

PARTICULAR

(A) Currency: details of the £1 and 20p coins received remarkably little publicity and we must wait until they are introduced (20p in July 1982 and £1 coin in April 1983) to study the effects. In the meantime interesting things are already happening:

Please note which shops continue to use the \pounds in pricing, and if they do not, see if you can find out why.

For four consecutive Sundays please make a note of the loose change in your possession i.e. how many \pounds , 1p, 2p etc up to 50p coins. Do not include paper money.

How much are cheque books replacing the use of currency and how long do cheque books last? If you use a cheque book please make a note of the number of cheques remaining in your current book and how many are left when you report back to us. If you use a credit card as well as cheques please say so. If you have kept used-up cheque books (and filled in the stubs!) could you let us know how many cheques were in the book originally and how long it lasted.

Do you use any of the so-called 'savings schemes' whereby you purchase stamps to pay for things like television licences, if so, give details. Included in this are the budget accounts operated by some banks.

Are there personal circumstances that make you 'collect' certain coins e.g. regular use of slot machines like the phone or underground travel. Some people also keep back \pounds for charities, some have 'savings bottles' for holidays etc.

Shortage of £1 at weekends. People are being paid in larger denominations which they change on Saturdays making for a shortage of £1 notes in the tills. Please tell us whether this is happening in your area and if possible the reactions of shopkeepers.

Graffiti on bank notes. This is something which appears to be quite new and difficult to spot because banks weed them out. Examples of what I have seen are 'This is a beer voucher' along the top of a £1 note, and a balloon by the Queen's mouth saying 'Wot price money?' N.B. simple numbers written on notes do not count but any written message does.

How much does money cost? In Brighton antique shops a 10/- note is offered for £1 and old pennies for 10p each.

(B) Pet food: If you keep pets please give detailed costs of feeding for a week and specify brand names if you use tinned food. If you keep a dog, give some idea of its size, e.g. 'about the size of a labrador' or specify breed of course if it's a thorough-bred. If you do not keep a pet please collect details of tinned food prices for one or more brands in different shops.

(C) Shopping strategies: 'Consumer Guides' tell us to 'shop around but this is not always possible. There are all sorts of reasons why we do not always buy the cheapest available -

PLEASE TURN OVER

PARTICULAR (cont.)

time, work, distance, health and 'too much else to worry about'. How do these and other factors affect how and where you do your shopping? A friend of mine has only recently worked out that it costs him more to travel to a cheaper petrol station!

GENERAL

- (A) The reports so far received on changes in the ownership of shops have proved so useful that I would be grateful if you would continue them. Please note when a shop closes and then what business is conducted there when it re-opens. If they have not re-opened at the time of reporting, please say SO. It is a good idea when a shop closes to make a note immediately of what it was because one can forget very quickly. Reports which add local comment on the effects of such changes are particularly useful.
- (B) Unemployment - what we need are facts and feelings. Local closures and difficulties in finding employment are important but what are not commonly reported in the press are, so to speak, the side effects on marriage, the family, social relations generally. Those without direct experience might keep an eye on advertisements in local Job Centres and the like.
- (C) The Liberal-S.D.P. Alliance, the changes in the Cabinet and the Deputy Leadership election in the Labour Party, still to come at the time of writing, are all going to warm up our political life quite considerably. In the past, Mass-Observers have done superb work plotting shifts in public opinion and we would like to continue this. The General Election is not imminent so for the present would you make casual soundings of the political climate; not 'How would you vote' questions but rather 'What do you think about the Labour Deputy Leader Election?'
- (D) Christmas is nearly upon us, the first sign was spotted by an alert Mass-Observer in June, and another already has a turkey in the deep-freeze. Please keep as detailed as possible an account of all aspects of Christmas expenditure and let us have it in the New Year. The question of imported French turkeys still seems unclear so watch out for reactions.

Despite the recession over the last few years the press reports shopping booms at Christmas; please record your local impressions. Obviously none of this Christmas material can be reported before the end of this quarter so please send it in after Christmas.

Finally please try to avoid the Christmas mail and post other material to us before mid-December.

REMEMBER THAT NO ONE CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO EVERYTHING!