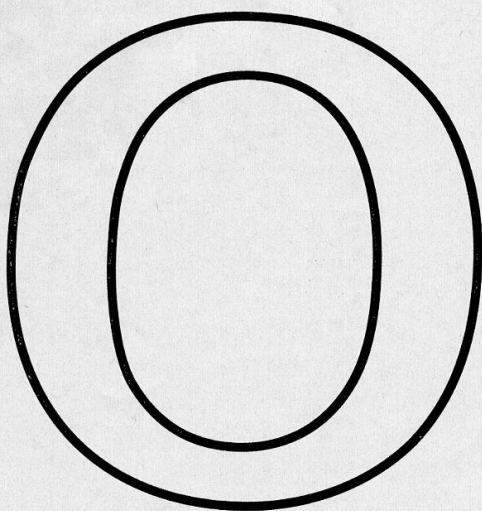


Why UC needs a

TENTH CAMPUS

A student population explosion has the University of California spilling over into its nine host cities, pitting students against residents, chancellors against mayors.

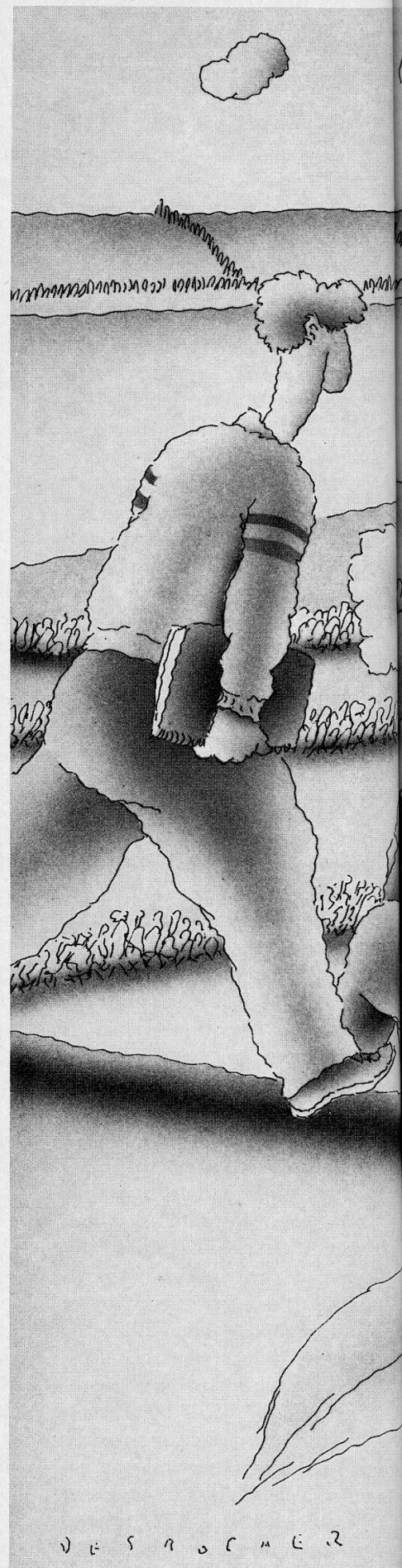
BY TOM DeVRIES



ON THE DAY BEFORE THE HOUSE on Haste Street was torn down, Berkeley mayor Loni Hancock telephoned the owner—the University of California—several times to ask that it consider an alternative to demolition. The city manager made a similar call. Because of overcrowding created by the university, which has built few dorms, it is virtually illegal in housing-starved Berkeley to destroy residential units without replacing them. But in the university's view the house—which had been left vacant for nine years—had become inconvenient, and in Berkeley, as in other campus towns, what the university wants to do, the university basically does. A wrecking crew arrived at seven the next morning, and by mid-afternoon the three-story wood shingle was gone.

In Berkeley now there is a new vacant lot and a plan someday to use it, perhaps for student housing. No big

Tom DeVries reports the news for KRON-TV in San Francisco.



hurry. UC is an institution that makes its own rules, moves at its own pace and answers to no one save the regents and, perhaps, God—which may explain how it can stare straight into a brewing disaster and do nothing.

In just the last seven years UC's system-wide population has grown by 26,000 students—enough to fill the campuses at San Diego and Santa Cruz. Next fall UC will hit levels of enrollment it wasn't supposed to

planning sessions or not even being kept informed as a courtesy.

Which is why those mayors accepted Rosenberg's invitation to come to Davis for a summit. On February 11, Hancock, Rosenberg, Sheila Lodge of Santa Barbara, Ab Brown of Riverside, deputy mayor Gloria McColl of San Diego, Larry Agran of Irvine, deputy mayor Mike Gage of Los Angeles and John Laird of Santa Cruz met to trade horror stories and organize for relief.

were to begin today, the new campus needed to meet the most modest projections would still not be ready. That probability makes the mayors tremble. But the university's response, made in a statement by UC president David Gardner released two weeks after the mayors' meeting, suggests little concern: "There is currently no commitment on developing or starting a new campus. Our options remain open. . . ."

