

JOHANNESBURG - SHOPPING CENTRE OF SOUTH AFRICA

- by JOHN R. PRICE.

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ADDRESS:

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- by John R. Price.

FUTURE TRENDS IN RETAILING

I am delighted to have the opportunity to participate in this Conference and to discuss Johannesburg in the future, and for the purpose of my talk I have chosen 20 years hence, 1988. My subject is retailing - but - as retailing is essentially - service to the public, and the satisfaction of consumer's needs, my remarks must of necessity impinge considerably on the manner of living and the general pattern of life in this future era. I am afraid I cannot, therefore, confine myself to the four walls of the shop but must interpret from my "Jules Verne" vision of the future of the retail industry, some of the other changes in our lives of 1988. I cannot believe that the world of 1988 will differ so very radically from the world of today. It will not suddenly spring into full bloom from a science fiction writer's fertile brain, but instead, will reflect, and grow out of the shape of things of today.

Certain future trends can be well defined. Thus, that Johannesburg will grow is certain - its population will increase every five years by $8\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the whites, and $12\frac{1}{2}\%$ of the non-whites. On the other hand what will happen to its boundaries I cannot foresee, nor would I venture to comment on possible Government interference to industry or our Bantu population. Certainly, as a trader, I can say that I am sure that our standards of living will rise considerably. Of course, money will continue to depreciate at varying rates, or should I say rather that prices will tend to go up. However, let me assure you that competition in the Retail Trade will grow fiercer, and this will always be the market's protection in a free enterprise system to our customers. You will find that in 1988 many items may be selling at prices lower than today, for reasons I shall develop later, but others may cost more.

Our non-white population will also have enjoyed a rise in their standards of living as their services have become increasingly productive. While many shops, and even some shopping centres, will concentrate upon their needs, in an increasing degree their buying will be from shops, who continue to trade without racial discrimination, for their needs tomorrow will be increasingly allied to the needs of the European.

But now let me turn to the future of the retail trade and this I must approach on two very different fronts. First, Downtown Shopping, and then Shopping Centres.

DOWNTOWN - THE PEDESTRIAN

The most difficult problem of Downtown Shopping today is the conflict between the pedestrian and the motorist, and parking

problems will overwhelmingly influence the future growth of the retail pattern of our cities. However, by 1988 I hope that Johannesburg may have succeeded in making a substantial advance towards solving this problem. The shopping centre, Downtown, which extends roughly over at least some 8 to 12 or more blocks, will by then, I hope, have accomplished a new pattern. I regret I cannot agree with the reported comments of my friends in the city's Town Planning Department who talk of going underground. I know we are a mining city, but heaven forbid we must condemn our housewives to burrowing for their shopping - to say nothing of the cost and of construction problems. For my vision of the future, I recall those ancient "rows" in Chester, England - those elevated, set-back, galleries where the shops open towards a covered pedestrian way; so also do I see the pedestrians in Johannesburg lifted in the shopping area out of the maelstrom of traffic flow to pedestrian galleries set over the pavements, against the buildings, whose displays and entrances will open also at this higher level to these pedestrian areas. As buildings in this centre area are rebuilt, they may be even set back at the second floor level to permit an increase in these high pedestrian ways. I see them linked by pedestrian bridges over the roads, in a manner so well known over the canals of Venice. So can shoppers be free of any interference from vehicles, for down below at street level the traffic will move all along one way streets, and will be mainly commercial and business vehicles.

PARKING DOWNTOWN

Parking garages that will act also as Bus Terminals will be arranged outside the shopping areas, and to Mr. Dorfman's great joy, private cars will no longer be allowed inside the centre City area. From these Garages will rise escalators to the high level pedestrian walks.

MONORAIL

An alternative access to downtown that could certainly be much more popular and efficient, would be a monorail from all the outer suburbs running above the roads and depositing the shoppers upon these upper floors in the centre of the shopping area, as well as bringing into the business area the workers at the beginning and end of the day. Then will shoppers and business people leave their cars in the suburbs and catch the monorail into the centre of town for business and shopping. This plan has already been proved in Tokyo and elsewhere. Buses will now feed these suburban monorail stations or operate from the car parking garages, while around the city will also be Heliport Stations mainly on the top of Store buildings giving service direct to the Airport.

