

We feel that St. Louis is a good labor town from the standpoint of the workingman and his employers, we feel that St. Louis benefits from a variety of retail chains both nationally and locally operated, and we know that we are in an advantageous geographical location from the standpoint of fast economical proximity to the major food producing areas of our country. We know that our people should not be penalized in this living cost item that already consumes a major percentage of families' income, particularly among the poor where the percentage spent for food climbs to an almost unbelievable portion of take-home pay.

We plan to provide a public forum where the people of St. Louis, representatives of the food industry, and other affected organizations can respond to any reports developed by the groups now conducting the various investigations and any preliminary report that your committee might produce as a result of what it learns.

With the full weight of the mayor's office and individual contributions of the members of our committee, any legislative action that would be beneficial and warranted by the various reports, as they affect St. Louis, could be introduced.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to request that we be placed on your mailing list for any preliminary findings or data that might be made available by your subcommittee and, of course, any final report that you produce. We assure you that we will keep you advised of our work.

Again I thank you for the opportunity to appear before your committee and congratulate all of you for devoting your time and effort on what is traditionally a long holiday weekend.

Mr. Brown, who is commissioner of human relations for the city of St. Louis and who is coordinating the efforts of our small staff, which is being gathered from his people and other local functions, will be in contact with your Mr. Hackett from time to time and establishing our liaison with the St. Louis groups.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Mr. Champagne, you are not an employee of the city I noted.

Mr. SHAMPAINE. No; I am not an employee of the city.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You are a businessman?

Mr. SHAMPAINE. I am a businessman, I am an employer in the city.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I want to commend you for accepting the responsibility that you have, the important responsibility as chairman of the mayor's committee for the development of consumer values and I want to commend the mayor for appointing you. It is the kind of thing that we need so much more of—for businessmen to assume this type of public responsibility—and I congratulate you for the work you have done and tell you that we look to you for a good deal more.

Mr. MYERS. Thank you for your fine presentation.

I have one question. You say hopefully put action behind the findings, and then you further define this as possible legislation from the city, is that correct, is that what you are anticipating here?

Mr. SHAMPAINE. This is a possibility. I would hope that we would get the desired results which is to eliminate the inequities in quality, in price, so on and so forth. I would hope we would get it by voluntary action, because I feel that it would come much more quickly, it would be much more effective than through legislative action.