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The University of Dayton Supports Lettuce Boycott

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DAYTON, Ohio, June 28, 1972 --- The University of Dayton, at the request of the Campus Ministry and the Peace Studies Institute, will support the current lettuce boycott recently called by Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers. This announcement was made today by Rev. Thomas Stanley, Director of the Campus Ministry, and student members, Jack Becka and Vince McKelvey, of the Peace Studies Institute with the endorsement of Rev. George B. Barrett, S.M., Acting President, and Brother Joseph Mervar, S.M., University Business Manager.

Under this endorsement of the boycott the University Food Services will henceforth purchase only UFW head lettuce (clearly identified as such).

In supporting the boycott, the University is taking a position similar to that of Ohio Governor John Gilligan, State Representative C. J. McLin, Mrs. Coretta King, and Senator Ted Kennedy among others.

In a letter to Brother Mervar asking for consideration of supporting the boycott, Father Stanley wrote:

"At the present time Cesar Chavez's AFL-CIO United Farm Workers are organizing a boycott of non-union lettuce because negotiations with the lettuce growers have broken down. A similar boycott some years ago was successful in improving the labor conditions of the grape pickers.

Because farm workers are too poor and too easily replaced to battle employers in a traditional strike situation, the union can make very limited use of strikes in agriculture. Thus they enlist the support of sympathizers around the country to boycott products of the companies involved in the disputes.

The poverty and dangerous working conditions of the lettuce pickers is a national scandal. Fidelity to the stated objectives of this University demands that the U.D. join the boycott (and suffer whatever inconveniences such action may entail) and publicly announce its intention of buying and serving only union lettuce.

Some years ago, our recently deceased Archbishop backed (publicly) a similar boycott action on behalf of Cesar Chavez. I am sure he would urge us to join this one.

As Director of the Campus Ministry, then, I ask that you lead U.D. in joining the effort to assist these needy workers and that you give whatever directives are necessary for U.D. to join the boycott."

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