The position seems remarkable, since the issue is almost certainly not if there should be a tenth campus, but where it and the eleventh and twelfth should be located.

Strangely, the university does not really disagree. Vice President William Baker admits UC is "pretty well crowded down the line. Riverside less so, but in a couple of years it'll be crowded, too."

Baker's charge is figuring out UC's options in the face of this spectacular growth. The possibilities will be presented to the regents in the fall; they do not, in Baker's view, include making it tougher to get into the university. Making UC more elite, he argues, is "bad public policy." The specter is raised of a UC consisting only of a few athletes, a few foreign students and thousands of kids who have been nerds since age twelve. Among other things, raising the high standards could wreck UC's successful effort to admit more racial minorities, leaving it the university of the middle-class white grind and the academically adept Asian-American. This is presumably not what California wants.

So, Baker says, UC should continue to take in—at one campus or another—everyone who applies and is eligible. "It would be a grave error," he says, "to educate fewer people rather than more." Baker's options have included more buildings, more night and weekend classes, more summer school and, especially, major growth on the existing campuses. Even if those choices are acceptable, they will only hold off the inevitable. And Baker himself blurted out at a regent's meeting in February the need for as many as three new campuses.

This year, 23,500 freshmen arrived at UC campuses. Projections suggest that as many as 45,000 will be eligible for admittance by 1996.

reach until 1995. You see these overgrowing pains at Berkeley—which has bulged to 32,000 this year, 4,500 more than its optimum student population—in the WWII-era temporary huts being used for office space and in the plans to open a satellite campus ten miles away in Richmond. You see it at the housing office (two blocks away from the now-vacant lot on Haste Street), where thousands of frantic students line up each year in search of a room to rent, and in the few campus parking lots, where it's not unusual to find lines of cars—ignitions off, drivers waiting and studying—stretching down the block.

You see it, too, in Irvine, where a downtown movie theater serves as an overflow lecture hall. And in Davis, where mayor Dave Rosenberg learned of the university's plan to add 7,000 students—a 15 percent increase in his city's population—only when it was too late to do anything about it. You can see—and feel—it in each of the nine host cities and in their mayors' frustration at not having their phone calls returned, not being included in

The mayors see the growth of California's population, they know the demographics and they fear for their futures. What they came out of the meeting with was a clear sense of what they needed, what could stop their towns from being overwhelmed by UC's unrelenting growth: a tenth campus.

It is a law in California that 12.5 percent of all high school graduates can demand a seat at a UC campus. But for years it has been assumed that only 5 percent would actually attend. The trouble is, for the past several years more than 8 percent have shown up.

This year 23,452 eligible freshmen—every one of them a top student—arrived at UC campuses for the first day of class. In eight years (the time it took to build the last new campuses), using the same ratios as today, 26,000 incoming freshmen are expected. But projections by the California Postsecondary Education Commission suggest it may be much worse by then, that as many as 45,000 seventeen- and eighteen-year-olds will be eligible for admittance.