DEPARTMENT STORES - DOWNTOWN

Most of the department stores of that era will be larger than today often covering a total block with many extensive shopping floors. They will carry complete ranges from the world markets, and will leave the shopping centres, out of town, to concentrate on day-to-day items of food and domestic requirements. Downtown stores will only offer, for example in food, the gourmet and the unusual, not the regular. These downtown stores of the

future will be vast eporiums, full of excitement and unusual things, reflecting the world's production and providing and greatest possible entertainment and interest. Selling will be undertaken by the most friendly and attractive assistants for service will be a highly competitive commodity. The different sections will be full of interest, of colour, and tasteful display. The exclusive fashions and the accessories will be shown to maximum advantage. To go shopping downtown will be an expedition, not for an hour, but for a day - an event, not a casual occasion, and the department stores of 1988 will ensure just that.

SHOPPING CENTRES

In complete distinction to downtown stores, the shopping centres will be visited two or three times a week by the housewives. Parking in the shopping centres will be extensive and easy, and even Mr. Dorfman will have realised that motorists must not be hounded, but must be adequately provided for and even pampered. Indeed, these shopping centres will be dominated by the car parking areas; which could cover an area, ten or twenty times that of the area occupied by the selling activities. These Shopping Centres will be located on the outskirts of town, close to the main new highways so that there is rapid access to a wide expanse of population. They will be designed to include all types of shops not only speciality and supermarkets, but also bazaars, discount stores and department stores, as well as non-retailing activities of banks and building societies, while the services of Doctors and Dentists and repair establishments will also be included. In fact, my mind goes back to that ancient market in Istanbul as evidence that in this future thinking there is really nothing new but just the old improved. These shopping centres will completely and comprehensively supply the needs of the community. I could almost imagine that even the churches may want to join these dominating centres of activity. Certainly the restaurants of all types will cater for the eating and drinking needs, and the suburban cinemas will be located there.

These retailing establishments will all face into a central mal or arcade covered against the weather, airconditioned, with beautiful lawns and areas for entertainment. They will have all the attraction that the mind of commercial men can devise to attract the custom of the surrounding population. A typical illustration of such a centre already today in existence is the Yorkdale Centre outside Toronto in Canada. The delivery of goods into these centres will be from the outside perimeter of the parking area by a ramp descending into the basement with underground access to the stores, so very much like the access to London Airport and so avoid all the private car and pedestrian traffic.

DISPLAY AND SELLING

Within the stores there will be almost everything on display grouped by consumer usage. The old fashioned departmental divisions of Manchester and Hardware etc. will have disappeared. Everything will be shown and the value will be demonstrated by the display and presentation, and save in the exclusive fashion sections, and luxury and expensive items, self-selection will be the rule and personal selling will have been reduced considerably. Customers will wander freely round the displays and will be invited to inspect and try and use, to touch and push and taste in order to make a decision while signs and moving demonstrations, or films and speakers will guide and sell them on the quality of the goods. Having made a selection, the consumer will pluck from the sample on display one of the

little tabs and having collected tabs for all her purchases, she takes them along to a centre desk. The cashier will list them on her tabulator machine after picking up the customer's name and address and identification card, as well as incidentally the number of the parking bay where the customer's car is parked. As she does this, away in the warehouse up above, or nearby, this information will be picked up from the cash desk machine and the goods so selected will be drawn from the warehouse, already packed and wrapped, so that the order can be assembled together with the parcels she may have bought in the personal service sections, and then sent down to the carpark for delivery to the customer's car before she leaves. Meanwhile, of course, the cashier has listed the total value of the purchases and, let us imagine that this is a cash transaction, or at least what today would be so called, for in this future age little money is carried. The money in your pockets will be only for the smaller purchases and for the slot machines that will have extended over so many more of the daily necessities. Your shopping will all be charged direct to your bank account. Wages will be credited direct to your bank account by employers, and all payments will be made by automatic transfer, instantaneously through the computer, to the bank account. So, as the customer's card is handed over, automatically is it checked against her bank account and provided there are enough funds, or that it is within the limits of her overdraft, the charge will be accepted and the goods cleared for deliveries.

