

From: The Building Name Review Committee  
To: Chancellor Carol Christ  
Re: Proposal to Remove the Name from Barrows Hall

October 9, 2020

Dear Chancellor Christ:

The Building Name Review Committee has evaluated the proposal to remove the name of David P. Barrows from Barrows Hall. The proposal was submitted by Melissa Charles and Takiyah Jackson of the UC Berkeley African American Student Development Office, with research and drafting support from many UC Berkeley students, staff, and faculty. The proposal was a response to calls for action by the Black Student Union, Black Graduate Student Association, Filipinx and Philippine Studies Working Committees, RECLAIM, and other members of the community.

After studying the proposal, collecting more than 500 comments, and carefully evaluating all information presented, our committee voted unanimously to recommend that the name be removed. We further recommend that the administration authorize and provide a budget for a working group composed of faculty and students drawn from the units housed in the building to develop an appropriate restorative approach to reckoning with the legacy of David P. Barrows.

### **Building Name Review Committee Principles**

The legacy of a building's namesake should be in alignment with the values and mission of the university. The values of UC Berkeley are expressed in our Principles of Community. In deciding whether to remove a building name, we believe that the committee should be guided by two principles:

1. As stated in the Regents of the University of California Policy 4400: University of California Diversity Statement:

*[T]he University of California renews its commitment to the full realization of its historic promise to recognize and nurture merit, talent, and achievement by supporting diversity and equal opportunity in its education, services, and administration, as well as research and creative activity. The University particularly acknowledges the acute need to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention, and advancement of talented students, faculty, and staff from historically excluded populations who are currently underrepresented.*

We view as our intellectual and ethical responsibility the promotion of an inclusive, global perspective on the peoples and cultures of the world, particularly in light of scholarly traditions that may omit, ignore, or silence the perspectives of many groups, such as ethnic minorities; people from non-European nations; women; lesbian, gay and transgender people; and disabled people, among others.

2. Whether or not a building's name is removed, we believe it is historically and socially valuable to retain a public record, perhaps in the form of a plaque in the building, that notes the building's history of naming and the deeds of its namesakes, including any positive contributions the namesake may have made to their discipline, the University, or the world beyond.

### **Building Name Review Process**

Per the process established by the Building Name Review Committee, the committee initiates a review once it receives a proposal. The proposal must make a strong, stand-alone case for why a building name should be removed.

Once a case goes forward, the review process includes wide-spread dissemination of the proposal via emails and posts on Berkeley websites, a comment period, the posting of comments, time for additional research or public meetings (if needed), and finally a report with recommendations for the Chancellor about the proposal.

### **Barrows Proposal**

Melissa Charles and Takiyah Jackson of the UC Berkeley African American Student Development Office submitted the proposal to un-name Barrows Hall on July 9, 2020. The formal proposal to our committee was the culmination of many years of interest in renaming the building to make it more welcoming to all. The proposal notes that renaming Barrows Hall was one of the ten initial demands put forward by the Black Student Union in 2015. Their demand resulted, in Fall 2016, in the formation of the Building Naming Project Task Force, out of which the Building Name Review Committee emerged. Renaming Barrows was also proposed at the fall 2019 Filipinx Summit at UC Berkeley. Renaming was supported by the editorial board of the *Daily Californian* in April 2016 and encouraged again in February 2020.

David Prescott Barrows (1873-1954) received his PhD in anthropology from the University of Chicago in 1897. His doctoral research was based on work among the Native peoples of Southern California and the Colorado desert. In 1900, in the immediate aftermath of the US colonial occupation of the Philippines, Barrows was appointed superintendent of schools for Manila, and soon thereafter became chief of the Bureau of Non-Christian Tribes of the Islands. From 1903 to 1909, he served as general superintendent of education for the Philippines and, in that capacity, according to the Bancroft Library, completely reorganized the Philippines' educational system.

