

they have not been organized and interpreted in such a way as to be meaningful to consumers.

I might say that we have probably the best staff of economists and statisticians which is enjoyed by any government agency anywhere in the world, but these people are not necessarily the best equipped to interpret for the lay public and to present in such a way as to be most helpful. This type of information for the consumer and his wife—

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Do you think if you turned over some of the special studies you have or some of the information to the Walt Disney organization and told them to make a 15-minute short on it that they could probably be helpful?

Mr. Ross. Why I think so. I might say BLS does get a good deal of mileage, not from Walt Disney yet, but we do from newspapers, magazines, television programs, and so forth, where they have people on their staff who are better than we are at making something meaningful to the average lay person.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I was looking at page 2 of a BLS publication entitled "The Consumer Price Index, January 1964, A Short Description." In there is a sentence, "the Consumer Price Index is used widely by the general public to guide family budgeting and to understand what is happening to family finances." Do you really think it's used widely by the general public?

Mr. Ross. I would like to comment on that. I am about one paragraph short of finishing my statement. Let me finish it and then I will come right to that question.

5. If we are to make our data more meaningful and understandable to consumers, more creative ways must be found to disseminate the information. We will have to discover the best ways of getting the information into the hands of the consumers themselves as well as to persons and agencies who help consumers, such as newspapers and magazines, social welfare agencies, women's organizations, home economics teachers, et cetera.

In summary, the Bureau's present program is being enhanced as we complete our work on standard family budgets. Nevertheless, there are a number of steps that can make them more useful such as the points I have enumerated. The Bureau hopes to improve its program continually to better serve the needs of the American consumer.

Now, Mr. Chairman, you called attention to a statement in our pamphlet concerning the price index that the Consumer Price Index is widely used by the general public to guide family budgeting. We also pointed out here that it is used extensively in labor-management contracts to adjust wages, long-term leases, other types of long-term contracts. In addition, it is used as a measure of changes in the purchasing power of the dollar for such purposes as adjusting royalties, pensions, welfare payments, all money—

Mr. ROSENTHAL. It is used by a lot of professionals, but I was interested in the statement that it is used widely by the general public.

Mr. Ross. Well, that I think would have to be regarded as a hopeful statement. I would say that we do get a lot of correspondence. Over the year, including our regional offices, we probably get tens of thousands of inquiries concerning price trends, so that is some indication of interest among the general public.