

Mr. MYERS. I was thinking about your bacon. A side of bacon versus prepackaged bacon.

Dr. BRADY. Yes. That is different.

Here, I have to talk, really, in the past tense. At the time I was at the BLS, and we were preparing the first of the family budget studies, we made a real effort in the additional pricing that was necessary for putting a price tag on the whole budget, to get alternatives of this kind into the picture, so we wouldn't come out with a food budget that looked really extraordinarily high by comparison with welfare budgets and budgets that had been prepared earlier in our history.

Mr. MYERS. There is just as much food value in a slab of bacon that you slice yourself, as there is in prepackaged, and presliced, and everything else. What is comparative price?

Dr. BRADY. Well, I can't tell you that. A few months ago, I could have. But I have sensed that in my supermarket I described as being low income, an income increase among its customers, because it has cut down on the extent to which they offered the various hams that are not precooked and the slabs of bacon and so on.

It is rather difficult to go into there now, even on a weekend, and find much of this sort of thing being offered any more.

Mr. MYERS. We spent a lot of time talking about bacon this morning. Does that whet your appetite any?

Dr. BRADY. Well, it is a good example of what we need to study more. There are varieties and there are quality differences in all processed foods, and this is where BLS has to put a great deal of effort in trying to hold quality constant, when they collect price statistics. They are, however, not yet prepared to tell you what the whole variety spectrum looks like as contrasted to real quality differences.

Mr. MYERS. I find myself in the middle here. I am concerned about seeing that we get the cheapest food on the table for the consuming public, but I also come from a big farm area, so I am concerned about the farmer. You spoke about the cut-up chickens, and so forth. There are a lot of empty chickenhouses and producers out there in Indiana, too, that don't produce chickens any more because they can't do it.

Dr. BRADY. They can't compete with the big industry in chickens.

Mr. MYERS. They have a lot of chicken coops, or whatever you call them, that are empty because they aren't making any money at the present prices.

So, we are met with a problem. I think packaging is part of the story, but I don't think it is all of it. I think that is used as an excuse too often.

Well, thank you very much.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Thank you very much, Dr. Brady. We are very much indebted to you for taking the time to come down here this morning. Your full statement will be printed at this point in the record.

(The statement referred to and an additional statement follow:)