the room.

The difficulties of translating compelling imagery into political change, and of coalition-building between seemingly natural allies, became apparent later in the panel discussion when Alberto Torrico, the majority leader of the state assembly, stood to speak. Torrico, a pugnacious Bay Area Democrat who was the first person in his family to attend college, said that he

was "pretty pissed off at all the students here" for not protesting when Governor Schwarzenegger began his series of cutbacks to higher education. Then he explained his cure-all: AB 656, a bill that would impose a 12.5-per-cent tax on California's oil. Torrico said that the resulting \$1.3 billion a year would go solely to higher education (assuming he can sweet-talk the necessary Republicans into supporting the measure). Mark Yudof has not endorsed AB 656: among his other concerns, he told me, was that only twenty-five per cent of the money would be earmarked for U.C., and that the legislature would establish another board above the Regents to allocate those funds. When I raised these reservations with Torrico, he said, "If I gave them a blank check, they'd use it for administrative costs instead of education. And on percentages I say, 'Do you want twenty-five per cent of a billion-plus, or one hundred per cent of nothing?' 'Cause I can give you that very easily.'"

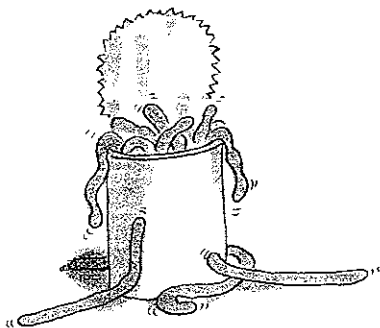
Throughout the early fall, the Berkeley administration deftly conveyed the impression that it had foreseen, condoned, and even authorized the rebellion. After the September walkout, Chancellor Robert Birgeneau and his executive vice-chancellor and provost, George Breslauer, e-mailed the community to say that "yesterday's protests exemplified the best of our tradition of effective civil action." Birgeneau, who had agitated for civil rights in South Carolina in the sixties, told me that the students "can occupy any space they like, that's fine. Unless they damage a building, in which case they're breaking the law and I'd send in the police." In October, just before three hundred students occupied the Anthropology Library for a Friday night "study-in" to protest the closure of department libraries on weekends, Breslauer privately assured a student ad-

viser that the police wouldn't step in.

I had coffee with some of the students who'd organized the study-in, and they seemed deflated by the administrators' juddolike response: Birgeneau quickly turned to some wealthy Berkeley parents and raised eighty thousand dollars to keep the department libraries open. The students had hoped to stir outrage by being arrested, and they were disturbed that the ameliorating money came from private funds: that even libraries were no longer part of the university's core public mission. Callie Maidhof, a graduate student in anthropology, said, "Clearly, the only effective tactic thus far is direct action, and that won us only a partial success." Michael Cohen, the Solidarity Alliance co-chair, who was also at the table, said, "What does any victory for the left look like? You get what you want, but someone else takes credit for it. It's a victory that feels like a defeat."

Meanwhile, to preserve his own campus, Birgeneau was laying a course that would separate Berkeley from the U.C. fleet. He co-wrote a widely discussed op-ed for the *Washington Post* suggesting that leading public universities such as Berkeley and Rutgers could stay afloat if the federal government matched, at two to one, private endowment funds raised by the universities (and their respective states also kicked in at one to one). Because of state disinvestment, local politicians have suggested that such noted universities as Michigan and Virginia should be taken private; Birgeneau was angling, instead, to go federal. Unlike Yudof, though, he wasn't seeking federal money for all of U.C.: only about five of the ten campuses would be eligible under his proposal. Birgeneau acknowledged that this would disrupt the Master Plan, but said, "Here I don't mind being accused of elitism—I do believe the great research universities play a disproportionately important role in the country."

