economic advantage. Consumer exploitation is a tragedy which is daily repeated over and over among the urban poor.

It includes credit exploitation, where credit today is readily extended at exorbitant cost to those who can least afford it, including those on welfare.

And yet, it is these low-income people who are often worst equipped in terms of education and experience to cope effectively with the mysteries of the credit system and to choose rationally between the various sources of credit offered to them.

Any remedy to the problem of food price discrimination must be part of a total attack on the economic exploitation of the consumer poor.

It must be an attack fought on three fronts: (1) efforts by Government to encourage additional large supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods; (2) Government prohibition of specific forms of price and quality discrimination; and (3) a massive program of consumer education to enable low-income people to make the most effective use of their economic resources.

There is one positive way to get new supermarkets and to insure that consumers will not suffer price or quality discrimination. This solution is for the poor consumers themselves to own the supermarket where they shop and to participate in the management of such a supermarket.

The people of Harlem increasingly are turning to the co-op market as a solution to food price and quality exploitation.

Recently I attended a meeting of Harlem citizens involved in organizing a cooperative supermarket in the Esplanade Gardens housing development. It is difficult in Harlem to bring large numbers of people out to a meeting and I expected to find perhaps 20 or 30 people.

I walked into a room packed with over 400 people and found out that these were not just people who had come out of curiosity—most of them had paid a $5 fee, the first step in becoming shareholders, co-owners of the new co-op market.

In West Harlem, the Morningside Consumer Cooperative has been successful in providing large numbers of low-income consumers with good-quality food at low prices.

Many sophisticated consumers from all over the ghetto, including a distinguished assemblyman, shop at this co-op market and carry their food home in a taxi in order to avoid the inferior quality and higher prices of ghetto foodstores.

As a first step in allowing low-income consumers to benefit from modern techniques of food marketing, I urge that the Federal Government and city governments take steps to encourage the establishment, growth, and operation of cooperative supermarkets in low-income neighborhoods.

Such asssitance must include long-term loans at low interest rates to provide part of the capital needed for construction and initial operating costs. It should also include providing community groups seeking to establish a cooperative food market with expert technical assistance in food retailing.

In this area, perhaps the expertise developed by the large food chain could be employed and the Federal Government could contract with the food chains to provide assistance to low-income people in setting up cooperative supermarkets.

But more than co-op markets will be needed for the poor to protect themselves from economic exploitation. What is most needed is a massive program of consumer education.

Exploitation will end only after the would-be exploited become sophisticated consumers and are able to recognize when they are being exploited, and then know what they can do about it.

Green power—the power of the sophisticated consumer to spend his money only where quality food is offered at reasonable prices—is the best answer to those who would seek to exploit.

In the Manhattan Borough president's office, we are seeking to organize a consumer protection and education program which would operate under the direction of our local community planning boards.

Such a program could aid in organizing cooperative supermarkets, could conduct comparison shopping surveys and communicate the results through a local newsletter, and could conduct classes for Manhattan consumers in how to organize a family budget and how to shop effectively.

On a national scale, this kind of a massive consumer education program should be undertaken by the antipoverty program.

The best device which Government has yet developed for involving the poor and enabling the ghetto resident to guide his own destiny, is the community action program, funded by the office of Economic Opportunity.