

who said that there is some sort of an automated grading so this thing couldn't happen, but it did happen. There were tiny peppers, big peppers, twisted peppers. Most of the peppers were not very fresh. There were good peppers within this, but when you moved out to the county you didn't see this. You saw just good peppers.

Mr. MYERS. But there were good peppers on the tray, too?

Mrs. DAMES. There were some good peppers.

Mr. MYERS. The pictures you have here show brown spots on them?

Mrs. DAMES. That's a fault of the color process. That's also true of the other stores' green peppers, that's just a flaw in the color.

Mr. MYERS. Size is what you are trying to show?

Mrs. DAMES. There is a gash in one pepper. There is one pepper here bought at a Kroger store.

Mr. MYERS. Did you buy that one, Mr. Franklin?

Mr. FRANKLIN. I found that over half of the peppers in the inner-city store were of poor quality.

Mr. MYERS. You bought the cracked one. When you took it up to the checkout counter did you say this one is spoiled or this one is cracked, could I have a new one, or did anybody offer to exchange it for you?

Mr. FRANKLIN. No. They charged me two for a quarter.

Mr. MYERS. How about you?

Mrs. DAMES. Yes. When I checked out with it—this is part of the reason Mr. Franklin went out—when I took the pepper out—he told me the bananas were good and he marked down on the one pepper a nickel in price; no, 4 cents in price. He did not on the other. Now, I wondered—

Mr. MYERS. Where did he mark it down?

Mrs. DAMES. He said, "I will only charge you this much," at the checkout counter. He didn't mark it down, he said only charge here, whatever it was, 11 cents.

Mr. MYERS. But he marked the damaged pepper down at the checkout?

Mrs. DAMES. Yes, but he didn't mark the other damaged peppers down and this had the price marked on the pepper, it was stamped on there.

Mr. MYERS. Did you ask or did he volunteer to mark it down?

Mrs. DAMES. I didn't ask for it.

Mr. MYERS. What store is this we are talking about?

Mrs. DAMES. National, 4331 Natural Bridge. As I walked down the aisle he said, called out to the meat men and said, he was marking things down in the aisle, you know, before I got over to the vegetable counter, and he said, pass the word, and I thought oh, oh, since this is an all-Negro area he either thinks: (a) I am from the newspaper, (b) I am from the chain checking prices against their list, or (c) I am from a competitive store, because I think my white skin stood out. The only other white person in the store shop was an old lady in her seventies who was complaining to me about the food prices. It is an area in transition, there are not many white people still living around there or it has gone beyond transition, I would say.

Mr. MYERS. But you did not tell them that you were a reporter, did you?

Mrs. DAMES. No; I didn't, but I had a notebook, I was taking notes.

Mr. MYERS. But you did purchase, though; didn't you?