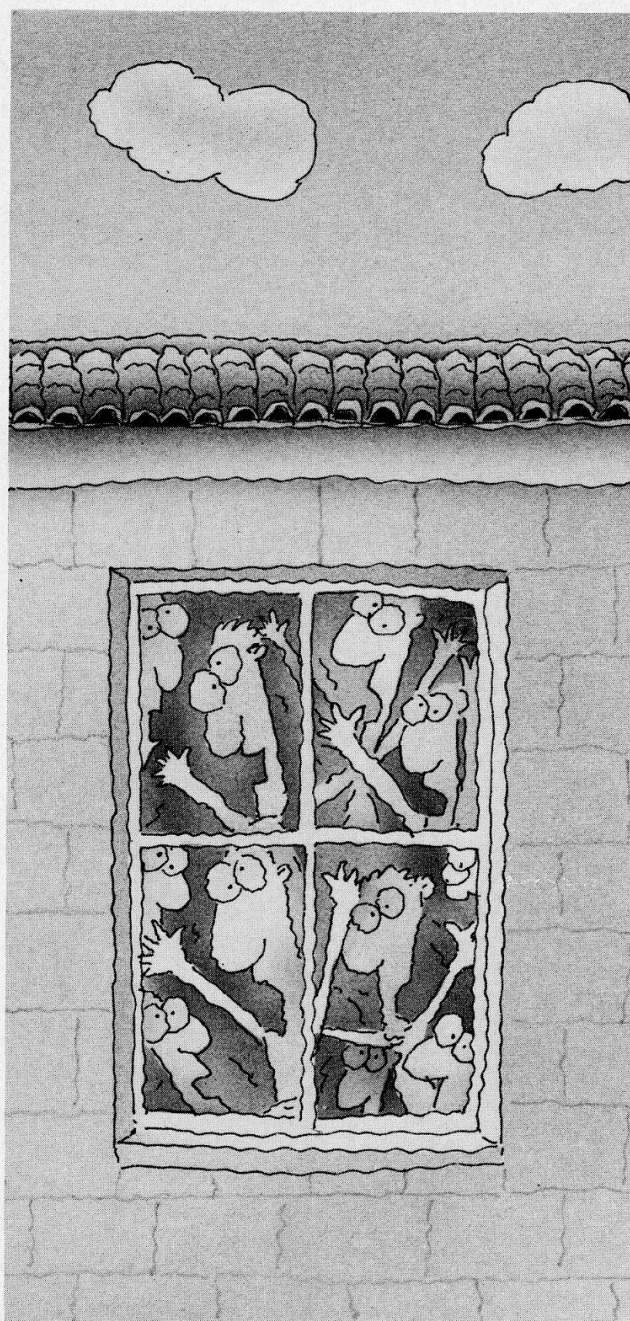
But even if design and planning

These days he is more circumspect. Things have been bad before, he says. UC was more crowded after WWII than it is now. But Baker adds that UC is, in fact, "ready to shift gears," and a new campus or three *could* be built in as few as six years. Maybe a wonderful piece of land will be donated. Maybe UC could take over an underused community college. Baker is a 24-year veteran of UC crises, a survivor of the sixteen bad years of Ronald Reagan and Jerry Brown, neither of whom seemed to like the university. He is a believer, the son and grandson of alumnae. "We have always come out," he says. It is an optimism few share.

IN OCTOBER 1957, THE same day the UC regents selected professor Clark Kerr as president, they also decided to expand. From the decision came campuses at Santa Cruz, Irvine and San Diego. Kerr does not have a difficult time recalling the eight years of 90-hour workweeks: there were sites to find (twenty in the Bay Area alone before Santa Cruz was chosen), three chancellors to recruit, hundreds of faculty to hire and an educational program to be determined. Architecture, financing and politics. It was, says Kerr, "a miracle to have the campuses open, to get that all done in that time."

And, he says, it will only be harder and slower to do today, or tomorrow. In 1957 no one had even heard of an environmental impact report, which could well add as much as a year to each project. And if assembling thousand-acre sites in urban areas was tricky back then, Kerr adds, it's bound to be much more difficult and much more expensive now; the sixties were prosperous times for California, after all, and there was plenty of money for public works. But this is 1988.

So if the need is so clear, and the



undertaking so daunting, why is there no real plan, not even a policy, to get started?

For a start, there is university politics. The chancellors, some of whom are powerful and well-connected, are barons of their own preserves and are not likely to support the idea of a new campus. Their campuses were victimized financially by Jerry Brown, and they haven't fully recovered yet. From their point of view, there are no extras for an extra mouth. And a new campus, they know quite well, could cost up to half a billion dollars to build and \$200 million a year to run.

Then, of course, there is Sacra-

mento, where the University of California has to compete for funds with the other big expenses in the state budget: prisons, elementary education, welfare and health. To a budget maker staring at the Gann limits, there is no difference between paying big-time money for a toxic cleanup, for a prison or for a tenth campus.

And finally, there is the uncomfortable question of location. Regional feelings being what they are, says Kerr, it would be hard to build a campus in the south without building one in the north as well. Moreover, Fresno was promised a campus in 1957—a promise not forgotten in the Central Valley. Politically speaking, Fresno is neither south nor north. That means there will probably have to be three campuses at a cost of roughly \$1.5 billion to build and \$600–\$700 million a year to operate.

There is a campus-construction bond issue on next month's ballot, but it's for the existing nine, not any newcomers. So, the chancellors and the regents and the president seem to be saying, if Irvine is expanding into town, if Berkeley students occupy every apartment for miles, if Davis thinks a 10 percent pop in growth is excessive, well, that's just too bad.

Back in Davis, on the same day the host mayors agreed a new UC campus was needed, the boys and girls who will need it were already sitting through another harrowing afternoon of sixth-grade history and arithmetic.

Eight years from now, the chances are good that those same sixth graders, if they're lucky enough to get into one of the nine campuses of the University of California, will face housing, parking and class shortages of nightmarish proportions. It may already be too late for those kids. But for today's fifth and fourth and third graders there is time—if, and only if, the university acts now. ■