CREDIT SALES

Let us imagine, however, that it is a credit transaction with the store agreeing to accept payment at some future time, or by instalments - for in that future era hire purchase and credit accounts will have grown to extensive proportions. But, by 1988 there will be a nation wide credit registry, listing all who buy on credit and itemising for each name his sins of non-payment, or his merits of accurate adherence to credit limits. This credit bureau will be fed by information from all traders, who grant credit, and an individual's rating will now be of vital importance to a man. So, stores will deal confidently with every customer certain in the knowledge of his history, and confident that few will fail to pay and damage, in the future, an essential reputation of credit worthiness.

In these cases, the Credit Card is taken at the Cash Desk and the goods charged as the computer verifies the customer's rating and balance in the books before accepting the charge and releasing the goods.

But let us go back to our store in the shopping centre which is, of course, beautifully air-conditioned, both temperature and humidity controlled. The lighting will be gentle and soothing while the goods on display will be high lit by spotlights from a source that gives a perfect colour matching to daylight. Movement within the store will be easy with escalators, and where the floors are large, even moving floors for high speed transit into different areas. In fact, to make shopping easier and to relieve the foot-sore customer, who has so many shops in such a large area to inspect, she can even rent an electric wheelchair to save her feet while shopping throughout the centre.

TELEPHONE BUYING AND DELIVERIES

On the other hand, a lazy customer can merely sit at a desk near the entrance and upon a television screen have shown to her illustrations of all the items available within the store of those commodities requested for choice, and on the little keyboard below she will order by a code number without the necessity of walking round and inspect. A somewhat similar service is available for the customer at home who wishes to place her order over the telephone, for telephones now can have a little television screen attached so that she can sit in the kitchen, and over this T.V. set, see the offers of the shop and by code number over the telephone order for delivery from this highly automated warehouse located on the edge of the city. Deliveries, incidentally, are now very prompt and are dropped into the home through special shutles or lock boxes so that there is no problem of not finding the servant or the housewife at home, nor indeed, need deliveries be made necessarily by day but can also be delivered at night. The goods go straight down into the kitchen of the home,

FOOD

But let me take you into those shops of the future and let us see what they are selling. I think that probably the greatest change will come in food products, for by 1988, the revolutionary new methods of communications and of transport, will have changed the whole pattern of living. The supersonic airliner and the giant freight planes will be circulating the world. The capitals of Europe will be less than three hours away. Television will by then be carried round the world by satellite, and even in South Africa we shall be seeing the events and the products of the world through this dramatic new media.

The seasonal changes of foodstuffs should have practically disappeared for the world's produce will be available to us. Methods of preserving will have advanced, so that the present deep frozen food with its loss of taste and difficulty of carriage, will have been largely superceded. The recently introduced freeze-dry process will have been developed, as well as new neologically controlled methods of halting the perishing of natural foodstuffs, so that, preserved and sealed in fine plastic, they may be handled or kept until needed.

In the world other changes, and technological developments of major importance to food retailing will have happened. A major breakthrough can be expected in the desalinization of water which can lead to the deserts of Africa, of Asia, of South and North America, becoming vast and new growing areas - ready and able to feed more and better products for all. Even today I hear of a young Israeli scientist who is conducting fascinating experiments in the Gulf of Acaba growing edible goods in salt water. All these, coupled with the opportunities of rapid transport, and with the application of irradiation and other methods of preservation, make the future for food retailing of tremendous excitement.

