

Mr. PRESS. Sweet Life is the lower cost line of the store. It's not really their own brand, but they use it as such. In the surveys, we did find the items that were the low-cost brands were higher priced in the low-income neighborhood.

In other words, the items people would be more likely to buy in a low-income neighborhood were higher priced in the low-income neighborhood. Sweet Life tuna was 33 cents on 72d Street and 35 cents on 120th Street. Del Monte spinach was two for 42 cents on 72d Street, two for 45 cents on 120th Street.

Gold Medal flour was 59 cents on 72d Street and 63 cents on 120th Street. Dock's minced clams was 29 cents on 72d Street and 33 cents on 120th Street. Sweet Life fruit cocktail was 25 cents on 72d Street and 33 cents on 120th Street. Sweet Life orange juice was two for 35 cents on 72d Street and two for 38 cents on 120th Street.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Might I ask at this point, since every one of these items is higher on 120th Street, did you choose only those items where this discrepancy appeared, or would there be, in some instances, items that were comparably priced at 120th Street or even lower priced?

Mr. PRESS. There were some items that were lower priced. Very few. And there were some items that were comparably priced. Also, many other items which were also higher priced on 120th Street that we didn't include in the survey where there was a penny or two difference.

At the time we actually went out and purchased these goods on a particular day in both stores, and we wanted to have the most striking differences apparent. We have thrown out surveys in relation to some chains in which we found as many items to be higher priced as lower priced, and this has happened.

It's just a general inefficiency on the part of the manager to have as many prices higher and lower. This was quite apparent early in the survey. We only did about 13 items the first week. This was the first-week survey in which a number of items showed up higher, including baby food, 1 cent a can, and at that point we felt that since anybody that does have young children and babies would buy so much of this that it seemed to be pretty obvious there was some kind of price discrepancy, and we expanded our survey a little and we did it week after week until we finally essentially brought this thing to a halt by publicizing it last year.

I think in this whole vein that there have been a tremendous amount of surveys run in ghetto areas, and I think the storekeepers are aware of this, and I think that they are trying more today to keep their prices in line than they were a year ago.

I will also comment: I remember the Bureau of Labor Statistics doing a survey in New York a year ago and finding that prices were the same in low- and middle-income areas, and at that time I spoke to Mr. Bienstock and he told me he asked the permission of each manager, asked him whether he could survey or not, and Sloan's was one of those stores that turned him down.

It can be pretty interesting if you are going to do a survey in the store, any store can say no and you don't do a survey. It's quite obvious the stores turning you down could be the stores charging the higher prices. I brought this to his attention last year. I really feel strongly you can't run a survey if the storekeepers will know you are doing it.