

Corpus Christi Minor Seminary

ROUTE 1 — BOX 500
CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS 78415

23 April 1974

Mr. W. D. Chisolm
President, Supermarket Interstate
2708 South 84th Street
Omaha, Nebraska

Dear Mr. Chisolm:

We write you this letter to impress on you the concern with which a significant segment of our community in Corpus Christi views the current labor dispute between Supermarket Interstate, Inc./ J. C. Penny Co., Inc. and the Retail Clerks Union, Local 455.

To be precise, we strongly regret and protest what seems to be a discriminatory attitude toward our people.

For one thing, this is an area of high poverty; it is an area flooded with unskilled labor. Now, while we most certainly welcome the contribution to our common good of a supermarket, your employment policy here does little to alleviate and much to exacerbate our problems. For there is a growing conviction that you are merely exploiting the situation, knowing that needy people, to survive, will submit to substandard wages, meager benefits, and a paternalistic management.

We feel a decent, living wage, job security, reasonable working conditions, health and pension benefits should not have to be so painfully striven for, so reluctantly acknowledged; that they are valid, natural human aspirations.

Secondly, it is certainly not unknown to our people that in others of your stores your employees enjoy a standard union wage-benefits contract such as workers here seek of you. You cannot believe, can you, that the people of Corpus Christi have to struggle with the high cost of living any the less than, say, the people of New Mexico? Your policy here, then, certainly seems a species of discrimination.

We the undersigned feel it incumbent upon ourselves, not only to urge you to re-open negotiations with the Retail Clerks Union, but necessary also to discourage shoppers from buying at the Globe Supermarket until reasonable collective bargaining has been concluded.

In which regard, we would gladly offer you the services, in a mediating capacity, of responsible, respected citizens of our community. There are leaders, for example, of the Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, and Orthodox faiths willing to offer themselves in such wise if so called upon.

Truly yours,

(Rev.) William J. Hill, S.J.
Rev. Patrick Higgins Pastor