But there is another major event that we can expect and that is in the increasing use of prepared foods. Not only will more and more food be consumed outside the home, but within the home there will be less and less ingredient cooking and more purchase of pre-prepared items. In 1988 the young wife will no longer feel it necessary to show her love of her family by spending long and tedious hours in the kitchen, for new

leisure hours will affect eating habits and new appliances will change the way that food is prepared. The retailer will sell a complete dish of all items prepared centrally by famous chefs and sealed for storage and transit. Now will the housewife buy, not items, but meals, in fact possibly a different selection for every different member of the family. In other words, eating at home can become similar to eating in a restaurant with each member of the family selecting his own menu. I predict that by 1988 only the most enterprising and adventurous housewife will cook anymore. In fact, cook-books of that era will probably quote a number for ordering purposes against its description and not detail how to make it.

Of course, food will still be mainly sold in the supermarkets, save that no longer will there be large masses of stock available but merely samples on display. Everything will be in plastic packs that show so clearly their contents, or alternatively in packages that will be wonderfully labelled and zipped open so easily. But, with only samples on display, the whole market will be so much easier to view while the range will be more comprehensive than ever before. No longer need there be any difficulty in choosing a cabbage or lettuce for they will all be good and all will be perfectly preserved and perfectly wrapped. No longer will there be empties to return for all containers can be thrown away, and even the famous coke bottle will have been supplanted by a destructable cardboard carton. There will be no trollies to push, carrying stock and bumping people's ankles, but just a bunch of cards by each sample so that when the item is selected one card is plucked and the collection of magnetic cards handed to the check out point at the end of the shopping spree.

Of course, the supermarkets will include not only all the groceries, but also meat, vegetables, dairy products, fruit, cakes, confectionery and even liquor, too. It will truly be "one-stop" household buying. There will, of course, also be a range of hardware, cosmetics and crockery. Incidentally, the crockery for domestic use will be completely indestructible. A combination of plastics with other materials will give the beauty and feel of china with indestructibility.

But let us wander into some of the other departments of our retail store of the future.

Into the clothing department where we find that fabrics now have become softer and finer and more indestructible, with little natural fibre but long wearing and in most fascinating colours and designs. Seldom will fabrics be sold by the yard for only the really adventurous, or the thoroughly individualistic, will still be making their own clothes.

Fashion, of course, will still remain, for people will still demand change and to be different will more than ever be important. Fashions will still change crazily every season. I am afraid I am unable to tell you where the hemline will be in 1988, or indeed, if there will be one, nor can I tell what part of the anatomy will be showing in that year in the future. What I can say, is that the designs clearly will be much more comfortable and easier to wear and to use. I trust, of course, that men will still wear the pants and she the dress, or at least most of the time.

Everyday underwear will be disposable and not washable and even overalls and working dresses will be made of disposable materials - cheap and never washed. Drycleaning will have grown to a tremendous industry for the new fabrics will lend themselves to chemical dirt and stain removal.

Wander into the furniture department of our stores and again intriguing changes. All the items are functional and, yet strangely beautiful in colour and finish and line. They are light weight for easy movement, thin and open for cleanliness and despite the new dust-free houses with their dust collecting airconditioning units, the furniture is made not only to be comfortable but also to be kept clean. In the kitchen the ovens will now only warm up the preprepared meals bought out. The dish washer is now only for the non-disposable items and the washing machine for rinsing those many drip dry items that did not go to the cleaners, while the drying closet is tucked away in the corner. Bedclothes in the bedroom will now only have an aesthetic value, for the rooms are thermostatically heat controlled with ventilation also regulated. The lounge and the study dominate the house and reflect the character of their owner with hi-fi recorders, multi-channelled coloured television, and with a "see" T.V. telephone.

LEISURE

Life will be dominated by leisure, for in this computer age man's work is largely directing machines or planning machine controls so that with their aid men need work much shorter hours to accomplish the productivity necessary to maintain the new high standards of living.

I trust that in this era shopping hours will have been changed more closely to the needs of the public and family shopping, and that even the trade unions and governmental bodies will have recognised that in our retail industry that the public convenience must dominate these matters.

