

York City. Its very existence evidences interest on the part of city administration in the welfare of the consumer. It also provides an entity to which consumers can go with their problems and complaints.

The work of the council seems to divide into three logical aspects: (1) projects or activities the council, per se, can instigate and carry out; (2) coordination of the consumer programs or functions of the various city departments and agencies; and (3) assignment to particular city agencies certain activities, programs, or studies as they arise. To these a fourth dimension should be added—that of becoming aware of nonpublic consumer programs and giving encouragement and support to worthy efforts.

The program of the council, as it takes shape, has two functions—consumer protection and consumer education. While efforts are being exerted toward the latter—the information handbook, the price survey, the daily and weekly radio programs of the chairman, are examples—much emphasis is being placed on protection. And so it should. From an educator's point of view, however, the best form of protection is education—on a longer range basis. One of the important steps being taken along this line is the consumer education course being developed by the board of education through the council for introduction on a limited basis in six schools this fall. It should be expanded to include students beyond those in distributive education and to other schools in addition to the six. In fact, introduction of consumer economic content into existing courses and curriculums, from the elementary school on up, would be of the most beneficial and lasting influence.

Protection by legislation is good, as evidenced by such things as meat inspection, product labeling, and other controls of a similar nature. Truth in packaging and truth in lending are certainly essential and should have the support of the council. Perhaps as important is the implementation and enforcement of existing laws and regulations. One example is that of regulation 49 requiring prices to be posted on goods sold in retail stores. This regulation is not enforced and often, as the food price survey illustrated many times, the consumer does not know what he pays for what he buys and is not able to compare prices between stores and among commodities. It would be helpful for the council to encourage its constituent departments to look into existing regulations and methods to enforcing them, as well as to look to new legislation.

As the council moves forward with its work it would seem to be increasingly important that specific assignments be given to specific individuals or departments to carry out. This, then, would be supported by subcommittees and, in some cases, lay advisory groups. While this is currently being done to some extent, it should be followed with consistency and vigor.

The effectiveness of the council depends on its membership. My observation is that the members of the council, as well as the staff members who carry out their program, are talented and dedicated public servants. (See app. B.) It has been a pleasure knowing many of them personally and especially satisfying being associated with them professionally. My association with Dr. Costello has been particularly enjoyable. He is a man whom I observe to be held in high regard by all—a recognition well deserved.

The staff of the council consists of representatives of the council members. These are capable persons; it has been a pleasure being associated with them in the biweekly meetings. Staff leadership is carried out by Lewis Feldstein, assistant to Mayor Lindsay, and Henry Stern, special assistant to Deputy Mayor Costello. Working closely with them during the summer months, I have found them both to be both competent and congenial.

I should also like to mention the friendly and satisfying relationship I have had with Phillip Finkelstein, executive assistant to Dr. Costello. While he has many other demanding duties, he has ably engineered the daily and weekly radio programs presented over WNYC by Dr. Costello. Having had a small hand in them, and having appeared personally many times on the weekly show, I know how effective he has been in this activity.

THE RETAIL FOOD PRICE SURVEY

A major purpose of the retail food price survey is to provide current, timely, and pertinent information to consumers on a neighborhood basis to serve as a guide to them in their day-to-day food shopping. This is of vital importance since food takes the largest share of the take-home pay of any of the family living costs—18 percent on a national average. Significantly, however, in ac-