maybe it would help us to know what didn't work for you. Our president is Mrs. Sarah Newman. She will welcome ideas from any of you. It seems to us that everyone comes to Washington sooner or later. Please give your Maryland counterparts a ring.

NEW JERSEY

Nancy Hawkins

The Consumers' League of New Jersey was founded in 1899 by a group of people who felt that the consumers should be as responsible as anyone concerning the labor conditions under which the products he consumed were produced, and also the honesty with which these products were presented to the public.

At that time many cough remedies and patent medicines contained opium, and thousands of otherwise up-right Americans were dope addicts without knowing it.

Attempts at labor organization were met with federal troops and 40-hour week was a laughable matter. Children worked long hours and there were no seats for women in factories or retail stores. Some of the reforms for which the New Jersey Consumers' League is responsible for initiating are:

Factory Act establishing State Department of Labor--1904
Law regulating hours for minors engaged in messenger service--1911
Hours Law for women--1912
Child Labor Laws--1914 and 1920
Compulsory Education Laws for children under sixteen--1914 and 1940
The Migrant Labor Law passed in New Jersey in 1945
A Study in cooperation with the New Jersey Department of Labor in relationship of Juvenile Delinquency to the increase in work permits, 1955.
Hot water regulation for Migrant Camps, 1960

Work in Process -- Minimum Wage Bill accepted as administration bill
The New Jersey Consumers' League at present is working on Minimum Wage laws which will establish a floor for those workers that are exempted from all other minimum wage laws, and those unprotected by unions or represented by poor unions, such as hotel workers, laundry workers and agricultural workers, who have no unions at all and are the lowest paid, most poorly housed, uneducated citizens of the wealthiest, most highly developed society the world has ever seen.

The Migrants or Agricultural Workers, for instance, start up the coast early in the spring. In most states they are checked only for venereal disease if their health is checked at all. They work from sun-up to sun-down—there are no latrines in the fields. They live in, at best cinder block houses—a family to a room, with proper wash houses and flush toilets; at worst, filthy shacks, hidden back from the road—some of them ex-chicken coops. Sometimes eight to nine people to a small room. Children of eleven and up do this gruelling stoop labor—their chances at education snatched in those states that have summer schools for them—a couple of weeks here and couple there.

I'm sure that when Premier Khruschev was visiting here and was over-whelmed with admiration at the height of our corn, he was probably quite aware that those that picked it were poorly housed and that their skins were almost always brown or black.

To all this the farmers say they can't pay a living wage because he would go out of business because the consumer will not pay more for produce. I am sure they are wrong in this assumption. I am sure that the American housewife and her husband do not want to get their frozen food a bit cheaper on the backs of underpaid, underfed and unprotected farm workers, and their children, and to the detriment of their countrymen as a whole.

Nor do we want our summer vacations in hotels cheaper, when the hotel worker often has to go on relief or unemployment insurance for six months out of the year because the hotels do not pay a living wage.

Certainly, we all pay for this sometime in some way—in relief, in unemployment insurance or public hospital expense and in exposure to those whose health is questionable. This is in the interest of consumers.

This unofficial subsidy that we all give to the farmer and factories is something we ought to think about with care. The farms and businesses which complain so about the welfare state would have many more complaints if this subsidy were not there and did not exist because as decent Christians, non-Christians, and Jews we cannot let people starve. We do not want to go back to the times when children were often exploited by both business and their parents, when men worked in factories a twelve hour day, and to the times when workmen's compensation did not exist, and many other reforms—to say nothing of the worthless consumer goods passed on the public by unscrupulous people—children's clothes that shrank to nothing after one washing, dentifrices that removed the enamel from teeth and opium filled cough medicines.
These slow steps toward an adequate living for all our people are not only humanistic but necessary. After all, if we want to boast about how much better our society is than others, we should be in a position to feel proud of it. We, as consumers, want not only to consume—we want also to return to the soil that which we take from it—the fertilizer that has been removed. Like, the good farmer we don't want to strip the land, and then move on to the next farm. We should replenish as much as we consume.

These interlocking aspects of our economy are as much the responsibility of the consumer as anyone's. Only if we do this will our society be as healthy as our economy. Only then will the consumer have assumed his full responsibility.

CINCINNATI

Mrs. A. D. St. John

The Consumer Conference began most modestly in depression days, and has grown to a membership of approximately 600. We are unique in that we have a solid core of loyal and interested members who have been with us for many years. Unfortunately, age and illness take an annual toll which we must make up with new names and faces.

Being connected with the School of Home Economics of the University of Cincinnati is a great asset. The privilege of meeting on Campus cannot be underestimated. It not only gives prestige to the Consumer Conference; it furnishes us with the interest and support of many faculty members who give us good advice and splendid programs. We have not only the University of Cincinnati to draw on, but also the faculty of Xavier, which has been most generous with its resources. The Better Business Bureau, the Retail Merchants Association, the F.D.A., and Cincinnati's many business firms have given us their finest co-operation. Program material is probably the greatest lure in obtaining and keeping members, but dues frequently are a discouraging item.

The Consumer Conference started in 1934 with annual dues of 25¢. Now, a quarter of a century later, we charge the rather nominal amount of $1.00, so that membership dues are within the reach of anyone interested in consumer education. Each month we publish a "News" bulletin containing items of interest and help. We are often told by members who are unable to attend regularly or not at all that, "that little 'News' is worth the whole dollar all by itself!"