The chancellor also decided to gradually increase Berkeley's out-of-state enrollment from 9.5 to twenty per cent. Out-of-state students pay more than triple the in-state fees, and the admissions measure would eventually generate an extra sixty million dollars for the campus—while, of course, reducing access for Californians. The shift was popular with senior faculty, who had seen the furloughs increase the gap between their salaries and those at comparable private institutions



PAR-TAY!



from twenty-nine thousand dollars to forty-eight thousand. David Hollinger, a professor of history, pointed out, "We have to match salary offers from Harvard and Princeton, and Irvine doesn't. Let Berkeley go out on its own with a degree of privatization—it'll take pressure off the budget elsewhere."

Budget cuts catalyze self-interest. In June, twenty-two department chairs at U.C. San Diego signed a letter suggesting that, to save the University of California "as we know it," at least one of the less desirable campuses—Merced, Riverside, or Santa Cruz—should be closed. Berkeley's Wendy Brown, a professor of political science and a member of Save the University, acknowledged that such escape-hatch ideas put tremendous pressure on the protesters' unity. "On the horizon is the breakup of the University of California into different castes at different prices, which reinforces socioeconomic inequality at the level of educational access at a public entity that was designed to *redress* those inequalities." Ananya Roy told me, "On bad days, many of us wake up and think, 'Wouldn't it just be easier to save Berkeley?'"

Birgeneau said he'd been able to predict the protesters' moves thus far, and he seemed confident that his flexibility and his Berkeley exceptionalism would placate students and faculty. Yet his contacts were chiefly with the student council and the Academic Senate—moderate organizations far from the heat of revolt. At a town-hall meeting on the crisis in early November, attended by many of the more radical students, Birgeneau advocated a system-wide march on Sacramento in March: "I hope that this will match the March on Washington, with literally hundreds of thousands of students." That idea met with favor, but the crowd's baseline hostility seemed to take him aback. During his opening remarks, Birgeneau slipped his glasses off and on fourteen times, as if he couldn't quite figure out where to look.

When Solidarity Alliance called for a three-day strike at Berkeley to coincide with the Regents meeting in November, the heads of the major local unions endorsed the call, as did Berkeley's student council. But many faculty members were torn. Wendy Brown decided not to cross the picket line to teach her undergraduate course in modern political

theory, but said, "To cancel a class in the name of saving education feels like a colossal contradiction." Robert Reich, the former Secretary of Labor, who is now a professor of public policy at Berkeley, also said he would respect the strike, but wondered, "Who are we striking against? The chancellor? The president? The regents? The legislature? The governor? The people of California? Ourselves?" The administration also hardened its line. Birgeneau told me, "The one-day strike was an appropriate reaction to frustration. Three days is three days, and it's not as if there's something new to say."

After consulting with her students, Ananya Roy decided to honor the strike and cancel that Thursday's lecture. She also became a full-fledged member of Solidarity Alliance. On November 18th, the first day of the strike, she was the alliance's lead speaker at a rally on Sproul Plaza. Her tone was conversational, her remarks blunt: "You know what angers me? That the U.C. top guys are cavalier. 'It is the state,' they say, shrug, and walk away." She continued, "Since September 24th, we have been doing the job of U.C. administrators for them. Workers, students, faculty—we have made visible the cause of public education." The Berkeley senior Isaac Miller told me, "Ananya was phenomenal. She made it very clear that it was our responsibility to seize this moment." Michael Cohen said, "Ananya went from being one of the most articulate voices in the movement to being the faculty's *most* important voice."

That same day, the Regents' Finance Committee met on the U.C.L.A. campus for a last discussion of the fee hikes, while outside the building five hundred students and union activists threw sticks and bottles at policemen in riot gear, who Tasered two of them. The following day, the full Board of Regents approved the new fees—and protesters promptly surrounded the building and held them prisoner for ninety minutes.

