



ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

No 1/1996

Editor: Mary Treacy

ICA's New World Wide Web Service

Join the ICA's Latest Venture on the Information Superhighway

ICA's World Wide Web (WWW) Service has now been redesigned to give access more quickly and easily than ever before on-line information on the International Co-operative Alliance and on the history and present activities of co-operatives worldwide.

To access the ICA Web service all you require is a computer, a modem, browser software - two of the most popular browsers are Mosaic and Netscape - and an internet connection. The address of the ICA Web Site is:

<http://www.coop.org>

Once there, the ICA Web service provides users with:

General information on the ICA, its history, membership, rules, etc. and the ICA's specialised bodies, with contact addresses.

Information about the history of the co-operative movement including biographies of famous co-operative people throughout the ages.

The latest ICA annual report and on-line copies of the Review of International Co-operation, the ICA News and other Co-operative publications.

A catalogue of ICA publications with details of how to order.

If you set your browser to <http://www.coop.org> this is the menu which will welcome you to ICA's New Web Site.

The French, German and Spanish pages are presently under construction and will be available within the next two months.

Turn to page two of this ICA News to see the first page of the English pages and discover what type of information is included in the site. Co-op Sites which wish to be included in the Web Pages should send a message to treacy@coop.org with their URL. We will then assess the site for inclusion in the ICA pages.



* Information on Co-operatives by Region and by Sector.

* Information on Newsgroups, On-line Conferences and FAQs (Frequently asked questions and their answers).

* A link to the ICA/University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives Gopher Server and its search engine.

* Hypertext links to other Web sites on Co-operatives and to Web

Sites of International Organisations and Business Information of relevance to Co-operatives.

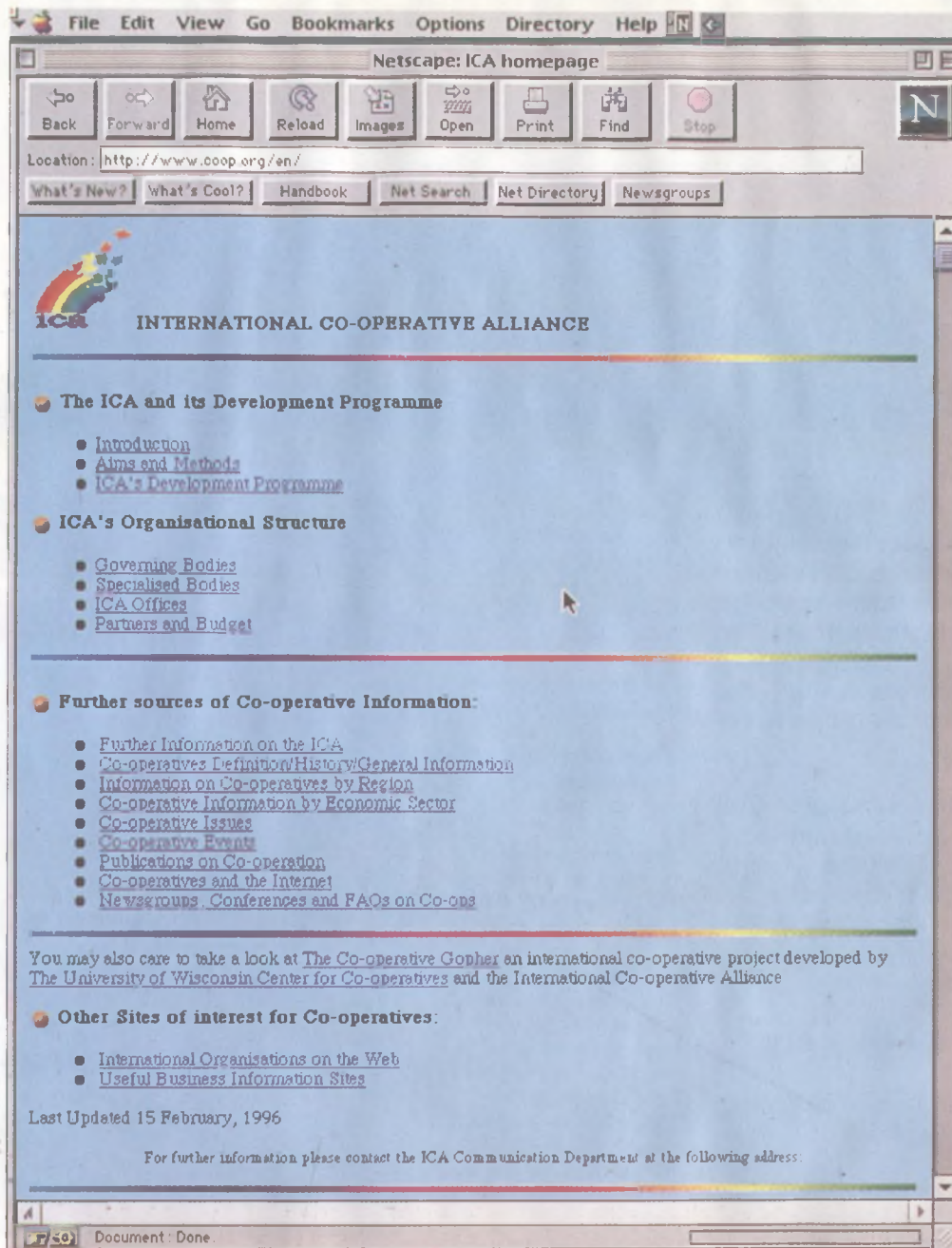
To find out more about a given topic, simply click on the underlined or highlighted text which represents links to menus, other Web sites or documents on the subject concerned.

With just a click of the mouse button you can browse through a series of materials of interest to you.



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ICA on the Internet



Address: <http://www.coop.org>

and: <gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/.coop>

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The first section of the ICA Home Pages is dedicated to the ICA itself with basic information on the International Co-operative Alliance and its Specialised Bodies. The second part "Further Sources of Co-operative Information" contains links to the ICA/ÚWCC Co-operative Gopher and Co-op Web Sites worldwide and includes further information about the ICA, articles explaining what a co-

operative is, historical information about the movement and famous co-operators throughout the ages, information on co-ops by region and by economic sector and information on issues of particular interest to co-ops.

The third part includes links to the University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives Home Pages and to the Co-

operative Gopher, in addition to links to other international organisations and business sites.

The Web Site is being developed to include information in French, Spanish and German.

The site will develop and evolve over the coming months and we look forward to your comments and suggestions.

Theme for International Co-operative Day

Co-operative Enterprise: Empowerment for People-centred Sustainable Development

Empowerment for People-centred Sustainable Development has been chosen as the theme for this year's International Day of Co-operatives. The theme was chosen in consultation with the United Nations and with the new ICA President, Mr. Graham Melmoth.

The theme will enable the ICA to give prominence to the new Co-operative Principles while linking to a variety of issues of importance to the United Nations in 1996.

ICA will provide input to the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty 1996, which will focus on the need for people-centred, sustainable development to reduce unemployment and hunger, empower women and provide basic services. The theme will also follow up the major UN conferences — the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) —

all of which call on governments to create partnerships with co-operatives as a means of tackling today's most urgent problems.

The International Day of Co-operatives will be officially celebrated on 6 July 1996, by the United Nations and by co-operatives around the world.

The International Co-operative Alliance is an independent, non-governmental association which unites, represents and serves co-operatives worldwide. The ICA was founded in London in 1895. Its members are national and international co-operative organisations in all sectors of activity including agriculture, banking, energy, industry, insurance, fisheries, housing, tourism and consumer co-operatives. ICA has more than 230 member organisations from over 100 countries, representing more than 760 million individuals worldwide.

In 1946, the ICA was one of the first non-governmental organisa-

tions to be accorded United Nations Consultative Status. Today it is one of the sixty-nine organisations holding Category 1 Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Co-operatives worldwide have been celebrating International Co-operative Day since 1923, when the Day was initiated to strengthen the unity of the Alliance and as a means of publicising the Co-operative Movement worldwide. In 1992, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the first Saturday of July 1995 to be United Nations International Day of Co-operatives, marking the centenary of the establishment of the International Co-operative Alliance. In 1994, it invited the international community to observe this Day annually, starting from 1995.

In this way the United Nations intends its own celebrations to support and extend those of the international co-op movement.

ICA Adopts New Logo

The logo which has been used during the ICA Centennial Year will continue to be used by ICA.

The logo, which depicts doves of peace emerging from the rainbow colours, universally recognised as the ICA and Co-operative Colours and adopted by the Executive in 1925, represents the unity of ICA's diverse membership.

As the original design only incorporates six of the seven colours of the rainbow, the acronyms ICA,

ACI, MKA, IGB can be added in violet, the seventh colour of the rainbow.

The new logo is more appropriate than the logo used by the organisation for the past eight years because it incorporates the whole spectrum of the rainbow and can be used in all of ICA official languages, indeed in all languages, whereas the former logo could only be used in English and inverted to be used in Spanish and French. The ICA has five official languages: English, French, Spanish, German and Russian, therefore, it was



necessary to adopt a logo which could be used in all of these languages.

Strategic Alliances Conference

The promotion of trade, joint ventures and investment between co-operatives was the theme bringing together more than 700 co-operators from mainly Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada and the U.S. for the annual Regional Conference of the Americas on 6-8 December 1995 in Miami, Florida.

In addition to briefing delegates on the current political, economic and social conditions in Latin America, international experts from the public and private sector, academia and the co-operative movement analyzed the potential of co-operatives forming strategic alliances for meeting the challenges of today's global economy.

Sectoral and specialized workshops were also held, giving participants the opportunity to share their experiences in forming partnerships and to discuss possible areas of collaboration. Moreover, co-operative sponsored luncheons, trade stands and an individualized business meetings session set the stage for a conference aimed pragmatically at fostering co-operative business.

The 1996 Regional Conference, whose theme will be "Deglobalization: Global Challenges, Local Responses," is being planned for 20 - 22 November 1996 in San José, Costa Rica. It will be followed by the Second Regional Assembly of the Americas on 23 November.

Co-operatives, A Question of People

On 4-6 June 1996, co-operative experts in Human Resource Development (HRD) will converge on Lima, Peru, for a Continental Forum that will culminate in the final draft of a continental HRD strategy.

Since receiving its mandate to focus on the area of HRD from the 1st Regional Assembly of the Americas in August 1994, the Regional Office of the Americas, in collaboration with regional experts, has been developing a continental strategy for HRD to be included in the Strategic Plan for 1996-2000. The final strategy document will be presented for formal adoption at the 2nd Regional Assembly of the Americas in November 1996.

This preliminary phase of strategic formulation is being sponsored by the Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC), the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), the European-funded PROCOPCA, and the COOPNET Programme of the International Labour Office (ILO).

The HRD strategy has the following components: the creation of a computerized information network through Internet; support for the formulation and implementation of HRD plans in co-operatives; the exchange and marketing

of innovative products for HRD; support for incorporating the gender perspective in co-operatives; and work with co-operative youth.

Regional Gender Campaign

This year's International Women's Day, 8 March 1996, will mark the launching of the regional campaign "Women! How Many Are We, and What Do We Want?" with special ceremonies taking place in Panama, El Salvador and Costa Rica, and national workshops in the Dominican Republic and Guatemala.

This campaign, coordinated by the Regional Office of the Americas' Gender in Co-operatives programme, is aimed at increasing the visibility of women's participation at both the base and sectoral levels of the co-operative movement in the Americas. Moreover, the "How Many Are We, and What Do We Want" campaign initiates a process of reflection on the interests and aspirations of women within the co-operative movement in terms of economics, politics, culture, family and participation.

At the national level, information will be disseminated and statistics will be collected on the level of participation of women in the co-operative movement, and women co-operators will be surveyed in order to develop a national platform representing women's interests.

This process will culminate in the creation and adoption of a Continental Women's Platform at the Continental Women's Forum to be held 18 - 19 November 1996 in San José, Costa Rica, just prior to the Regional Conference and Regional Assembly of the Americas.

Business with the Latin American Co-ops

The Regional Office for the Americas continues its publication of the series "Doing Business with the Co-operatives of Latin America" with new books planned this year for the following countries: Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Honduras, Bolivia, Panama, Puerto Rico and Venezuela.

These books serve as practical guides to doing business with the co-operative sector in Latin America, providing a synthesis of the economic, political and legal situation in each country; a survey of export and investment incentives; an analysis of the co-operative sector by economic activity; and valuable leads on potential business opportunities with specific co-operatives.

Guidebooks are currently available for the following countries: Mexico, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Argentina, and Brazil.

Canada

Profile Campaign of CCYN

The Canadian Co-operative Youth Network (CCYN) launched a Profile Campaign at its National Planning Session in Winnipeg last November. The session brought together co-operative youth from all over Canada. In 1996, the CCYN will work with co-operative organizations to find ways of working together, accessing funding and building the network. The SCYN is supported by the CCA.

(CCYN News Release, December 1996)

Electronic Conference on Co-op Principles

The Canadian Co-operative Association, CCA, hosted a three-week on-line conference on the Internet, on the revised co-operative principles. The discussion forum brought together 70 subscribers from Canada, the US, UK, Australia, Switzerland and Sweden. A Summary of the discussions can be accessed through the ICA Web Pages (<http://www.coop.org>).

The CCA will be producing an interactive multimedia presentation on the Statement of Co-operative Identity and Principles, which will be available on a diskette. The presentation will contain a brief history of co-operatives and the background to the ICA Statement and Principles, including full colour photos.

(Member Development & Communications Update, Fall 1995)

Desjardins Enters the US Capital Markets

The Desjardins caisse populaire movement in Quebec has successfully launched the first "Débenture Desjardins", with a total value of 200 million US dollars. Offered mainly to institutional investors in the United States, the debentures have an interest rate of 7.37 percent and carry no voting rights.

According to Desjardins President, Claude Béland, this new form of capitalisation demonstrates that the co-operative system can successfully enter the large institutional investment market, "while at the same time respecting its mission, values, and distinctive character."

(Desjardins Press Release, 9 August 1995)

China

ICMIF Members Open Beijing Office

NTUC INCOME, Singapore, and Unipol, Italy, have become the first co-operative insurers in the world to be granted representative office licences in China.

The two organisations will work with the All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) in joint projects and market research. Unipol is among the top 10 insurers in Italy, with more than 2.8 million policies and annual premiums of ITL 1,886 billion.

NTUC INCOME has also applied for a representative office licence in Viet Nam and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour to set up a joint venture and operate an insurance co-operative.

(Co-operative and Mutual Insurance Network, September 1995)

Finland

Consumer Co-ops Increase Market Share

Finland's two consumer co-operative groups shared in the general recovery of the Finnish economy during 1994.

The S group's food and grocery sales increased by 4.4 per cent, bringing its market share to 22 per cent. SOK Corporation's operating profit was FIM 90 million, an improvement of 17 million compared to the previous year.

The net turnover for Tradeka Consolidated Company grew by 3 per cent and operating profit rose by FIM 120 million to FIM 370 million. During the year 150,000 new households joined the Loyal Customer Scheme.

(SOK and Tradeka Press Releases, February 1996)

India

Rediscovering Co-operation

The Institute of Rural Management (IRMA), Anand, India will organise a national Seminar on 'Rediscovering Co-operation' in November 1996. In view of the significant changes in the social, political and economic environment in recent years, IRMA has called for research proposals on themes such as 'Bases of Co-operation', 'Strategies for the Models

of Tomorrow', and 'Co-operatives in the Emerging Context'. IRMA will provide funding support for field research and will also reimburse travel costs and provide local hospitality to authors of accepted papers for participation in the Seminar.

Further details from Prof. R. Rajagopalan, Institute of Rural Management, Post Box 60, Anand 388 001, Gujarat, India. Tel: (91) 2692-40391 Fax: (91) 2692-40188, E-mail: raja@irm.ernet.in

Japan

JA-ZENCHU Establishes an Internet Home Page

JA-ZENCHU has launched a Web Site, which can be accessed at <http://www.rim.or.jp/ci/ja/> or through the ICA Web Pages at <http://www.coop.org>

The site aims to provide domestic agricultural information, to stress the importance of JA-Zenchu's information service and to interact with other networks internationally.

The site will promote the JA group's activities through focus on its structure and business and through the regular publication of JA-ZENCHU NEWS.

The International Department of JA-ZENCHU can be contacted by E-mail at ldm05517@niftyserve.or.jp (JA ZENCHU News No.3, November 1995)

JA Group Involved with Welfare for the Aged

As a response to the fast aging rural society in Japan, the JA group has started a home-helper training programme which has trained over 18,000 home helpers in the past year and aims to increase the number trained to approximately 60,000 by the end of the year 2000.

The group also organized a 'Local Participants-Volunteer Programme' involving home helper trainees, women and youth.

The group runs or is building 14 homes which include a day care centre in Tochigi prefecture and a centre in Fuji city, Shizuoka prefecture, is scheduled to open later this year.

(JA-ZENCHU News No.4, December 1995)

Poland

Polish Parliament Approves Credit Union Act

Last October, the Polish Parliament approved a Credit Union Act submitted by the National Association of Polish Credit Unions.

The Act received almost unanimous support from the Sejm - the Lower Chamber of the Parliament - with 317 votes in favour of the regulation and only 8 against. The landslide victory in the Parliament follows more than two years of strenuous efforts dedicated to securing a legislation for the Polish credit union movement.

(Krajowa Spółdzielcza Kasa Oszczędnościowo-Kredytowa, Gdynia, October 1995)

Portugal

XXI International Congress of CIRIEC

The XXI Ciriec International Congress will be held in Lisbon on 20 and 21 May, 1996. The general theme of the Congress will be 'Towards economic and social cohesion? The contribution of public enterprises, co-operatives and social economy enterprises'.

Topics for discussion will include: prevention of social exclusion; provision and financing modes of public and social services; development of outlying regions; transnational infrastructure networks; privatization experiences (including Eastern Europe); services in the general interest facing liberalization; the future of public services in the European Union (1996 Inter governmental Conference for revision of the European treaties/European Charter of Public Services). Further information from:

Bernard Thiry, Director, Ciriec International, Universite de Liege au Sart-Tilman, Bat. B33 - bte 6, B-4000 Liege, Belgium. Tel.(32)41-66 27 46; Fax: (32)41-66 29 58.

(Ciriec International News Release, October 1995)

Switzerland

Migros Turns to Capital Markets

The Federation of Migros Co-operatives has turned to the Swiss capital markets for a 10-year loan of 250 million Swiss francs, which will be used to consolidate short-term debts. This is the first time since 1983 that Migros, Switzerland's largest retailer, has gone to the capital markets.

(Journal de Genève, 13 September 1995)

United Kingdom

Robert Owen Statue Gets a New Plaque

The Co-operative Bank, Manchester recently hosted the Robert Owen Memorial Museum Committee from Newtown, Mid Wales, who were visiting Manchester to see the statue outside 1 Balloon Street. The

original likeness, from which the statue outside head office of the Co-operative Bank is copied, is in Newtown, the birthplace of the famous co-operator. The visit also marked the completion of a new plaque which explains who unveiled the statue and when. (*Banknotes, Issue 45, December 1995*)

Entries Called for World Habitat Awards 1996

The Building and Social Housing Foundation invites entries for the World Habitat Awards 1996. The awards, initiated in 1985 by the Foundation, are part of its contribution to the UN International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987.

Each year, two awards of £10,000 and individually designed and crafted silver trophies are given to the winners of a competition for human settlement projects, both in developed and developing countries, offering sustainable futures to residents and providing practical and imaginative solutions to current housing problems.

Those who wish to participate in the competition should send their preliminary entries by 31 July, 1996 to Diane Diacon, Research Officer of Building and Social Housing Foundation, Memorial Square, Coalville, Leicestershire LE67 3TU (Tel.+44/1530/510/444 and fax +44/1530/510 332).

USA

Co-operatives Active in Rural Communities

New co-operatives across the USA are revitalizing rural communities, according to testimony provided November 1 at a USDA hearing by the National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA).

A small USDA programme that funds regional co-operative development centres is showing great results. Over the last 10 years, NCBA has committed itself to the creation and successful operation of centres for rural co-operative development. Today, all across rural America, citizens are using co-operatives to start their own businesses. In the Western part of the US, co-operatives create new jobs processing recycled material into retail products; in the upper Midwest, co-operatives engage in value-added processing of agricultural products that is raising farm income on the commodities they produce; and in the South, community development credit unions are providing loans for small businesses owned by minorities in rural areas.

This economic development activity is conducted on a regional basis through a network of co-operative development centres. The benefit to rural communi-

ties is significant because co-operatives aggregate economic power in large enough units to make businesses competitive in a global economy.

(*NCBA News Release, November 1995*)

NCBA and CBI Sign New Russian Project

The National Co-operative Business Association, through its subcontractor, Co-operative Business International, signed its third USDA Food for Progress Grant on February 9, to establish an Import Guarantee Fund in Khabarovsk Krai, located in far east Russia. The guarantee will be used to collateralize letters of credit on behalf of Khabarovsk food-processing enterprises for the purchase of bulk commodities, semi-processed and packaged foods, addressing the lack of available import credit at realistic interest rates in Khabarovsk Krai.

(*NCBA News Release, February 1996*)

CLUSA Institute for Co-operative Development

The National Co-operative Business Association launched the CLUSA Institute for Co-operative Development, January, 1996. The institute will increase the capacity of co-operatives to provide concrete solutions to contemporary problems and act as a catalyst to replicate successful co-operative development models around the country and overseas.

John Gauci has been appointed director of the Institute. Besides Gauci, a new internal steering committee, charged with the responsibility of setting overall policy and direction for the Institute has also been appointed. The committee members include Jim Cawley, NCBA Vice-president for international programmes, Paul Hazen, Chief Operating Officer of NCBA and Judy Ziewacz, acting Director of the Co-operative Development Foundation.

