

swered any and all questions that any member of the committee might have had regarding our operations.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Where is your office?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. My office is in Oakland, Calif., which is the headquarters office of Safeway Stores, Inc.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. And you are a lawyer rather than a managerial executive?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. That is true. However, over the years I have been exceedingly privileged in that I have been able to participate in many high-level managerial decisions.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. But you have no personal knowledge of the Safeway operation here in Washington?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. I cannot tell you whether the floors are dirty in our stores, but I can tell you regarding our operating procedures and policies; yes.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Have you visited the Washington stores?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. I have attempted from time to time when I have come into the area, yes.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You would like to make your statement?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. Yes, I would, and beyond that I would like to add one more thing.

This is not just a matter that pertains to the Washington, D.C., division. I think that this is a charge that goes to our total company.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Throughout the entire country?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. And I think also to the entire industry. To that extent I think that a presentation here of Safeway's position by a head office official, who is appearing as the representative of the company, albeit, that he is a lawyer, is pertinent.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I just simply wanted to understand your role.

Please excuse me for being persistent before you go forward. You have advised the Safeway management principals not to appear here.

Mr. VAN GEMERT. Those who either have appeared before the Federal Trade Commission or who have been scheduled to appear before the Federal Trade Commission.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Yes. So, then, what you are doing now is going to present to us a legal brief, rather than any evidentiary material?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. We have no evidentiary material to present to you, for one, and only one, reason: All of our documents, our records, our bulletins to the stores that state our policy, that shape our uniform and demonstrate our uniform book prices in this area are now in the possession of the Federal Trade Commission.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. You are not in a position to refute the charges that the ladies made in your presence here today?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. I deny the charges. I know I can point to some things that I think should raise some very serious questions in the minds of the members of the subcommittee regarding—

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Were you in California on August 15?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. I believe I was.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Were you there on September 1?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. I believe I was sir.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. And you are going to deny these charges today?

Mr. VAN GEMERT. Yes.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Go ahead and proceed.