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NEW YEAR – NEW ACTION!

For students, the first day of the quarter promises a mixture of emotions: anticipation over new courses; the renewed potential for comradery in the classroom; perhaps dread regarding the required class put off too long; or excitement at the prospect of being one step closer to graduation. For workers on campus, however, the thrill of beginning a new quarter is more often experienced as the end of a brief respite, blunted by grim forecasts of overwork, limited opportunities for workplace recognition, and wages low enough to make even Jeff Bezos smile.

Just like the conclusion of last quarter, the beginning of this one is qualitatively different. The feeling that we can break the monotony, accelerated by years of declining political action on this campus, is palpable. As of today, AFSCME workers are on strike over a fair contract (which the university has denied for years) and AFT (UCSC’s lecturer union) is out of a contract at the end of the month. Our university ceases to function without this labor.

However, the fruits of this latest PR-campaign (and remember, logic of scarcity as the US government when it comes to social and more cuts. Make no mistake, the university employs the same education is subordinated to its interests even as it reels from cuts weathers austerity, and UC is a perfect example of how public again at issue, we should soberly recognize that funding is never driven by military initiatives and the interest of U.S. foreign policy.

Some of the earliest UC regents, such as Irving M. Scott, were equally at home developing extraction technologies for California silver mines and producing warships to be deployed in colonial invasions of the Philippines in the 1890s. A more contemporary referent, on a scale inconceivable in the 19th century, is the UC’s leading role in managing the Los Alamos laboratories, a central site for the development of the first forms of nuclear weaponry under the auspices of the Manhattan Project (an early device for splitting enriched uranium, invented by UC Berkeley scientists, was in fact dubbed “Calutron”).

As we face an international conflict in which nuclear arms are once again at issue, we should soberly recognize that funding is never in question when weapons are at stake—only not under imminent threat of war but in the everyday functioning of our permanent arms economy. It is the one government sector that perpetually weathers austerity, and UC is a perfect example of how public education is subordinated to its interests even as it reaps from cuts and more cuts. Make no mistake, the university employs the same logic of scarcity as the US government when it comes to social spending. Its budgetary denial is perfectly in accord with the willingness to wage war. Our budgetary demands, on the contrary, challenge this entire structure of priorities.

Universal Cost of Living Adjustment  
#COLA4ALL

Who (or what) Runs the University?  
The specter of tuition hikes is constantly raised by the university to discourage student solidarity with any form of monetary demands. While it is true that they have increasingly offset the costs of operation onto you (and increasingly in the form of private debt), it is only from an exceedingly narrow standpoint that the university’s funds flow primarily in a circuit from tuition to employee wages. The educational functions that serve you as undergraduates are increasingly subordinated to research, and research to lucrative contracts in the private and national defense sectors—from the construction of the Thirty Meter Telescope on Mauna Kea, to pursuing commercial research for unscrupulous Big Pharma companies like Glaxo-Smith-Kline, to the decades-long UC management of the nuclear weapons program at Los Alamos National Laboratories. Not only does the research of this public institution flow from its faculty and students to other sectors for private gain, it does so also at the expense of the workers in these industries, to whom such gains merely represent greater resources for their exploiters.

In point of fact, the UC system has always been run by war profiteers. Long before the tenure of our resident burglar-in-chief Janet Napolitano, the UC had cemented its status as a revolving door between defense industry and public education, cultivating deep ties with weapons manufacturing firms like Bechtel and Lockheed Martin. Big Science, far from being a neutral application of scientific research to industry, has consistently been driven by military initiatives and the interest of U.S. foreign policy.

CALL TO ACTION! SUPPORT THE AFSCME STRIKE!  
Call and place a work order. If a light bulb is out, a toilet is clogged, a room feels too hot or cold. CALL 831594444 to place a work order.