(*NCBA Press Releases, January and February 1996*)

Zambia

ZCF Weathers Economic Down-turn

The Zambia Co-operative Federation recorded decreased profits in 1994-95 (K 145 million compared to K 870 million the year previously), but continued its restructuring in order to cope with the effects of the Structural Adjustment Programme. Staff size was reduced from 415 to 282 as part of ZCF's cost-cutting measures. Zambia's GDP declined in real terms in 1994, and its agricultural output fell by 19.8 percent, with the result that both maize and maize meal had to be imported in the first quarter of 1995.

(*ZCF Annual Report, 1995*)

Co-op People

Keith Brading, former Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies (UK) and first President of the UKCC died on 2 February aged 78 after suffering ill-health for several years.

David Dinning has taken over as the Senior Executive Director of World Council of Credit Unions and **David Richardson** as Executive Director of Technical Services. Both have had extensive experience with the credit union movement.

Lord Jacques, Chairman of the Central Executive of the Co-operative Union (UK) from 1964 to 1970 and President of Congress in 1961, has died aged 90. John Henry Jacques began his working life as a miner and entered the co-operative movement as a grocery apprentice with the Ashington Society, where he was working when he won a co-operative college scholarship.

Graham Melmoth, elected ICA President at ICA's Centennial Congress in Manchester last September, has been given another challenge. He is to become Chief Executive Officer of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in Manchester when the present CEO, **David Skinner**, retires later this year. Mr. Melmoth was Vice-President of ICA (Europe) before being elected ICA President in September 1995.

George Money, MBE, Chief Executive Officer and Secretary of Yorkshire Co-operatives, one of the largest and most successful independent retail co-operatives in UK, has been elected President of the 1996 UK Co-operative Congress which will meet in Harrogate from May 26 to 28, 1996.

Hakaru Toyoda, President of JA-ZENCHU, was elected ICA Vice-President at the ICA Congress held at

Manchester September, 1995. He succeeded **Mitsugu Horiuchi**, who retired as the President of JA-ZENCHU in 1995.

Churll-Hee Won, Chairman and President of the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, NACF, was elected Vice-President of ICA International Co-operative Agricultural Organization at its plenary meeting in Manchester last September.

U.S. Co-op Hall of Fame

On April 17, 1996, four co-operative leaders, **Burgee O. Amdahl**, **Glenn M. Anderson**, **Dr. Allie Felder, Jr.**, and **Dr. Katharine Whiteside Taylor**, were inducted in to the Co-operative Hall of Fame. They were selected by the two committees of national co-operative leaders to receive the co-operative sector's highest honour.

ICA CALENDAR

■ 22 March 1996
ICA European Council
Stockholm, Sweden

■ 11-12 April 1996
ICBA Central Executive
Casablanca, Morocco

■ 15 April 1996
ICA Housing Co-operatives Board
Prague, Czech Republic

■ 19 April 1996
Joint Meeting International Co-operative Agricultural Organization/ IFAP Standing Committee on Agricultural Co-operatives
Versailles, France

■ 24 April 1996
ICACC Executive Cttee
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 25-26 April 1996
Specialized Bodies Consultation Meeting on Operational Issues
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 27-29 April 1996
Health Steering Committee
Barcelona/Madrid, Spain

■ 22-24 May 1996
ICA Africa Co-operative Ministerial Conference
Mauritius

■ 3 June 1996
ICA Housing Co-operatives Board & Plenary
Istanbul, Turkey

■ 5 June 1996
Conference on Housing Co-operative Development, ICA and the Habitat Agenda HABITAT II
Istanbul, Turkey

■ 9-10 June 1996
ICA Board
Beijing, China

■ 10-14 June 1996
Regional Assembly Asia/Pacific
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

■ 28 June 1996
European Committee of ICBA
Lisbon, Portugal

■ 6 July 1996
International Co-operative Day/UN International Day of Co-operatives
Worldwide

■ 15-17 August 1996
Regional Assembly Africa
Dakar, Senegal

■ 11-14 October 1996
ICMIF Meetings
Wiesbaden, Germany

■ 25 October 1996
ICBA Plenary Meeting
Budapest, Hungary

■ 26-27 October 1996
ICA Board
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27 October 1996
ICA Audit & Control Cttee
Budapest, Hungary

■ 29 October 1996
ICA European Council
Budapest, Hungary

■ 29 October 1996
ICA Consumer Co-op Org
Budapest, Hungary

■ 30 October 1996
Regional Assembly Europe
Budapest, Hungary

■ 18-19 November 1996
ICA Global Women's Committee Conference
San José, Costa Rica

■ 20-22 November 1996
ICA-ROAM Regional Conference
San José, Costa Rica

■ 23 November 1996
ICA Regional Assembly Americas
San José, Costa Rica

■ 28-30 October 1997
ICA General Assembly
Tel Aviv, Israel



Co-operatives and Habitat II

The co-operative movement contributes to the goals of Habitat II by creating key partnerships with governments and all sectors of the civil society in improving environmental, social, economic and political conditions in human settlements.

The Habitat II Draft Global Plan of Action acknowledges the relevance of co-operatives in supporting the goals of creating employment, providing affordable and quality housing, providing access to credit and financial services, promoting social integration and in contributing to the economic and social development of women through their participation in co-operatives.

Housing co-operatives provide communities with access to affordable housing, security of tenure, and quality housing. They contribute to promoting safe and secure communities, control over urban and rural planning and environmental management. Co-operatives demonstrate, through practical application, the principles of democratic governance and individual responsibility.

Housing co-operatives have been able to achieve these objec-

tives in a variety of ways through partnerships with government and the civil society, as illustrated by the following examples:

* In Canada, the Co-operative Housing Foundation tackled the problem of domestic violence within housing co-operatives by sensitizing members and working with local governments and women's associations.

* The German Housing Co-operative Ludwig-Frank of Mannheim brought together low income families from 15 countries, to work in partnership with the Municipality of Mannheim to restore their block of 400 apartments. The co-operative was honoured with a World Habitat Award in 1992.

* In Turkey, the Batikent Project was launched in 1979 by Kent-Koop (Union of Batikent Housing Construction Co-operatives) under the leadership of the Metropolitan Municipality of Ankara. It was the first mass housing project to demonstrate the success of public and private partnerships in the housing field in Turkey. Batikent was a pioneer in bringing low income people together in co-operatives, through the workers' unions or according to their place of work,



Batikent Project in Turkey.

to decide for themselves about the type, size and number of units in their housing projects. Housing "by the people and for the people" has had an impact on the housing shortage in Turkey and has kept down the sale and rental prices in the Ankara housing market. Today, 190,000 persons live in 43,000 housing units at Batikent.

Co-operatives also transfer know-how through technical co-operation especially with regard to housing co-operative activities. For example:

* In Zambia, the Norwegian housing co-operative movement (NBBL) in collaboration with Human Settlements of Zambia

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This publication on housing is being printed especially for distribution at Habitat II. UN press releases and information concerning the conference in Istanbul will be available on the WWW url: <http://www.undp.org/un/habitat/UNCHS>



74th International Co-operative Day

(Saturday, 6 July 1996)

Message from the International Co-operative Alliance

Co-operatives for Sustainable Development

The potential of co-operative enterprises to contribute to the alleviation of poverty through the creation of employment and to satisfy certain of society's needs more effectively than either public or private profit-making enterprises have been widely recognised by the United Nations.

One of the ways in which the UN demonstrated this recognition was by declaring, in 1995, that the International Day of Co-operatives should be celebrated every year by Governments in collaboration with their national co-operative movements. In 1996, as the International Community celebrates the Year for the Eradication of Poverty, the UN will again draw the attention of Governments to the significant contribution of co-operatives to reducing poverty and to the need to form partnerships with the Movement.

Co-operatives have always had an impact in the communities in which they operate. Working at the grass-roots level they help to bring about sustainable development in the community by empowering their members. The member movements of the International Co-operative Alliance also act globally through their apex organisation and have thus won increased recognition at the international level for their valuable contribution to the achievement of the economic, social and environmental goals of the United Nations.

Concern for Community, a new Co-operative Principle reflecting the impact co-operatives have in contributing to sustainable development within communities, was added to the guiding principles of the International Co-operative Movement in the new Statement of the Co-operative Identity adopted at the Centennial Congress and General Assembly of the International Co-operative Alliance in September, 1995.

Some of the Co-operative Principles have changed little since the movement began over 150 years ago. The first three Principles: **Voluntary and Open Membership**, **Democratic Member Control**, and **Member Economic Participation** are the foundations on which the modern movement was built. Principle four, **Autonomy and Independence**, has been proven as a necessary ingredient in societies where governments have formerly used co-operatives to enforce their own development programmes and economic plans often to the detriment of the co-operative values of self-help and responsibility. Principle five, **Education, Training and Information**, has been acknowledged as being of primordial importance, not only for the co-operative members and elected representatives, managers and employees, but also for society at large, especially for those who govern societies, for opinion leaders and for the young people who will become the co-operators of tomorrow.

Co-operative Solidarity, or as stated in the sixth Principle of the Statement of Co-operative Identity, **Co-operation between Co-operatives**, is the potential strength of the international co-operative movement. It is a principle which is becoming increasingly important in the face of the contemporary global economic, social and political trends which societies everywhere are facing.

The International Co-operative Alliance calls upon its more than 760,000,000 members at grassroots level, and also upon co-operative enterprises and organisations at local, regional and national level, to consider not only how to improve their own situation, but also to devote significant energy to promoting new co-operative enterprises in their own and related fields.

The ICA moreover calls upon its member organisations and specialised organisations in the fields of agriculture, banking, consumer co-operation, energy, fisheries, health, housing, insurance, trade, tourism and industrial and artisanal production, as well as its committees working in the fields of communications, human resource development, co-operative research and the promotion of equal opportunities for women in co-operatives, to work together to build a strong, united movement which can help make tomorrow's world a better place for future generations.

Co-op Housing - An Effective Approach to Meeting Global Housing Needs

As resources for housing services become more scarce, new approaches to co-operative housing are emerging to maximize capital and human investments. In developing economies and emerging democracies in particular, co-operative housing provides a rational and dynamic framework within which public and private resources are brought to bear in a cost effective manner.

For the past 44 years, the Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) of the United States has worked at the grass-roots, municipal, and national levels and with key elements of civil society to promote co-operative and community development in more than 90 countries worldwide. CHF has built on this experience and on time-tested co-operative principles to develop pragmatic, innovative, private-sector assistance directed at co-operative and economic development, human settlements and planning. CHF's promotion of market-based co-operative development, credit and finance, jobs creation, institution building and policy formulation enables families to live in better, healthier and cleaner environments.

While national policies and systems do provide the necessary framework to improve the delivery of affordable housing, CHF has found that large-scale policy reforms are most effective when accompanied and reinforced by a tangible demonstration of their potential benefits. Co-operatives provide a way to bring about positive and visible change at the grassroots, "consumer" level. Demonstration projects organized around co-operative principles can increase the magnitude of those changes and

positively impact the society at large. This philosophy, rooted in the basic tenets of the co-operative movement, has enabled CHF to successfully implement a wide range of activities throughout the world. CHF is currently active in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Central/Eastern Europe and the NIS region, Latin America and the Caribbean. CHF's projects have varied in scope from creating small home-improvement co-operatives in Ecuador and Paraguay, to assisting in such watershed events as helping South African authorities incorporate co-operative housing into the country's new social housing strategy and establishing the first housing co-operatives in Poland to successfully secure commercial US-style mortgages.

In Ecuador and Paraguay, CHF is working to strengthen the role of co-operatives in meeting the shelter needs of low-income families. CHF is providing technical assistance to credit unions and co-operative members in implementing lending programmes. With this assistance,

low-income families are able to build a new house or make significant home improvements.

In South Africa, CHF is helping to introduce co-operative housing to assist the large numbers of South Africans previously disenfranchised and excluded from the formal housing delivery system. The programme is based on community involvement and incorporates co-operative mechanisms which have not been widely used in South Africa. CHF is mobilizing local resources to implement a co-operative housing project in the city of Port Elizabeth which will provide a model for replication throughout the country.

CHF's co-operative development project in Poland provides another kind of model which "activates" policy reform to produce real and replicable results at the local level. Since 1990, CHF has assisted in developing market-oriented, private capacity for housing delivery. All houses are built from the private funds of local co-operative

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The Ulica Warszawska Co-operative Alternatywa of Bialystok, Poland, is a residential and commercial complex which symbolizes a dream come true for many residents and small business owners.

Uruguay Families Find Shelter Thanks to the Solidarity of Swedish Co-operators



Rolf Trodin discusses plans with project architect.

Uruguay was once known as the Switzerland of Latin America. It was a rich country and a great place in which to live. But that was a long time ago. The country suffered economic problems which eventually led to a military dictatorship. Uruguay is once again a democracy but there is still much poverty due to unemployment and the galloping inflation of the 1970s and 80s.

There are two co-operative housing federations in Uruguay: Fucvam and Fecovi. Both function effectively on small resources and are dependent on financial aid from other countries such as Sweden.

One project they have been able to implement with such aid is a joint venture with Swedish co-operators. The project rehoused a group of families living in a shanty town on a small plot of land between a river and a highway. The shanty town comprised about 100 sheds made of anything on which the people could get their hands. Every spring, the river flooded forcing the

families out of these makeshift homes to sleep under bridges or to take refuge in other shanty towns nearby.

For years the authorities declared the town a health hazard and barred the families from taking up residence there. However, they did nothing to rehouse these poor people who had nowhere else to go. As one father of five put it: "We know this is not a suitable place to raise children but we have neither land nor money and the banks are unwilling to help us".

Then the Swedish co-operative housing organisation (HSB) came to the rescue. HSB had decided to put aside SEK 2 per member annually for international solidarity work. With 600,000 members, this meant 1.2 million SEK (about US\$200,000) per annum.

In Sweden, there is a system of 80-20 projects. This means that if organisations collect 20% of project money from their members, the government development aid agency will match it with the remaining 80%. HSB works through the Swedish Co-operative Centre (SCC). It is an

organisation which channels money from all Sweden's co-operative organisations into work with different types of co-operatives in developing countries. By working with SCC the US\$200,000 collected by HSB became a million dollars which was used to rehouse the shanty-town dwellers.

Swedish staff and people from Fucvam as well as representatives from the target group met with local authorities and banks and negotiated with the architects, construction material suppliers and others.

The local people formed a co-operative with help and training in co-operative management from HSB, who also transferred their know-how in maintenance and administration. The Swedish organisation paid for architects and building materials while the local municipality agreed to donate a piece of land. With technical training provided by HSB the local people built their own homes and infrastructure starting with a common building to house meeting rooms, a kindergarten and other facilities for the whole community.



Local housing before the project began.



Co-operative/Municipality partnership leads to the re-housing of shanty town dwellers.

While the construction was under way, this building was used as administrative offices, a temporary kindergarten and a kitchen and dining-room for the member workers and their

families. When the work is finished they intend to throw a big party and have a lottery to decide which family gets which apartment.

This is an example of a pilot project which shows both the authorities and the local people how co-operatives can successfully help to solve housing problems. In Istanbul during Habitat II, a representative from Fucvam will share his experience with people attending the ICA Housing Seminar.

*Rolf Trodin, Chairman,
ICA Housing*

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members, supplemented by mortgage credit obtained through the newly implemented housing finance system in Poland. With this activity, CHF is helping to pioneer ways to develop affordable housing and institutional structures that can be adapted to a new economic order in Poland. Since 1994, production of co-operative housing has been replicated at eleven additional sites. The project demonstrates how co-operative housing operates as a viable, housing delivery system.

Due to their universal nature, co-operative values can be readily applied to many types of organizations including condominium associations, non-governmental and community-based organizations. While CHF assists many different groups with diverse needs, all programmes incorporate the co-operative values of self-help, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. CHF works with women's groups on social and economic empowerment issues; with informal settlements to improve the urban

environment through appropriate technology; with low-income families to marshal their resources effectively through incremental building and affordable credit; and with non-governmental organizations to address local needs for shelter and infrastructure.

CHF promotes the development of co-operatives around the world to serve the needs of communities which do not have access to adequate shelter, encouraging self-reliance, demo-

cratic principles and private sector involvement. CHF's work is illustrative of how co-operative values and principles can be incorporated into national policies to satisfy the very basic need of adequate shelter for all.

The Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) was established in 1952 as a private, nonprofit organization to help low-income families build better housing and communities.

CHF's Guiding Principles to Development:

- Operate on a business-like, private sector basis
- Reinforce democratic principles at the grassroots level
- Work with local organizations
- Maximize local employment
- Use available, appropriate technologies
- Ensure sustainability through affordability
- Reflect community values and priorities
- Link formal and informal systems
- Emphasize flexibility and responsiveness to bring speedy results
- Enable local community control
- Provide for transparency and mutual accountability
- Build dignity through self-reliance

Co-ops Solve Urban Community Problems in West Germany

Urban unrest characterized the cities of West Germany in the 1980s. Urban planners had disregarded an integral approach to cities, separating business areas and economic and social centres. The housing market could no longer offer affordable housing at a time when unemployment was rising. The squatter movement grew as housing units which had remained empty due to speculation were occupied. Suburban areas too were facing increasing problems including the rise of juvenile delinquency.

The 1980s was characterized by increasing awareness of ecological problems, intensive resistance to nuclear power stations, and the struggle for democratization. In fact, basic democracy became the focus of the social movements of that time. Existing housing co-operatives were able to consolidate and continue their operations for existing members. However, faced with financial limitations reflecting the overall difficulties of the country, they found themselves unable to meet the increasing need for housing.

However, new co-operatives began to emerge in response to new challenges. One group looked at "alternative" housing - common property rights and living space, governance of apartment houses with a communal living perspective, i.e a community based on a wider interpretation of the traditional 2-adults/2-children family. The members of this group also focused attention on how to overcome the separation of paid work, child-education and leisure time. Environmental concerns

were given a high priority in forming their housing organizations.

A second group was made up of low-income individuals who formed co-operatives in response to rent-increases, speculative demolition, and the transformation of living areas. They aimed at providing quality, affordable housing, but also had concern for their community. A major focus was contributing to solving social problems.

An example of this type of new co-operative is "Drachenbau eG" (in English: dragons' burrow) which was founded in Hamburg in the early 1980s. The aims of its members were to live together as good neighbours, to overcome human isolation and to provide housing for a variety of households - single people as well as families. Members put the needs of children and developing solidarity and environmental awareness high on their priority list.

Thanks to movement-to-movement technical assistance and partnerships with local government, the co-operative was able to transform an old factory into an apartment building.

Members participated in the work and were able to contract services through a grant and non-interest loan from the Hamburg government and the support of "Stattbau", an agency supported by the local government of Hamburg, which supports self-help-organizations. This dramatically reduced the cost of rebuilding. The co-operative now operates 24 flats for 85 members in four different buildings.

Basic democracy is the operating rule. Co-operative members take decisions by consensus and each one takes on the role of administrator in turn rather than hiring an outside manager. Business surpluses are not used for new buildings but rather collected in a solidarity fund to assist similar projects.

Drachenbau eG members point out that their benefits are not only economic, but also social. Children have the possibility of playing in a safe environment. The feeling of community is strong so, for example, if parents are unable to be home when their children return from school, they know they can count on their neighbours. Similarly, members can count on their neighbours to water plants, care for pets, etc. when they travel. Members have also started a food co-operative. Self-administration is an important learning experience for members of the co-operative, particularly for female members who find this experience empowering. Member participation in reconstruction planning has made it possible to ensure high environmental standards on the micro-level. For example, low levels of toxic construction materials are chosen, rain water basins with water recycling engines have replaced costly municipal water, etc.

This is but one example of how co-operatives in partnership with municipalities have been able to respond to the housing needs of people in urban centres.

Anselm Meyer-Antz, Department of Co-operative Studies, University of Cologne, Germany.

Urban Self-help in Zambia

Up to 1990, Bauleni in S.E. Zambia was an unregulated area where people with poor means had settled. The authorities have since then accepted the settlement, but they have not had the resources to develop any infrastructure or public services. Bad quality housing, poor health conditions, high unemployment, and low income for those lucky enough to have a job, have plagued the area. The residents of Bauleni contacted HUZA* (Human Settlements of Zambia) for support and in 1990 the Project Urban Self-Help was launched. The main objective was to improve living conditions in Bauleni through support to self-help activities that enabled the residents to develop the area. The project is based on community participation at decision-making level, and the work is organised and carried out through different committees such as Bauleni Residents' Committee, the Health and Water Committee and income generating clubs. Successful achievements have made the area attractive to an extent that the population has more than doubled since the project started.

Better Houses and Ventilated Pit Latrines

A problem in Bauleni was that houses made of sun-dried clay broke up during the rainy season. Through the project HUZA has introduced new building methods like adding cement in the local clay to strengthen the bricks, and producing rooftiles from local sisal and cement to replace the corrugated ironsheets previously used.

HUZA provides motivation and training in these new building methods, and also cement which people can buy for building their

own houses. As a part of the income generating activities HUZA has also trained a group of young men whom the residents can hire to do the work.

A sanitary improvement in the area is the system of pit latrines. When a new house is built, the clay for the bricks is dug out on the plot, sufficient for a round hole, 4-5 m. deep. Here the latrine is built and can be used for about 10 years.

BAULENI URBAN SELF-HELP



Due to the residents' own efforts, Bauleni has become an attractive living area outside Lusaka.

The Bauleni project shows that a lot can be achieved with reasonable economic means, when people participate actively.

Improved Nutrition and Health Conditions

Information and education are given on improving the nutrition and health conditions and courses in family-planning and pre-school activities are also arranged. Together with improved types of latrines and better water drainage systems these activities have increased the awareness of nutrition and health issues. However, these efforts still need to be given priority.

Training for Income Generating Activities

In January 1994 the Bauleni Skills Training Centre was opened to provide training and edu-

cation in different crafts like carpentry, bricklaying and tailoring. This will be the main factor of economic promotion. A revolving fund has also been established to facilitate investments for working groups.

