

More than one half of my practice dealt with people in local problems; landlord-tenant problems, consumer protection problems.

Not only is there ignorance, but there is downright cheating. Not just ignorance or being cheated, but even if they were not ignorant or being cheated, the consumer credit machinery is such as to deplete their income.

So it is a combination of the two.

Congressman HALPERN. Thank you very much, Borough President Sutton.

The CHAIRMAN. If I could ask you one more question.

I notice also you have given strong support for control of the revolving account as a form of credit subject to abuse.

We have heard again and again in Washington, where they charge one and a half percent monthly as a finance charge, but that is not the same as eighteen percent a year.

This seems hard to believe, but it really doesn't work out that way. They don't like to put on there that it is really eighteen percent a year.

Borough President SUTTON. Yes. Right now this is an awful thing, because it exists with our biggest department stores as well as our corner department store.

One and a half percent interest on the balance that is left, and they say this is not eighteen percent a year, because the balance fluctuates, and they say also because the balance fluctuates it would be much too expensive to tell each month the purchaser what his actual carrying charges are.

Well, I don't yet understand their mathematics. First they say this is not eighteen percent per year, I don't understand how they say that.

What is wrong with specifying it is one and a half percent a month, at eighteen percent a year, and x number of dollars owed every month.

I think the carrying charges ought to be clearly stated and, I think, if you do nothing else, any attempt ought to clearly state the requirements of the department store or any other store, it should state what the carrying charges actually are.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, indeed, Mr. Borough President, and we would like to thank you for taking time out of your heavy schedule for helping out in this field.

The CHAIRMAN. The next witnesses will be a group of three witnesses from the ILGWU, Mr. Gerel Rubien, Mrs. Carmen Rolon, Mrs. Anna Zayas.

Do you want to take the stand together?

STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES FOR INTERNATIONAL LADIES GARMENT WORKERS UNION

Mr. RUBIEN. Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I will introduce the next two witnesses.

I am Gerel Rubien, the Education Director of Local 82 of the ILGWU, and the head of our steering committee who has been working many years, as Miss Dubrow told you, in order to effectuate the Truth in Lending law.

Before I introduce to you Mrs. Rolon, I would like to state a few other words, something that Mr. Brewer and Mr. Sutton said, and that is the fear, the anger, the unfair, oppressive installment practices, the effect they have upon the working people of this City.

You see, they come to us in our union, they come in with these problems and many times we cannot rescue them.

They are furious at our economic system. They are distraught with our Government and they are in despair about their ability to get along in the world because of the unfair practices that have been practiced against them; surely they may, but that is our entire economy, the door-to-door salesman then. These things worry us not only in terms of finance, but in terms of morale and citizenship and the contributing citizenship of our workers in this City.

Now permit me to introduce to you Mrs. Carmen Rolon, who is the Educational Director of Local 42, which has a large number of Spanish-speaking members, and Mrs. Rolon deals very much with many of the parties in consumer practices.

Mrs. Rolon.

Mrs. CARMEN ROLON. Local 42 has had most of the problems we have here, the consumer and buyer. Many of our members are really cheated, I can say, be-
cause they pay double the price, and if the merchandise is not good for one reason
or the other, if they cannot continue to pay on time their salaries are garnished
and many of them have lost their jobs on account of the misunderstandings that
they can bring in the office of their employer.