I have referred to the importance of leisure for the people of tomorrow, a view I am sure I have shared with the other speakers upon Sport and Culture to this Conference. I think this will reflect itself in Retail Selling who will cater so extensively to these new and extended demands.

Incidentally, I must also refer to the growth of Tourism to this country of South Africa. With the Jumbo Jets of that time, cheap international travel will be bringing thousands from other continents anxious to see our Jungle attractions and our Strange Dark Africa. The stores will have really organised to serve these visitors from the outside world, and will have Tourist Departments, full of African Curios and goods.

OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES

Selling methods will have changed and advertising will have progressed with the increasing knowledge of psychology and human reactions, even to a frightening science and the possible domination of the market. In fact, I hope that Government controls may bring sanity to limit the commercials and T.V. and to prevent propaganda techniques interfering too much with the freedom of choice and human reactions.

The office and bookkeeping services in these stores in the future will have changed completely - in fact they will probably have practically disappeared in this computer age.

The direct flow of original data into the computers will process all the information required. Similarly, many routine tasks in the stores will have been mechanised. The cleaning, the handling of stocks, the making-up of orders, the warehousing will have been automated to make labour so much more efficient. Of course, the saving of labour cost will be offset by the rising costs of these modern machines - but their perfection has more than compensated. They have permitted stocks to be kept in perfect balance with sales, for each item, as it is sold, is recorded against stock records. Automatically, when the quantity on hand drops to a re-order limit, does the computer make out a replacement order, transmit it to the supplier, so that, with a minimum capital investment in stocks, a constant state of "never out" is maintained and maximum sales efficiency follows.

In fact this certainly seems like the millennium of retailing. Certainly efficiency will be higher than ever before, and the standard of service will exceed anything that the world has yet dreamed of.

Though Big Business will grow bigger, it does not mean that the small independent shopkeeper will no longer have a place in the economy of the future. For him there will always be opportunities, provided that he recognises those differences in which he can move towards success. Computer services can be rented by him appropriate to his needs and to compete with his Big competitors. His small and distinctive enterprise can build a unique personality to attract the particular class of customer, who are interested in special service. This must be in distinct contrast to the larger stores whose approach must be standardised to the mass. The small retailer will concentrate on the lines that fit his image, will demonstrate his individuality and above all will keep a close and personal relationship with his customers. In this way there always will be a place for the small retailers in the economy even into this new era of 1988, for retailing will always need the independent merchant with new ideas and innovations for his is a vital contribution to the economy.

Finally, let me urge as I close this vision of the future, that we retailers may have an increasing understanding and awareness from the officials of Local and Central Government towards co-operation in the problems of rezoning and expansion. It is essential that truly imaginative new development should not be hampered but helped by the officials. It must be realised that Retail Business is very much alive to the great potentials of the future, as I have indicated, and when they are prepared to risk their funds to realise these visions, then they should not be thwarted by stupid regulations or rezoning restrictions. I urge that officials should be more ready to collaborate and guide and discuss with Business that these great changes of the future can eventuate. Together this vision of Retailing and of a bigger and better Johannesburg will most certainly soon be a reality.

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DISCUSSION ON ADDRESS:

JOHANNESBURG - SHOPPING CENTRE OF SOUTH AFRICA

- by John R. Price.

QUESTION:

I want to say to Mr. Price how much I have enjoyed his address. I think it was brilliant and he has brought new ideas to my thinking in any event. I want to say to him that we have in our midst Councillor Lewis, who is a member of the Executive of the Planning Association - a recently created body - which will try to consult with private enterprise in the planning of our city in bringing about the many news ideas that he has just expounded. I hope that Mr. Price and his organization will join that Association so that he can play a part in the new and greater Johannesburg, which he mentioned at the end of his address.