Roads, Water Drainage, and Water Supply

The dirt roads have been improved by gravel and a new profile to facilitate the evacuation of water. In order to avoid collection of water and rapid streams during the rainy season, comprehensive drainage has been done. The current water supply is insufficient and a new borehole has been constructed.

However, as more than half the population is still without easy access to water, further supply must be a priority.

A Better Environment

Efforts are still necessary to upgrade the area and improve the environment. In addition to the water drainage and the sanitary improvements, the planting of trees and organised garbage collection are important activities which will make the area a nicer place in which to live.

NRD/NORCOOP/HUZA

*HUZA is a non-governmental organisation founded in 1982 to promote self-help, self-reliance for social and economic development in the field of human settlements. HUZA is funded by the Federation of Norwegian Co-operative Housing and Building Associations (NBBL), the Royal Norwegian Society for Rural Development (NRD/ NORCOOP) and a number of European Church organisations. It also receives contributions from local sources.

(HUZA), local authorities and Habitat have supported the Bauleni Urban Self-Help Project whose aim was to improve living conditions in Bauleni through support to self-help activities.

Numerous housing co-operatives are also providing movement-to-movement assistance for the formation of housing co-operatives in Latin America, East and Central Europe and Asia.

* DESWOS, the German Assistance Association for Social Housing, is active in promoting self-help housing co-operatives in East and Central Europe, Latin America and Asia.

* The Cooperative Housing Foundation (CHF) of the United States is also very active in providing assistance to housing co-operatives in Central and Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States (NIS), Latin America and Asia. The CHF

model has integrated basic co-operative principles into a development model that has been singled out by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (HABITAT).

In Latin America for example, CHF is spearheading an innovative, hemisphere-wide effort to create regional associations of new associate members of ICA Housing, a sectoral organization of the ICA. Associate members will be recruited from community-based organizations (CBOs), small non-governmental associations (NGOs) and co-operatives which, by virtue of their size, reach or financial situation, do not fit the profile of traditional ICA members. For a modest fee, associate members will be integrated into a global network of co-operative associations. They will access, disseminate and exchange information, lessons learned and best practices. The ICA network will

also serve as means of matching international organizations which provide financing and technical assistance with the grassroots organizations in need of such support. As a first step toward this goal, CHF is currently drawing on its extensive relationship with small and medium-sized organizations working in areas as diverse as credit, housing, urban environment and sanitation to conduct a survey of potential ICA Housing associate members. The survey will be key to defining ways in which the ICA Housing may broaden its base and fulfil its mission. By next year, the decentralized ICA regional offices, through collaboration with the ICA Housing, will be able to function as a clearing-house for small co-operatives and associations throughout Latin America. The ICA will also significantly increase its awareness and responsiveness to small communities' issues.

ICA CALENDAR

■ 4 June 1996
ICA Housing Board & Plenary
Istanbul, Turkey

■ 6 June 1996
Seminar on Housing
Co-operative Development,
ICA and the Habitat Agenda
HABITAT II
Istanbul, Turkey

■ 9-10 June 1996
ICA Board
Beijing, China

■ 10-14 June 1996
Regional Assembly
Asia/Pacific
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

■ 11 June 1996
ICA Fisheries Committee Execo
Petaling Jaya, Malaysia

■ 11 June 1996
ICA Global HRD Executive
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

■ 12 June 1996
Asia/Pacific HRD Committee
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

■ 28 June 1996
European Committee of ICBA
Lisbon, Portugal

■ 6 July 1996
International Co-operative Day/UN
International Day of Co-operatives
Worldwide

■ 15-17 August 1996
Regional Assembly Africa
Dakar, Senegal

■ 26-29 September 1996
Research Committee Conference
Co-operative Innovation & Change
Tartu, Estonia

■ 26-27 October 1996
ICA Board
Budapest, Hungary

■ 29 October 1996
ICA European Council
Budapest, Hungary

■ 30 October 1996
Regional Assembly for Europe
Budapest, Hungary



“Co-ops Achieved Most of Habitat II Agenda on a Micro Level”

The Habitat Agenda adopted by governments at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement in Istanbul last month is the most comprehensive statement of recognition of the co-operative contribution to sustainable development yet issued by the UN system. With nearly twenty references to possible partnerships with governments and civil society in all sectors that will lead to healthier, safer and sustainable urban settlements, the document will be a tool for the co-operative movement to use to forge new partnerships and strengthen existing ones.

Rolf Trodin, President of ICA Housing, presented the ICA statement during the Plenary session of Habitat II on 7 June 1996. He noted that the co-operative principles and values address many of the goals of the conference and that the co-operative movement continues to successfully meet the challenges and concerns to which Habitat II was now drawing world attention.

He stressed that, “...in realising the agenda of Habitat II, national governments are more likely to find inspiration in the co-op housing model than in any other housing option. We have achieved most of the agenda already on a micro level.



Rolf Trodin addresses the Plenary session of Habitat II in Istanbul.

At the international level, the co-op movement has an ongoing history of bringing together the northern and southern co-op sectors for their mutual benefit. Co-op housing has the answer to many of human beings' deepest needs: for shelter, for community, for control over their own lives, for values. We urge those leaders present at Habitat II to work with the co-op housing movement in seeking out development partnerships, which can solve their shelter problem by giving citizens access to the one form of housing that offers more than just a place to live.”

Co-operators from around the world joined the ICA in making

sure that the governments were aware of the important contribution of the housing co-operative movement. Co-operators from Austria, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Kenya, Germany, India, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uruguay, USA, Zambia, and Zimbabwe also attended the conference and the parallel events held at the NGO Forum.



HABITAT II

UNCHS (Habitat)





CHF stand at the Housing Exhibit at the Habitat II meeting in Istanbul, Turkey.

ICA Housing Co-operatives held both a Board meeting and General Assembly in Istanbul allowing many of their members the opportunity to participate in the

numerous events and meetings taking place during Habitat II. Many reported having been able to make excellent contacts. A special seminar on movement-to-movement

assistance was also held attracting participants from national delegations and the NGO community.

A number of stands showing the successes of the co-operative movement were also put up at the NGO Forum including the ICA Housing photo exhibit on movement-to-movement assistance.

Co-operative Housing Foundation (USA) and a number of Turkish co-operative organizations including Kent-Koop, Turkkent, Taris, Union of Bornova Housing Co-operatives, also had stands.

The Turkish Housing Co-operative Movement also held seminars to present their successes and challenges for the future.

Co-operative Initiatives Receive “Best Practices” Recognition

Launched by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements as part of the preparatory process for Habitat II, “the City Summit”, the Best Practices Initiative aimed to forge a positive vision of the urbanizing world by focusing attention on practical solutions to some of the most pressing social, economic and environmental problems.

Over 600 entries were submitted from 90 countries. The top twelve entries received awards with a further 100 entries put on the “Best 100 List” and others considered to be “Good Practices”.

Co-operatives were prominent in the entries. Each initiative was judged on its impact, partnerships, and sustainability. In addition, criteria regarding leadership, transparency, empowerment of people and responsiveness of social and cultural diversity, potential for replicability, and appropriateness to the local conditions.

SEWA, the Self Employed Women’s Bank, established by the co-operative and trade union movements in India was one of the award winners for its success in providing loans at market rates to women who would otherwise not have access to credit.

In the “Best 100 List”, co-operative initiatives in Brazil, China, Costa Rica, Egypt, Germany, Norway, Pakistan and Venezuela were selected. Other co-operative initiatives were considered to be “Good practices”.

For further information on the initiatives see <http://www.bestpractices.org>.

COPAC Secretariat Transfers to Geneva

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Co-operatives (COPAC) officially established its office in Geneva on April 1, 1996. Ms. MariaElena Chavez has been appointed COPAC coordinator. Ms. Vittoria Zaffarano, the COPAC office manager will assist the coordinator during 1996 until the full transfer of the COPAC office from Rome is completed.

COPAC was established in Rome in 1971 to improve the coordination of members' activities for the promotion of co-operatives. Its present membership includes the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN (FAO), International Labour Organization (ILO), the

International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP), International Union of Food, Agricultural, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco, and Allied Workers' Associations (IUF), World Council of Credit Unions (WOCCU) and the ICA.

The COPAC coordinator can be contacted at the ICA Head Office; telephone: (41-22) 929 88 25; E-mail: icageneva@gn.apc.org. Further information about COPAC and its members can be found on the ICA/UWCC Co-operative Gopher (gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/.info-source/.coop) or on the ICA International Web Site (<http://www.coop.org>).

New ICA Organisation

At the June meeting, the ICA Board received a report from the Interim Steering Committee established to finalise plans to create the International Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) as an ICA Specialised Organisation. The Board approved the draft rules of the new Organisation, which plans to hold its founding meeting on 22 November to coincide with the Regional Assembly for the Americas. The new body will promote health co-ops of three kinds: consumer- and user-owned, and integrated forms. Only members of ICA will be eligible for full membership, although a category of associate membership will also be available for others. ICA Head Office will provide the secretary for the IHCO.

Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly

The first ICA Regional Assembly of 1996 was held in Petaling Jaya, Malaysia, from 13-14 June under the chairmanship of Royal Professor Ungku A. Aziz, President of the National Co-operative Organisation of Malaysia, ANGKASA.

Among the agenda issues dealt with by the 180 participants were:

- * approval of a new four-year development plan (1997-2000) for the Regional Office;
- * review of the report of the advisory committee on the policy and direction of the Regional Office, which recommended that efforts be focussed in the areas of improving the business efficiency of co-operatives, human resource development, and improvement of co-operatives' image and relations with government;
- * approval of a model constitution for adoption by Specialised Regional Committees;

- * establishment of two working groups to draw up guidelines for the establishment of regional housing and women's committees;
- * reports on national progress in publicising and using the Co-operative Identity Statement;
- * preparations for the next meeting of Co-operative Ministers and leaders, scheduled to be held in Thailand in March 1997;
- * acceptance of the offer by Bangladesh to host the 1998 Regional Assembly.

The participants also decided that the nomination of a candidate for election as ICA Vice-President would be postponed until the March 1997 meeting of the regional Executive Council.

In his opening address to the Assembly, ICA President Graham Melmoth noted that the rapid growth

of economies and co-operative movements in the Asia-Pacific region had generated both opportunities and anxieties.

Referring to the wish expressed by some Asian members for greater representation on the ICA Board, and for retaining a larger percentage of subscription payments for use in the region, he said that both issues are being examined within the global ICA context by the Special Board Committee on Rules and Finance, which will present its proposals for change to the 1997 General Assembly.

At the conclusion of the Assembly Mr. Melmoth paid tribute to the retiring Regional Director, G.K. Sharma, for the progress made by ICA in the region during the last nine years, and introduced the newly-appointed Regional Director, Robby Tulus of Indonesia, who will take up his position on 1 October.

Colombia - Recycling Co-operative Offers New Beginnings

by John Julian

At 16, Nellie was in big trouble. She was pregnant, illiterate, unskilled, and she had two children under the age of two. Her husband, a thief, was failing in his chosen profession, her parents were dead, and the children were hungry. In Buccaramanga, Colombia, Nellie's options were limited.

Desperate, Nellie made her way to the edge of the city, and with her two tiny children, walked down the dusty gravel road to the municipal garbage dump. For Nellie, and others who have passed that way before and since, it is a long, hot walk into hell.

The dump is situated on a relatively flat piece of land surrounded on three sides by hills. Chulos — a type of vulture — wheel overhead or cluster on the ground, feeding on the garbage. Scattered on the hills around are little makeshift shelters of sticks and tattered plastic and cardboard — home to as many as 200 people who survive by scavenging in the dump. When garbage trucks rumble in, the people emerge through the billowing clouds of dust to swarm over the piles, pulling out glass or plastic — anything saleable. Most carry knives to cut up plastic and to defend themselves from each other. When the human population at the dump gets too large, civic minded citizens have been known to shoot them. Nor do the authorities pay much heed if the dump dwellers kill each other. There are just two rules to follow at the dump — the law of the jungle, and the code of silence.

"We were *desechables*," says Nellie, "the disposable ones. No one ever went to jail for killing one of us. I was no better than an animal." Like Nellie, all the people who find their way to the dump teeter precariously on the bottom rung of society. Many are alcoholic, and others addicted to



Vultures cluster on the dump and feed on the garbage - they provide extra protein.

basuko, a by-product of cocaine that is cheap, highly addictive, damaging to those who use it, and readily available throughout Colombia.

Nellie's immediate concern on her arrival, and during much of the four years she spent in the dump, was food. If she and her children found bottles or plastic, they often traded with others who had found food in the mounds of refuse. Chulos provided extra protein. Enterprising people would kill the birds and roast them — a simple enough matter in a dump. The rotting garbage provided a ready source of fuel. A deep hole would release enough methane gas for a steady fire. Life in the dump was ugly, violent, and very often short.

Salvation for Nellie and many other dump workers came from an unexpected source. The city of Buccaramanga was planning to close the dump and replace it with a modern landfill. A team of social workers from Santander University were dispatched to look into the problem of the people who lived there. After months of daily visits a co-operative was formed, and for the dump people who joined it was a ticket out of hell. Nellie was among the first to sign up.

Ten years later, little has changed in the dump. But everything has changed

for Nellie. Now thirty, and married for the second time to another co-op member, Nellie is a senior member of the co-operative. Her job these days is as a supervisor at the co-op's recycling facility.

There, workers sort and package a wide range of products for resale. And while they may still be working in the same industry as they did during their days in the dump, the recycling facility might as well be on another planet.

The workers wear neat uniforms — green to symbolize hope. To be a member of the co-operative a new recruit must be free of drugs and alcohol. The facility is orderly and businesslike, and at the end of the month there is a steady pay cheque of between 250,000 and 300,000 pesos, approximately \$500 to \$600 Canadian dollars.

The recycling facility is not the only business that the co-operative is involved in. The co-op members, now more than 130 strong, clean buildings throughout the city. They run a restaurant, and have contracts to sweep city streets. Others go door to door, collecting recyclable products in the suburbs. There is a co-op run restaurant at the city's gigantic new



Children of dump dwellers need help.

bus terminal. And in one of the poorer barrios of the city there is a daycare centre where more than 60 children, dressed in carefully laundered white shorts and T-shirts, spend their days learning and singing and playing. Without the co-operative, their fate would certainly have been that of the hard eyed, dirty children that can still be found growing up in the horror of the dump.

The members of the co-operative are proud and independent. Their co-operative has never received assistance from government. Starting with capital of less than \$100 they have grown, in 10 years, to own the buildings that house the recycling plant and the daycare centre. They own two trucks and a variety of other pieces of equipment, and they have provided themselves with employment and a new life.

The university which was instrumental in establishing the co-operative has maintained its ties, and the co-operative is a member of ASCOOP, the national association of co-operatives in Colombia. Through ASCOOP the co-operative is part of a program, funded by the Canadian Co-operative Association, that provides skilled technical assistance and credit. They have had help from ASCOOP business specialists and auditors, and are about to receive a loan to buy a machine to compress and bale cardboard. Money for the recycling co-op's part of the

program was contributed by St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Good Neighbour Fund, of Ottawa, Ontario.

Nellie and her new husband have bought their own house. They now have two more children, and the family owns a shiny new motorbike. After years of attending school on Saturdays, Nellie has completed the first levels of high school. A measure of the respect she has earned in the co-operative is the fact that she has been assigned the duty of working with new recruits. When they arrive fresh from the dump, Nellie helps them to adjust to the discipline of an ordered and regulated working life.

She has never had to refuse a new recruit entry into the co-operative. By the time they complete their three-month trial, the recruits know for themselves whether they belong or not. Long before the trial period is over, those who cannot conform, who

cannot contain their violence, or for whom the pull of basuko or alcohol is still too strong, usually drift back to the dump.

Nellie has another important responsibility with the co-operative. She supervises the co-op members who return to the dump as buyers to purchase products for the recycling facility. For many co-op members, this job would be impossible. They have escaped the fate that awaited them in the dump, and they cannot bear to tempt that fate by once again travelling down that dusty, litter-strewn road.

On a sunny day in March, Nellie makes one of her visits to the dump. The chulos swoop and swirl as she is greeted warmly by a growing crowd of children and adults, caked with dirt and dressed in an odd assortment of cast-off clothes. They press in around her to exchange greetings.

Nellie stops to talk to a tiny, baby-faced 13-year-old. The girl is small because she has lived most of her life in the dump. She has never had adequate nutrition. Already she has two children, and according to Nellie, is passed around from man to man like a piece of communal property. As Nellie turns away a look of terrible sadness comes over her face. She sits rigidly in the van, and as the vehicle begins to move she looks neither left nor right, and certainly not back. Just straight ahead down the narrow road to redemption.



The co-operative daycare centre provides security for more than 60 children.

Gender Issues in Co-operatives

Congress Adopts New Policies

The UK Co-operative Congress, Harrogate, UK, 1996, endorsed the statement on gender equality adopted by the European Regional Assembly of the ICA. The congress particularly noted the need to encourage societies to commit themselves to the active promotion of equality between men and women; the different priorities of values, strengths and competence between men and women and ensure equality of participation, job opportunities and working conditions as well as equal access to training and education opportunities.

The Congress urged co-ops to set and publicise action plans which include targets for achievement and timescales, in order to achieve the above objectives.

(Source: Co-operative Gazette, Information and Advisory Bulletin 6, March 26, 1996)

Gender Project to Improve Efficiency and Job Satisfaction

Folksam Insurance, Sweden has established a project 'Gender Perspectives on Skills and Qualifications in the Claims Adjusters' Work'.

In the project, one female and one male group of claims adjusters describe and analyse, together as well as in separate groups, differ-

ent forms of knowledge, skills and qualifications in their work. One female and one male researcher will also attend meetings and analyse the discussions. Seminars with guest researchers will be held in between the group work. There will be five seminars and five group meetings during 1996.

Issues discussed at the meetings and seminars will be: what is knowledge? What kind of knowledge is valued and not valued? What kind of knowledge is important in the claims adjusters' work? How important is knowledge of human nature? female and male language - are there any differences in female and male adjusters' contacts with clients and colleagues? Female and male definitions of efficiency, service and quality in the work - do female and male clients have different demands and preferences with regards to the adjuster's sex?

The aim is to improve efficiency, quality and work satisfaction by widening and combining gender perspectives. The results will be used as a basis in forming a gender neutral job evaluation and salary setting system in the company.

Perhaps this example may inspire similar projects in other co-ops!

(Source: Katarina Apelqvist, Folksam, Chair of ICA Global Women's Committee)

Network on Women in Co-ops

An electronic discussion group on women in co-operatives and credit unions has been launched by the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), known as 'WICEN'. It is open to anyone who has an Internet e-mail address. Upon becoming a member, all conference comments and postings will arrive automatically in your e-mail box. WICEN will provide a forum for exchange of ideas, experiences and information and a place to pose questions or propose solutions; a place to share 'best practices' and case studies and to make new contact. The focus of discussions will be on issues relating to women and co-operatives - issues such as women's involvement on boards of directors and in decision-making within co-operatives and credit unions; family-friendly policies and practices in co-ops; women and co-op development; leadership styles and marketing to women.

WICEN is open to members of co-ops and credit unions and not restricted to women only. It is open to anyone with an interest in the subject of women and co-ops.

To join the conference, one needs to subscribe on line through e-mail to wicen-request@usask.ca. Please mention in your e-mail : `subscribe wicen <your e-mail address>`.

Youth and Co-operatives

Canada Hosts Two Youth Forums

The Co-operators Insurance Group has launched a youth unity project which will provide a forum for 100 Canadian youths (aged 18-21) to explore, express and listen to diverse views on Canadian unity at Hull, Ottawa, from August 17-23, 1996. Further information, posters and application forms can be obtained from Laura Gregson, The Co-operators, Priory Square, Guelph, Ontario N1H 6P8, or on Internet home page (<http://www.cooperators.ca/cooperators/>).

The Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) also organized a Youth Conference in Halifax June 24-25 where Canadians, Colombians, Indonesians and Filipinos learnt about co-ops in Canada and provided input on how to increase youth involvement in co-ops. Check the Web site for more information about youth initiatives (<http://www.cca.usask.ca/CCA/CCA.Home.html>)

Sustainable Development

Congress Adopts New Policies

The UK Co-operative Congress in Harrogate noted the enthusiasm of the Co-operative Movement for sustainable energy policies and called for co-operative initiatives to assess the feasibility of developing renewable energy schemes in Northern Ireland.

The Congress also declared that Co-operation is, by its nature, rooted in community spirit. Therefore, the congress called upon all member societies to publicise their support for their society's community involvement.

(Source: Co-operative Gazette, Information and Advisory Bulletin 6, March 26, 1996)

Bank Opens Ecology Centre

The Co-operative Bank National Centre for Business and Ecology was launched on 22 March. Established in partnership with the four universities of Greater Manchester - the Manchester Metropolitan University, UMIST, the University of Manchester, and the University of Salford - the centre aims to provide environmental advice of the very highest quality at affordable rates by drawing upon the research and resources available in the largest educational precinct in Europe.

(Source: Banknotes, April 1996)

Co-op Agenda 21

ICA has just released the printed copy of the Co-op Agenda 21 which will be available from MariaElena Chavez at the ICA Head Office. The text is also available on the ICA/UWCC Co-operative Gopher (gopher:/wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/.coop) or on the ICA Web Site (<http://www.coop.org>).



New business and ecology centre was opened on 22 March with the help of Terry Thomas, Managing Director of the Co-operative Bank, the Right Honourable Tony Blair MP and Cherie Blair, Phil Barton, Director of the National Centre for Business and Ecology, and representatives from the universities, Professors Tom Husband, Bob Boucher, Martin Harris and Sir Kenneth Greeb.

Co-operative Bank's Ecology Mission Statement

"We, the Co-operative Bank, will continue to develop our business taking into account the impact our activities have on the environment and society at large.

The nature of our activities are such that our direct impact, by being selective in terms of the provision of finance and banking arrangements, is more ecologically significant than the direct impact of our trading operations.

