

zations—consumer research or consumer cooperative organizations. They make tremendous use of our material. Some trade unions, although not all, have consumer programs. I, when I get a chance, try to follow trade union publications. They sometimes have consumer columnists and quite a good deal of consumer information.

There are, I think, all kinds of organizations that do make use of consumer information and they get it to the public that way. We do have a great many inquiries from consumers although certainly only a small proportion of total consumers would be corresponding with us directly.

Mr. MYERS. Now some of the information you get, does that go into the cost of living figure we see published?

Mr. Ross. That is our information.

Mr. MYERS. You mean that is the cost of living that we see, the index—

Mr. Ross. The consumer price index which I have been referring to is generally known as the cost of living index. That is our index.

Mr. MYERS. Well, you say, here, you don't go into a lot of areas such as cost of mortgage loans and automobiles and so forth—

Mr. Ross. No, sir; I didn't say that.

Mr. MYERS. I thought that was in the statement.

Mr. Ross. No. We have to distinguish between the index and the publication of actual dollars and cents prices. We publish—I wonder—

Mr. MYERS. I just got this statement but I thought I remembered you saying something—well, you know what you said.

Mr. Ross. No. I didn't say that. We do publish an index—

Mr. MYERS. Excuse me. I stand corrected.

Mr. Ross (continuing). For all significant items of consumption. We have indexes for the Nation and the 20 largest cities on automobiles, for example, and on mortgage interest—

Mr. MYERS. I know where I got that information. You were talking about the cost of living, the poor, housing areas and so forth and said you didn't consider their—

Mr. Ross. That was the special study of living costs of the poor as compared to the affluent or nonpoor. That was a special inquiry we made at the request of the Food Marketing Commission and OEO, and we only took certain points of relevance there. Only certain types of consumer goods.

Mr. MYERS. How many people do you have working now in your Department?

Mr. Ross. The entire Bureau of Labor Statistics?

Mr. MYERS. Yes.

Mr. Ross. 1,600.

Mr. MYERS. What is your budget? How much does this cost per year?

Mr. Ross. I am referring to the entire program of the BLS, not just the price indexes.

Mr. MYERS. CPI.

Mr. Ross. Oh, that is another story, Mr. Myers. The answer to your question is that the consumer price index program costs us about \$2 million a year. That is the budget which Congress gives us for that purpose. The employment on that program comes to about 175 peo-