

## SOCIETY NOTES



The greeting *Farewell - and Hail* has some aptness for the two Notes now moving, more or less coherently, into this space.

### ICA - Present and Future

First, this Journal is addressed specially to the International Co-operative Alliance and to its Centennial Congress opening in Manchester on 20th September. As the Director-General writes below, the occasion has "the double task of celebrating the significant achievement of 100 years of international Co-operation and at the same time preparing for the very real challenges of the future".

The Journal's address to it takes the form of Mr. Thordarson's comprehensive survey of the present priorities of the Alliance, followed by more specialised perspectives on particular aspects of its rôle and organisation now and in the predictable future. The address is also accompanied by the Society's gratitude, congratulations and best wishes - and, in particular, by the thanks of the Journal for the ready help of the Alliance staff over the years.

### Editorship - Present and Future

There is also to be noted the combined greeting of *Farewell - and Hail* over the editorship of the Journal: we retire after this issue and waiting reassuringly in the wings is the Editor-Designate Dr. R.J. Birchall.

### *In Retrospect*

We have not - at least, not yet - fully examined the history of the Journal since its first issue in June 1967 and over its more or less uniform pattern of three issues a year. However, some of the marks and changes that define it are clear enough.

Its first title was *Bulletin* and in the beginning it had very much that character - a record for members of the activities of the Society and also of the Co-operative studies and research at Universities and Colleges in which the Society was particularly interested. The change to *Journal* was

more than nominal and reflected a process that had been going on for some time. It was a better fit for the ambition which we hope has been perceptible though the diversity of the Journal: to examine independently and in some depth the development, both economic and social, of the Co-operative movement in the UK and, if the early concentration was on the consumer sector, there has been, without neglect of that area, increasing attention over the years to the other sectors and to the relation of the UK movement as a whole to the frame of international Co-operation.

We are grateful to all who have supported the Journal; including the colleagues who have typed and set it and seen to its printing; and especially the contributors who, over the years and over the world, have given their service free. We have deeply enjoyed our association with them and echo a dedication which, we recall a little uncertainly, Randolph Churchill placed at the beginning of a collection he had made of some of his father's speeches: "In gratitude to my father without whose help this book could never have been written".

We confess to a sense of moderate satisfaction that, if there is still much to do in developing the Journal, already a good deal has been done. We can identify initiatives whose full potential we have not seen, possibilities we have not appreciated, opportunities we have seen too late. There remains a stubborn conviction that the Journal has made a contribution to the discussion of Co-operative development that is distinctively independent and informed - and increasingly acknowledged. This has not arisen from some exclusive evangelical mission. We have had our causes to press - but where the issues have been controversial, the Journal has been a forum of competing advocacies rather than an exercise in partisanship.

### **In Prospect**

There is still much to do. For example, at the 1994 AGM we raised two of the main reference points for the Society and Journal to heed: "... sustained effort to attract more 'academic' involvement which could be secured only by serving the interests of 'academics'" and, secondly, more "consideration on marketing the Journal much more widely, perhaps with the aid of some professional agency within the Co-operative movement."

We have already spoken of the reassuring prospect of the succession of Dr. Birchall. Many things conspire to commend him: his academic career, now at Brunel; his engagement with the main Co-operative sectors, particularly consumer and housing Co-operatives; his authorship including *Building Communities - The Co-operative Way*, *Co-op - the people's*

*business* and, in preparation, a *history of the ICA* for its centenary; and his long service to the Society. We offer our best wishes and any help he feels we can give.

**Between Ourselves**

We have thoroughly enjoyed the editorship and each other. However with national reticence let us resort to a practice followed at least in one Scottish University - the issue, or the withholding, at the end of a course of what we called DP's. There is a symmetry in this resort. One of us had the completion of his first venture in editorship of any kind - in the University students' monthly - marked by the presentation of a D.P. from his fellow editor. So -

*I hereby certify that Professor T.F. Carbery has given regular attendance in a full course in Editorship . . . and that he duly performed the work pertinent thereto.*

*R.L. Marshall Joint Editor*

*I hereby certify that Dr. R.L. Marshall has given regular attendance in a full course in Editorship . . . and that he duly performed the work pertinent thereto.*

*T.F. Carbery, Joint Editor*

August 1995

*T.F.C./R.L.M.*