However, we undertake to continually assess all our activities and implement a programme of ecological improvement based on the pursuit of the following four scientific principles:

1. Nature cannot withstand a progressive build-up of waste derived from the Earth's crust.
2. Nature cannot withstand a progressive build-up of society's waste, particularly artificial persistent substances which it cannot degrade into harmless materials.
3. The productive area of nature must not be diminished in quality (diversity) or quantity (volume) and must be enabled to grow.
4. Society must utilise energy and resources in a sustainable, equitable and efficient manner.

We consider that the pursuit of these principles constitute a path of ecological excellence and will secure future prosperity for society by sustainable economic activity.

The Co-operative Bank will not only pursue the above path itself, but endeavour to help and encourage all its stakeholders to do likewise."

Co-op People

New Appointments at ICA

During the ICA Board meeting in June, Director-General Bruce Thordarson announced two secondments, one new appointment, and one promotion within the Head Office staff structure, and a change of Regional Director in Asia.

Mats Ahnlund, Director-General of the Co-op Network for Co-operative Development in Eastern and Central Europe, joined ICA as Senior Adviser, Member Services in July. He will also serve as focal point for liaison with the Specialised Organisations.

MariaElena Chavez, currently ICA's UN Liaison Officer, will be promoted to Director of UN/NGO Relations.

Bjorn Genberg, currently head of the Nordic co-operative development programme in Kenya with the Swedish Co-operative Centre, will join ICA as Development Director in January 1997.

Won-Sik Noh, senior agricultural economist with the National Agricultural Co-operative Federation of South Korea, will join the ICA as Agricultural Co-operative Adviser in August 1996.

Bruce Thordarson described these changes as a result of the Board's planning session in December 1995. At that time the Board emphasised the need to diversify and improve services to Member Organisations and the Specialised Bodies, to strengthen the Development Programme with special attention to Africa, and to ensure that the Head Office is sufficiently strong to balance the centrifugal forces resulting from the new regional structure.

At the ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, **Robby Tulus** of Indonesia has been appointed Regional Director, effective 1 October 1996. A founder of the credit union movement in Indonesia, he subsequently served as Asia Regional Manager for the Canadian Co-operative Association. During the last three years he has been Senior Policy Adviser in the Regional Office.

The retiring Regional Director, **G.K. Sharma**, will assume the function of Special Advisor to the Director-General, with particular responsibility for issues dealing with co-op legislation and government policy.

Giancarlo Pasquini has been elected member of the Upper House of the Italian Senate, and has resigned from the post of Lega Chairman and also from the ICA Board. The new Lega Chairman is **Ivano Barberini**.

David Allonby OBE, a director of the Co-operative Wholesale Society and member of the CWS Surrey and Berkshire Branch Committee, has been appointed Chairman of the Co-operative Union, the Co-operative Movement's central organising and advisory body in the United Kingdom. He succeeds **George Money**, who has retired.

Obituary

Dr. Jacobo Laks, President of the ICA Sub-Regional Banking Committee for Latin America and the President of the Instituto Movilizador de Fondos Cooperativos died on May 7th, 1996. Dr Laks was a great supporter of ICA and was instrumental in the development of co-operatives in Argentina.

ICA CALENDAR

■ 12 August 1996
DSE/ZEL-ICA ROWA
UNCAS Seminar
Dakar, Senegal

■ 15-17 August 1996
Regional Assembly Africa
Dakar, Senegal

■ 26-29 September 1996
Int.Co-op Research Conf.
Tartu, Estonia

■ 11-14 October 1996
ICMIF Meetings
Wiesbaden, Germany

■ 22-23 October 1996
ICA-LEGA-Confcoop. Sem.
Imola, Italy

■ 24-25 October 1996
ICBA Exec. & Plenary
Budapest, Hungary

■ 25-26 October 1996
CICOPA-CECOP Exec.
Budapest, Hungary

■ 26-29 October 1996
ICA-IRU Board & Seminar
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996
INTER-COOP Meetings
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996
Housing Exec.
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27 October 1996
ICA Audit & Control Cttee
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27 - 28 October 1996
Research Committee Conf.
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996
ICA Consumer Co-op Org.
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28-29 October 1996
ICACC Exec. & Seminar
Budapest, Hungary

■ 29 October 1996
ICA European Council
Budapest, Hungary

■ 30 October 1996
Reg. Assembly for Europe
Budapest, Hungary



ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Issue No 4-5/1996

Editor: Mary Treacy

International Co-operative Day

United Nations 2nd International Day of Co-operatives



Left to right: Hans Dahlberg (ICMIF), Ted Weihe (OCDC), Chris Baker (WOCCU), Graham Melmoth (ICA President) Mohamed Idris (IFAP Rep. from CACU, Egypt) and Yehudah Paz (ICA HRD).

The United Nations Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development organized, jointly with the ICA, a panel discussion on 1 July 1996 at the UN Headquarters in New York on the theme "Partnership between the United Nations and the International Co-operative Movement in the follow-up to Copenhagen, Beijing and Istanbul". Representatives from the Co-operative Movement joined Nintin Desai, Under Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, to discuss concrete measures that would allow the effective engagement of the Co-operative Movement in the implementation of the strategies adopted in

Copenhagen, Beijing and Istanbul. Under Secretary-General Desai opened the meeting by stressing the special role of the organized segments of civil society - one of the largest being the co-operative movement. Co-operatives have an important role to play in implementing the programmes of action of the recent global conferences. The aim of the meeting was to identify ways for practical expression of these goals. Mr. Desai pointed out that unlike other segments of civil society, the co-op movement has a unique body which was already bringing together United Nations agencies and NGOs to coordinate their activities in co-operative development. The Committee

for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) was a good starting point for practical implementation.



Nintin Desai, Under Secretary-General for Policy Coordination & Sustainable Development, opens the discussions



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International Co-operative Day (cont.)

Co-op Day in Slovakia

The International Co-operative Day 1996 was widely celebrated in Slovakia this year with representatives from the Government and many foreign visitors attending the festivities which included International Seminar on Systems of Governance and Management in Co-operatives and Management and COOPEXPO'96, the 3rd co-operative exhibition, where a wide range of products from agricultural, workers and consumer co-ops were available as well as a fashion show twice daily.



Another important event which had taken place earlier in the year was also highlighted during the day. This was the 200th anniversary of the birth of Samuel Jurkovic, a founder and pioneer of the co-



Alina Pawlowska presents the message from the ICA.

operative movement in Europe. Commemorative coins and a postcard in honour of and including the portrait and house of Samuel Jurkovic, issued by the philatelists of Brezova pod Bradlom, his native town, were also on sale during the celebrations.

The Union of the Slovak Republic gave prominence to the promotion of the Slovak co-operative movement at national and international level, with the adoption of a new Co-operative Act as one of the principle objectives. The new Act should solve legal obstacles for establishing credit and savings co-operatives, and ease restrictions. A highly successful health insurance co-operative, which was founded only a few years ago and already has over 100,000 members, is just one example of the dynamic changes in Slovakia.

Web Site Launched to Honour International Co-operative Day

The National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA) launched a web site devoted to helping people understand what co-operatives are and how they can use the co-operative model to help themselves and their communities, on the internet, to celebrate the International Co-operative Day, Saturday, July 6.

The site is located at <http://www.cooperative.org> and the site's home page features areas which lead the viewer to more information about food co-ops, childcare co-ops, housing co-ops, agricultural co-ops, financial co-ops, co-operative economic development, NCBA, and more.



Co-operative Image in the Year 2,000

The ICA Communications Committee and ICA Europe are hosting a Communications Seminar on Co-operative Image in the Year 2,000 which will seek to formulate strategies for enhancing the co-operative image and investigate how the growth of new technologies can benefit co-operative communications and democracy.

The Seminar will take place on 29 October in the Agro Hotel, Budapest, just prior to the ICA Regional Assembly for Europe. Keynote speakers include Byron Henderson from the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan, Canada, who will discuss the strengthening of community

identity among international organizations through the use of electronic networks and Andrew Booth, of World Television, who will explain how television can be used to enhance the co-operative image and discuss a promotional strategy for the ICA and its members. Members of the ICACC Executive, Zahid Qureshi of ICMIF and Iain Williamson of Coop Union, UK, will also be speaking. Mr. Qureshi will talk about harnessing the collective genius of people to create the results they truly desire and Iain Williamson will reflect on the Desk-Top Publishing revolution of the past ten years and its implications for the future.

In Brief

ICMIF Sponsors Workshop

CLIMBS, the Co-operative Life Mutual Benefit Services Association, Inc. of the Philippines organized an ICMIF-sponsored seminar-workshop on possible Philippine Co-op Insurers' Unification at Taal, Tagaytay on September 23-24, 1996.

Environmental Stand

CICOPA is conducting a membership survey on the achievements of co-operatives in supplying healthy, biological and non-polluting products; and in implementing production processes which avoid polluting air, water and the environment in general.

New Constitution

Last June the ICA Consumer Committee for Asia and the Pacific adopted a new constitution which only allows non-member organizations to join the committee if they adhere to co-operative principles and are recommended by the national apex co-operative organization.

Agricultural Sub-Committee Resolution on Food Security

On June 12, 1996, the ICA Committee on Agriculture for Asia and the Pacific adopted a resolution on Food Security to be presented at the World Food Summit.

The resolution expressed the willingness of the committee to participate in FAO's efforts in drafting the Policy statement and Plan of action at the World Food Summit which aims at solving global food problems, and hoped that the summit would agree on a solution to the world's food insecurity and unsustainable agricultural development.

The committee also realizes that the Asia-Pacific region, which already has over sixty percent of world's population, will face a rapid increase in population and the demand for more nutritious food. The loss of agricultural land to industrialization and trade liberalization, will be the core of global food problems in the future. The committee believes that family farming is the best regional model to safeguard rural communities and the environment. The resolution urged governments in the region to provide incentives promoting family farms and co-operatives.

The resolution also noted that the inauguration of the World Trade Organization weakened the economic viability of the small family farms in the region.

On behalf of agricultural co-operatives in the region, the Committee recommended that the vital roles of family farms and agricultural co-operatives, in increasing food production and protecting the environment, should be reflected in the World Food Summit's Policy Statement and Plan of Action.

(Source: Minutes of the meeting of the ICA Committee on Agriculture for Asia and the Pacific held in Malaysia)

Africa

African Regional Assembly

The Second ICA Regional Assembly for Africa was held in Dakar, Senegal, on 16 August under the chairmanship of Bernard Wolimbwa, ICA Vice-President. It was preceded by a seminar on Education, Training, Communication and Information, involving participants from across Africa, and by a strategic planning session for the Regional Office for West Africa (ROWA).



Left to right: B. Thordarson, G. Melmoth, Y. Paz & Hon. B. Wolimbwa

The Regional Assembly endorsed the four-year Regional Development Plan prepared by the Regional Office for East, Central and Southern Africa, as well as the guidelines for ROWA's new four-year programme.

It also welcomed the offer by ICA's Egyptian member organizations to provide facilities for a locally-financed liaison office for North Africa,



Messrs. Melmoth & Wolimbwa & Chief Ayola (Nigeria).

which could be opened in 1997 to assist the two existing regional offices to extend their services northwards.

The Assembly approved the establishment of a new pan-African Agricultural Committee, as well as a Womens' Committee for the West African region. ring the West African Regional Council, which preceded the Regional Assembly, the ICA-Director General informed the Assembly that, as part of ICA's efforts to reduce operating costs in Africa, while maintaining its presence in both the sub-regions, serious consideration is being given to transferring the Regional Office for West Africa from Abidjan to a less expensive location. The Regional Director, A.S. Kibora, will keep members informed of progress.

The Assembly accepted the offer from the Zambian Co-operative Federation to hold the 1998 assembly in Lusaka when, according to the agreement between the two regions, a representative from West Africa will be nominated as ICA Vice-President for Africa.

Europe

Hungary to Host Regional Assembly

Over 200 delegates from 40 countries will gather at the Agro-Hotel, Budapest from October 24 to 30 for the European Regional Assembly and associated meetings. The main issues for discussion will be East West Collaboration and Corporate Governance and Management Control Systems in European Co-operatives. Meetings of the Specialised Bodies will precede the Regional Meetings.

ICA to Launch Development Fund

A Development fund for Co-ops in the Third and former Communist Worlds will be launched in Budapest. The ICA Project Development annual budget amounts to some \$10 million; the fund will channel these resources, deriving from the leading Co-operative Movements and development agencies of Europe, North America and Japan. The ICA is appealing to its members to supplement this core funding by further contributions.

Asia-Pacific

Management Training Course

The eleventh ICA/Japan Training Course for Strengthening Management of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia will be held from 4 November 1996 to 25 April, 1997, in India, Sri Lanka and Japan. The Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (MAFF) of the Government of Japan will continue to fund this project.

Programmes for Asian Women Leaders

The sixth ICA/Japan Training Course for Rural Women Leaders of Agricultural Co-operatives in Asia will be held at the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia (IDACA), Tokyo, Japan from October 20 to

November 16, 1996. Six participants, two each from Indonesia, Malaysia and Pakistan, will attend.

A regional conference of top level women farm leaders of agricultural co-operatives will be organized in Tokyo from 20- 26 October, 1996, jointly by the ICA, IDACA and the Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives of Japan (JA ZENCHU).

Co-operative Business Development

The third ICA/NACF regional seminar on Agricultural Co-operative Business Development, with special reference to Korean Experience' was held at the Agricultural Co-operative College near Seoul on last May. Participants came from China, India, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, the Philippines and Vietnam.

The Americas

San José World Capital to the Co-op Movement

The ICA Regional Office for the Americas is preparing a series of events which will make San José the Co-operative Movement's capital city, given the importance of the themes addressed and the number of delegates expected. Hundreds of co-operators will attend, the majority from the Americas' region, but with delegations from other regions as well. This is a summary of the events to be held:

A continental forum of women co-operators will be held from 18 - 19 November with the theme: "How many are we and what do we want?" This Forum will open a wide and genuine space to women co-operators from the Americas' continent to discuss their position and expectations regarding the co-

operative movement. Experts on the topic will state the gender outlook and its projection towards the next millennium.

The second event is the 1996 Regional Conference "Deglobalization: Global Challenge - Local Mar-

kets.... the Co-operative Strategy" to be held 20-22 November. The aim is to strengthen both the knowledge on the globalization process and the alternative ways to face it through the local markets.

Finally, the Regional Assembly of the Americas will take place 23 November and its main goal is

the approval of the International Co-operative Alliance Strategy Plan for 1996 - 2000.

(Continued page 9)



Co-op Dream Alive in the Rubble of Ruamjai

by David Shanks of the Canadian Co-operative Association

The search is on as Jalan Thuansuwan, 36, steps gingerly over the rubble that was once his home. He has trouble negotiating the broken boards and bottles that litter a patch of earth he once knew like the back of his hand. Careful not to slip into the murky waters of the klung below, Jalan is looking for the spot where he lived for 29 years. Gone is the doorway through which as a young man he proudly brought his bride Thawin and later their newborn son Thawat. Also gone is the wooden porch from whose uneven steps he watched manicured rice fields disappear under Bangkok's relentless advance of buildings, billboards and dusty sidewalks.

Moments later the wiry young man points to a clump of boards near an old shoe. "Here it is!" As Jalan speaks, the back hoe that had flattened his home days earlier is still at work among the rubble of the community.

"The landlord's son was my best friend when I was a boy," says Jalan wiping dust from his eyes. "His mother told us we could stay on her land until she died. But now they want to build an apartment here so we must leave." Like dozens of communities caught in Bangkok's breathtaking growth, the 23 families living in Ruamjai Samakkhi are expendable. "The landlord has a bad heart," says Jalan. "Thailand is growing but the heart of the people is not."

But the people of Ruamjai are wrestling back control of their future. With help from the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and a local housing organization called Building Together Association, they



Jalan Thuansuwan squats on the bridge that he and members of Muang Nai Phattana Housing Co-operative built to take them to their new site.

joined 31 families from a ten-year-old settlement in nearby Bangna to buy some land of their own. When construction is completed - sometime in 1997/8 - 54 families will make the move to a site in neighbouring Samutprakarn province just 5 km beyond the edge of Bangkok. "We formed our savings group in 1992 and became Muang Mai Phattana Housing Co-operative Ltd.," says Jalan, who joined the co-op board two years ago. This gave members the buying power they needed to arrange a loan from the Urban Community Development Office (UCDO), a Thai agency set up five years ago to give loans to poor people.

Jalan remembers how hard it was at first to set aside money from their meagre income. He earns 8,000 Baht (\$400 CDN) a month as a driver for a municipal welfare agency and, though his income has grown in recent years, the cost of living has jumped dramatically in that same time. Today, each family pays 750 Baht (\$37 CDN) a month towards the loan and an extra 250 Baht (\$12 CDN) to prepare the land for construction. The 20-hectare property is located on wetlands and must be drained and land filled before construction can begin. Their

old homes destroyed, families from Ruamjai have already begun to move to temporary housing on the co-op site.

While the co-op promises Ruamjai residents a new lease on life, the road has been long and difficult. The first eviction notice came in 1992. "When we tried to negotiate the landlord took us to court to enforce the eviction," says Jalan. Their legal avenues exhausted, the people of Ruamjai were told to pack up and leave in May. "We asked the landlord to give us two more weeks because our new land wasn't ready but she refused." Unable to leave, the families moved into temporary shelters they hastily built just 50 metres away on land owned by the Bangkok Metropolitan Authority. In all, the landlord compensated the community just 40,000 Baht (\$2,000 CDN).

Jalan was seven years old when his family moved to Ruamjai in 1960. For 29 years Jalan has watched this small farm community become a bustling downtown neighbourhood lost among Bangkok's sprawling urban landscape. Today, his family can only watch helplessly as work

crews carve away the last vestiges of Ruamjai life. "Early this morning, I awoke to the sounds of heavy machinery tearing up the road. I ran to my window to see what was happening but before we could react there was a loud noise. The back hoe had broken our water line. Now we have no water and the road to our homes is gone."

Despite the hardships, Jalan says his heart will be heavy the day he leaves Ruamjai for the last time. The place he is moving to is foreign to him and, in a city famous for its traffic jams, will add another two hours to his already long commute to work. "When we picked the new land for the co-op three years ago, I felt it was very remote in the countryside, not close to anything. But there are factories with jobs for our people." The co-op is near Bang Plee New Town, a new high-density village with many apartment buildings and homes. Bang Plee holds the promise of jobs and there are schools, hospitals and services nearby. Jalan now sees a good life in the future and is eager to build a new community without fear of eviction, on land the co-op can call its own.

"Building housing co-ops in Bangkok is an uphill battle," says former BTA director Dr. Chamniern Paul Vorratnchaiphan. It begins by organizing families to create a savings group to pool their modest resources. After lengthy negotiations for a government loan they must find and purchase a piece of affordable land, negotiate with their landlord for compensation and time to remain in their homes until the new land is ready, prepare the land for building and move into temporary housing during construction. There are now 29 housing co-operatives at various stages of development in this city of 8 million. With technical and financial support from CCA, the

Building Together Association (BTA) brings government, housing groups, and development agencies together to educate them about the housing situation and to advance co-op housing solutions among the estimated 1,500 slum communities in the greater Bangkok area. Vorratnchaiphan says a newly formed Housing Co-operative Federation plays an important role training members and coordinating and negotiating with concerned agencies for support. It is a welcome ally in securing Muang Mai Phattana Co-op's new home.

Jalan has found the obstacles are not always financial in nature. This year, torrential rains, as well as heated resistance from the National Housing Authority (NHA), caused further setbacks and delays. In the spring, co-op members literally had to find their way across troubled waters - waters which threatened to flood their land. "We got together and built a bridge over the canal that separates our land from Bang Plee New Town," says Jalan. "Then we applied for a second loan to add landfill to prepare the site for construction." The NHA, which controls the loan fund, stonewalled Muang Mai's attempts to prepare the land and on one occasion arrested and charged their workers with trespassing. Co-op leaders took their complaints to the central government and eventually persuaded NHA to drop the charges and let the work resume.

The co-op then tried to get permission to use a road which runs through NHA land right to the co-op site. The NHA refused. The move effectively barred co-op members from accessing their own land. Far from discouraged, Muang Mai members have emerged from setbacks like these battle-hardened and more determined to succeed than ever. "Sometimes we must fight very

hard and sometimes we must withdraw to negotiate," says Jalan. "We are gradually winning the support of the Ministry and now the NHA is not so quick to block our efforts." By applying pressure through UCDO, Muang Mai won temporary access to move onto their land this June. "Once we are on the land we will be very powerful."

Muang Mai Phattana Co-op will bring families from two long-standing slum communities to live together in a new way. At first, the members from Ruamjai knew little about their new neighbours from Bangna. But after attending several joint seminars they are very close and plans to move to their new homes are in full swing. "We will build a child care centre and open a shop for our members," says Jalan. "And the co-op will give loans to help members improve their lives. But for now, we have more pressing concerns." The co-op is arranging financing for construction and must build more temporary houses. It must arrange for electricity and get the government to approve the land plots for each home. Jalan has already asked his boss for a truck to move everybody and their belongings to the co-op. "It will take us one or two days to move using a van. We will use whatever material we have on hand to build our new shelters and buy the rest from the market."

Jalan now squats on the narrow wooden bridge gazing out over the co-op site. He sees beyond the solitary tree standing amidst the barren clumps of earth. He sees the future and it is moving toward him. After a long pause he remarks. "It won't be long now before we move into our new homes." Breaking into a broad grin he swings around and adds "...and we won't have to move again!"

World Overview

Korea

NACF Acts as NGO for the World Food Summit

The National Agricultural Co-operative Federation of Korea has taken part in various international activities relating to the World Food Summit to be held in Rome, Italy during November this year. The NACF has assisted in merging co-operatives' view in the drafting of the Policy Statement and Plan of Action.

