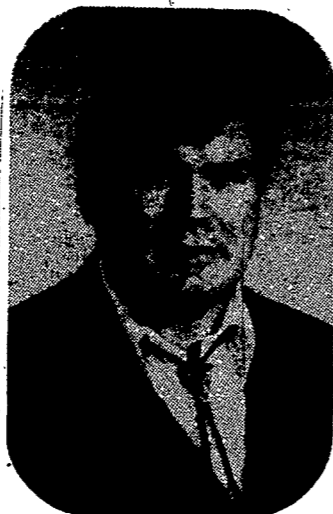


# OHD Joins J.P. Stevens Boycott

By MICHAEL GRODEN

In keeping with their philosophy of "pursuing social justice founded upon and within the context of Christian theology," the diocesan Office of Human Development, headed by John Salter, has joined in a nation-wide boycott of all products made by J.P. Stevens Co.



JOHN SALTER

The boycott, launched in mid-1976, comes as a result of a 14-year-old conflict between the company and the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU).

The Stevens Co., the nation's second largest textile manufacturer employing some 44,000 people in 85 plants mainly in the Southeast, has strongly opposed union efforts to organize its employees since 1963.

The company supplies the retail market chiefly with bed sheets and pillowcases, under various labels.

So far the company's anti-union stand has been effective. To date only seven plants representing some

3,500 employees, in Roanoke Rapids, North Carolina have been able to organize. The union was approved by Roanoke Rapids workers in 1974. However, a labor contract has yet to be signed by Stevens.

The textile manufacturer has paid a price in fighting the union. It has, for example, been found guilty of 15 separate violations of the National Labor Relations Act, paying a

number of heavy fines. These cases, among other things, deal with illegal firing of employees, for union activities in the plant, and failing to negotiate in good faith with the Roanoke Rapids union.

They have also been found guilty of violating health standards, causing "brown lung" disease, and they did not contest but paid a \$50,000 fine for wire-tapping the motel room of a union organizer.

Aside from Stevens' chairman, James D. Finley, admitting "mistakes in judgement" the company has made it clear that it will not back down from fighting the unionizing effort.

In June, 1976, statement concerning the boycott, J.P. Stevens contends that the main reason for their fighting organizing efforts is that "the overwhelming majority of the employees of Stevens do not want to be unionized." Union spokesmen claim that the reason for this is because the company has scared off potential union members and taken advantage of weaknesses in the labor laws, making it impossible for fair elections.

John Salter, who spent nearly ten years working for the civil rights movement in the deep South during the sixties, feels the underlying cause for Stevens' reluctance to accept a union, besides the loss in profits, is racism.

In a report dealing with the dispute, Salter writes, "Any study of the Stevens' situation cannot divorce itself from the murky setting of the American South - where both the negative and the positive strains that course through the American culture are seen with oft-brutal clarity."

He continues saying that with the coming of the civil rights movement the

barriers of racism (in Roanoke Rapids and throughout the South) began to break down.

"Forced into day-to-day egalitarian association with non-whites through the sociological alteration in the County patterns of interreaction (i.e. desegregation) and within the plant itself, many white workers - like white Southerners generally - began to see non-whites as people. The racist perspective began to wane and, conversely, the positive ties that have so often linked white and non-white Southerners together in the small town Southland, were strengthened."

Although both sides are still in a stalemate, there seems to be a thaw.

On June 6 seven Roman Catholic bishops from the Southeast offered to "mediate between the parties for the good of all concerned."

Archbishop Thomas A. Donnellan, Atlanta, Ga.,

and Bishops Michael J. Begley, Charlotte, N.C.; F. Joseph Gossman, Raleigh, N.C.; Raymond W. Lessard, Savannah, Ga.; George Lynch, auxiliary of Raleigh; Walter F. Sullivan, Richmond, Va.; and Ernest L. Unterkoefer, Charleston, S.C. said, in a statement printed in the June 9 edition of Origins, that although they supported the right of workers to organize into unions, "they have refrained from taking sides" in this issue.

They warned, however, that if Stevens continued to refuse negotiation, they would "feel obliged" to "review the situation and in a reasonable period of time, to issue a more detailed and more specific statement on the dispute," strongly hinting that censure of Stevens would be forthcoming.

Salter is hopeful of a victory for the union. He added that it would be a major setback in both Southern economics and interracial action if Stevens emerged victorious.

# Mercy Sisters On 'Vacation' In Navajoland

\*Sisters Barbara Joan Wintish and Karen Marie Burmeister both of the Rochester Mercy Community, are taking their "vacation" in northeastern Arizona. They set out by bus Saturday for a mission station in Navajoland, where they will work for the next eight weeks.

Sister Barbara Joan, a licensed practical nurse, will help at a pediatrics clinic set up by her friend, Dr. Nancy Thompson. The two have worked together in Rochester. Sister Karen Marie a Mercy High School teacher, will be in public health, devising programs for elderly Indians. Their station is the St. Isabel Mission in Lukachukai, where the summer temperature is said to rise sometimes to 120 degrees.



5-27 FLYING THINGS

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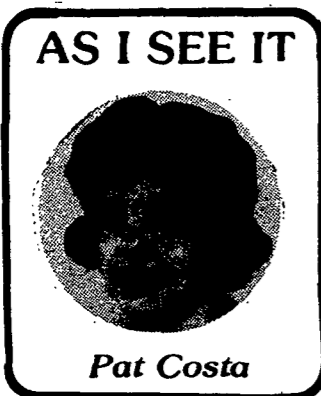
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Pat Costa

Children who have never known a home without television cannot, I suspect, ever appreciate the medium as those of us who became acquainted with the modern day miracle later in life.

It dawned on this viewer as the children and I were watching Pope Paul conduct canonization ceremonies for St. John Neumann on a recent Sunday morning via CBS satellite that I was the only one overcome by the electronic wonder of it all.

To watch and hear the head of the Catholic Church receive symbolic gifts from people from Syracuse, Buffalo, and Philadelphia removed the spectacle out of the realm of never-never land where we are taken nightly on the 6:30 network news and forced upon us the reality of what television can really do and does.

That this much maligned medium makes us privy to history in the making, at a ringside seat, no less, will never fail to astonish me. (Unfortunately we were not among those sharp-sighted enough to spot the Rochester delegation.

Much is said about the effect of TV on family life. Experts tell us that family activities including conversation have come to a standstill because of the interruptive presence of the tube.

We are told that parents and children do not play parlor games together, read aloud, build models, bake cookies or do any of the other things they used to engage in before television.

Poppycock. Those parents inclined to enjoy the company of their offspring

will always do so whether or not TV is present. And those parents who cannot stand their kids would only find some other excuse for ignoring them if there were no TV.

As we watched the canonization of the holy man from Pennsylvania and watched the dramatizations of his life, more questions were generated than in all the previous weeks when newspapers and magazines were full of background stories.

Too often we hear about the undue influence TV has on us all.

There is the other side of the coin. As a teacher, clarifier and delineator, it has no parallel.

AS I SEE IT

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