Barrows joined the UC faculty in 1910, where he served first as professor of education, then as professor of political science. In 1913, Barrows was appointed Dean of the Faculties. In 1919, Barrows was elected president of the University of California, a position he held until 1923. In 1924, he became chair of the Department of Political Science, and continued teaching until his retirement in 1943. His publications include *A History of the Philippines* (1905), *A Decade of American Government in the Philippines* (1915), *Government in California* (1925) and *Berbers and Blacks* (1927), and many contributions to professional journals and magazines.

The building in question was named after Barrows when it was opened in 1964, housing the Business School and the Departments of Economics, Political Science, and Sociology. When the School of Business moved to its current location in the 1990s, other departments were relocated to Barrows. Currently, the building houses the Departments of Near Eastern Studies, Political Science, Sociology, Ethnic Studies (including Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies, Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies, and Native American Studies), African American and African Diaspora Studies, and Gender and Women's Studies. Additional office space is held by the Social Science Matrix, the Energy Resources Group, KALX, and the D-Lab. The basement and first floor hold several classrooms.

Barrows' professional reputation rests on his accomplishments as a colonial administrator in the Philippines, as an academic administrator, and a scholar of Political Science. In his scholarship, Barrows expressed and extended the white supremacist assumptions that he applied as schools chief in the Philippines. As the AASDO proposal points out, Barrows' writings about non-white and non-European peoples not only reflect racial ideologies consistent with the "humanitarian imperialism" of his time, they were marshaled especially to shape the educational experiences of Filipinos under US occupation. Barrows claimed that Filipinos had "an intrinsic inability for self-governance" and his paternalistic approach to colonial administration wielded education as a means to indoctrinate the local population to accept colonial rule. His approach to colonial education assumed Filipinos were an "illiterate and ignorant class" (1910) to be brought into modernity through the benevolence of American rule. The high school textbook Barrows wrote on the History of the Philippines (1905) was used in schools in the Philippines for nearly two decades. The book frames its approach to history through a racialized hierarchy that ordered populations based on relative historical advancement, "relative intelligence, physical attractiveness, and as members of either civil or savage societies." Barrows underscored that Europeans and white people were the only "great historical race," against which all others are to be compared (1905). The same racial/colonial logic framed Barrows' approach to the so-called "Black race." In 1927, reflecting on his research trip to the African continent, Barrows wrote that "the black lacks an inherent passion for freedom," and that it was only British colonization of Nigeria that brought Western Africa "a just and humane government." The proposal concludes by stating unequivocally that "Barrows cannot stand as a symbol of what we value on the Berkeley campus."

### **Our Committee's Outreach and Deliberations**

On July 10, 2020, the Building Name Review Committee received the proposal to un-name Barrows Hall. On July 13, 2020, a campus-wide announcement informed the UC Berkeley community that the proposal was posted on our website and that comments on the proposal were encouraged. In total, 518 responses were collected through our website's feedback form. 95% of the collected responses were in favor of the proposal to remove the name, and 5% of the collected responses opposed the proposal. In addition, the committee received 12 communications via email regarding the proposal, eight of which were in favor, and four opposed. Additionally, a letter in support of the proposal was signed by 75 campus organizations and over 1,250 campus faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

Twenty-five members of the Barrows family submitted a collective letter in support of removing David Barrows' name from the building. The family grounded their support in a recognition of the "deep pain" caused by Barrows' own involvement as an administrator in the Philippines, along with a sense that memorializing Barrows is an impediment to conveying a sense of welcome and belonging for people of all identities and backgrounds. The committee also received communications from two additional members of the Barrows family, one who expressed opposition to the proposal, and the other requesting that, should the un-naming be approved, that any of David Barrows' artifacts be returned to the family for safe keeping. The committee agrees that the artifacts should be returned to the family if the Barrows name is removed from the building.

