

\$7.6 million. There had been a 100 per cent increase in the profit picture.

**An hon. Member:** Give the 1969 profits.

**Mr. Broadbent:** I should like, now, to deal with the George Weston corporation, that "tiny" concern which has some 120 enterprises under its control.

**Mr. Stafford:** Tell us about their gross as well.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Wait a moment.

**An hon. Member:** Arrogance.

**Mr. Broadbent:** In 1967 their profits were \$13 million; in 1968, \$13.6 million; in 1969, \$15.4 million; in 1970, \$14.4 million and in 1971, \$15.1 million.

**Mr. Stafford:** What were their gross sales each year?

**Mr. Broadbent:** I will deal with that later.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Broadbent:** Now look at the Dominion stores situation. The profit for the 39 weeks ending December 31, 1970, amounted to \$1.9 million. The profit for the same period ending December 31, 1971, was \$5.8 million. That is an increase of about 300 per cent in one year.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh!

**Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary):** On a point of order—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce (Mr. Howard) rises on a point of order.

**Mr. Howard (Okanagan Boundary):** I should like to ask the hon. member if he would permit a question.

**Mr. Broadbent:** No; I do not have the time.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. Hon. members should not use points of order for the purpose of seeking to ask questions.

**Mr. Broadbent:** I thought it would be appropriate for one speaker today to deal with the subject, Mr. Speaker. Now I should like to come to the rate of return on the investment dollar. If the hon. member had done his research he would have found today on his desk a report from Statistics Canada on the subject of industrial corporations.

**Mr. Stafford:** I have read it.

**Mr. Broadbent:** It was released today and it refers to the rate of return on the investment dollar for the past year in a variety of sectors of the economy, particularly in the industrial and corporate sectors. The figures are interesting. If you take all industry in Canada over the past year, the rate of return for the first quarter was 5.3 per cent, in the second quarter it was 5.93 per cent, in the third it was

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6.35 per cent, and in the fourth quarter it was 6.44 per cent. If you take manufacturing, the return for the first quarter last year was 5.2 per cent, for the second quarter 6.54 per cent, for the third 6.97 per cent, and for the fourth 6.69 per cent.

Now let us look at the food industry. Look at what poor Steinberg's, Dominion stores, Westons and Loblaws did—those firms for which the Liberal party shows such sympathy as expressed today in the speeches we have heard. For the first quarter of last year the rate of return was 8.02 per cent compared with the over-all average of 5.36 per cent, in the second quarter 9.13 per cent compared with the average in industry as a whole of 5.93 per cent, in the third quarter 8.05 per cent compared with 6.35 per cent in industry as a whole, and in the last quarter 7.87 per cent compared with 6.44 per cent.

There is the answer to the hon. member's question. That is the rate of return per investment dollar. This, I suggest, constitutes a prima facie case for our motion. Remember our motion does not say that supermarkets are totally responsible for increasing costs. Conservative members have correctly pointed out that one has to take into account transportation costs and other factors. That is obvious. We are not denying it in any way. What we are saying is that the profits of supermarket companies have been rising at an astronomical rate in the past year and must be regarded by any impartial observer to be in large measure responsible for the high cost of food which the people of Canada have to bear.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** What are the pricing policies of these corporations? I refer supporters of the government to the same committee report of 1967. That committee, dominated by government members, pointed out that in many cases, if not in most, the firms set the prices. They dominate the market. They do not respond to market conditions. I quote from the report:

The five great corporate food chains and the voluntary chains control more than 75 per cent of the grocery business in urban areas and their percentage is increasing.

In one part of the food processing industry, one firm controls 100 per cent of the market in the Maritimes and western Canada and at least 80 per cent of the market in Ontario and Quebec.

I also have before me a report prepared this year in British Columbia by a professor at Simon Fraser University who examined food pricing policies of companies in the province as well as the structure of the industry as a whole. What does he conclude? He concludes what the special joint committee concluded in 1967, namely, that the big corporations do not respond to market conditions in the main but, rather, set those conditions because they control most of the factors which influence production of food products in the first instance.

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What did he discover in addition to that? I suggest this must also be of concern to us. He discovered that in Vancouver one of the major chains charges higher prices in the poorer parts of the city than it does in the richer parts. This duplicates studies conducted in the United States where it was discovered that in the Negro ghettos