I would just like to mention Mr. Dorfman. He is of the view that should there be a parking ban on the inner square mile, that the central city will in fact die. He is one of the exponents of not limiting the traffic in the centre of Johannesburg. I agree with Mr. Price regarding the conflict between pedestrian and motorist and that they have to be separated and we in our planning certainly intend doing something about it, but when he speaks about not taking them underground I draw issue with him. I was in Coventry a little while ago and I think that it is the only place in the world, that I know of, where they have experimented with pedestrian galleries on the first floor. There is no question of conflict between pedestrian and traffic. They have tried to take the pedestrian and shopper to the first floor to a shopping gallery and it was a dismal failure. In a single precinct they had underground shopping, surface shopping and first floor shopping and the shops on the first floor were used for storage purposes only. Its failure is inexplicable. One seems to be able to take the pedestrian and shopper underground rather than onto a first floor.

My first question to Mr. Price is, in view of that experience, would he still suggest pedestrian galleries?

He also indicated the part that would be played by television. I would ask Mr. Price if he is not of the opinion that with the introduction of television and telstar techniques, my second question, that boards of directors will one day be able to hold a board meeting in spite of the fact that one member might be in Tokyo, one in Washington, another in San Francisco, another in Johannesburg.

Also talking about night deliveries, I would like to ask Mr. Price if he is not of the opinion that the time has now arrived for us to think in the direction of night deliveries by the S.A. Railways, so as to alleviate some

of the traffic congestion caused by those enormous vehicles double parked, as they have to do, in the central city to deliver the goods?

These are my three questions to Mr. Price.

Mr. Price:

Your first question challenged my pedestrian ways and knowing the undergrounds in various countries, I still submit for being up in the air rather than in the bowels of the earth.

International directorates. Yes, I believe this could be very very possible but there are problems to be overcome before this could become a reality.

Your third question, night deliveries from the Railways. Please realize that my point of night deliveries to the consumer has the advantage of a drop box system through the door. The difficulty of night deliveries from the Railways is the necessity of having labour on duty to receive it. I am quite sure that we can probably overcome that difficulty. We have various ideas on how it could be done and I am sure that the most business houses would welcome the opportunity of arriving first thing in the morning and having the delivery there on time.

QUESTION:

I would like to ask Mr. Price a question more concerned with the present than with the future. I refer to the new Carlton Centre in the course of construction. We are told that eventually that building complex will house 7,000 people, that it will accommodate 2,000 motor cars in its parking basements and elsewhere. I was talking to leading men in the retail trade and I said to them, "With this new Carlton Centre, will you close down your stores and open in the new centre which, we are told, will accommodate two large bazaars and 150 retail shops?" Each one of them said, "certainly not. We are well established." Now we have been told that there ought to be four Carlton Centres, one in the south-east, where the present one is going up, one in the north-west, one in the north-east and one in the south-west. I would like to know Mr. Price's opinion on the future of large undertakings of that sort. Whether he feels that we ought to have in Johannesburg one or more Carlton Centres and what effect those centres are likely to have on the central shopping area of Johannesburg as we know it today?

Mr. Price:

I believe that the shopping centre of Johannesburg is already established and please realise that it is a basic policy of big retailing to gather together as close to one another as possible, because the easier it is for the shopper to go round all the stores and compare the goods, the better for everybody concerned, especially the more efficient. So therefore, we prefer to keep concentrated in the centre. Now the proposals that one should go down the road, four or five blocks away, will only mean that somebody is going to open a branch down there not move from the main centre.

QUESTION:

I feel that this should really be a subject for the ladies, but being the cook in my household, I feel I may speak. I am not mad about Mr. Price's vision for the future, in fact I rather hate it. These large centres are very much an established pattern in the world today. There are many large blocks in London being built by financial enterprises, where everything for the worker in the building is there on the spot. There are doctors, Sauna baths, physiotherapists - everything they may require. I think it is possibly a thought for the future but I don't think it will necessary eliminate the big store.

The computerization and automation of one's warehouse goods is all very well and is fine to a point. But I do think there is a hideous tendency with this view of the future to take the personal thing out of our lives. It is something which we have to fight against. If I am not going to be allowed to touch and find the tomatoes I want to buy but have to pick from one sample and say "I will have tomatoes", I will leave S.A. and go and live in Paris where I know it will be the last stronghold of the individual shopper. There is always going to be the desire and the need of the population in any city for the individual to do his individual shopping.

