

Society for Co-operative Studies

— ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1967-68 —

1. A representative meeting at Stanford Hall on 3rd/4th April 1967 agreed on the inauguration and constitution of the Society and on the national officers for 1967-68. These officers have had four meetings in the year, and the following is their report for presentation to the General Meeting on 18th/19th April, 1968.

2. Membership

After the inaugural meeting, the distribution of information about the Society included all universities and also all colleges engaged in co-operative studies; all co-operative societies; the co-operative and the educational press; and many individuals who, it seemed, had been or could be interested in the Society. At 17th February 1968, the membership of the Society was:

Region	Individuals		Organisations		Total
	"Co-operative"	Other	"Co-operative"	Other	
MIDLAND	8	4	6	2	20
NORTH	9	3	4	2	18
YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE	4	2	9	2	17
NORTH-WEST	11	7	10	1	29
SOUTH	12	10	5	1	28
SCOTTISH	3	2	2	2	9
SOUTH-WEST	1	—	2	—	3
WEST	2	1	3	1	7
	50	29	41	11	131

The division into "Co-operative" and "Other" to indicate the main interest or experience which appears to have led members into participation in the Society is not of course exact, but it may still give a useful indication of the comparative support for the Society from these different areas.

3. The Bulletin

The general objective set by the national officers for the *Bulletin* is to give information and views on the engagement between the universities and colleges and the Co-operative Movement of which the Society is one expression. This will include information on the development of the Society, particularly in the regions; on co-operative studies and research undertaken within the Movement or in universities and colleges; and on organisations with related objects both in Britain and in other countries. It is not intended however that the *Bulletin* should serve as a "learned" journal for the publication of the results of the research.

There have been three issues of the *Bulletin* in the present year: and the national officers appreciate particularly the services of Miss J. M. Abbott, B.A., as co-editor with the Secretary and Treasurer.

4. Regional Developments

Along the lines set by the inaugural meeting, two Acting Joint Conveners were sought in each region and the Sectional Education Officer of the Co-operative Union was invited to act as Secretary. General suggestions had been made by the national officers for development in the regions, including the study of co-operative democracy in regional societies, and submission of views which could be considered for publication nationally. The situation in February 1968 as reported from each region is:

Midland

The Society had a slow start owing to the difficulty of bringing the acting joint conveners and secretary together. At their first meeting it was agreed to submit five studies and from these the members attending the inaugural meeting selected two main areas of concentration: management in regional societies and democratic control.

The speaker at the inaugural meeting in January was Mr. J. Whitfield of Keele University and a further meeting is planned for 25th May. It would seem that in the Midlands there is a firm base on which to commence regional activities of the Society for Co-operative Studies.

North

There are eighteen members of the Society, eleven of whom attended the inaugural meeting in January. A programme is being planned and meetings have been scheduled for the next session. Relationships with colleges and universities continue, including suggestions for courses for 1968/69.

Yorkshire and Humberside

Throughout this, the first year of life, membership has by no means developed at the pace at first expected, which may be due to overlapping of activities of other organisations. Two meetings of the conveners have been held during the session and forty-four people attended the inaugural meeting held in Leeds on 29th June 1967 when Mr. T. E. Stephenson spoke on the aims of the Society.

A conference on regional co-operatives held jointly with the National Co-operative Education Association at Scarborough in November was addressed by Mr. J. Roper and Mr. Lloyd Harrison, the co-authors of the Fabian pamphlet "Towards Regional Co-operatives", and associations with other organisations in the region continue.

North-West

Two meetings of the Society have been held. The first in October was of an exploratory nature and brought forth a suggestion that amongst early topics for consideration might be regional society organisation and problems of capital.

The conveners acted on the first of these two suggestions and in preparation for the second meeting held on 9th February circulated to members an outline of the methods of democratic control adopted in the Bath & West, Birkenhead, Bolton District and Bradford District Societies. After the opening addresses by Mr. S. P. Clarke, secretary and chief executive officer of Bradford Society and

Mr. G. W. Calcroft, chief executive officer of Bolton Society, there was a useful discussion in which the lines of thought contained in the documentation and the opening addresses, particularly with reference to the problems and importance of district or regional committees, were followed up. The discussion will be continued at the next meeting on 26th April.

Scotland

During the year the conveners met for discussion before the inaugural meeting which was held in November and addressed by Mr. J. M. Wood, the Parliamentary Secretary of the Co-operative Union, who spoke on "Consumers in Europe".

South

The inaugural meeting has been held and there is a growing membership of organisations and individuals. Mr. P. Shea has been endorsed as a permanent convener and a second appointment is being sought from the "co-operative" side.

South-West

Explorations have proceeded during the year regarding the appointment of the acting joint conveners and a successful conclusion is near.

West

Following the inaugural meeting at the Co-operative College, Stanford Hall, held on 3rd/4th April 1967, information was sent to all relevant organisations and individuals throughout the region and membership sought. This has not proved high numerically with only three individual members and four organisations. Two acting joint conveners were obtained, Mr. W. E. Jenkins, Extra-Mural Department, Swansea, and Mr. M. E. Morgan, General Manager, C.R.S. Discussions resulted in the decision to promote a regional organisation in September, 1967.

The regional inauguration, attended by only a small number was addressed by the Society's Chairman, Dr. A. Wilson, M.A., and facilities were provided by the Extra-Mural Department, Cardiff. As a result of this meeting it was agreed to make approaches to several individuals and organisations to achieve a working body for the region, and the first meeting of this committee is proposed for April 1968.

5. Kindred Relations

Opportunity will continue to be taken to get information of kindred organisations in Britain and abroad and where possible to develop productive relations with them: in particular, with the British committee for Public and Co-operative Enterprise.

6. Finance

The cash and bank account from the formation of the Society to 17th February 1968 is as follows:

SOCIETY FOR CO-OPERATIVE STUDIES

Cash and Bank Account from Formation of Society to 17th February, 1968

RECEIPTS	£ s. d.	PAYMENTS	£ s. d.
Subscriptions	664 12 0	Printing—Society <i>Bulletin</i>	129 0 5
Fees — A.G.M. and Conference	13 4 0	Typewriting	38 17 4
Gift	20 0 0	Meetings—Expenses	30 15 0
Sales — Society <i>Bulletin</i>	1 11 6	Visit	4 12 6
Bank Interest	1 3 6	Stationery and Postage	75 7 5
		Telephone	1 3 8
		Bank Commission	0 2 9
		Cheque Books	0 12 6
		Cash in Hand	—
		Cash at Bank	419 19 5
	£700 11 0		£700 11 0

7. Conclusion

In general the first year has inevitably been devoted to setting up the national framework and services of the Society. The next stage will be to define and pursue specific tasks, particularly in the regions, which arise from its distinctive purposes.