Churll-Hee Won, Chairman and President of NACF, delivered a special speech entitled 'Food Security and Family Farming' at the meeting of the ICA Committee on Agriculture for Asia and Pacific in Malaysia.

NACF was represented at the World Farmers' Congress in Versailles organised by IFAP in April this year and at the Spring NGO meeting for Asia and Pacific in Bangkok. It also participated at the FAO Regional Conference in Apia, West Samoa in May and intends to send representatives to attend the general meeting of ICA-ICAO, the World Family Farmers' Summit and the World Food Summit in Rome in November.

Russia

Consumer Co-ops in Russia

In August Centrosoyus of the Russian Federation invited ICA's European Chairman, Lars Hillbom, and Director-General, Bruce Thordarson, for a week-long study visit to see the current situation facing consumer co-operatives in Russia.

During visits with regional co-operative leaders in Novgorod in the north and Krasnodar in the south, the ICA officials were able to see at first-hand the role which co-operatives are playing in providing basic food stuffs to some 55 million people in the rural areas and small towns. However, given the falling income levels in these areas, and the need to sell goods on credit, few rural co-operatives are able to be profitable these days. As a result, the

consumer co-operatives continue to rely on various forms of state assistance through annual agreements at national and regional levels.

The ICA officials concluded that this support was fully justified during this transition stage in the Russian economy, although it must be accompanied by continued efforts to improve the managerial efficiency and member participation in the co-operatives. In follow-up letters to the Russian President, Prime Minister, and Chairman of the State Duma, they requested early passage of amendments to the current law on consumer co-operatives, which would prevent the sell-off of co-operative property by ensuring that co-operative property belongs to the co-operatives as juridical persons, as is now allowed under the new Russian Civil Code.

Switzerland

25 years of Environmental Concern



Protection of the environment has been included in the statutes of Coop Switzerland since 1973. Since then, priorities have been defined, directives have been given and plans are now implemented, designed to preserve water resources, reduce packaging and energy consumption, eliminate CFCs, collect used batteries, promote recycling, and introduce into the Co-op stores a wide range of ecological products.

Coop Switzerland has engaged in an extensive education campaign. It recognizes that environmental protection can only begin by individual awareness. Safeguarding the environment is the concern for

every one. Information material, such as brochures, pamphlets and colouring books for children have therefore been produced and articles regularly appear in the Coop's weekly magazine (in French, German and Italian) as well as in a magazine designed for staff with environmental responsibilities - Coop Ecorama.

Environmental logos provide quick and easily recognizable information to consumers. These include for non-food items, CoopNaturaline and CoopECOplan and food items CoopNATURApian indicating organic production.

Coop Switzerland has published an Environment Report for 1995 tracing how it has realized its commitment to the environment over the last 25 years. Copies are available in French and German from Coop Switzerland, Public Relations, Postfach 2550, 4002, Basel, Switzerland.

(Coop rapport sur l'environnement 1995)

United Kingdom

Top Line-up for Fifth UKCC Forum

The UKCC Forum, which is a unique occasion in the co-operative calendar, brings together representatives from the co-operative sector in the UK, will be held at New Century House, Manchester, 22-23 November, 1996.

Frank Field, MP; Baroness Cumberlege; Gavin Grant of the Body Shop; Brian Davis of Nationwide Building Society; Alan Sneddon of the Co-

operative Insurance Society and Sara Parkin, formerly of the Green Party will be the keynote speakers. Frank Field, Chairman of the Select Committee on Social Security and former opposition spokesman on Education will be the after dinner speaker on Friday evening.

Lord Carter, Chairman of UKCC and opposition spokesman in the House of Lords will open the Forum, followed by a review of current opportunities for co-operative sectors by Peter Walker, the Chief Executive of UKCC.

Sara Parkin, Director, Forum for the Future, will look at how the co-operatives can best turn the recently adopted 7th Principle of ICA, 'Concern for Community' into reality. David Thompson, former Vice President of the National Co-operative Business Association and Director of National Co-operative Bank, will give a presentation on Co-operatives in America. To get a copy of the Forum programme and booking form, contact the UKCC, c/o The Co-operative Bank plc, 1, Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP; Tel. 0161-829-5355; Fax: 0161-832-9707.

Labour Leader Opens New CRS Headquarters

Labour Party leader, Tony Blair officially opened the Co-operative Retail Society's new 20 million headquarters in Rochdale, on 29th August, 1996. The CRS venture is the single largest investment of its kind in Rochdale in the last 50 years.

Co-operative News, August 6, 1996

News from the Regions. . . . News from the Regions News from..

The Americas cont/d from page 5

World Bank Accord with OCB/ICA

ICA and OCB have signed an agreement with the World Bank to finance projects aimed at small Brazilian producers in the co-operative sector. As per the agreement, resources will be transferred to co-operatives in the states where the project is to be developed. Their federations will be in charge of providing technical assistance,

input distribution, marketing and credit for the production and agricultural industries.

USA/Brazil Co-operative Venture

Blue Diamond, one of the largest US co-operatives engaged in the commercialization of almonds and nuts sent a mission to Brazil last July to formalize an agreement with OCB/ICA. The project includes research, planting systematization, technology and commercialization of cashew and Brazil nuts.

Electronic Networking and the Internet

New On the ICA WEB

The ICA Web Site has recently launched pages in Spanish, French and German which can be accessed at <http://www.coop.org>. Please inform the Communications Department of any new co-operative sites in English, French, Spanish and German so that these can be added to the site and advertised in the ICA News.

UWCC & ICA Partnership

University of Wisconsin Co-operative Center has been incorporating the Internet into its co-operative outreach and extension work for over two years. Since the beginning the UWCC has been working with the International Co-operative Alliance, Geneva, and Director of Communications, Mary Treacy.

Since the visit of Ms Treacy in November 1995 and after sharing the Internet projects of ICA and UWCC with representatives of the Madison-area co-operative organizations, the UWCC and ICA have worked out a more formal agreement for collaborating. ICA will continue to

provide information from its members for inclusion in the Co-operative Gopher, which is a searchable database of articles and information. UWCC will set up and maintain ICA databases on the Gopher and provide technical assistance.

The UWCC Co-operative Gopher can be reached at gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/coop. The information is also available through the web sites maintained by ICA (<http://www.coop.org>) and UWCC (<http://www.wisc.edu/uwcc>).

(UWCC Working Together vol.4 No.1)

ICA to Extend Collaboration

ICA intends to extend its collaboration in 1997 to include projects with other universities and organisations.

In 1996, besides working with the University of Wisconsin, ICA has been collaborating with a number of organisations including the UK Society of Co-operative Studies and the University of Leicester, helping to develop their presence on the Internet and publicize their activities.

In 1997 the ICA will collaborate extensively with the University of Saskatchewan Centre for the Study of Co-operatives on a new project to develop the multi-media potential of the Internet to promote the Co-operative Image.

A project with the University of Moncton in Canada to set up a French Data Bank of ICA Statistics on the Web is also planned for next year and the ICA has recently had discussions with Marcel Roy, Chaire de Cooperation at the University of Quebec, to discuss possible joint ventures.

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ICA Members and the Internet

WOCCU Launches Home Page

The World Council of Credit Unions has launched a home page on the Internet, at

<http://www.woccu.org>, on June 1. The home page contains general information about the World Council and its programmes, activities and meetings, the World Council's Newsletter Perspective and links to other credit union and co-operative organizations.

Co-op Bank's Electronic Mail

The Co-operative Bank used the latest technology to ensure all staff saw the International Co-operative Day message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to the 2nd United Nations International Day of Co-operatives, by using the bank's electronic mail system, which can be accessed by all the bank's staff.

JCCU on the Internet

The Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU) has established a home page on the internet, giving details on the consumer co-operative movement in Japan. The site can be accessed at:

<http://www.jccu.or.jp/jccu>.
JCCU also has a new e-mail address for its International Dept: jccu-int@mx.meshnet.or.jp.

Co-op People

Professor Ungku A. Aziz, the President of ANGKASA, has been elected as the new Chair of the ICA Regional Assembly for Asia and the Pacific for a period of two years, from June 1996. Prof. Aziz was also re-elected as Chair of the ICA Committee on Human Resource Development for Asia and the Pacific. Mohd. Sahid Ullah, General Secretary of the Bangladesh National Co-operative Union (BJSU) has been elected as the Vice-Chair of the ICA Regional Assembly.

Dean Luis Damiles Carrillo has been elected as the Chair of the National Confederation of Co-operatives Inc. (NATCCO), Philippines, at their 1996 Congress and General Assembly from May 28 - June 2. He succeeds Atty. Adolfo A. Ibanez.

S. Chandra, Managing Director of Fishcopfed, India, has been elected as Chair and H. Eddiwan of Indonesia as the Vice-Chair of the ICA Fisheries Committee for Asia and the Pacific at its 21st meeting in Pataling Jaya, Malaysia on 10 June 1996.

Lars Hillbom, ICA Vice President, Europe, has been appointed as Head of the newly formed KF International Department. **Jan Ahlen**, **Margareta**

Carlsson and **Stig H. Lindhe** are staffing the department which will cover a number of new projects, international relations, new business opportunities, and relations with the European Union.

Akira Kurimoto from the Japanese Consumer Co-operative Union has been elected Vice-chair of the ICA Research Committee in addition to **Lou Hammond Ketilson** from Saskatchewan University Centre for the Study of Co-operatives and **Yohanan Stryjan** from the Stockholm School of Business, Sweden.

Tan Kin Lian, CEO of NTUC INCOME and Chair of the ICMIF, has been elected as the new Chairman of the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF) at the 6th Triennial General Assembly of the Federation on 21 September.

Tom Lyon, NCBA President, **Russ Notar**, CEO of NCBA & **Ralph Page**, NCBA Board Member were appointed to the National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education and Economic Advisory Board of the United States Development Agency (USDA) in September 1996. Lyon and Paige have also been elected to the nine-member executive committee.

Hiroshi Tanaka, Vice-President of the Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU), has been elected Chair of the ICA Committee on Consumer Co-operation for Asia and the Pacific, during its meeting held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 12 June 1996, while **Lim Ho Seng** of Singapore has been re-elected as the Vice-chair.



Terry Thomas, Managing Director of the UK Co-operative Bank, has received an honorary degree (Doctor of Letters honoris causa) from Salford University in recognition of his contribution as an innovative Manchester-based businessman and his work in furthering the partnership between business and academia.

Obituaries

Yves Regis, Chairman of CICOPA and former President of C.G.S.C.O.P. (1974-1987) died on 9 September 1996, at the age of 76. His energy and dedication will be sorely missed.

The worker co-operative movement also lost another well-known co-operator in September, Bohdan Trampczynski, who died in Warsaw at the age of 83. He was a former president of the Central Union of Workers Co-operatives in Poland and another former Chairman of CICOPA.

Co-operative Management Development

Opportunities by Distance Learning
at the University of Leicester

Commencing January 1997

1. Postgraduate Certificate in Co-operative Management and Organisational Development (Credit Unions)
2. Postgraduate Diploma and Masters in Co-operative Management and Organisational Development (General)

For further details please contact:

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Leicester
University

Management
Centre



ICA CALENDAR

■ 11-14 October 1996

ICMIF Meetings
Wiesbaden, Germany

■ 22-23 October 1996

ICA-LEGA-Confcoop. Seminar
Imola, Italy

■ 24-25 October 1996

ICBA Exec. & Plenary
Budapest, Hungary

■ 25-26 October 1996

CICOPA-CECOP Executive
Budapest, Hungary

■ 26 October 1996

Research Committee
Budapest, Hungary

■ 26-27 October 1996

ICA Board.
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27 October 1996

IHCO (Health) European Consultation
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27-29 October 1996

ICA-IRU Board & Seminar
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996

Global HRD Executive
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996

INTER-COOP Meetings
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996

Housing Executive
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996

ICA Audit & Control Committee
Budapest, Hungary

■ 27 - 28 October 1996

Research Workshop
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28 October 1996

ICA Consumer (ICCO).Exec./Plenary
Budapest, Hungary

■ 28-29 October 1996

ICACC Executive & Seminar
Budapest, Hungary

■ 29 October 1996

ICA European Council
Budapest, Hungary

■ 30 October 1996

Reg. Assembly for Europe
Budapest, Hungary

■ 2 November 1996

2nd Meeting of Asian Health Co-ops
Bombay, India

■ 11 November 1996

International Co-op Agricultural.Org.
Rome, Italy

■ 16-17 November 1996

ICA Global Women's Execo/Plenary
San José, Costa Rica

■ 18-19 November 1996

First Americas' Continental Forum on
Women and Co-ops
San José, Costa Rica

■ 20-22 November 1996

ICA Reg.Assembly for the Americas
San José, Costa Rica

■ 22 November 1996

IHCO Founding Meeting and Open GA
San José, Costa Rica

■ 30 Nov - 1 Dec. 1996

ICA ROAP Symposium
Yangon, Myanmar



ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Issue No 6/1996

Editor: Mary Treacy

Co-operatives and Food Security



WORLD FOOD
SUMMIT

Rome

13-17 November 1996

Photo: FAO

ICA was able to present the views of the co-operative movement to the World Food Summit in November in Rome, Italy, with invaluable assistance from the International Agricultural Co-operative Organization (IFAP). After having provided input to the preparatory meetings, ICA presented its final statement to the World Food Summit highlighting the contribution of co-operatives to the production and distribution of food, but most importantly the role of co-operatives in providing the income and employment that are essential to food security.

The ICA also forged partnerships with other organizations in order to ensure that the important role of co-operatives to food security was highlighted. A joint statement of the Agri-Food Sector emphasized that

food production, its distribution and the raw materials necessary for feeding the world were core concerns for the private sector - i.e. all business elements in the food chain - from the individual and family farms, via co-operative enterprises right through to multinational corporations.

Both the ICA and the private sector statements were circulated to the delegates of the World Summit. Copies are available from the ICA Secretariat.

The outcome of the Summit was the Rome Declaration and Plan of Action. It recognizes "the fundamental role of farmers, fishers, foresters, indigenous people and their communities, and all other people involved in the food sector, and of their organizations, supported by effective research

and extension, in attaining food security". It further identifies specific areas where there is a need for dialogue, and more importantly partnerships between government and farmers (fishers and foresters) and their representative organizations with two specific paragraphs dedicated to the role of co-operatives.

ICA and the ICAO, its specialised body for agriculture, are already discussing the follow-up to the Summit and will continue to work with their new partners to further contribute to ensuring that people have sufficient food.

The Rome Declaration and Plan of Action is available on the Internet (<http://www.fao.org/wfs/policy/policy.htm>) or from the FAO, via delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy.



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E mail: ica@coop.org

Canadian Co-ops and Credit Unions Forge International Links

by John Julian
of the Canadian Co-operative
Association

At first glance, Fort St. John in B.C.'s Peace River District, in the extreme northwest of Canada, might seem to have very little in common with the town of Lichtenburg in the sun-baked Transvaal region of South Africa. Yet these two far-flung communities share a powerful connection.

The strongest link is a human one. Ingrid Fischer is the general manager of North Peace Savings and Credit Union in Fort St. John. In 1994 she spent seven months in the Transvaal sharing her expertise with a tiny, emerging credit union in Lichtenburg. Another connection is the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA), the national association of co-operatives and credit unions in the English speaking areas of Canada. In addition to various domestic roles, CCA is the international development arm for its Canadian members. It initiated and continues to support the partnership with credit unions in British Columbia that took Ingrid Fischer to South Africa.

A third link between these two communities, according to Fischer, is a shared belief in the power of co-operation in strengthening communities. "Both credit unions arise from needs within the communities they serve," Fischer said. "Here, farmers needed access to credit that they couldn't get from banks. My experience in South Africa is that black people have great difficulty in getting credit. In both cases we had a need that wasn't being met, and a group of people within the



Jan Dinko is a member of the Itireleng Savings and Credit Union in Lichtenburg, South Africa. Through the Canadian Co-operative Association, his credit union has developed a unique link with North Peace Savings and Credit Union in Fort St. John, B.C. (CCA photo by Peter Wilson)

community who were willing to work together to meet that need."

North Peace Savings and Credit Union, with assets of Canadian \$63 million and more than 6,500 members, has been an engine of economic growth and stability in a region which suffers from the vagaries of a resource based economy. In Lichtenburg, with Ingrid Fischer's help, Itireleng Credit Union has doubled its asset base to more than 1 million rand (Canadian \$400,000), allowing its 170 members to improve their housing, to purchase vehicles, and to finance the education of their children.

For more than 20 years CCA has helped to link the co-operative system in Canada with emerging organizations in the developing world. With the financial backing of the Federal government through the Canadian International Development Agency, Canadian co-operatives have assisted thousands of co-operative organizations in more than 40 countries to strengthen communities and improve income levels for members. Co-operatives and credit unions

contribute money to the cause, and each year more than fifty co-operative employees and leaders, like Ingrid Fischer, contribute their skills and experience.

The fact that co-operatives worldwide operate from a common set of principles provides a common base of understanding that makes it easier to transfer specific skills or expertise. And because of the success of co-operative ventures in that country, Canadian expertise is much in demand.

The partnership that CCA has developed between the credit unions of British Columbia and South Africa is a case in point. In spite of a well developed banking sector, the majority of black South Africans have had no access to the financial services they need in order to develop economically. Credit co-ops are filling that need.

Kwedie Mkalipi, a former anti-apartheid activist who served 18 years in prison for his opposition to the former regime, is general secretary of the Savings and Credit Co-operative League of South Africa.

"Because of the apartheid system, we were very isolated when we first sought to develop our movement," Mkalipi said recently. "We went looking for help within South Africa but the advice received came from people who did not understand co-operatives. It was like asking directions from a one-eyed man. He will point you in the only direction he can see."

"With CCA we entered into a true co-operative partnership. Others had said, 'That is the way to Jericho. Go that way.' CCA said, 'We know the road to Jericho. Travel with us'."

Helping the development of the co-operative movement in a poorer country can lead to business opportunities and other benefits for the donor co-operatives. Because co-operatives have a business focus, it is not uncommon for development partnerships to evolve into business relationships. For example, for more than 10 years CCA, in partnership with the Colombian Association of Co-operatives (ASCOOP), has provided support to small co-operatives serving the poor of that country. Today, a self-sufficient ASCOOP continues to provide those services on its own. However, at a time of rapidly expanding trade relations between

the two countries, CCA has maintained its involvement in Colombia in order to help co-operatives on both sides of the equation capitalize on the commercial possibilities.

Luis Arturo Muñoz, general manager of ASCOOP, describes this as a maturing of the relationship between the two organizations. CCA, he says, provided support when it was needed, but it also pushed ASCOOP to become self-sufficient. Now, as equals, CCA and ASCOOP are researching various business opportunities, such as importing tropical fruit from Colombia into Canada.

While commercial activities in Colombia are still at the research stage, CCA's work in other countries has yielded concrete commercial results. In Costa Rica, for example, beans are now being purchased from Alberta Wheat Pool, a CCA member organization. B.C. Tree Fruits, another CCA member co-operative, was involved, for a time, in a joint-venture fruit packing operation in China as a result of CCA development activities there.

Not all of the benefits realized by Canadian organizations through their involvement with CCA are strictly financial. For many of the

Canadians who volunteer their time to work overseas, the experience is a life-changing event, both professionally and personally.

John Wipf is an actuarial student with The Co-operators Group Ltd., a large Canadian insurance co-operative. He has made three visits to the Philippines, totalling nearly 12 months, to assist an emerging co-operative insurance company there. "I think I am much more effective in my own job because of that experience," he said. "It matured me in many ways. Because of that experience I have much deeper insights into my own profession than I had before."

For Wipf, working with CCA helped him realize some of his own potential. In many respects, realizing potential is what the Canadian Co-operative Association's work is all about.

Mkalipi of South Africa describes it this way. "CCA identified in us a sleeping giant. They have done a great deal of work to make that sleeping giant awake. I am convinced that before the end of this century we will have credit unions in South Africa to rival those in North America."

John Julian is Director of Institutional Relations, CCA

NCBA Releases New Video "The ABCs of Co-operative Child Care"

The National Cooperative Business Association (NCBA) has released the second in its developing series of "how to" videos. The first "How to Run a Co-op Food Buying Club", released in 1993, has proven to be a practical and popular resource. Produced in conjunction with the University of California Center for Co-operatives, the new video contains valuable information that will help families start and run their own co-operative child care centers.

With more than half of the women with children under age one in the workforce, the need for child care has become an issue for them and their employers. Increasingly, parents and employers are turning to professionally managed child care co-operatives as the best way to meet the need for child care. The video explains how co-operative child care centers - member owned and run enterprises - provide high quality, affordable child care for their member families. In producing the video, NCBA looked for examples of co-operatives from across the United States and Canada.

The 21-minuted video is available in VHS format in both English and Spanish for the price of US \$19.95 each. "The ABCs of Cooperative Child Care" and "How to Run a Co-op Food Buying Club" are also available as a package for US \$35.00. For further information, contact Jill Stevenson, NCBA, Washington D.C. E-mail: jstevenson@ncba.org

Asia-Pacific

Top Women Farm Leaders Meet

The Asian Regional Conference of Top Level Women Farm Leaders was jointly organised by the ICA ROAP, the Japanese Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives (JA-ZENCHU), the Institute for the Development of Agricultural Co-operation in Asia (IDACA), and the Afro-Asian Rural Reconstruction Organisation (AARRO) in Tokyo from 20 to 26 October 1996. Over 100 participants, from 25 countries, Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Egypt, Fiji, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Republic of Korea, Laos, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mauritius, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Syria, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam and five international organisations (FAO, ILO, AARRO, IFAP and ICA) attended the Conference. The participants included 44 observers of JA prefectural women's associations in Japan.

The objectives of the conference were to exchange views and experiences on the role of rural women in agricultural co-operatives and on measures taken to raise the living standards of rural women engaged in the agricultural sector through income generating activities and better working conditions.

