

## SOCIETY NOTES



'To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heavens' - and here are some of the occasions and considerations for the Society that lie ahead.

### **A Season for Conferring . . .**

The Society's fringe meeting at the Co-operative Union's Congress, successfully inaugurated in 1993, will be held this year at lunch-time on Sunday 29 May and will discuss the Problems of Market Share. The leading speakers will be Professor Leigh Sparks, Director of the Institute for Retail Studies at Stirling University who contributed the extended essay Consumer Co-operation in the UK 1945-93 to Journal 79 and Alan Middleton, lecturer and consultant, who is a director of Lincoln Society.

The annual conference will be at the College on Saturday/Sunday, 10/11 September and will be followed in the latter part of Sunday morning by the AGM. Publicity to members for these occasions in being undertaken separately. The theme set for the conference is "Commercial Success: Moral Dilemma?". No theme has been set for the AGM but one useful engagement would be with an aspiration expressed in the first issue of the Journal: to "bring together representatives from all areas of Co-operative interest and many individuals, particularly from universities and colleges." How many and how active are the areas represented and how wide and positive the interest from universities and colleges?

### **. . . Collaboration . . .**

The International Centre of Research and Information on the Public and Co-operative Economy (CIRIEC) aims to "promote the collection of information, scientific research and the publication of works on economic sectors and activities oriented towards the service of the general and collective interest". It has national sections in some 15 countries - not now including the UK. The Co-operatives Research Unit of the Open University is now taking the initiative towards setting up a UK section and the SCS committee will be considering the venture.

### **. . . for Charity . . .**

Application for charitable status for the Society has been made by the committee and more information on this development - and much else - will be given in the Annual Report to the AGM.

### **. . . for Congratulations . . .**

Another distinction within 1994 is the 75th anniversary of the Plunkett Foundation. It is worthily marked by *The World of Co-operative Enterprise 1994*, published by the Foundation (23 Hanborough Business Park, Long Hanborough, Oxford OX8 6LH) and priced at £14.95. The book, as Keith Brading has written in the *Co-operative News*, in "describing the position of Co-operatives in different sectors and in different countries, brings out their many common interests and problems".

### **. . . and for Collection**

Dr. Peter Davis, Research Correspondent for the Society, (c/o 132 Cordery Road, Evington Village, Leicester LE5 6DF) is sending out the questionnaire for the up-dating of the Register of Research into Co-operatives. Help from members in responding or in bringing the venture to the attention of likely respondents will, of course, be welcomed.

### **Journal Ahead**

In Journal 81 we plan further contributions stimulated by *Consumer Co-operation in the UK 1945-93* in number 79, (£4.50, postage included, from the Membership Secretary) - essentially on the challenge facing that movement at present and in the calculable future and on the options available to it. If you can join in the symposium, we shall be glad to hear from you! We shall draw on as many contributions as we can and we expect, confidently, forgiveness, if we sometimes have to limit publication to excerpts. Material to Dr. Marshall by the end of June.

Another main point of reference will be the post-war development of the College which reaches its 75th birthday in 1994 and reaches, also, the report to Congress of the working party on its future. And, of course, there will be the Annual Report and Accounts of the Society in readiness for the AGM on 11 September.

April 94

R.L.M.