

Why Do They Want to Put A&P Out of Business?

The answer is to be found in the formal complaint "they" have filed with the court. By "they" we mean, of course, the anti-trust lawyers from Washington who are out to destroy A&P.

They say . . . and these are the anti-trust lawyers' own words . . . that we "have regularly undersold competing retailers."

To this charge we plead guilty:

We confess that for the past 90 years we have constantly stepped up the efficiency of our operations in order to give our customers more and more good food for their money.

The American people have seen nothing wrong in this. By their ever-increasing patronage for 90 years they have shown that they like this low-price policy.

Apparently the people still see nothing wrong in this today. All during the past week - since the anti-trust lawyers made their charges - we have been deluged with phone calls and letters from men and women in all walks of life who want us to know they are opposed to this effort to put A&P out of business.

An enormous number of customers are telling our store managers and clerks that they want to continue to enjoy our low prices for quality foods.

Farmers and other suppliers are asking what they can do to preserve this efficient outlet for their products.

Our 110,000 employees are asking us to protect their jobs and pensions.

Labor leaders are warning us their opposition to this threat to labor's living standards.

If all these people will be hurt, why then do the anti-trust lawyers want to put A&P out of business?

Low Prices Don't Hurt Anyone

The anti-trust lawyers say because we are able to sell food cheaper than other grocers, we make it impossible for those grocers to compete with us.

If this were true, we should have all the food business in the United States by this time.

Just the opposite is true. In 1933 we had 11.6 per cent of the nation's food business. Now, according to the anti-trust lawyers, our share has decreased to 6.4 per cent in 1948. Anyone can see we have nothing even approaching a monopoly.

As a matter of fact, there are about 30,000 more individual grocers in business today than there were ten years ago.

There are about 275 more food chains in business today than there were ten years ago.

In other words, we have more competitors in the food field and do a smaller share of the nation's food business than before.

Where is the alleged destruction of other grocers? Where is there any evidence of their inability to compete with us?

Do You Want Higher Prices?

As anyone can see, the only purpose that would be served by putting A&P out of business would be to raise food prices.

Who would this benefit?

We were the first merchants to set the pattern for low-cost, low-profit distribution. Our example and our competition has led other grocers to keep their prices down.

Remove A&P from the picture and food prices are bound to go up.

Remove A&P from the picture and the way will be cleared for the destruction of every other efficient large-scale distributor.

Is this what the American people want?

Is this in the public interest?



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