The Native American Advisory Committee wrote in support of the proposal, underscoring that Barrows' longtime professional embrace of a colonial ideology of "civilizational uplift" "served as the foundation of multiple violent policies and atrocities against native Americans and Indigenous peoples around the globe." Numerous comments in support of the proposal emphasize the bitter irony of a building that houses transformative scholarship and teaching on race, colonialism, and immigration named after someone whose career was launched as the architect of a colonial education system. The Sociology Department's Anti-Racism Working Group notes that honoring the Barrows legacy is an obstacle to participating in a "vision of an anti-racist university." Similar comments were made by many individuals. For instance, sociologist Irene Bloemraad, stresses how "vital" it is that the building be "perceived as welcoming and inclusive," especially given that it serves as a "hub of activity for research, teaching, and mentoring," as well as public conferences, talks, and workshops. A faculty member in Political Science underscores that Barrows' utterances "represent the racist and colonial thinking, and legitimate the actions and institutions, that now require an enormous project of redress." A Filipino student entering Berkeley Law, notes how "particularly hurtful" it is that "someone celebrated and lauded on Berkeley's campus (with a building named after him) thought of me and all other Filipinos as subpar and immoral to the point where we shouldn't have governance over our own country." A PhD candidate in sociology, describes studying inequality and injustice in a building named after Barrows to be "unnerving and offensive." A staff person, and alumnus of Berkeley, avers that the "university's continued celebration of a white supremacist who vehemently degraded the very people who learn and work at this university is reprehensible."

In short, the proposal and the public comments reveal overwhelming support for un-naming Barrows Hall, stressing that the name has long posed an obstacle to creating a sense of belonging for all Berkeley students, faculty, and staff.

The Building Name Review Committee met on September 28, 2020 to discuss the Barrows proposal. Present were Paul Fine, Keith Feldman, Dylan Penningroth, Ari Chivukula, James Ford, Alex Mabanta, Melvin Tangonan, and Victoria Vera; ex officio committee members Therese Leone and Nancy McKinney; and staff member Verna Bowie. Our committee

discussed the proposal, and the arguments in favor of and opposed to removing the Barrows name from the building. We reviewed additional arguments that were made by the commenters. We considered how our principles and processes were aligned with the Barrows proposal. During our deliberations, every member of the committee expressed an opinion.

### **Recommendations**

At the conclusion of our deliberations, the Building Name Review Committee voted unanimously to recommend that the name be removed from Barrows Hall.

Un-naming cannot be understood as a transformative practice absent substantive consultation with parties most directly affected. It is for that reason that we recommend consulting with the descendants of David P. Barrows, particularly regarding the care of his artifacts. We also recommend you authorize and provide a budget for a working group composed of faculty, staff and students to develop an appropriate restorative approach to reckon with the legacy of David P. Barrows, particularly in regards to communities of color, in the United States and in the Philippines. The working group should be drawn from the units housed in the building as well as include others with relevant area expertise, and consider the development of murals, exhibits, and/or other university-sponsored programs. We encourage the campus to be led by their vision, with a working group put in place before the end of the Fall semester 2020.

Chancellor Christ, thank you for your support for our committee and its important work. We look forward to your response to our recommendations, which we believe will help UC Berkeley acknowledge its past while becoming more inclusive and supportive of today's community.

Sincerely,

Paul Fine, Professor, Integrative Biology (Chair)

Keith Feldman, Associate Professor, Ethnic Studies (DECC representative)

Frank C. Worrell, Professor, Graduate School of Education

Dylan Penningroth, Professor, Law and History

Fabrizio Mejia, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Equity and Success, Equity and Inclusion

James Ford, Chief of Staff, Academic Planning

Melvin Tangonan, ASUC Executive Vice-President

Victoria Vera, ASUC President

Ari Chivukula, Berkeley Law

Alex Mabanta, Berkeley Law & GA Legislative Affairs Director

Therese Leone, Deputy Campus Counsel (ex-officio)

Nancy McKinney, University Development and Alumni Relations (ex-officio)

Verna Bowie (ex-officio)