Asian Medical Co-ops Meet

The second meeting of Medical Co-operatives from the Asia-Pacific region was held at Mumbai (Bombay), India from 2-3 November, 1996. Twenty-eight delegates from India, Japan, Nepal, Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka participated at the meeting which was chaired by Dr. S. Kato, chairperson of the International



A Korean delegate makes a presentation at the meeting of Medical Co-operatives held in Bombay in November 1996.

Health Co-operative Organisation. The main item of discussion was the formation of an Asia-Pacific Health Co-operative Organisation (APHCO) and its relationship with the IHCO. The forum appointed a working committee consisting of Dr. Oginio from Japan, Dr. Vijay Deshmukh from India and Lionel Samarasinghe from Sri Lanka to draft the constitution for the organisation. The committee subsequently met on 26 December to draft the constitution, which will be discussed at the next meeting in March 1997. The general meeting of the committee will be held in the latter part of 1997.

During the proceedings of the meeting, there were several proposals for the bilateral exchange of medical practitioners as well as a technical co-operation programme among developed and developing countries in the region.

Agri-business Symposium

ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific held a symposium on the Impact of Globalization on the Competitive Strength of Agri-business Co-operatives in Asia and the Pacific from 30 November to 1 December 1996 at Yangon, Myanmar. About 30 delegates participated in the symposium.

ICA Organises Youth Seminar

ICA ROAP held a regional seminar on Youth Co-operatives in Singapore from 21-23 November 1996, in collaboration with the National Federation of University Co-operative Associations (NFUCA), Japan and the Singapore National Co-operative Federation (SNCF).

The seminar brought together 250 delegates from Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Japan, Sri Lanka, Republic of Korea, Philippines and Singapore. The seminar discussed youth issues in the Asia-Pacific region and the potential of co-operatives to integrate youth into the main stream of development as well as setting up of youth co-operatives in the region. Co-operative identity and leadership formed the major part of the discussions. Dr. Aline Wong, Senior Minister of State for Education in Singapore was expected to inaugurate the seminar.



Dr. Aline Wong, Senior Minister of State for Health and Education, Singapore, gives the inaugural speech at the Youth Seminar.

Seminar on Agro-processing

A Regional seminar on agro-processing was organised by the ICA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, in collaboration with the All China Federation of Supply and Marketing Co-operatives (ACFSMC) in Dalian city (China) from 11-22 November 1996. Sixteen delegates from seven countries participated in the seminar.

The Americas

Regional Meetings

From November 18-23 San Jose, Costa Rica, was the centre of a major series of events organised by the ICA's Regional Office for the Americas, which brought together more than 600 co-operative leaders from across the continent.

The first Continental Women's Meeting ever held in the Americas, following several years of national and regional workshops, resulted in the adoption of a Platform of Action on Gender Issues, much of which was

subsequently incorporated into the Regional Office's Strategic Plan for the period 1996-2000.

This meeting was followed by a three-day Regional Conference on the theme of "De-globalisation", featuring a variety of high-level presentations on the economic challenges facing co-operatives in the Americas, as well as strategies for the future.

The Regional Assembly for the Americas, held on 23 November under the chairmanship of Roberto Rodrigues, President of ICA-Americas, formally approved the Regional Office's new Strategic Plan, as well as a revised set of Rules for the Regional Assembly.

The Assembly will henceforth be composed of representatives of the Specialised Organisations in the region, in addition to representatives of ICA member organisations.

Members also approved the creation of a new position of Alternate President for the Americas, to which Miguel Cardozo of Uruguay was elected.

The 1997 Regional Conference, to be held in Mexico, will feature the themes of youth in co-operatives and the role of co-operatives in providing employment. The 1998 Regional Assembly will be held in Uruguay.

Europe

Regional Assembly

The Second ICA Regional Assembly for Europe was held in Budapest, Hungary, on 30 October 1996 under the chairmanship of Lars Hillbom, ICA Vice-President. The meeting was attended by 180 representatives and observers.

The Assembly was preceded by an International Seminar organized jointly with IRU on financial co-operatives, which had a large participation from Central and Eastern European co-operative movements, and by several specialised organisations' meetings.

László Lakos, Minister of Agriculture, himself a co-operative member, welcomed participants on behalf of the Hungarian Government and the message of the Prime Minister was read out. The head of the

NGO section of the Council of Europe, Géza Mezei attended the Assembly as a special guest.

In his address, Graham Melmoth, President of ICA, referred to activities going on in other regions as well as at global ICA level.

The Regional Assembly adopted the activity report on 1996 and the work plan for 1997, welcomed two new members to the Region, the co-operative apex organisations from Malta and Bosnia-Herzegovina, discussed and approved a report prepared by the Working Group on Assistance to Central and Eastern Europe.

After the procedural matters, the afternoon session was devoted to the topic of "Corporate Governance and Management Control Systems in European Co-operatives" based on the background paper drafted by Reimer Volkers and Moira Lees. Six speakers - I. Barberini (Italy), P. Bartus (Hungary), R. Ikonen (Finland), A. Nicolaisen (Den-

mark), E. Pflimlin (France) and S. Sivertsen (Norway)- touched upon various aspects of the main theme, such as internal and external controls, gender aspects, management control experiences of a country in transition, auditors' responsibilities related to reports to members, and technical and democratic controls in co-operative banks.

The discussion was facilitated by Lloyd Wilkinson, CEO of the Co-operative Union, UK. A final statement was distributed and adopted by the Assembly serving as guidelines for co-operative movements in their follow-up work on Governance issues.

The Assembly confirmed the nomination of Lars Hillbom to the post of ICA Vice-President and accepted the invitation of the French co-operative movement (GNC) to hold the next Regional Assembly for Europe in France in autumn 1998.

*ICA Regional
Assembly
for Europe
Budapest 1996*



Scenes from meetings of the ICA Board (above), the Regional Assembly (right) and the joint ICA/IRU Seminar (below).



Gabriella Sozanski, ICA (left) and Zsuzsanna Puskás, Co-op Hungary, were the chief organisers of the events.

ICA President Graham Melmoth (left) and Director-General Bruce Thordarson.



*The ICA
Europe,
Co-operatives
October
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ICA staff dinner hosted by Hungarian after a busy week of meetings.

▲ Ivar Hansen from Norway and ICA Deputy Director-General Claes Thorselius at the Audit and Control Committee Meeting.



Andrew Booth from World Television addresses participants of the Communications Seminar. ▶



◀ ICA President and his wife Jenny chat with two communication specialists, Byron Henderson from the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada and Andrew Booth, from World Television in the United Kingdom.

Dr. Pál Bartus, President of Co-op Hungary, welcomes everyone to a reception in the Ethnographical Museum. Lars Hillbom, President for ICA-Europe, features left-centre. ▼

Regional Assembly for hosted by the Hungarian ative Movement in 1996, was a great success. photos portray, it managed me the essential meetings w social events in order a healthy balance of hard relaxed intercommunication



Highlights of the ICA Board Meeting

During its meeting in Budapest last October the Board approved a record number of membership applications. Of the 17 new ICA member organisations, 14 are from the Americas region. Other new members are from Palestine, Malta, and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The Board also officially approved the establishment of the ICA Development Trust as the formal body that will implement the ICA's development programme in the future. The members of the ICA Board will constitute the Board of the Development Trust, and its management will be carried out by the staff of the ICA Development Section. At its next meeting the Board will consider the establishment of a global advisory body for the Trust.

The Board accepted a management recommendation that the ICA Regional Office for West Africa be relocated from Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to Ouagadougou in

Burkina Faso. As previously discussed with the Regional Council, this will result in significant financial savings.

The Board continued its examination of how to improve the representation of women within co-operative organisations. It was agreed that the ICA President would write to all member organisations in order to encourage them to give high priority to this issue, and also ask them to inform ICA of their policies and targets.

After achieving a surplus of over 225,000 Swiss francs in 1995, largely due to the success of the Manchester Congress, ICA is projecting only a small surplus for both 1996 and 1997. The Board approved these financial reports and requested management to continue its discussions with representatives of those sectors in which changes to the subscription formula or process are desirable. The 1997 General Assembly, now

scheduled to be held in Geneva on 15 and 16 September, will feature elections to the Board and the Audit and Control Committee. Member organisations will be requested to submit nominations, as per the Rules, three months prior to the meeting.

The Special Committee on Rules and Finance was asked to examine the possibility of establishing a Nominations Committee in order to improve the representation of regions, sectors, and women on the ICA Governing Bodies.

The next ICA Board meeting will be held on April 18-19, in Uganda, at the invitation of the ICA Vice-President for Africa, Bernard Wolimbwa. The Board also accepted an invitation from "the ICA's Canadian member organisations to hold the 1999 General Assembly in Quebec, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Desjardins caisse populaire movement.



Pioneers on the Tourist Map - in Six Languages

Guide books have been introduced in six languages at the Rochdale Pioneers Museum, birthplace of the Co-operative Movement, to meet the demand from international visitors.

The famous landmark in Toad Lane, Rochdale, is visited by up to 10,000 people every year - including many from overseas.

Thanks to a financial contribution from the European Union, which allocated funds following the 150th anniversary of the Rochdale Pioneers in 1994, the Museum's principal guide book has now been produced in French, German, Italian, Spanish and Japanese, as well as English.

"The Rochdale Pioneers were the inspiration for the Co-operative idea spreading around the world, and we receive hundreds of international visitors at Toad Lane - including large groups from Japan", commented Iain Williamson, Museum Curator. "This new

brochure tells the remarkable story of the early Pioneers as well as explaining the many objects on display in the Museum today."

The translations were carried out by Total Coverage Ltd, a workers' co-operative based in Southampton, and the full-colour brochures have been printed by the Co-operative Press in Manchester. The brochures are available at £1.50 each plus postage from the Co-operative Union Ltd, Holyoake House, Hanover Street, Manchester M60 0AS. For further information contact Iain Williamson, tel. +44-161 832 4300, E-mail info@co-opu.demon.co.uk

World Overview

Canada

1997 International Credit Union Forum

Vancouver, Canada is the venue of the World Council of Credit Unions' 1997 International Credit Union Forum. Diverse Voices in Concert is the theme of the 1997 Forum, which capitalizes on the unique flavour of the international credit union movement by bringing together people of distinct culture, beliefs and personalities. Diversity brings richness and synergy to every organization and the 1997 Forum promises to deliver both in dialogues, educational sessions, networking and comraderie. The forum will be organised from 29 June to 3 July 1997.

Further information and registration form can be requested from World Council of Credit Unions, P O Box 2982, Madison, Wisconsin 53701-2982, USA, fax +1-608 2388020.

Israel

Conference of Social Welfare

The 28th ICSW International Conference of Social Welfare will take place in Jerusalem, Israel, 5-9 July 1998. The theme of the conference is "Promoting Human Well-Being: Addressing the Forces Shaping Society". For any further information, please contact the Chairperson of the Organising Committee, Dr. Yitzhak Brick, Tel Aviv, fax: +972-3 517674.

Japan

Rochdale Club

It was in 1844 that the first co-operative was formed in the town of Rochdale, England. It all started with a tiny rented grocery shop in an old warehouse with only 28 people distributing only five staple items. The Rochdale spirit of co-operatives "to support our life by serving ourselves" is still very much alive among co-operative followers throughout the world. Osaka Izumi Co-op opened the "Rochdale Club" in July 1987 with a view to inheriting the Rochdale spirit and developing new contacts and cultural activities. After eight years, the number of people who have used the club has reached over 300,000. The Club is the center of attention not only from

members and employees but also business traders, scholars and VIPs in various sectors as a new communication space for meetings, talks, relaxation, improvement and recreation. It provides musical entertainment on a regular basis.

New Insurance System for Quake Victims



Destruction of coop property by Hanshin

Taking a lesson from the January, 1995 earthquake which hit the Kansai region of Japan and in particular the city of Kobe, the Japanese Consumers Co-operative Union (JCCU) and the National Fédration of Workers and Consumers Insurance Co-operatives (ZENROSAI), in association with the government of the Hyogo Prefecture and the Japan Federation of Bar Associations, have agreed on a joint plan to establish 'a disaster insurance contingency scheme' against future risks. They have also agreed to request the government to use the scheme to provide relief for the victims of the last earthquake (Hanshin).

The agreement provides for the establishment of a national insurance scheme for house reconstruction in case of natural disasters, such as earthquakes, floods or volcanic eruptions, covering losses and damages to houses and household articles.

The four organisations launched a campaign and collected millions of signatures from citizens supporting the scheme, which will be submitted to the government. The JCCU alone will be collecting fifteen million signatures in co-operation with its members.

(Co-op Japan Information, Vol. 26, September, 1996)

World Overview

Children Reporters at JA Fukumitsu - Chuo

To make children know more about JA, a gathering of children reporters was organised by JA Fukumitsu-Chuo. This event was sponsored by JA's information Journal "First" and twelve elementary and junior high school children participated with the recommendation of the Fukumitsu City School. Mr. Maeda, the councillor from JA, gave an address taking "Chagurin" the children's magazine published by the Ie no Kikari group as a reference and explained about JA's activities and future agriculture. (*JA-Zenchu News, No. 8, 1996*)

Singapore

Good Results for FairPrice

NTUC FairPrice, the supermarket co-op, reported a group turnover of \$647.35 million for the year ending 31 March 1996. This represents a 7.7% jump over the previous year. The co-op's group net profits also jumped over 25% to \$50.38 million. With its good performance, FairPrice will be paying out \$31.4 million to its shareholders through a 6% dividend and an 8% patronage rebate. The co-op's membership now exceeds 320,000 and, over the next 12 months, another six outlets will be opened to add to its current 53 stores in Singapore.

(*SNCF Co-operator, vol. 21, no. 2*)

United Kingdom

Co-operative Bank Introduces Teleworking

The Co-operative Bank, UK has introduced a pilot scheme with a number of staff from the Collections Department, who will be working from home, on the basis of the teleworking agreement which the bank signed with the banking union BIFU. Based on the practice already in place in many industries, the agreement ensures that the bank staff working from home will have appropriate terms and conditions for their circumstances. For teleworkers, the benefits include increased flexibility, reduced travelling time and expenses, more free time and often the ability to integrate home and work life more effectively. Teleworking can help the Bank reduce recruiting and retaining costs, apart from providing additional working options for the staff.

Co-op Bank Introduces Schools Affinity Cards

In a most ambitious affinity scheme introduced by the Co-operative Bank in October, 1996, parents and their family and friends will be given the chance to do some fund raising to contribute towards their children's education, through their spending. For every card opened in the schools name, £5 will be donated to the school and a further 25p. for every £100 spent on the card. The head teachers of the school will be involved in the scheme and it is their responsibility to sign up as many parents as possible. To coincide with the launch of the Schools Card, a national competition will be launched in collaboration with the Guardian newspaper, aimed at schools, to find the Young Ethical Entrepreneurs of the Year. The competition winners will be invited to discover the challenges of handling an ethical business by running the Co-operative Bank for a day, besides willing £500 for each age category for their schools. The competition is aimed at 14-16 and 16-18 age groups.

(*Banknotes, October 1996*)

Co-op News on Cyberspace

The *Co-operative News* has taken its place on the information superhighway by launching its own web site on the Internet. The site contains an outline of the newspaper's history and ideals, useful contact numbers and subscription details. The web site is located on the CWS UK Co-op pages and the address is <http://www.co-op.co.uk/UKCM/coopnews/coopnews.html>

(*Co-operative News, November 12, 1996*)

USA

Race Raises \$27,000 for Co-op Development

The Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF) organized its 8th annual Race for Co-operative Development on 6 October 1996, which drew nearly 300 runners. The race raised a record breaking \$27,000 to support the Co-operative Development Foundation's work for promoting community, economic and social development through co-ops founded on self-help and mutual aid.

(*CDF News Release*)



World Habitat Awards: Call for Entries 1997

The World Habitat Awards were initiated in 1985 as part of the Building and Social Housing Foundation's (B&SHF) contribution to the United Nations International Year of Shelter for the Homeless in 1987. The principle objective of the international year was for every nation to draw up strategies, policies and programmes that would enable practical and attainable improvements to be made in the shelter and neighbourhoods of all poor and disadvantaged people by the year 2000.

Entries are currently being sought for the 1997 World Habitat Award. This year is the thirteenth year of

this annual competition, which has been highly successful in attracting outstanding human settlements projects. The winning projects have received world-wide publicity, with a view to encouraging their replication in many other countries.

Projects are sought, in both developed and developing countries, which offer sustainable futures to residents and which provide practical and imaginative solutions to current housing problems.

A panel of international assessors evaluate the projects. The two award winners each year receive

£10,000 plus an individually designed and crafted silver trophy. The awards are presented each year on World Habitat Day and in 1996 were presented by Mr. Gábor Kuncze, Minister of the Interior of the Republic of Hungary in Budapest, Hungary.

The B&SHF is now calling for entries for 1997. Preliminary submissions should be sent before 31 July 1997.

For further information, please contact Diane Deacon, Deputy Director B&SHF, UK by fax: +44-1530 510 332, or E-mail: 100567.3433@compuserve.com



The UNEP SASAKAWA Prize

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Sasakawa Prize is one of the most prestigious environmental awards in the world.

The Prize, administered by UNEP, was initially named the Sasakawa International Environment Prize. It is now known as the UNEP Sasakawa Environment Prize and is awarded annually to leading environmentalists and recognizes the work of these individuals at the global level. Since its inception, interest in the award has increased significantly as attested by the growing number of nominations. The prize aims to encourage environmental achievement in any field of the environment. The annual award of \$50,000 was increased to \$200,000 in 1990, making it one of the most valuable environmental

prizes. The prize is awarded to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the management and protection of the environment consistent with the policies, aims and objectives of UNEP.

Candidates can be associated with any field of the environment. Those eligible to make nominations include, but are not limited to, specialists in environmental sciences, academies of science, engineering and research, members of the United Nations system, governments and intergovernmental organizations, trade unions and non-governmental organizations. The deadline for nominations for the Prize is 31 March 1997. Additional information may be obtained from the Secretary, UNEP, Nairobi, Kenya, Fax: +254-2 62 3692.



IYEP

In 1993, the UN General Assembly proclaimed 1996 as the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty (IYEP), "recognizing that poverty is a complex and multi-dimensional problem with origins in both the national and international domains, and that its eradication in all countries, in particular in developing countries, has become one of the priority development objectives for the 1990s in order to promote sustainable development". Boutros Boutros-Ghali said that the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty posed a challenge to the international community to do more to stem the rising tide of world poverty. The global observance of this Day is aimed at promoting public awareness of the causes of poverty and the need to eradicate such destitution.

Co-op People

Martin Bergner, former head of the International Department of VdK, has been promoted to Executive Vice President. VdK is one of the two Consumer Co-operative Unions in Germany, mainly active in the Eastern part.

CCA Executive Director **Lynden Hillier** has been seconded to the Government of Canada to become Executive Director of the Co-operatives Secretariat, effective 2 December 1996. The secondment will be for a period of two years under Interchange Canada, an executive exchange programme between the Federal Government

and the private sector. Mr. Hillier has been CCA's Executive Director for the past 8 1/2 years. It was announced that the CCA Board of Directors would fill the Executive Director position through a contract for management services with the Credit Union Central of Canada (CUCC).

M. C. Merrill Perera from the Keopungoda St. Anthony's Fisheries Co-operative Society Ltd, has been elected as the President of the Sri Lanka National Federation of Fisheries Co-operative Societies for a period of two years from August 1996.

Raymond Stelandre, Secretary-General of BITS, has taken over the responsibility for the Secretariat of Tourism International Co-operative and Associated (TICA) on the retirement of Connie Beswick from the CWS on 1 November 1996.

On 23 April 1997, four co-op leaders will receive the US co-operative sector's highest honour - induction into the Co-operative Hall of Fame. The inductees '**Paddy**' **Bailey**, **Stanley W. Dreyer**, **W. Malcolm Harding** and **Woodrow Keown** will join 90 other co-op leaders in the prestigious Co-operative Hall of Fame.

Obituaries

Paul Derrick died in December 1996 at the age of 80. He was a long-serving employee of ICA until his retirement. The funeral was held on 9 December at Our Lady of Perpetual Help in London.

Eva Fehér, Hungary, died on 12 November 1996 at the age of 71. She worked for the National Federation of Agricultural Co-operatives and held different positions in the ICA organs between 1968-76. She represented the National Co-operative Council in the ICA Central Committee, in the Women Co-operators' Advisory Council/Women's Committee and was a member of the Agricultural Committee.

Åke Lundqvist, former President of Kooperativa Förbundet (KF), died on 7 December 1996. Member of the ICA Central Committee for many years, his contribution to the Co-operative Movement was appreciated worldwide.

Dr. Arturo Vainstok died on 4 January 1997 at the age of 86. In addition to his many important contributions to the co-operative movement of Argentina, Dr. Vainstok will be remembered by countless co-operative leaders around the world for his unwavering belief in the values of the co-operative movement and in the necessity for practical international co-operation.

