

SOCIETY NOTES

As it happens most of the material that might have claimed a place under this heading is quite appropriately included below in the Newsletter and in the Report of the Society's A.G.M. However, there is still room and need for a word on the Bulletin.

This Issue -

There is some concentration on the Buying and Selling Practices of Retail Societies and the capacity of Societies to compete in both with the multiples and independents is quite simply a condition of their commercial life. The Bulletin also makes a further effort to show and stimulate the variety, the controversy and the response from readers about which we expressed ambitions at the A.G.M. In addition to the Newsletter and the Reviews from Rita Rhodes and Stephen Drodge there is the Report of the Conference which Alex Wilson has extended into an interesting analysis in its own right; the report by Athanasius Bouchard on the Researches in the French Movement into member participation which extends the scope of our discussions in the last Bulletin and at the Conference; the question and challenge by Jim Craigen on the future of the Co-operative Party; and the letters of contradiction, correction or caution from Dick Bluer and Alan Taylor.

- And the Next Issue, No. 44

This we expect to publish in April 1982 and a central feature will be the first of two articles by W.P. Watkins on the relations among Co-operatives in France and between them and the Socialist Party and Government. This interest has figured strongly in the discussions of the working group on "Co-operation between Co-operatives". We also expect to

give some attention to agricultural co-operation, mainly in the U.K.

Among the other prospects we should like certainly to develop the forum "From Readers". We should welcome your letters - and if, to stay within (or close to) our limits of space we have to print in part rather than in whole we shall make the selection as fairly and as sensitively as we can.

Seminar for Co-operative Researchers

This was held under the auspices of the S.C.S. on 26th June 1981 with the general objective:-

"areas of mutual concern such as the publishing of a co-operative research directory and its up-dating, how to stimulate more co-operative research and achieve its wider dissemination, and how to encourage new sources of funding."

Those present were:-

Prof. Colin Lacey	University of Sussex
Elise Bayley	Plunkett Foundation for Co-operative Studies
John Morley (Chairman)	" " " "
Lord Oram	Co-operative Development Agency
Nora Stettner	" " " "
Sharon Dimoldenberg	" " " "
Rita Rhodes (Convenor)	Society for Co-operative Studies
David Hutton	" " " "
W.P. Watkins	" " " "
Miss G.M. Winch	" " " "
Dr. G.T. Fopham	University of Aston
Ms. R. Horton	" " " "
Robert Mears	University of Leicester
Garth Pratt	Co-operative Union Ltd
Jim McCloskey	CLEAR Unit
Dr. Mary Mellor	Newcastle-Upon-Tyne Polytechnic

Mark Craig	University of Oxford			
Tom Fitch	Industrial Common Ownership Movement			
Jenny Thornley	Co-operative Research Unit			
Chris Cornforth	"	"	"	"
Peter Milford	"	"	"	"
Roger Spear	"	"	"	"

Elise Bayley reported on the Research Directory which the Foundation and the C.R.U. have now published and discussion ranged round a paper prepared by Nora Stettner and Jenny Thornley.

Future Action

The following agreed agenda for "Future Action" is taken from a report of the Seminar prepared by John Morley and Rita Rhodes:-

- "- the need to consider which organisation can provide a clearing house for information on co-operatives so as to relieve congestion on actual co-operatives
- suggesting to co-operative libraries that they exchange indexes
- ICOM to suggest suitable topics for short research projects of 6-8 weeks (particularly for University and College students)
- Society for Co-operative Studies to make the case to the Co-operative Bank and CIS that they should give financial support to co-operative research
- Plunkett Foundation to consider publishing summaries of students' theses in its Year Book
- Society for Co-operative Studies to consider producing a list of identified gaps in co-operative research in a future edition of its Bulletin

- Society for Co-operative Studies to be asked to protest at the closure of the ICA Library."

Items for the S.C.S.

No doubt the Society and its national officers will be continuing to refer for some time to this list. On the items specifically referred to the Society they have already made at least initial responses.

- Case to the Co-operative Bank and C.I.S.

An exploratory approach under way.

- Gaps in Co-operative Research. We hope to publish in the next Bulletin a fuller review of the Research Directory with some consideration of the gaps revealed.
- I.C.A. Library. The Society is expressing its appreciation of the services the library gave and concern about the damage from reducing these.

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R.L.M.