

them is one where they have to be on guard, and they have been on guard.

I am afraid—I was afraid last year when the publicity died that the stores would go back to their former practices.

Mr. REID. You found no great change on factory paydays or welfare check days?

Mr. PRESS. We haven't really done surveys in that area. I have been familiar with some in the past, and I would say it's a very sophisticated way of raising prices.

Mr. REID. But in the main, what we are talking about is deceptive practices in terms of not marking down certain items as advertised?

Mr. PRESS. Yes. This year, this is what our main thrust in our program has been to.

Mr. REID. Thank you.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Mr. Gallagher?

Mr. GALLAGHER. No questions.

Mr. ERLNBORN. I would just ask, since you checked Wednesday of this week and found the prices had been marked in accordance with the advertising, do you think it's quite fitting that the next day we celebrated Thanksgiving?

Mr. PRESS. I guess so.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Thank you very much. You, too, are to be commended. Our next witness will be Mr. William Vitulli of the A. & P.

(The complete text of Mr. Press' prepared statement appears below:)

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHEN PRESS, DIRECTOR, MEND CONSUMER EDUCATION PROGRAM, NEW YORK, N.Y.

If there have been any voices raised in support of increased consumer protection, the consumer education program of MEND would like to join the chorus. MEND (Massive Economic Neighborhood Development, Inc.) is an antipoverty agency operating in East Harlem. Its consumer education program, of which I am Director, is trying to make the poor consumer alert to the problems he faces, as well as to provide him with the practical and technical know-how to cope with these problems and the deceptive methods with which East Harlem residents are confronted. In educating our consumers we have had to make them aware of the pitfalls of dealing with storekeepers who seek to take advantage of their weaknesses.

Utilizing community people as comparison shoppers, MEND's consumer program has run a series of surveys which have clearly pointed out many irregularities in the treatment of low-income consumers by major food chains.

In 1966 we surveyed prices of two major chains in East Harlem to see whether their prices were higher in East Harlem stores (a low-income area) than in their stores in higher income areas. In one of these chains, the A. & P. we could find no significant difference in prices in comparison with the A. & P. store on East 64th Street, for example. We found, however, lower quality meats, moldy pies and cakes and abominable conditions in the stores servicing low-income clientele. The aisles of the East Harlem stores were cluttered, the stores were dirty and needed paint, and the help was not as plentiful.

In another chainstore, Sloans, we found a large disparity in prices between the stores in East Harlem and those on 65th, 72d, and 78th Streets (Middle- and upper-income areas). Our findings, based on a 4-week-long survey of about 50 items, seemed to indicate that it would cost the low-income consumer of East Harlem almost 15 percent more to shop on 116th or 120th streets rather than in the stores first mentioned. From our survey of August 11, 1966, here are some of the price discrepancies.