I know that in America, where this supermarket idea started, they are finding that the little shop on the corner is becoming more and more popular. The little man in coming back again because people are becoming so bored stiff with the computerized supermarket that they want to have a personal contact with the person they are buying from, and I think we must bear this very much in mind. Let us have our central big warehouse stores but please let us have our little shop near our homes on the lines of the village shops of Britain. The whole thing of the future is to try and get some humanity back in our lives and unless we get back the personality into our ways of shopping we will get further away from the humanities which will make our future lives worth living.

Mr. Price:

Mr. Langford, may I suggest that you have amply demonstrated the point I made at the latter part of my remarks. The population of a country will always include a degree of intelligentsia and those who are able to pay the higher prices for the personal attention to the individual and for the privilege of pushing the tomato before buying it. This I accept, but the great mass of people are dominated by quality at the keenest price and this is mass distribution. I am afraid, despite your horror, mass distribution will grow, but don't worry you don't have to subscribe to it.

Comment:

I represent the hotel industry and when I heard Mr. Price's comments about the housewives of the future being able to prepare the dish of her choice for each member of the family - prepared originally by the world's best chefs - I didn't think this boded very well for the hotel and restaurant industry. Though on second thoughts I feel we have a future. People might come out to us for a little bit of home cooking!

Mr. Price:

Mr. Gardner, we will supply the hotels on a wholesale basis.

QUESTION:

Having made my comments, I would like to ask a question. There appears to be a tendency in the world today towards the big getting bigger and small getting smaller and eventually disappearing. This is, in fact, a realistic tendency in that we find super families of companies coming together - 20 or 30 companies associating themselves to a common board of directors. The range of products supplied by these super families is of course very diversified. At the moment you get certain companies allowing discount privileges to members of its own staff, which appears to me to be spreading. This is very well illustrated by one of the larger companies in S.A., which is not only in one type of business. The buying privileges of the one company have now been extended to the other related companies. Is this likely to short cut the retail market by more and more employees getting all their products at cheap discount prices?

Mr. Price:

You know this reminds me of a family which grows bigger and bigger until it includes everybody and no longer is it distinct from the rest of the world. We envisage that this tendency for discriminatory prices, for this is the key to what you are saying, must ultimately disappear and that everybody shall share the keenest possible price in competition. I think much of this is artificial in its selling presentation of the real truth.

QUESTION:

I feel that closing off certain streets into boulevards in the centre of the city would be an enormous draw as they are in Europe. I would also like to suggested automated slot machine selling, which enables the shopper to shop in the evenings.

Mr. Price:

I agree with your suggestions. Let us close some of the downtown streets as long as you close the streets where I am trading, then I am in full agreement with you. But I wouldn't like to be in the shoes of the person who has to decided which is going to be closed and which is going to be open.

Automated slot machine selling has not succeeded so far. There is a shop on the outskirts of Paris completely automatic and several in Europe. I would prefer to abandon restriction so that we can have, like Time Square, shops open until midnight.

Comment:

Perhaps some of you who were able to visit the Montreal Exposition may have seen the telephone demonstration in the Bell Tower whereby the housewife, from her own house before she goes to work in the morning, places a series of orders on her telephone. She leaves before the opening time of the shop which shall we say is nine o'clock. Automatically at nine o'clock, her telephone starts operating by itself and dials the various shops with whom she has placed orders previously on the telephone and communicates that order to the shops. The shops then

deliver the goods to her home. The payment to the shops is done by means of a debit which is debited direct to her bank account and then the bank account then passes the credit to the necessary bank and so she does her shopping today. When she goes on holiday she can leave a message on the telephone and when she decides to ring her home from her distant beachy holiday resort, the telephone rings and waters the garden!

CHANGES TO THE ATTACHED DOCUMENTS

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF THE
PROVISIONS OF THE ACT OF 1952
RELATIVE TO THE

ACT OF 1952

ACT OF 1952

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

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