in his home city went from 29 to 39 cents per head. This information could be tied in with publications regularly issued by the Department of Agriculture on the supply and price outlook for food of all kinds to assist the consumer in planning his food budget. The same kind of information could be provided, at least on a national or regional basis, for many other consumer items, such as men's suits, women's dresses, refrigerators, hospital rooms, etc.

If average prices for more items were published for a greater number of localities, consumers might be able to determine whether items they are considering are really the bargains that sellers claim them to be. If they were able to obtain a reasonable estimate of what they should expect to pay for an item, they could be in a position to be more careful shoppers.

3. There appears to be a great deal of confusion in the minds of consumers about the price per unit represented by different sizes of packages. Because of its present method of collecting price data, the Bureau's existing price records do not provide a complete answer to this question. With an expansion of coverage to include a broader cross section of package sizes, however, we could advise consumers of per unit differences in prices for various package sizes. We also could provide information on changes in per unit prices as new package sizes are introduced, or old ones are altered.

4. A major area in which BLS data could be made more useful to consumers is that of family budgeting. In connection with our forthcoming reports on standard budgets, we are planning to prepare pamphlets in popular form. More could be done along this line than we now are presently able to do. It would involve further simplification of the manner in which the budgets are presented, and their adaptation to various types and sizes of families. The results would provide a "norm" against which individual families could measure their own spending for various classes of goods and services.

The data which the Bureau gathers on consumer income and expenditure, as well as the work that is done in preparing the standard budgets, could be exploited further. For example, we could prepare pamphlets on "the cost of running a house," or "the cost of owning and operating a car," or "the cost of rearing a child." These are subjects on which we receive many inquiries. Most of the basic data needed to produce them are contained in the results of our consumer expenditure surveys, but they have not been organized and interpreted in such a way as to be meaningful to consumers.

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, etc.

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.