

## Consumer Affairs: A Scottish Initiative

Members will have learned with interest of the Movement's plans for a Consumer Conference in 1973. This arose from a resolution passed by the Education Convention of 1971 which met in Skegness. The resolution called on the Education Executive to initiate moves towards a National Consumer's Conference.

It now looks as though the Conference will be held in London in the early summer of 1973 when it is hoped the bulk of the delegates will emerge from local discussion groups which will be held in the first quarter of 1973.

The vast majority of these groups will meet under the sponsorship of the local Co-operative Society or of groupings of such societies or, again, under the jurisdiction of a local Federation. Such groups will probably base their deliberations on a Discussion Guide being prepared by the Education Department of the Union.

### Collaboration with Strathclyde

In the West of Scotland, however, the Society for Co-operative Studies has hopes of arranging what could perhaps be seen as a much more venturesome effort. The Society's Convenors in that region have joined forces with the Department of Marketing of the University of Strathclyde and it is hoped that jointly they will be in the position to offer a six/seven/eight week course on Consumer Affairs, which course would run from late January into March.

The topics to be covered in this course would include:

- The Consumer and the Welfare State
- The Consumer and the Retailer
- The Consumer in the High Street
- The Consumer and the Law
- Marketing and the Consumer: can they be reconciled?
- The Consumer and Politics

the course terminating with a final session reviewing the position of Consumer Affairs in the United Kingdom.

It is hoped that not only will such a course materialise but that the speakers will include:

- (1) *Mr. George Gay*, President of the S.C.W.S. and Chairman of the Scottish Committee of the Post Office Users Consultative Committee.
- (2) *Mrs. Janey Buchan*, former member of the Consumer Council; best known champion of Consumer Rights in the West of Scotland; Labour Councillor on Glasgow Corporation; wife of Norman Buchan M.P.
- (3) *Mrs. Kay Carmichael*, by far the most articulate spokeswoman on the social services in Scotland, and by now a leading Scottish television personality; wife of Neil Carmichael, M.P.
- (4) *Professor Michael Baker*, Head of the Department of Marketing at the University of Strathclyde whose D.Phil is from the Harvard Business School.

- (5) *Dr. Campbell Burns*, author of the leading work on Commercial Law in Scotland and consultant on marketing and business matters to a number of trading organisations.
- (6) *Dr. Tom Carbery*, former National Chairman of the Society for Co-operative Studies and author of "Consumers in Politics" published by Manchester University Press.
- (7) *Mrs. Jennifer Jenkins*, National President of the Consumers Association and wife of the Rt. Hon. Roy Jenkins M.P.

While it is true that those attending this course may have to pay a little more than their counterparts at the Discussion Groups in other parts of the country it is believed that the quality of the speakers will be seen as more than justifying the additional expense.

Again we see this as an activity which epitomises all that the Society was conceived to do i.e. bring the Universities and the Movement into closer collaboration doing so to the benefit of both.

T.F.C.