

Farah pants boycott fails to crease Lincoln sales

By Tam Mehuron

Despite favorable union publicity concerning the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) boycott of Farah Manufacturing Co., no Lincoln stores have been affected, according to Paul Hartman, Farah sales representative.

The ACWA's efforts to unionize the world's largest manufacturer of men's slacks have failed thus far, he said. In Nebraska the effect of the union's efforts have been counterproductive, according to Ron Preston, Magee's sales manager.

Farah slacks sales haven't decreased at Miller and Paine and Brandeis stores although a recent article in the *Lincoln Gazette* encouraged consumers not to buy the slacks.

Because Farah is the largest garment manufacturing company in the Southwest, ACWA views Farah employees as a potential source for increased union membership and finances, Preston said.

However, most Farah employees don't want to become union members because they have so much more now than a union could provide, the sales manager added.

Employee fringe benefits include a free medical clinic, free medicine, eye glasses at cost and non-contributory profit-sharing and pension plans.

Health and life insurance plans that are non-contributory after the first year, vacations and a company lunch room offering substantial meals for 75 cents are provided also according to Hartman.

The *Gazette* reported that the workers are paid \$1.80 to \$2.25 an hour, pay that the *Gazette* called very low wages for factory work.

One of 10,000 Farah employees who are unionized in other factories, however, a union poster indicated that 3,000 were supporting the union.

To become the bargaining agent for a company's employees, a union must have the signatures of 30 per cent of the total work force on union cards requesting the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to conduct an election by secret ballot.

The National Labor Relations Act states that more than 50 per cent of the eligible employees shall determine the outcome. The union receiving the majority vote then becomes the bargaining agent, according to the NLRB.

The ACWA has failed for four years to obtain the necessary quota of signatures to call for an NLRB election, according to company statistics.

To offset this failure, the union and the AFL-CIO called a nationwide boycott against the company, Hartman said.

In an effort to settle the matter, Farah twice has requested the NLRB to hold plantwide elections at two plants in San Antonio and one in Victoria, Tex. However, if the ACWA preferred, Farah would agree to company wide elections.

The ACWA, however, has refused consistently to agree to such elections. Hartman said "The union actually filed a letter with the NLRB saying that the ACWA does not in fact represent anyone in Farah."

Hartman said the 1,200 union supporters wanted to choose for 10,000 Farah workers, and that this violated the majority over minority policy of Farah.

More complications have developed as a result of recent church involvement at the El Paso plant. Roman Catholic Bishop Sidney M. Metzger said he supports the Farah union because "they are poor workers and if I had refused, they would have been bitterly disillusioned with the church."

The bishop's support of the pro-union minority resulted in a letter from 8,000 Catholic Farah workers, protesting his action. The letter, which was printed in the *El Paso Times*, read in part: "Your talk to the workers who walked out from their jobs at Farah was disheartening to all of us Catholics, who are working at Farah and who know the true facts...I am certain that there is no one in El Paso who has tried as hard to get good benefits and improve working conditions for its employees as Willie F. [Name]..."

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Farah management first learned of the workers' action when the letter appeared in the newspaper, according to Paul Poling, a United Presbyterian minister who investigated the Farah situation and wrote a booklet about it, called "For the Defense of Farah Workers."

Hartman said that anyone who wants to is encouraged to visit the Farah plants. The bishop was invited to visit the plant to investigate it, but he refused, according to Poling.

Hartman termed the incident "misunderstanding in the church."

Both Preston and Hartman noted that since Nebraska is not "union country", there has been little publicity about the Farah situation.



Astronaut Edgar Mitchell

Astronaut to probe 'inner space' in talk

The sixth man to walk on the moon, Edgar Mitchell, will speak on "Exploring Inner Space" at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Nebraska Union.

Mitchell conducted an ESP experiment during the Apollo 14 moon mission and, since his retirement from the Navy in 1972, has embarked on a new career.

He founded the Institute of Noetic Sciences in Palo Alto, Calif., in 1973. Noetic refers to consciousness. The institute is dedicated to scientific research in the processes of human consciousness, and educational activities designed to expand awareness and release human potential.

Mitchell's talk is part of the Nebraska Union Talks and Topics Committee's Human Potential Series. The series, being sponsored in conjunction with the United Ministries in Higher Education, concludes Oct. 11 with an address at the University of Nebraska at Omaha on "Psychology and

Roskens criticizes UNO fee use story

The chancellor of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Ron Roskens, has accused UNO's student newspaper, the *Gateway*, of "distortions" which he said appeared in a recent issue of the newspaper.

However, in an editorial in Wednesday's *Gateway*, the newspaper said the chancellor's "attempted refutation of a *Gateway* story concerning purchases of various

entertainment items amounted to nothing but hollow rhetoric."

The *Gateway* story in question disclosed that UNO purchased \$7,880 worth of china, silverware and a van with UNO student fee money.

At a meeting of the UNO student senate, Roskens, holding a copy of the newspaper, pointed to a front page story headlined, "Student-paid fees buy china, silver, van." Then he said, "It opens up an impression that there have been some underhanded activities."

He continued, "We have no objection to criticism. In fact, we expect it. Neither do I want to give the impression that we are somehow trying to put a clamp on the *Gateway*. But one would get the impression from this story that the china, the silver and the van were purchased for my convenience."

He said that the university has not provided a home for him as many other universities do for their chancellors, and said, "We are under no obligation to use our home for university purposes."

He said that he and his wife spend much time and work in their entertaining efforts for the university.

Roskens then referred to several points in the *Gateway* account of his expenditures which he said were distortions.

First, he said the story created the impression that the price of the things purchased was exorbitant. He explained that the \$1,800 china was purchased at a 30 per cent discount.

Second, he said the article gave the impression that the catering van was to be used only for transporting food to his home, when actually it will be used in many other areas.

See *Gateway*, page 7.

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