

tion has every little huckster on the street. We have air conditioning in the summer and heat in the winter, and we still have to compete and we still have to have the prices to bring these customers in.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Do you have any supermarket competition?

Mr. CARON. Yes, of course.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. How close?

Mr. CARON. Within one or two blocks away.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. I mean——

Mr. CARON. They have changed. Many have changed. A. & P. Royal Farms—there is always competition. If there is business, there is supermarkets or people there to serve the customers.

Mr. BARASH. I am just interested in your response to the Congressman's question relative to the posting of book prices. Could you explain to me in somewhat more detail the reasons why it would be impossible, as you put it, to——

Mr. CARON. You said to post. To post a book of 100 pages written on both sides is an impossibility, but I will say this: The book is there, and any customer who wants to see it can see it. It is available. It is right there.

Mr. BARASH. Have you ever said that publicly before?

Mr. CARON. Absolutely. To any customer in the store. Any customer who questions the price we will open the book and that is the price.

Mr. BARASH. Do all your managers understand that?

Mr. GEORGE BROWN. Yes.

Mr. BARASH. In other words, any customer with a problem could look at the book and find out the correct price?

Mr. GEORGE BROWN. That is right. Ask to see the book.

Mr. MANDELL. There is one thing we haven't taken up in the way of prices, the normal changes of prices aside from the specials. We also have a book and the prices on that book change from day to day, because the nature of our business, especially the perishables such as eggs and butter and chickens, the market changes, so although we have a book price sometimes even the book has the wrong price because the book is usually printed—you can't print a book overnight. It's printed a month in advance and by the time the book goes out, it's already outdated, so even looking into the book will not give you the whole story.

One other thing I would like to mention, because I don't like it to appear very simple. A lot has been said about the quality, about different quality items. Ninety-five percent of our items are nationally advertised items. That other 5 percent is getting less and less. There is very little we sell that we have control over quality, because it is all nationally advertised items, and our Campbell's Soup and Carnation Evaporated Milk and 10,000 items, baby foods are the same in every other store.

I, for the moment, can't think of anything that can come in from one store and say your soup is not as good as the next soup. As far as that 1 percent on perishables, that might be sometimes if something goes wrong, but the margin for error must be in human nature for everybody.

Mr. ROSENTHAL. Anyway, you will do two things: You will make a vigorous effort to reduce the margin for error, and you will post a sign saying if you are out of a special, a raincheck will be issued.