

We have the president of the Independent Bankers Association, Mr. Stanley R. Barber of Wellman, Iowa, accompanied by Mr. Howard Bell, of Sauk Center, Minn., executive director of an organization which is always welcome before the Committee on Banking and Currency; and, from the ranks of organized labor, Mr. Pat Greathouse, of Detroit, vice president of the United Automobile Workers of America. Mr. Jacob Clayman, administrative director of the Industrial Union Department of the AFL-CIO, was also scheduled for this morning but is not able to be here.

We have a lot of ground yet to cover in completing these hearings today and we have found that by having the witnesses make their presentations in turn, and then giving the members an opportunity to question any or all of them at one time, we can cover far more ground and make sure that each member can ask the question or questions he is most anxious to direct to a particular witness.

We also have with us Mr. Herbert O'Connor, Jr., former commissioner of banking for the State of Maryland. Mr. O'Connor, I understand that you would like to present to the committee a statement to be made part of the record since we may not have time to enable you to do it orally.

STATEMENT OF HERBERT R. O'CONNOR, BALTIMORE, MD.

Mr. O'CONNOR. I would have no objection if your schedule permitted it, but knowing that you have previous witnesses scheduled I will just offer it for the record if I may.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. We will be happy to accept it.

After we study your statement, if there are any questions that we would like to put to you, if we can give it to you in writing will you have your answers back to us in a few days?

Mr. O'CONNOR. Very glad to do so. I would add this, I believe Mr. Keyserling testified on Wednesday.

He testified that he felt an 18-percent ceiling on interest was too high. I happen to agree with that. But I disagree with the fundamental practicality of trying to incorporate that in the bill this year. I think it is unrealistic to attempt it at this time and it might well destroy the passage of good legislation.

Thank you.

Mrs. SULLIVAN. Thank you very much for preparing a statement for our information, based on your extensive experience in this field.

(Mr. O'Connor's statement follows:)

STATEMENT OF HERBERT R. O'CONNOR

I am Herbert R. O'Connor, of Baltimore, Maryland. I am a practicing member of the Maryland bar; my public service includes a term as State Bank Commissioner from May 1, 1963 until July 1 of this year. I do not purport to be an expert in the field of finance or a specialist in consumer loans or credit. Rather, I happen to be an interested citizen convinced that one of the essential safeguards to the system of government we all cherish is a well-informed public.

There can be no doubt about the fact that a very substantial portion of the American public is not aware of the true cost of borrowing money or obtaining credit in the purchase of goods and services. Much of this lack of understanding is due to the absence of meaningful and standard information about the various species of legitimate transactions.