

Mr. BAUM. Yes, sir; everything here that I am reading from my statement is exactly what they told us. They told us that labor costs and insurance would be the same for all stores within a chain with a comparable number of personnel because of the same union structure in St. Louis and because of the chain-administered policy. No chain or organization admitted the existence of different price zones. No representative stated that any food of inferior quality would ever be shipped from one store to another. None of the executives we interviewed admitted that prices on days following issuance of welfare checks would go up.

In summary, then, our meetings with the store executives boiled down to the fact that the differences we found in poverty area prices would be due mainly to errors of the store personnel.

Mr. NADLER. At this time we would like to call up Mrs. Slavin who represents a group of women in Clayton who did an independent survey which we did not know about until after one week of the survey was finished. She has turned the data over to us which we will explain the analysis of when she is finished with her presentation.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Would you give us your name and address for the record?

STATEMENTS OF MRS. RAYMOND SLAVIN, HOUSEWIFE, AND MRS. JOAN FOSTER DAMES AND DONALD FRANKLIN, REPORTERS FOR THE ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

Mrs. SLAVIN. Mrs. Raymond Slavin, 631 East Polo Drive, Clayton, Mo.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You made a survey independent of these two gentlemen?

Mrs. SLAVIN. That's correct.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. At the time you made your survey, were you aware of the fact that they had done a similar survey?

Mrs. SLAVIN. Not when we originated our survey. We had discussed in about mid-October the fact that we were paying prices for food here that was documented to be third highest nationally—

Mr. ROSENTHAL. What stimulated you into making this survey?

Mrs. SLAVIN. We had read articles published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch by Mr. Eugene Bryerton which put St. Louis food prices third highest nationally according to figures made public by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. We couldn't understand this because Boston and San Francisco were the only cities which outranked us, and we felt by virtue of their geographic location and ours it didn't make a great deal of sense that we should be paying this high a price for our food.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Did you do the survey with any other people?

Mrs. SLAVIN. Yes; we contacted friends of ours who lived in various areas of the community, prepared a list of our own which included approximately 65 food items which we considered more or less basic to our cupboard. We had a brief initial meeting with those who could attend, and we mailed the lists to the other people who were willing to shop and asked them to shop these food items for 3 consecutive weeks beginning on the week of October 23.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. About a month ago.

Mrs. SLAVIN. That's right.