

Mr. GALLAGHER. You then would come to the conclusion, Mr. Van Lenten, there is no evidence at all to support that charge as it pertains to your stores?

Mr. VAN LENTEN. No, sir.

Mr. GALLAGHER. I hear a lot of grunts.

VOICE. That is right. We know.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Let me preface my question by saying if this reveals anything about your merchandising practices you can feel free not to answer it, but do you have any practice of comparison shopping in other chainstores to find out how your prices compare with theirs?

Mr. VAN LENTEN. Well, certainly we always compare ads, and I think at times we are inquisitive inasmuch as the stores are open to the public as shoppers, we avail ourselves of the opportunity to determine what the competition is presenting, too.

Mr. ERLNBORN. From this, have you drawn or can you draw any conclusions as to the variance in prices in other chainstores between ghetto areas and other areas?

Mr. VAN LENTEN. No, I wouldn't be able to do that.

VOICE. We can tell you, though.

Mr. ERLNBORN. Have you been able to draw any conclusions as to the efficiency in the other stores of marking the product to compare with the advertised price?

Mr. VAN LENTEN. No. I don't think I would be qualified to——

Mr. GALLAGHER. I would say the Chair would yield. What would you like to ask?

VOICE. My name is Mrs. Fox. I am an East Harlem parent. I trade with A. & P. store here in East Harlem and it is quite often as late as Wednesday when I went in to get groceries. I got two cans of string beans, french-style string beans, which was 31 cents and when I brought them to the counter the lady say that the price had been changed.

They were two cans for 39 cents. That is after I got to the counter. I am looking on the price list and seeing what is happening there and oftentimes when you go—I am speaking about the A. & P. store here between 93d and 92d Street. The price list that you go there and see when you take it up to the counter to the lady, she tells you got to pay something else. Such as napkins, two for 27 cents, and when I get down to the counter, it's two for 29 cents. You know what I mean. This is what is going on.

Mr. GALLAGHER. That appears to be the basis of a great deal of the complaint. Just that sort of thing. How would you account for that?

Mr. VITULLI. Well——

Mr. REID. Before Mrs. Fox continues, could I ask her whether there are some other items——

Mrs. Fox. An awful lot.

Mr. REID. Could you get us a brief list of some of the times where you found a difference between the advertised price and the marked price?

Mrs. Fox. Sure. Campbell's pork and beans. They are supposed to be two for 29 cents, and they says that when we get up there they say no not 29 cents, two for 33 cents, but what happens is they got a 29-cent stamp, they got a 33-cent stamp. Somebody forgot to take out