Mark Yudof told me he would now go to Sacramento. "We're going to fight like hell to get nine hundred million back in our budget, which is the minimum needed to avoid further cuts." He added, "We actually need two *billion* to get back to where we were in 1990, but . . ." He shrugged. H. D. Palmer, the deputy director of California's Department of Finance, says, "The Governor *wants* to invest in public

education," but adds that the state's huge deficit may well prevent that; the Regents, for their part, already expect to have to raise fees again. When I asked Yudof whether he planned to harness the students' energies in his campaign, he said, "I want to be shoulder to shoulder with them, and, if that means marching with them in Sacramento, probably so. If they're naked," he added, with a faint smile, "probably not."

The students didn't wait for Yudof's *démarche*. They had decided that a vital constituent of a University of California education is fighting for a University of California education. The day of the vote, students at U.C.L.A. occupied a building, and the next day students at Davis, Santa Cruz, and Berkeley followed suit. At Berkeley, forty protesters gathered at Wheeler Hall at 5:30 A.M. and barricaded themselves in on the second floor, then hung a sheet out the window that said "32 percent hike, 900 layoffs," next to the word "CLASS" with a slash through it. It was unclear whether "CLASS" referred to the hundred and eighteen courses at Wheeler that would be cancelled that day, to socioeconomic status, or to an ideal of behavior. One student with a scarf wrapped around his head, *mujahideen* style, thrust a bullhorn out a window and announced, "This isn't your sixties Berkeley sit-in." The protesters inside, most of them undergraduates, were an "occupationist" group that had come together the previous day. Some didn't even know one another's names.

Campus police encircled the building, and soon hundreds of students were at the barricades, many of them drawn there because protesters pulled fifty fire alarms in nearby buildings—and others by Robert Birgeneau's e-mails warning everyone to stay away. The campus police called for backup from the Berkeley and Oakland police departments and the Alameda County Sheriff's Office.

Ananya Roy arrived at 11:30 A.M. and helped other teachers link arms and form a wall between the police and the students. It was unclear who was in charge, either inside or outside. Michael Cohen told me, "The people on the inside expected those of us on the outside—whom they hadn't consulted—to do all the work, getting people there and then keeping them from rioting. They hadn't empowered a negotiating team, so we

had to figure out who they would trust, and Ananya seemed like she could be the person.” Roy took a call from some of the occupiers, who asked if she and other faculty would convey their demands to the administration. Roy said she would. The first demands, which were broadcast on the bullhorn and also disseminated via Twitter, were that the university rehire thirty-eight custodians that it had laid off and grant amnesty to the occupiers.

But no one could reach Birgeneau or George Breslauer—their office lines were overloaded with calls—and California Hall, where the administrators worked, was locked tight. A cold rain began to fall, and as the students outside shivered and stamped their feet rumors circulated of a mass attack on the barricades at 1 P.M. Roy’s colleague Peter Glazer used his iPhone to tap out a hasty message to the Listserv of politically active faculty: “Where istha. Administration. Please help. Contact admn. Violence mminent.” At about that moment, Richard Blum called Roy. The regent was unaware of the occupation, and wanted to remonstrate with her about an editorial, which she and other Solidarity Alliance members had published in Berkeley’s *Daily Californian*, that called Yudof “a deep embarrassment to our University and public higher education.” Standing by a cordon of police in riot gear, Roy lost her famous composure and screamed, “You don’t want to be talking to me about Mark Yudof *now!*”

Skirmishes kept breaking out as groups of students, in a crowd now grown to some two thousand, surged toward the stanchions. Police lashed the wall of bodies with their batons and fired pellet guns, and the demonstrators began to chant “Shame on you!” Zac Taylor called it “the most difficult day for me as a Berkeley student.” Luis Reyes, the G.A. mainstay, observed, “The fact that the administration, which said, ‘Oh, we’re on your side,’ then sent in the riot police to break skulls showed a lot of students why we’re targeting U.C. as well as Sacramento.”

