I believe the consumer should be fully informed of what he is buying, how much he is paying, and what charges he is being made to pay for the extension of credit.

I believe the consumer should be fully protected by law from contract provisions that have no place in fair dealing.

I believe the consumer who enters into an agreement for goods or services is entitled to receive his half of the bargain and not be left out in the cold because of outmoded legal concepts.

I believe the housewife who wishes to make her purchases on the basis of credit should be expected to pay an additional cost for the privilege of stretching out her payments, but I firmly believe, too, that the law should place a reasonable maximum on the amount of that credit charge.

These are minimum requirements in today's retail installment market.

The consumer, in my view, needs more than just legal protections. He also needs guidance; he needs more consumer education. Consumers should know the advantages of comparative purchasing. Housewives who find themselves paying a dollar's value and receiving less than a dollar's value can be greatly benefited by educational programs, by informational materials, by programs that bring to them an awareness of their important consumer position.

The housewives of our community should have an agency devoted to provide them with the information and assistance which they need to become sophisticated purchasers equal to the marketplace.

Consumer associations should be encouraged at the grassroots level of the city's neighborhoods, coordinated and organized into a communitywide and, indeed, a regionwide consumer organization dedicated to the protection and interests of all consumers.

I would certainly like to see the day that we have an organization stretching through Maryland and Virginia trying to protect the interests of the consumers. Such organizations could play a significant role in developing cooperation between consumers and the business community.

Some neighborhood-level organizations are already in the process of being formed in the District. I am extremely pleased with their development.

Mr. Chairman, these center-city organizations now in their formative stages have been receiving valuable guidance and leadership from consumer organizations whose members are our suburban neighbors on both sides of the Potomac. The help and interest they are giving is very encouraging and indicates that regional coordination of consumer efforts is a distinct possibility.

Similarly, the aid and encouragement of the staff of the President's Committee on Consumer Interest has been highly valuable. Much impetus to neighborhood interest in consumer matters has come from the efforts of the workers and volunteers of the United Planning Organization, with the cooperation of many civic groups. These efforts should be greatly encouraged and coordinated so that well-organized and effective consumer interest groups may become strongly established in the District.

Moreover, in my view, it is time that the city government must make a start in coming to grips with the problems of the consumer.