ICA CALENDAR

■ 27 February 1997
Board Cttee on Rules & Finance
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 21 March 1997
ICA European Council
Rome, Italy

■ 19 - 22 March 1997
Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference
Chiangmai, Thailand

■ 7 - 8 April 1997
Meeting of Specialised Bodies
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 9 April 1997
ICBA Board Meeting
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 18 - 21 April 1997
ICA Board Meeting
Kampala, Uganda

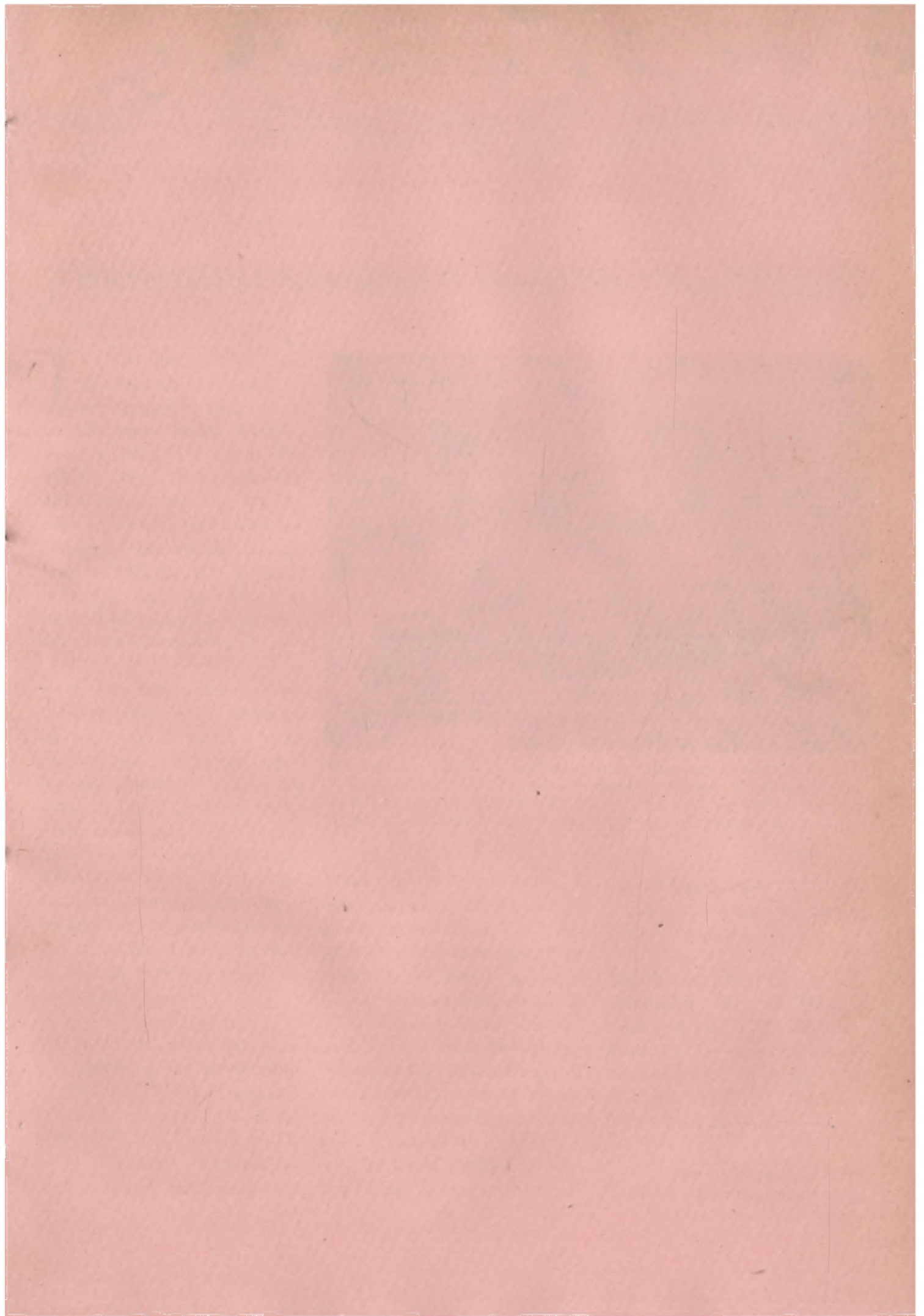
■ End April 1997
ICACC Executive
Copenhagen, Denmark

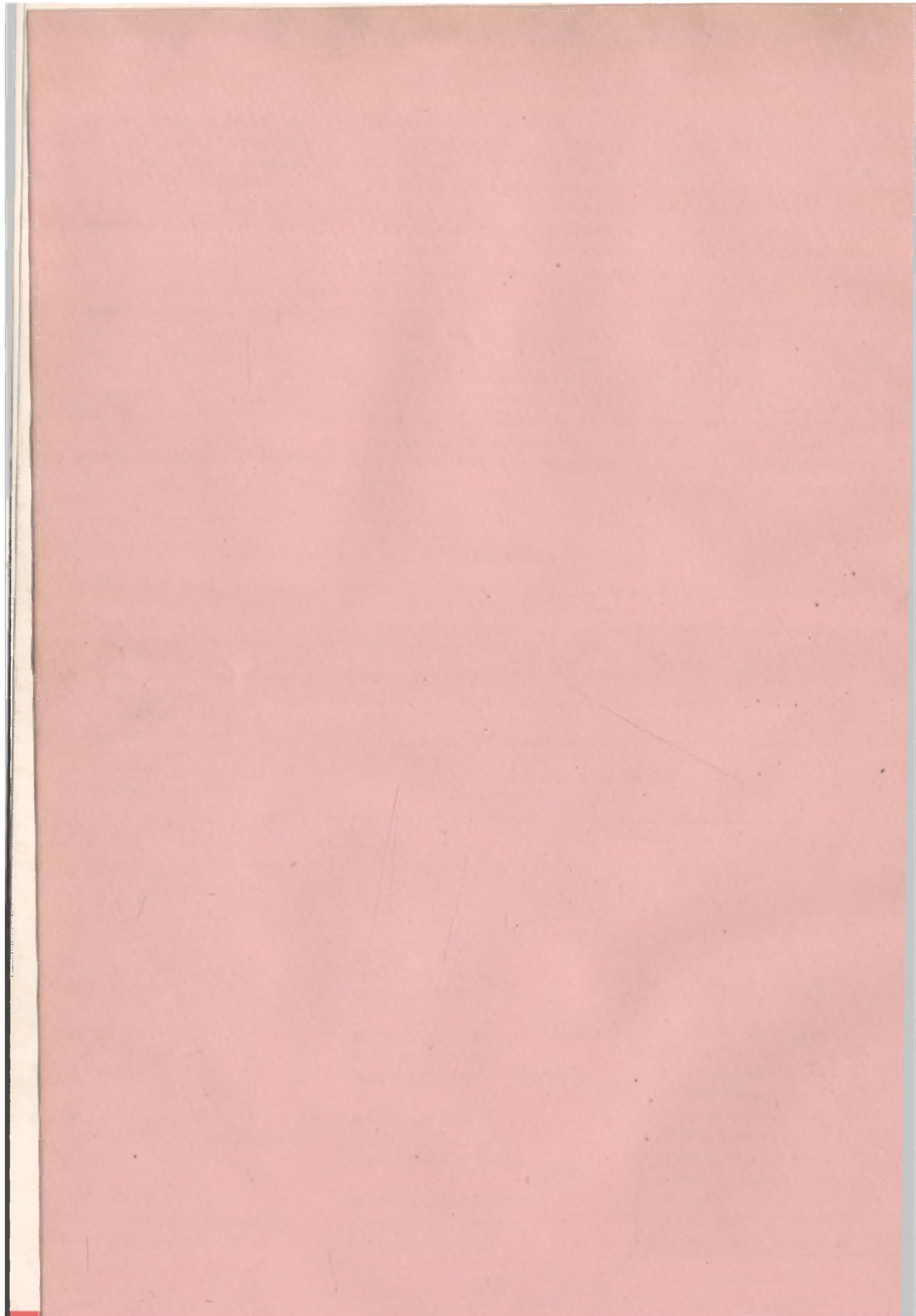
■ 15 - 16 September 1997
ICA General Assemby
Geneva, Switzerland

Official Swiss ICA Holidays in 1997

In 1997, the ICA Head Office will be closed on the following days:

1 January - New Year's Day
28 March - Good Friday
31 March - Easter Monday
1 May - Labour Day
8 May - Ascension Day
19 May - Pentecostal Monday
1 August - Swiss National Day
25 December - Christmas







Eleventh ICA Specialised Organisation in Good Health

In November 1996 a new ICA specialised organisation was formed by three of the world's largest health co-operatives: UNIMED of Brasil; The JCCU Medical Committee, JCCU (Japan); the Espriu Foundation (Spain). The founding meeting, which was held in conjunction with the ICA Regional Assembly for the Americas, immediately elected a Board and adopted an action plan and rules.

Over sixty representatives from the nine organisations interested in becoming members of the organisation attended the meeting and elected Dr. Kato from Japan as Chair and Dr. Castilho from Brazil and Dr. Carreño from Spain as Board members. Once the remaining seven organisations applying have been accepted into membership a further three Board Members will be elected, preferably one from each of the regions.

The additional seven organisations applying for membership are: Usimed (Brazil); Swedcoop (Sweden); Coomeva (Colombia) and FEMEC (Colombia); DRU-ZAP (Slovakia), Centrosoyus (Russia) and OPHACO (Belgium).



Ruben Villa from COCETA in Spain making an intervention at the founding meeting of the ICA's International Health Co-operative Organisation. Sitting at the top table from left are: Dr. Mallmann from UNIMED, Mats Ahnlund, Secretary of IHCO from ICA Secretariat, and the newly-elected Chairman of IHCO, Dr. Kato from the JCCU Medical Committee.

While many of the new organisation's activities will be focused at the regional level, the Secretary of the new committee, Mats Ahnlund, the newly appointed Senior Membership Advisor at ICA, will co-ordinate activities at the global level, through the collection and dissemination of information about health co-ops and through workshops and seminars organised in conjunction with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International

Labour Organisation (ILO), with whom a partnership has already been developed.

The first such seminar was held immediately after the founding meeting at which 50 participants listened to key-note speeches by representatives from the ILO, ICA and health co-operatives from around the World.

(Source: International Health Co-operative Organisation Secretariat)



UNIMED - A Unique Co-operative Model



by Zahid Qureshi of ICMIF

Santos, in Brazil's state of São Paulo, is Latin America's largest sea port. On 18 December 1967 it gained another distinction. To counteract the growing commercialisation of health services, the city's medical syndicate, led by Dr. Edmundo Castilho, set up the first Unimed co-operative. Before long, the "medical co-operation" of the 21 founding doctors was embraced by other associations and syndicates of doctors.

In 1972 Unimed do Brasil was set up to consolidate the system within a political and administrative structure providing nationwide guidelines. Today, Unimed is found in 3,700 or 70% of Brazilian municipalities, with 304 co-operatives bringing together some 73,000 doctors serving eight million users.

The Unimed Multico-operative Business Complex now includes Unimed co-operatives for users, Unimed savings and credit co-operatives inspired by Mondragon, Unimed Systems to coordinate information technology in the provision of services, Unimed Products and Health Services, the Unimed Study

Centre Foundation, Unimed Air for emergency services, and Unimed Insurance covering some 2.5 million clients. Products offered by Unimed Aseguradora include medical insurance, group life, income guarantee, loan insurance, reinsurance for operational risks of co-operatives, and a private pension plan. Unimed is spreading its model through joint action in other countries - Colombia, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay, to name a few. Unimed is a unique model whose success is proven by numbers, says Dr. Castilho. "It is the result of hard work and vigorous ethics. We present this victorious model to fellow-co-operators in all countries of the world."

In June 1995, Unimed organised an International Forum on Health Care Co-operation in conjunction with the ICA and put forward a proposal to include health among the affairs of the ICA. With Dr. Castilho as the driving force and assistance from co-operative organisations in Japan and Spain, a new specialised organisation of the ICA is now created. The International

Health Co-operative Organisation (IHCO) held its official founding meeting in San José, Costa Rica, 22 November 1996. Among IHCO's plans are to explore areas of collaboration with ICMIF, including the possibility of the insurance programmes of health co-operatives applying for membership of ICMIF.

Latest Co-operative Health Care News

MultiPlan, a New York-based health plan headed by a well-known co-operative builder has joined hands across the Caribbean with one of the world's largest co-operative health organizations, Cooperativa de Seguros de Vida de Puerto Rico (COSVI).

COSVI and MultiPlan announced jointly that they are expanding to Puerto Rico adding to their network 74 hospitals, 120 other facilities and 4,000 physicians participating in COSVI's island-wide health plans.

Some 20 million people have access to the MultiPlan.

Asia and the Pacific

Fourth Co-operative Ministers' Conference

Ministers, government officials and co-op leaders from 21 countries participated in the ICA's fourth Co-operative Ministers' and Leaders' Conference in Chiang-mai, Thailand, from 19-22 March. The meeting reviewed progress on amending co-op legislation and policy in the region, and set objectives for further improvement. During the meeting of the regional Executive Committee, Yang Deshou of China was nominated as the region's candidate for election as ICA Vice-President at the General Assembly. B.S. Vishwanathan of India was elected chairman of the region's Executive Committee.

The Americas



Argentina Hosts International Seminar

In November 1996, the ICA Buenos Aires Project Office and the Instituto Provincial de Acción Cooperativa, Argentina, jointly organised an International Seminar on the "Argentine and Canadian Co-operative and Public

Banking Sector: its Articulation with Production".

The seminar, which was sponsored by the Confederación de la República de Argentina and the Canadian Co-operative Association, attracted delegates from Bolivia, Brazil, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay as well as the ICA Banking Committee for Latin America, CCA International Business Network, and the Credit Union Central of Canada.

One of the results was the signing of an agreement between CCA and the Argentine co-operative banks, Banco Mayo and Banco Creditcoop, to develop reciprocal commercial and technical missions aimed at creating binational import/export enterprises.

Africa

ICA Housing To Meet In Uganda

After the successful presentation of the achievements of co-operative housing by the Chairman of ICA Housing, Rolf Trodin, during the HABITAT II conference in Istanbul, ICA Housing has decided to continue with regional HABITAT-conferences. These are excellent occasions to show how co-operative housing can contribute to solutions of housing misery and shortage.

On the occasion of the ICA Board meeting, there will be a housing seminar on 17 - 18 April 1997 in Kampala, to discuss political pre-conditions, the legal framework, economic and social aspects as well as the financing of housing co-operatives.

The Ugandan Government should be motivated to introduce co-operative housing in the country through the promotion of the housing co-operative foundations, and the introduction of favourable conditions for land and infrastructure, as well as access to credit.

Successful examples from other African countries can help to illustrate why co-operative housing is a good solution to the problems of sub-standard and slum housing or homelessness. Fulfilling the pre-conditions for the establishment of co-operative housing is an important task. The Kampala seminar will be a contribution to a more transparent policy.

(Source: C. Hachmann, GDW, 20 March, 1997)

Europe

CICOPA Meeting In Budapest

A meeting of CICOPA was held in Budapest in October 1996. The proceedings were opened by the ICA President, Graham Melmoth, with a moment of silence in tribute to Yves Régis, who had led the organisation so dynamically until his death in September 1996.

Marian Rybar of Slovakia was unanimously elected as Interim-President until the 1997 General Assembly and the ICA Director-General, Bruce Thordarson agreed that Arsenio Invernizzi from the ICA Secretariat would be designated as Interim Secretary. Jean-Marie Courtois from France was co-opted as member of the Executive and Pierre Guiard-Schmid, also from France, was mandated to coordinate the CICOPA Development Programme.

Zimbabwe - Domestic Workers Learn to Build



Two proud domestic workers of the Tashinga Co-operative building society.

by Astrid Kirchner, DESWOS

The traditional ways of earning a bit of money in Africa, Asia and Latin America are all too well known. Anyone who has ever visited Brasilia, Delhi or Nairobi has seen them, the street vendors, shoe shiners and clerks in the little sidewalk offices who for a charge take down letters for people who have never learned to read or write. To this group also belong the domestic workers, the live-in household help for the better-off who do the cooking, cleaning, gardening and more for their wealthy bosses.

As in Germany, the wages earned by domestic workers do

not exceed the limit at which their employers would be required to make social security contributions. But the domestic workers in the south suffer a much worse lot than those here at home. They are among the lowest paid of all workers. Most can neither read nor write and have never learned a trade. They have no social insurance and the wages they earn are not enough to support a family.

Domestic workers have only a shadow of a family life. Their shacks in the slums are so far away from their work that they live in small rooms in their employers' homes. They have only Saturday afternoons and Sundays off. This is when they finally find time for their fami-

lies, for church and, so that they can somehow make ends meet, for side jobs.

DESWOS has been working to help the members of the Tashinga co-operative building society. The word "Tashinga" means something like "to take control of your own life" and to improve your situation. For eight years now, all 224 families have been saving a small sum each month so that they, with help from the government, could purchase a suitable lot close to the city where they can build. Now they have finally found a site. With financial assistance from the European Union and DESWOS, they plan to put up 100 solidly-built houses so that the domestic workers and their families can come together under one roof during the week as well. The proximity to the city and to their employers means the workers can leave early and walk or take the bus to get to their jobs on time.

At the same time the DESWOS project wants to, so to speak, kill two birds with one stone, and offer these people new job prospects along with new lodgings. The co-operative society has made an arrangement with a local construction company whereby the company can take over management of the construction project if it agrees to take on more trainees. Domestic workers would be more than happy to trade in their current jobs for more meaningful and practical employment. In their view, household work is very unsatisfying and benefits only the rich. They would prefer to learn a productive trade, so that

in the evenings they could look back with pride at what they accomplished that day and, most importantly, so that their hard work would earn them a higher wage.

Both men and women are taken on as trainees in construction. They can learn to become masons, carpenters or simple labourers. Similar projects have shown that unskilled workers are ideal for producing building blocks and roofing tiles by hand. The tools and machines required are already available and the building materials are supplied. Bricks are pressed using hand-operated machines. This is hard, physical labour but is quite easy to learn. As such work is too strenuous for women, they may be employed making roofing tiles, where a fine touch and sure

instinct are required to properly work and shape the moist mixture of clay, cement and sisal hemp used in producing the tiles. Other DESWOS projects have demonstrated that women are particularly suited to such work. This project also provides compensation for wages which participants would have earned as domestic workers during the period of training.

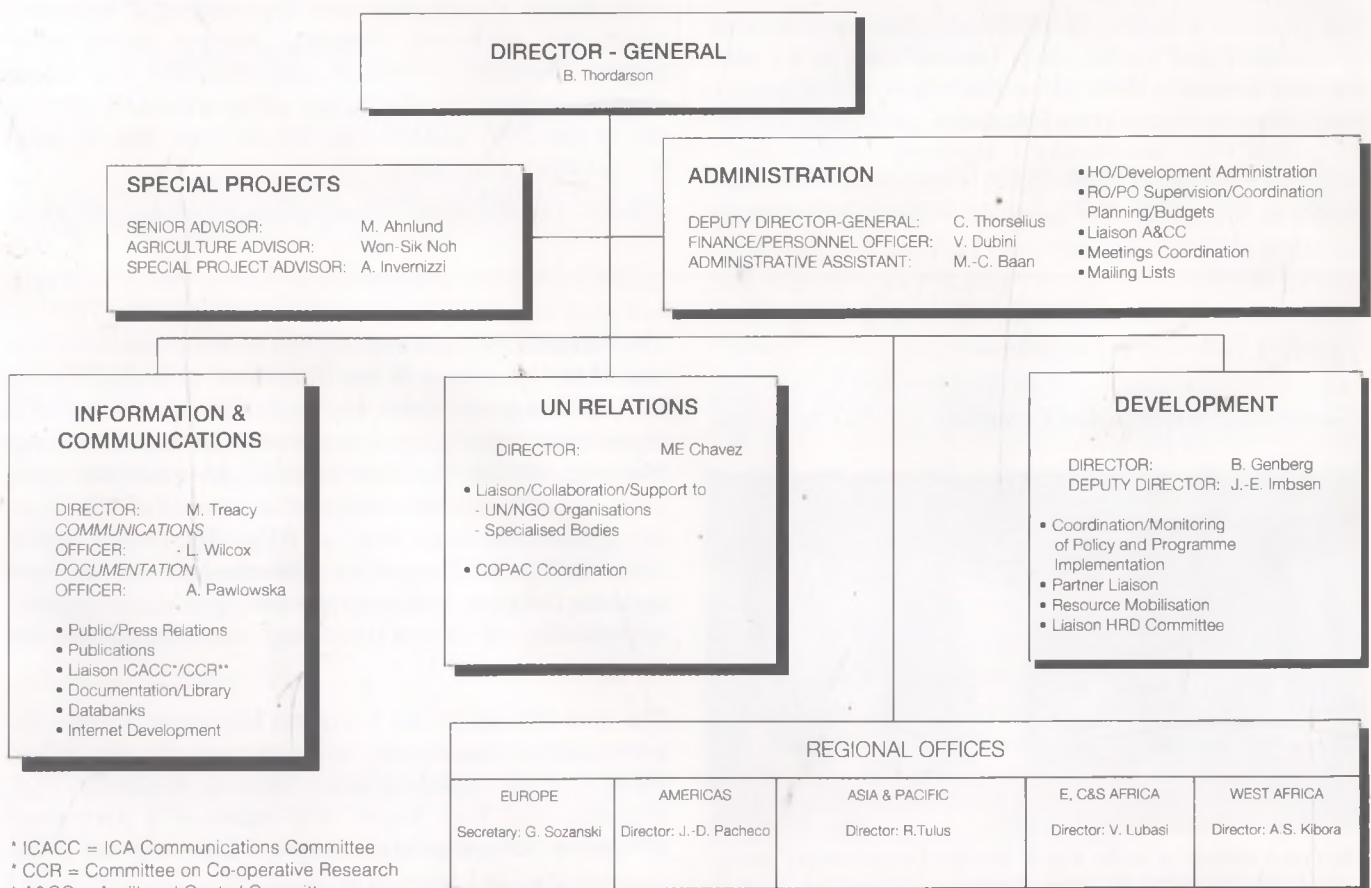
If all goes according to plan, trainees will be able to earn their livings producing building materials or working as masons once the project has ended. They will be able to help in the construction of additional houses for the co-operative society. The various mixtures of sand, cement, clay and water allows for the production of building materials for rich and poor alike. So it will be pos-



Dinner preparations are underway.

sible to satisfy the growing demand for homes. As the Tashinga project reaches fruition, the chances for domestic workers in Zimbabwe to improve their lives grow by the day.

