

WEBSTER COLLEGE

Statement from Dr. Gerdine Regarding the Webster College Strike
May 5, 1970

The Webster Students and faculty, in calling for a two day action in memory of the Kent State students and in protest of the expansion of the war into Cambodia, have stressed three major points:

1. The general strike, called for Wednesday, May 6, is not a strike against the College, its administration or its faculty. It is rather, in the Strike Committee's own words, "to encourage intelligent involvement in the vital societal issue immediately before us".

2. Violence, in the words of the students "is simply not an option".

A student committee of marshalls has been established to co-ordinate all activities. This committee has voluntarily established contact with the Webster Groves police department, under the direction of Chief Zinn, and is working co-operatively with them.

3. While the committee is asking that all normal college business cease on Wednesday, the group understands that some functions must continue. Student volunteers have come forward to assist in these areas, releasing regular employees who may wish to participate in strike activities or simply remain at home.

Throughout our discussions, involving students, faculty and administrators yesterday afternoon and last night, the strike committee has gone to great length to

guarantee that the College and its personnel will not be jeopardized in any way.

We are agreed that the institution as an institution will not take a stand on political issues. This would violate the very academic freedom to which we are all committed. That same academic freedom, however, enables students and faculty the right to express their own views within the context of their own working and living situations. As long as there is no violence of any kind, and the rights of others are not infringed upon -- and with a continuation of the responsibility demonstrated thus far, this will be the case -- these privileges are being adequately and fairly used.

At this point, I am extremely proud of the tenor, style and sensitivity demonstrated by all involved in the strike.