

Dr. MEHREN. The information given to us last night is that 265 of these dinners were utilized, practically all of which were used for laboratory testing. Their statement to us last night was that a few were sold last fall to employees. I don't have the numbers other than those I have given you here.

Mr. WYDLER. They sold them in their thrift shop to the employees?

Dr. MEHREN. A few were sold last fall to employees in the company's thrift store. Our information is that only 265 of the 18,563 were used, most of those for testing.

Mr. WYDLER. Do you know how they knew the employees bought them at the thrift store?

Dr. MEHREN. I have no information other than what I obtained last night to be as responsive as I could to the questions of the chairman.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. We have a letter from them which says they disposed of 4,000 or so in their thrift stores, sold to anybody. I guess the more the bacteria, the lower the price. [Laughter.]

Dr. MEHREN. At the time this happened, the Department had no authority or responsibility to move against this.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You have a responsibility once you put your stamp on there. I'm not sure that if someone got sick they couldn't sue you. There is almost a warranty of fitness for use when your stamp is on there.

Dr. MEHREN. Our authority and similarly our responsibilities, since we operate under law, did end on meat and poultry products when the stamp of inspection went on.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You are interposing your training against my training. I have a sneaking suspicion I might be right.

Dr. MEHREN. It's not impossible, but I proceed under legal advice of the General Counsel.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Have you made any special inspection of this plant since being notified of this? Bacteriological inspections?

Dr. MEHREN. Your people have been down there, haven't they? [To Mr. Grange.]

Mr. GRANGE. Yes. We have three inspectors stationed at this particular plant. All this happened in the last few days, since we got your notification concerning this case in your letter of March 20, so some of this is still in process—our examination of the remaining stocks is yet to be done.

We will know what we find insofar as the bacteriological contamination is concerned. We are informed, Mr. Chairman—again, all I can give you is what we are told by the company—we are informed that there is only a certain portion of this rejected quantity where the bacterial estimate was involved. So we just don't know yet what we will learn when we have had a chance to sample and run the tests on the product being held.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Would you submit to the committee a copy of your report when this is finalized so we can include it in the record too? (The furnished report follows):