

## FOREWORD

I was reminded recently of a story which a former CWS Director used to tell. He visited Society A and in the Boardroom was questioning its Chief Official as to why Society B just up the road was successful when over the years Society A had recorded poor results. Since the conditions in which the two Societies operated were about the same, was there any reason why Society B seemed to be having much more success? "Of course there is a reason", replied the indignant Chief Official, "My counterpart in Society B runs it as if it were a business!"

This was not the text for examination which we sent to our contributors on *Management in a Co-operative Setting*, though it might have been. We offered them a rather more pretentious elaboration which, however, comprehended the question to Society A - and indeed to all of us. From an acknowledgement of Co-operative values for human behaviour and Co-operative principles for organisation, lines of analysis readily enough emerge:

- What are these values and principles?
- What are their implications for Co-operative organisation and operation in practice and for our competitive position vis-a-vis organisations of a different character?
- How effective a response does management make in its practice to the claims which these values and principles offer?
- How could this response be improved?

Our invitation was for each contributor out of his study and experience to comment on this formulation generally or on any particular part of it which attracted his interest. So they responded out of their very varying backgrounds: Dr. Briscoe, now of the University of the South Pacific, out of his studies and Co-operative engagements; two former Chief Executive officers T.R. Edmondson and Lord Jacques; two serving Chief Executive Officers - F.E. Creed and J. Smethurst; and N.C. Wijayaratna from his research into the various forms of dividend and discount with which societies are now experimenting. Finally in a link with what has gone before, Peter Davis reports on a SCS/Horace Plunkett Foundation Conference earlier this spring on the same topic.

July 1988

R.L.M.