

- (vii) That there were many topics needing research ranging from the problems of democracy in regional Societies to the problems of capital for co-operative development, from the application of "value-added" taxes to the possibilities of unified action in the Movement, etc.

(f) **THE NEXT STAGE**

There was considerable stress on the importance of the Society concentrating its efforts in the immediate future on one or two lines of development selected from the wide range of possibilities open to it. It was envisaged that the National Officers would review the various suggestions made at this AGM and select such priorities.

7 Annual General Meeting 1969

It was agreed:

- (a) That in general there was a value in the AGM moving among different centres—including a resort to the Co-operative College possibly about every third year.
- (b) That the next AGM should if possible be held at the University of Manchester.
- (c) That the dates should be Friday and Saturday, 11th-12th April, 1969—providing two sessions on the afternoon and evening of the first day and one session on the Saturday morning.
- (d) That, in 1969, one session be the business meeting of the Society and that the other two be based on papers reporting research carried out or in progress.

Lines of Development for 1968-69

A Review by the National Officers

In a wide-ranging discussion at their May meeting the National Officers of the Society for Co-operative Studies reviewed the report of the Annual General Meeting given on the preceding pages of this Bulletin and sought to identify some lines of concentration for 1968-9. In the outcome, the main points were:

1 General

There was agreement that the concern of the Society was not to assume any of the executive responsibilities which belong to the official agencies of the Co-operative Movement but to encourage and share in the exploration of the problems and developments which lay beyond these immediate tasks.

2 Increasing the Membership

It was noted that, in some regions, an urgent need was still to build up a group of members of a size which could sustain an appropriate programme. There was interest in the scheme under consideration in one region for sponsoring a social occasion such as a wine and cheese party to bring "Co-operators" and "Academics" together by individual invitations and at a charge, and to use the occasion to increase the membership.

3 Programme for 1968-69

The Officers acknowledged the emphasis at the AGM on the importance of the Society concentrating its efforts in the immediate future on one or two lines of development and the expectation that the National Officers, after reviewing the various suggestions at the AGM, would select such priorities:

(i) STUDY PROJECTS

After reviewing various topics that might be promoted in the regions, it was agreed:

- that two areas of study and discussion should be suggested: the Future of Co-operative Democracy—particularly in regional societies; and the “National Structure of the Movement”, particularly the relations between the trading and the non-trading federations. It was not of course envisaged that these topics should be “compulsory” for all regions or that they should represent the only activity in any region.
- that Dr. Wilson and Mr. Watkins would prepare notes respectively on these topics which would seek to provide a framework for discussion. It was appreciated that regional groups might well adopt their own framework and, even if they adopted the suggested pattern initially, they might well pass later to other lines of enquiry.
- that regional groups be invited to send in reports of their discussion and views by the end of January 1969 so that these could be considered as a basis for a report to be published in the Bulletin.
- that a general intimation of the intention and of the topics be made in Bulletin No. 4 with the promise that the more detailed notes would be distributed early in September. This was based on the expectation that Dr. Wilson and Mr. Watkins would be able to submit their material to the Secretary and Treasurer within a month.

(ii) RESEARCH

It was acknowledged that systematic research depended upon the commitment to it of qualified individuals and this in turn depended on resources adequate to support such individuals and their work. Sources of such money for research as set out in the report of the AGM were reviewed and ways of carrying forward the help of the Society for research discussed:

- by disseminating information of research which was already being undertaken and of developing a sense of common interest among the participants.
- by providing opportunities for research workers to report to regional and national meetings.
- by helping in gathering information for such research from the members of the Society whose sympathy could be counted on.
- by the members of the Society helping when they could in support of co-operative research from the sources available.

The National Officers agreed to keep this aspect of the Society's interest under review and further discussion.