

ARCHEVÊCHÉ DE MONTRÉAL

OFFICE FOR ENGLISH-LANGUAGE AFFAIRS

April 25, 1975.

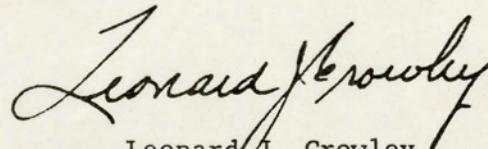
STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF UNITED FARM WORKERS

On the occasion of Farm Worker Week (May 4 to 10), I wish to assure all members of the United Farm Workers of my full and continued support of the boycott of non-U.F.W. table grapes and iceberg lettuce. I also wish to congratulate them, and the many dedicated people of our city who have helped them, in the organization and conduct of this non-violent campaign against injustice.

I would remind all our English-Catholic people that the cause of the United Farm Workers has been supported by the Archdiocese of Montreal for some time, by Canadian bishops across the country, by the United States Bishops' Conference, and by Pope Paul VI. During his private audience with Cesar Chavez, President of the U.F.W., in Rome, in September, 1974, the Holy Father spoke of his joy at the "sustained effort to apply the principles of Christian social teaching" made by Cesar Chavez and his organization, and of their "laudable spirit of cooperation" with the bishops in the promotion of their cause.

The objective of the current boycott is to win for all farm workers the right to free, secret-ballot elections to determine whether or not they want a union, and, if so, what union they want, to represent them. This fundamental right of self-determination is taken for granted in most sectors of labour today and is fully endorsed by the Church. Yet farm workers have been excluded from this right and have not been protected by the law.

By supporting the grape-and-lettuce boycott, we, as Catholics, can show our concern for Christian principles of social justice and do something concrete to help our brothers and sisters in Christ in their struggle for the recognition of their human dignity. I call upon all our people to give their full support to the boycott in Montreal.


Leonard J. Crowley
Auxiliary Bishop of Montreal.