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In ‘Bloombergville,’ Budget Protesters Sleep In

By **DAVID W. CHEN**

Mylan Cannon/The New York Times Yotam Marom and Larry Hales with New Yorkers Against the Budget Cut Coalition speaking before a group of other protesters.

So it may not be quite on the scale of the so-called Walkerville sit-in in Wisconsin, or the protests in Tahrir Square in Cairo. Nor will it remind anyone of the anti-apartheid shantytowns on college campuses in the 1980s, or even, on a much less serious note, the legions of Duke students who regularly camp out in a makeshift tent city, known as Krzyzewskiville, before college basketball games.

Mylan Cannon/The New York Times A crowd of about 100 people sleeping outside City Hall Park in protest of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg’s proposed city budget cuts of \$208 million.

But at least give the forces behind “Bloombergville” points for being creative for highlighting their anger toward Mayor **Michael R. Bloomberg**’s proposed layoffs and cuts in his \$65 billion budget.

On Tuesday night, a collection of labor officials, students and social service workers parked themselves just outside City Hall in sleeping bags and vowed to stay there, nonstop, “till Bloomberg’s budget is defeated!”

It is the first sleep-in protest outside City Hall in recent memory, according to the police and city officials. And about 100 people made it through Night 1, despite the rain and chilly conditions. By Wednesday morning, the 20 or so protesters who were still there were in good spirits, distributing fliers, chanting slogans and recording their actions on video cameras.

Inspired by Wisconsin and Cairo, the organizers say: “Bloomberg’s budget is killing New York! To stop his teacher firings, firehouse closings, and cuts to libraries, day care, CUNY and more, we’re going to be sleeping outside City Hall and protesting to make our voices heard for as long as it takes,” according to their fliers [and their Web site](#).

City officials note that many groups — including business and civic organizations, and nonpartisan policy groups and others who tend not to protest — have praised the mayor for trying to act prudently in his budget, despite being dealt a bad fiscal hand. They also say that Albany’s austere budget is largely to blame for the city’s budget shortfall.

So when asked about the protests, Marc La Vorgna, a spokesman for Mr. Bloomberg, said, “They should have been camped out in Albany months ago.”

The people behind Bloombergville are not the only ones who have relied on social media to voice their grievances about the budget, in an attempt to go beyond the usual parade of protests on the steps of City Hall.

One group, led by Arthur Cheliotas, president of Communications Workers of America Local 1180, has been especially creative. [Relying on a Web site](#), the group has been active on Facebook and Twitter in distributing their man-on-the-street interviews with New Yorkers about Mr. Bloomberg’s proposed cuts. They have come up with an online slide show comparing Mr. Bloomberg to the Grinch. And they have even come up [with a YouTube video](#) likening Mr. Bloomberg to Godzilla, crushing schools, firehouses and anything else in his wake.

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