

Mr. CONREAU. No, sir. I will tell you what we do. In order to be of service, we have a price guide. We obtain this by checking competitors in the St. Louis area. We give this information out as a price guide, it appears on the right-hand side of the invoices that go out.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You do have certain joint ventures, you advertise together?

Mr. CONREAU. We have an A-G ad that appears in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch only.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. If any of your stores charge more than the advertised special, or if they are out of a commodity, there is nothing you can do about it?

Mr. CONREAU. We do do something about it, at least we try.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. What do you do?

Mr. CONREAU. We have a complaint for a store that does not follow our advertised price. First, to the complainant we tell them not to buy any more at that store and give her at least two names of stores who are close to that store and suggest she go there. Second, we contact that store and tell him to take down that A-G store sign, if he has one.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. How many stores have you disciplined in the last year or two?

Mr. CONREAU. I would say, to my knowledge, in the last 3 months we have had four or five, and within the last month we have sent a notice to every one of our members to that effect for the simple reason that the State law indicates that you cannot have that sign if you don't follow that law, and we have so advised our members.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. In other words, if one of your member stores, A-G stores, which are individually owned, sells at a price above your recommended price or above an advertised price you take disciplinary action against them?

Mr. CONREAU. We would only know this, though by a complaint. We don't go in to check those stores for that.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. The four stores you did discipline, where were they located?

Mr. CONREAU. The last one, I think, was in the county, and we have had two, to my knowledge, in the area which was defined this morning. We have had in the last—

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Defined as the ghetto area?

Mr. CONREAU. As the inner circle.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Innercity area?

Mr. CONREAU. Different places. There is just as much trouble one place as the other.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. It is your intention as president of A-G to make sure that your stores do all sell at one price and at the recommended price?

Mr. CONREAU. It is my intention to go further than just that, if we can possibly define some method of doing it. I believe there is a much stronger approach we can take.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. In other words, you feel very strongly about it?

Mr. CONREAU. There is another way of doing this, too, entering into an agreement and advertise for only those stores who agree to do this. We are asking our attorney to check that out, too, sir. We have an obligation even though we are wholesalers, because without retailers we don't have any wholesale business.