



Cut prices! Putin drops by on supermarket 俄國總理突襲超市 要求降價！

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin paid a surprise visit to a Moscow supermarket, **instructing** startled managers to lower their prices, the press reported.

The visit appeared to be the latest in a series of media stunts by Russia's strongman to show the public that the government is in control of a financial crisis that still shows no sign of easing.

Putin broke off a formal meeting on the retail trade at his offices to take the participants to a nearby branch of the Perekrestok supermarket, one of Russia's biggest retail chains.

Striding around the aisles with top managers from the company and food producers in tow, Putin asked why the selling prices of goods were often so much higher than the producer price.

"Why do your sausages cost 240 rubles (US\$7.5)? Is that normal?" Putin asked, according to the *Kommersant* daily.

"But these are high quality sausages," replied the managing director of corporate relations for the X5 Retail Group that owns Perekrestok, Yuri Kobaladze. "Look, these ones are just 49 rubles."

"Too expensive," retorted Putin.

"No..." said Kobaladze, who is a former head of the public relations department of foreign intelligence.

"I can show you your mark-up," replied Putin, **brandishing** a piece of paper and seemingly uninterested in the

whys and wherefores.

"Look at this kind of sausage, your mark-up is 52 percent!"

Worse was to come when the prime minister moved on to a cabinet with pork products, where Putin objected that the supermarket had more than doubled the original price of the goods.

"This is twice as much. Is this normal? It's very high," said Putin.

"Tomorrow we will cut the price," promised Kobaladze.

Back at the meeting at the government offices, Putin said a better balance had to be found between producers, retailers and consumers in the industry.

"Only then can we achieve social **fairness**," he said according to Interfax. (AFP)

俄國媒體報導，俄國總理弗拉基米爾·普廷日前出奇不意地造訪莫斯科的一家超市，並指示措手不及的經理降低他們的商品售價。

這次造訪似乎是這位俄國獨裁領袖最近頻頻搏版面的動作之一，企圖讓民眾知道政府正在為了這波仍不見好轉的金融海嘯努力。

普廷中止了一場在他辦公室舉行的零售業正式座談會，將行程改至視察附近的Perekrestok連鎖超市：Perekrestok超市是俄國最大的連鎖零售業之一。

普廷和該店高階主管和食物供應商一起巡視店內商品時，詢問

為何商品的售價往往比供應商的價格高出這麼多。

俄國《工商日報》報導，普廷問：「為甚麼你們的香腸要價兩百四十盧布（美金七塊五）？這個價格合理嗎？」

Perekrestok超市所屬的X5零售集團事業關係部總經理尤里·寇巴拉茲回答：「這些香腸比較高級。」

普廷駁斥：「太貴了。」

曾任外國情報部公關主任的寇巴拉茲說：「不...」

普廷揮著手上的一張紙，對他的解釋興趣缺缺地說：「我手上有你們的漲價的紀錄。」

「光是這種香腸你們就漲了五成二！」

當普廷走向豬肉櫃檯時，他更抨擊該超市的豬肉價格高出進貨價的兩倍。

普廷說：「這是雙倍的價格。這樣合理嗎？這個價格太高了。」

寇巴拉茲允諾：「我們明天就會降價。」

普廷回到政府辦公室開會時表示，我們必須在生產商、零售業和消費者間，找到一個更合理的平衡點。

據俄國電通社報導，他說：「唯有如此，我們才能實現社會公平。」 (法新社/翻譯：袁星塵)

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin, second right, flanked by First Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Zubkov, right, looks at dairy products on display at the "Perekrestok" supermarket in Moscow, on June 24, 2009. PHOTO: AP

六月二十四日，俄國第一副總理維克特·祖布科夫（右）陪同總理弗拉基米爾·普廷（右二），在莫斯科的「Perekrestok」超市視察櫃上的乳製品價格。

照片：美聯社

TODAY'S WORDS 今日單字

1. **instruct** /ɪn'strʌkt/ v.

指示 (zhǐ shì)

例：The examinees were instructed to put down their pens and stop writing. (應試者被指示放下紙筆，停止作答。)

2. **brandish** /'brændɪʃ/ v.

揮舞 (huī wǔ) · 炫耀 (xuàn yào)

例：Hamish stormed into the room brandishing a copy of the contract. (漢米許衝進房間，炫耀著手上的合約。)

3. **fairness** /'fɛrnəs/ n.

公正 (gōng zhèng)

例：In the interests of fairness, players will be ranked according to their age. (為了公平起見，選手將會依年齡分級。)

IDIOM POINT 重要片語

whys and wherefores 事情的來龍去脈

The **whys and wherefores** of a situation are the reasons behind it. In the article, Putin seemed uninterested in the reasons behind the apparently high price of sausages.

Examples: "I'm not interested in the **whys and wherefores**. Just tell me who you gave the money to."

某個情況的「whys and wherefores」就是事情背後的原因。文章中提到，普廷顯然不想知道價格明顯過高的香腸背後的原因。

例如：「我不想知道這件事的來龍去脈。你只要告訴我你把錢拿給誰就好。」