

be differences, although certainly not as great as between Nassau County and Manhattan. But we don't have that. Now, there are some cases where there are local groups connected with chambers of commerce or local colleges and universities which want to survey on a narrower basis than we do in our program, and we are able to give them technical assistance.

I might say there are some universities around the country that do have their own programs which are designed for these specialized local needs, and we try to give them help in showing them how to do it.

Mr. WYDLER. I think there will be a look taken at this situation in the near future, so I wanted to give you the benefit of my thinking in case you happened to be asked about it in the Department.

Mr. ROSS. Yes. Well, I am aware certainly that New York is an extremely vast area with many differences.

Mr. WYDLER. One thing, in conclusion in your statement, what really struck me rather strongly is this statement regarding the difference in the price of food in well-to-do and poor neighborhoods. If I understand what you say, it seems to me you say it is really a question of the fact that you don't have chainstores in the poverty areas. Would that be a fair—

Mr. ROSS. I wouldn't say there are no chainstores in poverty areas. Of course, there are some. But there are a larger proportion of the small neighborhood stores, the so-called mom and pop stores, small independents, and a lesser availability of chainstores.

Mr. WYDLER. Which you say accounts for the difference in the general cost.

Mr. ROSS. It accounts for much of the difference. There are also differences in the appearance of the stores, in the freshness of the merchandise, and so forth, which you sometimes find even between a chainstore in a slum area and a store of the same chain out in the suburbs, but the price differences, by and large, are related to differences in type of store.

Mr. WYDLER. Which would seem to me to be an indication of what might have to be done or the direction your efforts should take if you really wanted to eliminate or ameliorate, depending on how you look at it, that difference.

Mr. ROSS. Well, I know my friends in New York City have maids who live in Harlem, and they have tried to advise their maids to do their own shopping in the high-rent area near Central Park, let's say, from supermarkets rather than to go back in Harlem and buy there, so they can save money. That does indicate the lack of full availability of merchandising outlets in the slums.

Mr. WYDLER. Could you comment on the fact—I am just trying to figure in my own mind—why the cost would be higher under these circumstances? Is it more expensive to do business in low-income areas?

Mr. ROSS. No; I think it is more expensive—you don't get the economies of scale in a small independent mom and pop store that you do running a chain. I don't want to argue for or against bigness, I don't want to get into that, but it is certainly true that a chain can operate more economically in some ways than the small store. It has the ability to buy en masse, it has experts of all kinds, and usually can sell at lower prices.