

July 24, 2020

To the Building Name Review Committee:

We welcome the opportunity to respond to the proposal to change the name of Barrows Hall, which is currently named for David Prescott Barrows. Barrows is a former colonial administrator and military officer in the Philippines who had deep ties with the University of California, where he earned a master's degree and later served as a professor and dean. He held a lifetime fascination with Indigenous peoples of California, and wrote his PhD dissertation on the Cahuilla tribe in southern California.

As a committee concerned with Native American issues, we support the un-naming of Barrows Hall. Indigenous communities have not been unaffected by his research, or by his ideological commitment to "civilizational uplift" that relied on a racist conception that "tribal" peoples could ascend from "savagery" to "civilization." This ideology has served as the foundation of multiple violent policies and atrocities against Native Americans and Indigenous peoples around the globe. We find Barrows' writings and record of colonial administration to be riddled with discrimination and outright cruelty against Filipinos and others.

David Prescott Barrows was a lifelong agent of imperialism and colonialism. And while his defenders may say that he was "a man of his time," we, too, are people of our time. We have an opportunity now to disavow his racist and discriminatory work, and see the un-naming as a reasonable step toward that end.

Sincerely,

Native American Advisory Committee

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