

## home textiles/curtains/draperies linens/domestics/bath



### behind the curtain by Al Levine

#### Affinity to Furniture

"FOUR WEEKS AFTER 'HERCULON' CAME OUT of Larry Schnuer's mouth, olefin sleepcovers were on sale at Bloomingdale's."

This is the way that Paul Pilzer, youthful vice-president for sales of Pilzer Bros., recounts the start of the company's growing program on Herculon sleepcovers.

The Bloomingdale divisional merchandise manager for home furnishings came to Pilzer Bros. to ask what it could do with high-quality Herculon sleepcovers.

"Larry, with his knowledge of the furniture market, recognized that the success of Herculon in upholstered furniture can be tied in with sleepcovers," Paul says.

The initial reaction to the speedily launched Pilzer Herculon sleepcovers earlier this season bolsters Paul's view both that sleepcovers are a big growth area and that olefin can play an important part in this growth.

OLEFIN, A BIG FACTOR in the furniture market, is a natural for sleepcovers, Paul says.

"The sleepcover market is furniture. A lot of people are using it as an inexpensive convertible, so upholstery types of fabrics are logical for sleepcover usage.

The company, he points out, has been successful with upholstery types of fabrics, including rayon/acetates, and linen/cotton with Scotchgard.

"We anticipate a big market for Herculon and all upholstery fabrics."

Other stores from Gimbels, New York, to Macy's, San Francisco, have picked up olefin sleepcovers, Paul reports.

At Gimbels, he points out that the furniture background of Richard Swed, buyer of sleepcovers and decorative pillows, was an asset in working on olefin styling.

"He was formerly a furniture buyer, and was experienced with Herculon upholstery."

BLOOMINGDALE'S RECENTLY INCLUDED CHALET, a broad plaid in Herculon, in its promotion of quilted sleepcovers keyed to the holiday season. Four-way fitted Chalet covers to fit Hollywoods (39x75x20), Hi-risers (34/75x22), Studios (34x75x18), were priced for the sale at \$48, with wedge covers at \$15 and pillow shams at \$12.

Sleepcovers and blinds are in the same department at Bloomingdale's, so it was a natural thing for Ralph Vacarro to have shades made to go with the Herculon sleepcover program, Paul points out.

For Pilzer Bros., which does about 50 per cent of its business on bedspreads and draperies, the balance on sleepcovers, the move into Herculon involved a major capital investment in new machines and cutting tools, Paul observes.

Paul notes that sleepcovers are growing not only in the conventional areas like Los Angeles and Chicago, but "also elsewhere around the country."

"The big growth is in the 39x75x20 Hollywoods," he reports.

"The studio look is desired all over," he sums up. "It's right for the 1970s life style."

PAUL AND HIS BROTHER LEONARD graduated from Lehigh University last June and were both on their way to graduate school. Paul was heading for Wharton Business School, and Paul for law school.

But the good response on the Herculons played a part in their decision to defer graduate study.

"I may go to Wharton, but I enjoy what I'm doing," says Paul. Leonard is vice-president, production.

Elias, their father, is president of the company, and runs the factory at 102 Madison Avenue.

Elias founded the company with three brothers in 1920: Morris, Max, and Manny. Pilzers are very much active in the drapery/bedspread/sleepcover market.

Max's son, Paul, is president of Silver-Pilzer, which manufactures bedspreads for Montgomery Ward and J.C. Penney Co.

Morris's son, Steve, is vice-president of Star Bedspread Co. Max's brother-in-law, Stanley Mandel, operates Stanley Studio.