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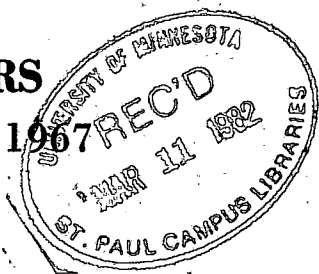
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**Reports of Discussion
Groups at the
International Conference
of Agricultural Economists
Sydney, August 1967**

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GROUP 5b. MARKETING IN INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIES

Chairman: C. E. French, *U.S.A.*

Secretary: H. de Farcy, *France*

Consultants:

E. Andah, *Ghana*

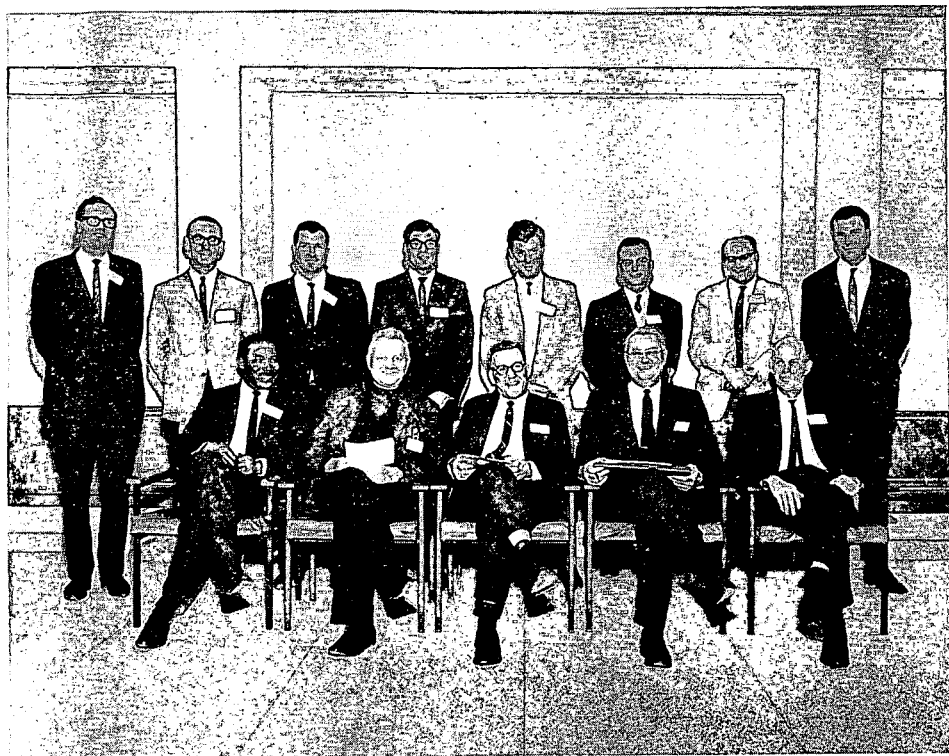
V. E. Schneider, *U.S.A.*

At the beginning of the discussion, many participants expressed their concern about the main topics of the conference. For adjusting farmers to a changing world, we have not only to deal with the theoretical problems, but also to discuss more freely the points which could help farmers to make this adjustment. Among these points a new approach to marketing problems could be very useful, provided that we do not consider marketing as a passive activity, but as a creative one.

In that sense we tried to summarize the goals of the marketing activities: (i) to assure efficient transfer of farm products from producers to consumers, (ii) to give to the consumer what he requires, (iii) to make efficient use of production resources.

In industrialized countries that means: (a) not only ensuring that transfers done on a purely commercial basis (exchange of food for money) are done efficiently, but transfers resulting from redistribution systems (the techniques of redistribution being far more complex than those of commercial exchange); (b) being concerned with the distribution of primary needs which were formerly free (such as running water, fresh air, silence)—as main occupants of the land, the farmers cannot be indifferent to this point; (c) not only being interested in markets functioning according to the law of supply and demand, but also in markets subject to different types of government intervention; (d) not only giving consumers what they demand, although these demands may appear capricious, or selling what producers are offering (very often without care for the real needs of the market), but helping producers and consumers to be more free, to have a better sense of responsibilities, to be more flexible, to be better economic agents, through better producers' and consumers' education.

It appears very important that many marketing men, instead of being devoted exclusively to their techniques, might form a better appreciation of the sociological, political and human implications of



GROUP 5b. MARKETING IN INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIES

Front row, left to right:

E. Andah, *Ghana*
H. de Farcy, *France*
C. E. French, *U.S.A.*
V. E. Schneider, *U.S.A.*
G. D. Oliver, *Australia*

Second row, left to right:

I. H. Lamond, *Australia*
A. L. Lacasse, *Canada*
D. R. J. Densley, *Australia*
J. W. Freebairn, *Australia*
R. B. Ham, *Australia*
A. J. C. Lobao, *Portugal*
G. A. Kaufmann, *Australia*
P. A. Westerman, *Australia*

Other members of group:

G. Vorobiev, *U.S.S.R.*
R. W. Gray, *Australia*
M. Le Couteur, *Australia*
G. L. Miller, *Australia*
L. D. Napolitan, *U.K.*
R. Pender, *Australia*
T. N. Sandor, *Australia*
Miss N. Y. Webber, *Australia*

these techniques. In that sense, more emphasis should be put on a better understanding of the goals of marketing and of the ethical implications of marketing activities.

Research which could be undertaken in the field of marketing

As the field of marketing is related to politics and sociology, the first responsibility of the economist—with the increased acceptances of marketing problems—is to try to know and to express the realities as they are, and not in the way that farmers, governments and other sponsors would like them to be. More than suggestions, they have to provide alternative solutions, being more and more able to answer the question: 'What if . . . ?' resulting from the introduction of innovations.

It seems that if the classical types of marketing research are not to be neglected also, more emphasis should be put on the following aims: (i) to elaborate a consistent theory of marketing (possibly in an eclectic approach); (ii) in the meanwhile, to make progress with the best methods available of analysing the problems which are not yet subjected to purely scientific research, but which need to be solved; (iii) to analyse the best methods which could be used to promote entrepreneurship and innovations; (iv) to find more efficient tools to co-ordinate, in an interdisciplinary approach, political, economical and social viewpoints of the marketing problems; in those efforts, economists could have a catalytic function; (v) to solve the problem of the group decision processes (especially for helping co-operatives to get along with economic evolution); (vi) as marketing is a way of communication, to analyse the problems of advertising and promotion, from the economical, psychological and sociological points of view; (vii) to analyse the consequences and the results of government interventions and various types of redistribution, both within and between countries.