

The Society for Co-operative Studies

REPORT OF THE FIFTEENTH ANNUAL

GENERAL MEETING

Friday/Saturday 25/26 September 1981

at the Co-operative College, Stanford Hall

1. CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Mr. David Hutton warmly welcomed the members to the meeting and expressed his pleasure at the number attending the Conference (65) and Annual General Meeting (53).

2. ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NATIONAL OFFICERS FOR 1980/81

This had been tabled at the meeting. Officers in turn introduced various areas of interest:-

a) The Secretary.

Dr. Alex Wilson, reviewed in particular:-

i) Officers

Dr. Wilson suggested that the list of Presidents should be reviewed at the AGM 1982 with particular consideration for its coverage of the various areas of Co-operative organisation.

ii) Meetings of the National Officers

The National Officers had met in September and December 1980, February and June 1981, and had a meeting before the AGM.

iii) Membership

At 1st September 1981 membership of the Society was:-

<u>Region</u>	<u>Individuals</u>		<u>Organisations</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>(Prev. Year)</u>
	<u>Co-op</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Co-op</u>	<u>Other</u>		
Metropolitan & Southern	36	15	16	2	69	(50)
Midland	23	5	8	-	36	(31)
North	2	1	1	-	4	(3)
North-West	11	3	7	2	23	(19)
Scottish	22	9	2	3	36	(24)
South-West	3	2	3	-	8	(8)
Yorkshire & Humberside	9	1	7	1	18	(15)
Overseas	3	2	1	4	10	(8)
	<u>109</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>204</u>	<u>(158)</u>
Previous Year	90	21	39	8	158	

This achievement in membership was a matter for some satisfaction, and Dr. Wilson noted that much of it was due to personal efforts by Officers attracting new members and urged that this good example be widely followed.

- iv) Dr. Wilson advised the meeting that he hoped to withdraw from the Secretaryship at the end of 1981/82 - having completed the tenure

which he had originally envisaged. No doubt suggestions would be brought to the 1982 AGM for his successor and for any other consequential arrangements.

b) Mr. W.P. Watkins

Mr. Watkins reported the progress of the study group on "Co-operation among Co-operators" and the prospects for further analysis of the scope for concerted action among the Co-operative sectors.

c) The Treasurer

Mr. L.A. Harrison reviewed the following statement which had been included in the Report for 1980/81:-

"The Receipts and Payments Account for the 15 months ended 31st March 1981 by comparison with the previous year ended 31st December 1979 is as follows:-

	<u>1979</u>	<u>1980/81</u>
	£	£
<u>Receipts</u>		
Cash in hand brought forward	1.10	0.64
Cash at bank brought forward	201.11	268.40
Subscriptions	1076.40	1258.08
Fees - AGM and Conference	480.00	682.95
Sales - Society Bulletins	70.29	39.73
Gifts	4.00	20.00
	<u>£1832.90</u>	<u>£2269.80</u>

Payments

Secretarial expenses	-	5.75
AGM and Conference	356.23	573.78
Refund of Subscriptions (or Bulletin Sales)	4.00	11.00

Other meetings - Fees and expenses	26.06	227.42
Stationery	44.28	41.15
Printing Society Bulletin	432.50	651.00
Telephone	3.74	71.09
Postage less contra items	190.70	342.41
Typewriting	335.41	188.04
Bulletin Editorial expenses	169.12	118.24
Bank Commission	1.82	3.10
Cash in hand	0.64	1.82
Cash at bank	268.40	35.00
	<u>£1832.90</u>	<u>£2269.80</u>

The Treasurer explained that this represented the very tight financial balance which the Society had had to maintain and also reported the financial position at 1st September 1981 which indicated some easement. Beyond that he drew attention to an arrangement with the CWS which would be a great advantage in the future and which he warmly commended to the AGM. In effect the CWS, for the next three years, while fully respecting the independence of the Society, was willing to meet the costs of printing three issues of the Bulletin annually together with some of the associated costs. This would represent a major and much appreciated improvement in the financial position of the Society.

The Treasurer also reported the explorations that had been initiated about the possibility of charitable status for the Society and the benefit this could bring for subscribers and contributors. He asked the AGM to agree that these enquiries should be carried forward as positively as possible by the National Officers.

d) The Joint Editor

Dr. Marshall, on behalf of Professor T.F. Carbery and himself, summarised the year - on the one hand, a considerable extension in the range of Co-operative interest and of authors included in the Bulletin, and, on the other hand, some contraction under the limitation to three issues per year and to 64 pages normally for each Bulletin. For the future he urged the development of more controversy within the Bulletin and also of more initiative and response by readers by way of letters and submissions dealing with the material printed. For the topics for 1981/82 he envisaged that the first would have a variety of reference points including a symposium on the practice of retail societies in their buying and selling prices compared with the record of multiples and independents. He invited further suggestions for subjects to which the Bulletin might turn. In response to this there was a suggestion from Mr. M. Kirkman that the record of the Co-operative Productive Federation might be a useful study, especially in view of the interest now in workers' Co-operatives. Dr. Marshall felt that this general area had been reasonably well covered in quite recent Bulletins but agreed that at least there should be some enquiry into the survival and availability of the records of the CPF.

e) Future of the I.C.A. Library

Appreciation was expressed by members of the service from the I.C.A. library and concern about its future following the I.C.A.'s discussions about the resources and prospects

for the future. It was agreed that the Society should convey this concern to the I.C.A.

3. APPOINTMENT OF NATIONAL OFFICERS FOR 1980/81

The following were all re-appointments, with the exceptions noted:-

- a) Presidents: Mr. L.A. Harrison, Lord Jacques, Dr. R.L. Marshall, Mr. W.P. Watkins, Dr. Margaret Digby, Mr. G.R. Gay and Lord Young of Dartington.
- b) Chairman: Mrs. R.M. Rhodes was appointed
- c) Vice-Chairmen: Professor A.J. Eccles; Mr. Brian Rose was appointed.
- d) Secretary: Mr. T.E. Stephenson had indicated that he did not wish to continue as Joint Secretary. It was agreed to rely on one officer and Dr. Wilson was appointed.
- e) Treasurer: Mr. L.A. Harrison
- f) Editors: Dr. R.L. Marshall and Professor T.F. Carbery
- g) Auditor: Mr. C.A. Turner

Mr. David Hutton expressed warmly appreciation of all the colleagues who had served with him during 1980/81, and in turn he was warmly thanked for his services throughout the year.

4. CONFERENCE AND AGM 1982

The Chairman reported that a suggestion had been made that the Conference be moved from September to Easter or even Christmas. On balance, however, the AGM expressed the view that it should remain at its present season. Accordingly the next Conference and AGM would be held on Friday/Saturday 24/25 September 1982.