Prof. Z.K. Matthews,
Fort Hare.

Dear Professor Matthews,

I enclose a copy of a letter I have just received from the President of the Student Christian Movement in Oxford—one of the organisations with which I was working while in England. I wonder if you would be prepared to give me your advice confidentially on the subject it refers to in order to help me give a balanced reply to the request.

I quite appreciate your position should you feel unable to assist me.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Donald Bragg
Merton College,
Oxford.
11th November 1959

Dear Mr. Cragg,

You may have heard that there is considerable agitation among university students in Britain for a boycott of South African goods. Thanks to the diplomacy of Costa Carras who was, you remember, S.C.M.'s president in Oxford, the joint protest committee (J.A.C.A.R.I.) has conceded that it cannot advocate such an action and can only publicise the various possibilities. Supporting societies must now think over the issues, not least the S.C.M., as it is largely responsible for the present cautious position. The new exec, of which I am president, naturally feels that further deliberation cannot proceed until the relevant facts are more fully known.

We therefore wondered if you would give us some guidance. In particular could you indicate whether a boycott would in fact be an effective form of protest, or even a justified one. A great deal is said here about the psychological effect of such a move, but no-one seems clear which particular group of people is meant to be affected. Those of course who advocate a selective boycott feel that such a course of action would have a direct effect on a particular group. But for this to be valid, one must know that the particular firms singled out by Congress are not simply the victims of personal animosity, and that, when such a boycott has been applied within South Africa, as I believe it has, the effects have in fact been as intended. Naturally we are also acutely aware that our relations with the South African S.C.M. (sic - S.C.A.) place us in a very special position which we cannot ignore.

On all these points then, there is a good deal of confusion and division, and we should be very grateful if you could help to guide us to a just and responsible decision.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Wallace
(President. Oxford SCM)