Birgeneau and Breslauer were actually in their offices, washed by the roars from across the way as they deployed a vice-chancellor and the dean of students to Wheeler and tried to ascertain whether the occupiers were students or “outsiders.” Breslauer later told me that he and Birgeneau were always reachable by their vice-chancellor and dean on the scene, “though

we did not answer all the appeals from individual faculty. Some may call that lack of leadership; others call it prudent.” (Both were upset when they learned later about episodes of police violence.)

After the vice-chancellor, Harry Le Grande, arrived at Wheeler, he and Roy and two other negotiators went into the building. But the occupiers would speak to them only on the phone, through a barricaded door, and after ninety minutes the discussions fell apart. Roy went outside and called me, leaving a voice mail “from the front lines.” She sounded both exhilarated and anxious: the police were about to go in. “Birgeneau and Breslauer are hiding out and missing in action. It’s pouring,” she concluded, signing off, “It’s just quite, quite something . . .” A few minutes later, the occupiers’ Twitter account reported, “The SWAT team is coming in. They are hammering the hinges off as I type.” Within minutes, all the occupiers, who’d retreated to a single classroom and piled chairs against the door, were wearing plastic handcuffs. But how were the police going to get them out?

Roy and a half-dozen other faculty and student-council members ran to California Hall and were finally able to meet with Birgeneau and Breslauer. “We just focussed on, How can we avoid one of the worst riots in Berkeley history?” Roy told me. Birgeneau says that it was Roy’s and other faculty members’ accounts of police violence and the crowd’s mood that made him decide not to try to herd the occupiers into police vans but simply to cite them for trespassing and release them.

Roy and three other observers went back into Wheeler to escort the arrested students out into the night and the embrace of the roaring crowd. On finally meeting the occupiers, Roy recognized five students from her class—and discovered that she didn’t know precisely how she felt about seeing them there. Part of her, the administrator part, was troubled by their recklessness.

Later that evening, as footage of the occupation played on CNN and YouTube, many of Roy’s students called or e-mailed

to thank her for helping to avert a much more violent outcome. Others were hostile. “Some sections of the crowd felt I’d sold out by going inside to impose a deal for the administration,” Roy told me afterward, sounding weary and stunned. “That’s not the case, but I knew the second time I went in that I could be seen as diluting the effect of student action. I was just worried about their safety.” Callie Maidhof, the anthropology student I’d spoken to earlier about the library study-in, was the occupiers’ media representative. She told me that a number of the occupiers believed that Roy’s actions, though well intentioned, were self-aggrandizing and paternalistic. “It was the crowd and the threat they posed that kept the occupiers from being taken downtown, not Ananya Roy and the administration. At this point, the students have realized that the administration is an unreliable partner.”

“What does solidarity mean?” Roy asked. “The students felt we faculty were breaching it because we were trying to soften the blows. But we felt we were demonstrating solidarity, because they *hadn’t* thought through what might happen, the risks.” She added, “Still, I love it when my students throw my words back at me. I tell them I wouldn’t want them to act as if they speak for or represent the poor—and now they’re telling me the same thing. So in one day I went from being the radical professor leading the strike to being accused of moderation. And that’s . . .” She laughed. As a double agent, she’d been blown. “Well, it’s . . . fantastic.”

When I spoke to Birgeneau, a few days later, he said, “It’s very easy to over-respond to noisy students, because they’re the ones you hear.” But, he said, he was no longer certain how events would play out. On December 11th, the administration again sent in the police, arresting sixty-six protesters who had occupied Wheeler for four days during study week. At eleven o’clock that night, more than forty people carrying torches marched on Birgeneau’s residence, where the chancellor was sleeping. A handful of the protesters smashed the outdoor lights and threw cement planters and burning torches at the house, scattering only after the chancellor’s wife, who was writing Christmas cards, woke her husband and he called the police. Mario Savio was long gone, but risen again were the rebel students and the flailing nightsticks, the days of rage. ♦

