

TEN REASONS TO RETIRE THE CHIEF

### 3. Bad Publicity - National Views

#### Nationwide disdain for the Chief reflects poorly on the UofI

##### Regional and National Opinion

**Wall Street Journal** - Frederick C. Klein

"Sports are supposed to be fun, and neither they nor the ceremonies that surround them should cause distress. The university should rise above the Chief's supporters and detractors and ease him into retirement."

**Chicago Tribune** - Editorial "Retire The Chief"

"By now board [of trustees] members should recognize that their athletic teams' controversial symbol has become too great a distraction... the University of Illinois is, after all, an academic institution."

**Milwaukee Journal Sentinel** - Article

"With the continued presence of Chief Illiniwek, the University of Illinois is merely making a spectacle of itself."

**Chronicle of Higher Education** - Letter

"I recently applied for a faculty position at the University ... but when I learned that [UIUC] aggressively promotes the perpetuation of stereotypical representations of native people, I withdrew my application."

**Chicago Sun-Times** - former Senator Paul Simon

"...the alumni and University of Illinois board of trustees .. have not reached the point of sensitivity that their colleagues at Dartmouth and Stanford and other schools have achieved ... sooner or later the University of Illinois will join other schools in abandoning this symbol, and the sooner the better."

**Amnesty International** - Letter from Chair of Board to UIUC

"While the First Amendment gives UIUC the right to use these symbols [dancing, chanting, face-painting wearing eagle feathers] in a way that dishonors and debases [Native Americans], it is shameful and wrong for UIUC to exercise this right in this way..."

✓ **Reality Check**



The University is *not* about the Chief. It is about excellence & leadership in teaching, research and athletics.

← U.I. ACES Library. The ACES Department of Agricultural Engineering is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in U.S.

##### Bad P.R. for the University: Chief Illiniwek is a poor symbol for the University of Illinois

By the Editor, RetireTheChief

Just the facts - or in this case, opinions.

National publicity regarding the Chief and other Native American sports symbols is predominantly negative. Even prominent former supporters of the Chief have since recommended his retirement.

Read on for the opinions of regional and national organizations, newspapers and magazines on use of Chief Illiniwek as a UIUC symbol. Keep in mind such press may constitute a poor first impression of the U. of I. for national leaders and media as well as prospective students and faculty.

Isn't it time to retire the Chief? •

**CNN Talkback Live** - comment by Vernon Bellecourt

"... 'Braves,' 'Chiefs,' or 'Indians,' those are not our words ... But when you attach it to a sports team, then it conjures up and triggers all the ridiculous behavior, stereotypical behavior, which is really an offense and an insult to Indian people and non-Indian people ..."

**Chicago Sun-Times** - Roger Ebert

"The Chief for me goes back to childhood ... But ... I must listen again at what Native Americans are saying, and they are saying they feel wounded and dismayed by this depiction of their culture..."

**Sports Illustrated** - Article by Franz Lidz

"[Chief Illiniwek] is the sort of ignoble savage that grunted and circled wagon trains in Saturday afternoon serials ... has nothing to do with football and everything to do with what's sacred to the Native American heritage."

**Southern Poverty Law Center** - Letter to UIUC

"Chief Illiniwek is a racial caricature that represents 'Indian' culture in a simplistic and stereotypical fashion ... An image that denigrates members of the University community can hardly serve as a symbol of school spirit and unity."

The SPLC, founded in Montgomery AL in 1971, is a nationally-recognized organization dedicated to tolerance and diversity.

(This is only a sample; 31 opinions on this subject, and all references, are at RetireTheChief.org).

www.RetireTheChief.org: Welcome • Letters • Essays • Position statements • Web sites • Pro-/Anti- Chief dialogue

## WELCOME

This site exists to give a voice to those who believe Chief Illiniwek should be retired, to promote discussion between those who are pro- and anti-Chief, and to encourage a change in policy - to retire the Chief. We want to help turn up the volume on the Chief debate. Regardless of your stand on this divisive issue, welcome. Much more may be found at our web site, [www.RetireTheChief.org](http://www.RetireTheChief.org). We welcome your letters on the subject.