than it was 2 or 3 years ago and I am in north central Pennsylvania and I am dealing with a major company.

Mr. DE BLOIS. I cannot answer from the standpoint of Pennsylvania. I do know in the Rhode Island market as concerns our own company, and here again I have to take myself out of the classification of talking now for the fuel oil institute and talking as to what I know exactly is the case, our margin has been reduced considerably, I would say to the tune of about three-quarters of a cent a gallon over the past year, year and a half.

I would say half to three-quarters of a cent a gallon.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. I haven't had that experience.

Mr. DE BLOIS. This has been our experience and these can be verified if you would care to.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. I have two very good friends in the oil distributing business up there, Rolly Booma and Les Godwin.

Mr. DE BLOIS. I know Rolly pretty well.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. Give him my regards.

Mr. DE BLOIS. I sure will do that.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. Thank you very much.

Mr. ULLMAN. Mr. Bush.

Mr. BUSH. Sir, on the top of page 2 in your testimony you talk about these increases which certainly are very real. I wonder if you could enlighten the committee on where these increases come from. The price of crude oil hasn't gone up appreciably, has it? Do you have figures on that?

Mr. DE BLOIS. I don't have any figures on the price of crude.

Mr. BUSH. In the last 5 or 10 years I believe you will find that the price of crude oil in this country has gone down. Certainly it has where I used to live so I wonder what is your feeling here in this price thing? Who is getting it?

Mr. DE BLOIS. That is a very good question, Mr. Bush, and I wish I could give you a positive answer. I would probably be a lot smarter than I really am. I really honestly don't know. I know basically that we are not getting a percentage of it.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. May I interrupt here?

Mr. BUSH. Yes.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. I think a lot of it is the increased cost of transportation.

Mr. DE BLOIS. This was the case. Transportation costs during the height of the Suez crisis, there is no question, took a considerably steep climb; but these have since come back down. At least I am led to believe it.

Mr. SCHNEEBELI. These are internal transportation costs within the country which are considerably higher, pipelines, trucks, and railroads.

Mr. DE BLOIS. For example, Mr. Bush, there was a price increase, I am going to say the beginning of May—it may have been June 1—of approximately a half a cent a gallon on the wholesale price. As near as I can determine there was no economic justification for this.

You get all different kinds of answers from all different kinds of people. They mention, possibly, wage-price, for instance, as being one of the things in the country. They claim that this is just a correction that should have taken place a long time ago.