1997 ICA STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS



* ICACC = ICA Communications Committee
 * CCR = Committee on Co-operative Research
 * A&CC = Audit and Control Committee

World Overview

Canada

Success Stories

The Canadian Co-operative Secretariat and the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) and Conseil Canadien de la Coopération have finalised a second edition of Co-operative Success Stories in Canada. This can be obtained free of charge from the Co-operative Secretariat. Fax: (+1-613) 759-7489.

Breaking Barriers to Build Co-operation

Co-operative educators, leaders and communicators from the USA, Canada and the Caribbean are invited to participate in the Association of Co-operative Educators (ACE) Annual Institute for 1997, which has as its theme "Breaking Barriers to Build Co-operation in the New Millennium".

The event will take place in Toronto from April 30 - May 2, and will include sessions on educating government; barriers faced by young people as they look to the co-operative model; education and training in the workplace; new generation co-ops; and a special session on "Thinking Outside the Box", which will challenge those whose minds are closed to new technology and new ideas.

The Institute will also provide an opportunity to visit co-operative and credit union Internet sites at a Cyber Bar and present a Best Ideas Showcase where participants can share innovative ideas with colleagues.

Further information from Betty Davey at CCA at Fax: (+1-613) 567 0658 or by E-mail betty@coopcca.com.

Finland

Environment Week in SOK



An environment week was arranged in the SOK Head Office from 13 to 21 February 1997 including an exhibition and panel discussion. During the week, experts gave up-to-date information and advice about environment issues. Main topics were environmental labelling, paper and cardboard recycling, energy saving techniques, biowaste collection and treatment and office cleaning equipment. The target group was SOK personnel in the first instance and the purpose was to raise environment awareness.

(Source: FCCA Finland, March 1997)

India

Co-ops in a Liberalised Economy



The Prime Minister of India, Shri H. D. Deve Gowda meeting foreign dignitaries at the NCUI Congress.

The National Co-operative Union of India discussed the role of co-operatives in the liberalised economy during its 13th Congress which has gathered more than 3,500 representatives of grass-roots level societies. The Prime Minister, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda addressed the delegates insisting on the merits of co-operative efforts in all spheres of economic activity. The main topics reviewed by the Congresses concerned personnel management policies, structural reforms, gender integration, applicability of labour laws and the income tax for co-ops.

The first session of the Congress honoured foreign co-operators for outstanding achievements for the movement. Among awardees were Graham Melmoth, ICA President and Yves Régis, who received a posthumous tribute for his action to develop workers coops in India.

(Source: A. Pawlowska, ICA Geneva)

World Overview

Italy

Women Benefit from Affirmative Action

The 1992 affirmative action law on women's entrepreneurship (L.215/92) will soon become operational. A fund of 40 thousand million lire will provide funding for projects promoting enterprise development by and for women. Italian co-operatives have been identified as one of the beneficiaries of the fund and have been urged to submit funding requests for relevant projects.

(Source: *Lega Informazioni No2/97*)

Japan

Migros Chairman Visits Japan

Jules Kyburz, Chairman of the Board of the Federation of Migros Co-operatives, the largest retailer in Switzerland, visited Japan at the end of 1996 to help launch the Japanese version of the book "The Adventure of Migros" with a moving speech on the Migros philosophy and history. Mr. Kyburz took the opportunity to deepen relationships with the Japanese co-ops, visiting the headquarters of JCCU and visiting a han group, Co-op Kobe, the largest co-op in Japan, a department store, a food plant and the Co-operative College. Since Migros originally grew from a mobile sales business using delivery trucks he was particularly interested in joint purchase activities and home delivery services.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information, December 96*)

UK

Banking on an Historic Year

The Co-operative Bank is celebrating its 125th birthday in 1997, having been formed in 1872 as the loan and deposit department of the Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS). The Bank's Annual Report for 1996 should show profits of £ 36.7 million, the best indication that the bank's ethical policy based on Co-operative Principles continues to demonstrate that the co-operative approach to business can equal success in today's competitive environment. The bank has identified seven stakeholder groups in addition to its shareholders - customers, staff, suppliers, community, society, past and future generations.

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

CWS Supports Co-operative College

CWS has placed a major vote of confidence in the Co-operative College by pledging to send 1,400 of its executives

and senior managers on a special course on Co-operative Values. The course will explore ways in which the Co-operative Identity and Principles can be put into practice while improving the society's business. The course follows a senior executives conference which was held at the College in January at which the new Chief Executive of CWS, Graham Melmoth, who is also President of ICA, launched a handbook entitled "Managing Change Through People".

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

Journalists Launch Media Agency Co-op

A media agency run on co-operative principles has been launched in the UK by four journalists, pooling a range of skills under one roof.

Set up with help from the local Co-operative Development Agency, the co-operative Media South West, aims to offer press, PR and research coverage for Devon and Cornwall while operating as a worker's co-op. Services available include writing, editing, design, photography, research and consultancy, plus producing publicity materials and in-house newspapers for local businesses.

(Source: *Co-operative News*)

USA

The Value of Co-operation

The 1997 theme of the Co-operative Conference in the USA will be "The Value of Co-operation". The National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA), the National Co-operative Bank (NCB) and the Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF) are collaborating to present value-added opportunities for each organisation's membership during the two-day event to be held in Washington D.C. on April 23 and 24. For more information contact Dianna Vaughan at (+1-202) 638 6222 or E-mail dvaughnan@ncba.org

(Source: *Co-operative Business Journal, February 1997*)

Future Co-op Leaders Programme

NCBA is looking for candidates for the 1997 class of its "Future Coop Leaders Program", an educational programme designed to develop co-operative leadership in order to build a stronger co-operative Community. The Programme provides scholarships for staff, directors and members of co-operatives to attend a training and educational event held annually in Washington, DC. Contact Leta Mach at NCBA for further information or send an E-mail to lmach@ncba.org.

(Source: *Co-operative Business Journal, February 1997*)

Co-op People

The Administrative Council of the Confédération des caisses populaires et d'Economie Des-jardins of Québec re-elected **Claude Béland** as President of the Mouvement des caisses Des-jardins (Canada) for a third three-year term of office in January of this year. Mr. Béland was first elected to this position in January 1987. Mr Béland is also Chairman of the International Co-operative Banking Association, a Specialised Body of the ICA, and a member of the ICA Board.

Jan Fencel has been re-elected as Chairman of the Association of Agricultural Co-operatives and Companies in the Czech Republic at the Annual General Meeting on 29 November 1996.

MEP Pauline Green, Leader of the Socialist Group in the European Parliament, has been elected President of the next UK Co-operative Congress to be held in Cardiff from 25 to 27 May. (Source: *Co-operative News*, Jan. 1997)

Nora Sobolow has been appointed as the new Executive Director of the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA). She was seconded by the Credit Union Central of Canada and the two organisations are exploring opportunities for working more closely, especially in the area of government affairs and policy. Ms. Sovolow remains as Vice-

President, Government Affairs and Policy at CUCU. Her e-mail address is nora@coopcca.com (Source: *Inter Sector Volume 1 Winter 96/97*)

Peter Vrisk has been elected President of the Zadruzna Zveza Slovenije, the Co-operative Union of Slovenia.

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ICA CALENDAR

■ 7 - 8 April 1997
Chairs & Secs of SBs
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 9 April 1997
ICBA Board Meeting
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 - 18 April 1997
ICA Housing Seminar
Kampala, Uganda

■ 18 - 21 April 1997
ICA Board Meeting
Kampala, Uganda

■ 2 May 1997
ICACC Executive
Copenhagen, Denmark

■ 5 - 7 June 1997
Global Women's Committee
St. Petersburg, Russia

■ 13 - 14 June 1997
ICA Housing Board
Vienna, Austria

■ 11-13 September 1997
Global Women's Committee
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 September 1997
European Council
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 - 14 September 1997
Health Committee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 14 September 1997
ICA Board
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15 - 16 September 1997
ICA General Assembly
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15 - 16 September 1997
Audit/Control
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
CICOPA, Fisheries
Housing, HRD
ICBA, Intercoop & ICAO
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 18 September 1997
CICOPA, HRD,
Housing, ICBA & ICAO
Geneva, Switzerland



ica News

INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE

Issue No 2/1997

Editor: Mary Treacy

ICA Board Meeting in Kampala, Uganda

The ICA Board Meeting in Kampala, Uganda, on April 18-19, was not only the first such meeting to be held in Uganda but also led to decisions which will have a major impact on the forthcoming General Assembly in September.

ICA President Graham Melmoth, who had to miss the meeting while leading a successful defence against a takeover attempt of the Co-operative Wholesale Society in the U.K., informed the Board in writing that his heavy domestic commitments had "sadly led me to the conclusion that I ought not to stand again for the Presidency in September".

The Board therefore decided to establish an Elections Committee consisting of the four regional nominees for Vice-President (Lars Hillbom, Roberto Rodrigues, Bernard Wolimbwa, and Yang Deshou) and the incumbent members who have decided not to seek re-election (Raija Itkonen, Ota Karen, Hasle Nielsen, and Graham Melmoth). The Committee will be responsible for reviewing potential candidates and presenting a proposal to the Board, so that the Board can subsequently make a recommendation to the GA in September. The Elections Committee will also promote candidates for the Board, with particular efforts to promote the nomination of women, and will supervise the election procedure in Geneva.



ICA Board members meet with senior Government officials in Kampala.

The Board completed its review of the recommendations made by the Special Board Committee on Rules and Finance, composed of Graham Melmoth, Raija Itkonen, Yehudah Paz, and Etienne Pflimlin. The Board decided to recommend to the General Assembly a number of rule changes, including an increase in the size of the Board from 16 to 20 members; an increase in the maximum national representation at the General Assembly from 20 to 25; the introduction of a new category of associate member; and a provision to co-opt up to four female Board members if deemed necessary. After reviewing possible

amendments to the subscription formula, the Committee proposed not to make any major changes, with the exception of amending the formula for housing co-ops, to which the Board agreed. The Board approved the ICA's 1996 financial statements, which show a small surplus, and the 1997 budget, which also projects a small surplus. In addition, the Board approved membership applications from 12 organisations. It reviewed policy papers and approved recommendations on three of the ICA's priority areas of activity - communications, development and membership services.



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ICA General Assembly News

Some 500 representatives and observers are expected to participate in the ICA's biennial General Assembly, which will be held in Geneva on September 15-16, 1997, after a four-year absence from the ICA's home city. It was in Geneva in 1993 that the current Board was elected, and a feature of this year's meeting will be elections for a new Board, including the President, and members of the Audit and Control Committee.

Member organisations wishing to nominate a candidate for election to the Presidency or to the ICA Board should submit the name to the ICA Director before 15 June 1997. Candidates for President should include a brief statement about their vision for the ICA, in addition to the biographical details expected of all nominees.

As foreven when the ICA Rules underwent a major revision at the Tokyo Congress in 1992, they have been subjected to a further review during the last two

years to see if any modifications are needed on the basis of recent experience. The proposal being presented to the General Assembly by the Board concludes that the new regional structure is generally functioning well and requires no major change. Continued efforts, however, are needed to strengthen relations between ICA and the Specialised Bodies, and a number of changes are proposed. A new category of associate member is proposed in order to enable organisations not in a position to assume full membership to participate in ICA's global and regional activities. With a larger Board and General Assembly membership (see previous report), it is hoped that the representation of regions, sectors and women will be improved.

A special half-day session on 16 September will focus on the global dimension of co-operatives - how they have an opportunity to influence important international issues, and how they can better collaborate with

other allies in the civil society (including farmers' associations, trade unions, and mutuals).

Eleven of the ICA's 15 Specialised Bodies will hold meetings in conjunction with the General Assembly. In the case of the agriculture and women's groups, issue-oriented conferences will be held in addition to their statutory meetings. Other meetings include the ICA's European Council, a joint Seminar on Networking and Distance Learning organised by the HRD and Communications Committees and a new "Business Opportunity" luncheon in conjunction with the launching of a new sub-committee on Communications and Trade.

Member organisations have already received registration and hotel information. Documentation for the G A, printed in the next two editions of the ICA Review, will be sent to registered participants at the end of June. Further information is available from the ICA Secretariat on request.

Overcoming Distance

A Seminar on the potential of Electronic Networking for overcoming distance and the possibilities of using distance learning for Co-operative Education, Human Resource Development and Communications will be held at the ILO in Geneva on 17 September. Aspects covered will include interactive and distance learning, networking, using the Internet for research and lobbying and mobilising people via the Internet. For further information and registration contact Jan-Eirik Imbsen at the ICA, Fax: (+41 22) 798 41 22; e-mail development@coop.org. The Seminar will be supported by the ILO COOP-NET Programme.

ICA News now available in English, French and Spanish

If you are interested in receiving copies of the other language versions please drop a line to the ICA Secretariat. Either fax, e-mail or send a letter to the Communications Department at the address on the front page.

The ICA Review of International Co-operation is available in English and Spanish. For the Spanish version please also contact the ICA Secretariat for details of how to subscribe.

European Council Meets in Italy

This spring's European Council meeting was hosted by the ICA's Italian member organisations in Rome on 21 March 1997. Among the items discussed were gender issues, which constitute an integral part of all European programmes. With the goal of encouraging a higher level of participation by European women co-operators in ICA activities and governing bodies, the Council decided to evaluate and analyse the answers to the ICA President's Gender Policy letter, as well as review the Rules for the European Region from a gender perspective.

In light of the ever-increasing impact of the European Union's enlargement on co-operatives, it was decided to organise a seminar dealing with this topic in



ICA European Council welcomed in Rome by Luigi Marino, President of Confcooperative.

November 1997. The invitation of the Czech co-operative movement to host the seminar was accepted.

Another item addressed was how to best represent European co-operatives, in order to avoid overlapping activities and to ensure smooth co-ordination with parallel institutions. To further discuss this issue, a Working

Group was set up under the chairmanship of Calixte Parpais, of Crédit Mutuel, France.

Council members agreed that the next Regional Assembly for Europe would be held 15 and 16 October 1998 in Paris.

The European Council will meet on 13 September 1997, prior to the ICA General Assembly in Geneva.

ICACC Meets in Copenhagen



Members of the ICACC meeting discuss future projects for the committee.

The Executive of the ICACC met in Copenhagen on 1 May to discuss future plans which include: a joint seminar with the ILO and the ICA HRD Committee to be held in Geneva in conjunction with the 1997 General Assembly;

a seminar on Co-operatives and Lobbying to be held in 1998; and a workshop for journalists from East, Central and Southern Africa, to be held in the region in 1998, possibly in collaboration with the ILO.

Research Cttee News

This year's ICA International Research Conference will be held at the University Residential Centre in Bertinoro near Bologna, Italy, on October 3-5, 1997. The conference title is "The Co-operative Advantage in a Civil Economy".

The 1998 Research Conference has been tentatively scheduled to take place in Cork, Ireland from 13-17 May 1998. The Committee also plans to hold a conference jointly with the ICA Global Women's Committee sometime later in 1998 on "Women, Entrepreneurship and Co-operatives".

Belgium

Happy 50th, CIRIEC!

The 50th anniversary of CIRIEC, the International Centre of Research and Information on the Public and Co-operative Economy, will be celebrated 26 September 1997 in Brussels. A scientific colloquium addressing "The Public, Social and Co-operative Economy and the General Interest. Which Roles in the XXIst Century?" will be presented. Those interested in attending should contact CIRIEC at (+32 4) 366 27 46 or by e-mail at ciriec@ulg.ac.be. Their web site can also be viewed at <http://www.ulg.ac.be/ciriec/ciriec.htm>.

Canada

Second Annual Youth Unity Conference

Following the success of its Youth Unity Conference held in August 1996, the Co-operators Group will hold a second such conference this year. The conference aims to provide a forum for young adults, aged 18 to 21, to explore, express and listen to diverse views on Canadian unity. An evaluation of the last conference showed that 90 per cent of the attendees found the event "exceeding their expectations."

(Source: *ICMIF NetWork*, no. 20, February 1997)

New Newsletter for Co-op Connections

In the fall of 1996, the Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA) published its first issue of the Linkages Bulletin, a newsletter for the Co-op Connections Programme. The target audience of the bulletin is co-operatives and credit unions, both in Canada and overseas, involved in the Linkages Programme, as well as Canadian developmental education co-ordinators and CCA staff. The purpose of the Co-op Connections Programme is to link co-operatives and credit unions in Canada with those in countries where CCA is actively involved. Co-ops with similar challenges and services agree on a linkage, or a "co-op connection," for three years. During this period, they are able to participate in activities such as internships and exchanges, designed to benefit both partners. For further information, or to be added to the Linkages mailing list, please contact Laurie Tennian at (+1 613) 238-6711 or by e-mail at laurie@coopcca.com.

New Canadian Co-op Act

On 21 March 1997 Industry Minister John Manley

and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Minister, Ralph Goodale, introduced the *Canada Cooperatives Act*, designed to modernize laws governing federally incorporated, non-financial Canadian co-operatives. This Act strengthens and clarifies the corporate governance rules relating to co-operatives and gives them access to different sources of capital. As well, it provides benefits to small and large co-operatives by simplifying incorporation and providing clear standards for directors' liability. The co-operative sector, through the Canadian Co-operative Association, in collaboration with the *Conseil canadien de la coopération*, played a key role in drafting the legislation. Industry Canada and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada used this draft to conduct a series of consultations and fine-tune the legislation.

(Source: *Government of Canada News Release*)

Desjardins: Economic Success and Social Responsibility

The 1996 annual report of the Mouvement des Caisses Desjardins shows that the Quebec-based financial co-operative movement increased its assets to 83 billion Canadian dollars and increased its operating surplus by 8.5 percent to 473 million Canadian dollars last year. The movement is the largest private employer in the province of Quebec. It is also the Canadian leader in direct payment, with over 28,000 point-of-sale terminals. The movement also published its annual "Socio-economic and Cooperative Audit Report", showing that it returned 89 million dollars to the communities it serves through a combination of patronage refunds (66 million dollars), gifts, sponsorships, and scholarships. 57 percent of the local caisses collaborate with other caisses, and 32 percent have links with other kinds of co-operatives in their communities.

(Source: *1996 Annual Report: Review of Operations*)

Czech Republic

Housing Seminar in Prague

Last November over 40 participants met in Prague for a United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE) workshop for central and eastern European countries, organised by the Federal Union of German Housing Associations, an affiliation of housing co-operatives in collaboration with the Co-operative Section of CECODHAS (European Liaison Committee for Social Housing). The objective of the workshop was to offer information to those countries in transition, where co-operative structures have to be adapted to the needs of a market economy; and also

to draw attention to the fact that privatisation of state-owned housing can be transformed into new housing co-operatives. During the workshop, the Czech, Slovakian, Polish and Hungarian movements showed how successfully housing co-ops can carry on their work once legal preconditions are met. Nevertheless, problems such as increases in real estate and energy need to be solved. Saving schemes and favourable terms of credit can help to overcome some obstacles, but subsidies are also necessary for the lower income sections of society.

A follow-up of the workshop in Prague will be organised in Warsaw. The first draft of a new handbook for the foundation of new housing co-operatives was presented by GdW in Prague and will be finished for publication in Warsaw.

Greece

Ambelakia, the Co-op's Birthplace

A small village in the mountains of Greece, Ambelakia is historically recognised as the home of the first co-operative. Formed in 1795, the co-op exported naturally dyed colourful cotton yarn all over Europe.

Dimitra, the Institute of Information, Training and Development, and the Cultural Association of Ambelakia are working together on a comprehensive rural regeneration project to secure and enhance the historic and economic prosperity of Ambelakia.

A multi-lingual interactive touch screen CD-ROM on the historical, architectural and economic development of Ambelakia, as well as a Visitors' Centre where the CD-ROM can be viewed, are being planned.

The project is partially funded by the RAPHAEL programme (The European Community Action in Support of Culture), which works for the preservation and increased awareness of cultural heritage. However, the programme is still in need of funding. Please contact the head office at (+30 41) 554 027 or be-mail at dimitra@hol.gr for more information.

UK

CWS Foils Attempted Takeover

In April an attempted take-over of the Co-operative Wholesale Society by Galileo, a company headed by

31 year-old old entrepreneur, Andrew Regan, was foiled thanks to the swift response of CWS officials. After a lengthy battle a last-minute injunction forced Galileo to abandon the launch of their hostile \$1.6 billion bid.

CWS Chief Executive, Graham Melmoth, said that the attempted bid failed mainly because CWS were able to prove that it was based on stolen documents. The CWS, which hired a team of private detectives to trace how information was being leaked, is now taking legal action against one of its executives, Allan Green, who allegedly handed confidential documents to Galileo.

According to the Manchester Guardian Weekly of 27 April, Galileo disclosed that it had been about to publish its long-awaited strategy for unlocking the multi-billion pound value of the CWS. It had intended to make formal proposals for the conversion of the CWS into a limited company, so that Galileo could then make an offer for the mutual society.

The court order obtained by the CWS forbade Mr Regan, Mr Green, Galileo or its parent company, Lanica, from using confidential CWS information. It also required them to disclose all the information they had and what they had used it for, and to return all papers to the CWS.

On April 22, a spokesman for Mr Regan said he would stand down as a director of Galileo as soon as the company was able to go public with its plans. It was seen in some quarters as the first sign of a crack between Mr Regan and his financial backers, led by Hambros Merchant Bank. Later Hambros made an unreserved apology to CWS over its conduct in the affair and is understood to have paid substantial damages.

Apologies have also been sent by lawyers Travers, Smith, Braithwaite who acted as legal advisers to Galileo and Larnica. Galileo have subsequently gone into voluntary liquidation.

The situation of CWS in Britain is clearly something that co-operators world-wide must face up to. According to Gary B. Hansen of Utah State University the Wall Street Journal recently published an article stating mutual insurance companies in the US are considering converting to stockholder companies in order to raise more capital for acquisitions, etc. If this path is followed, warns Hansen, it will mean that the policy holders will soon find themselves at the mercy of shareholders who are interested only in profits and dividends and not about the interests of the member-policy holders. These enterprises will

World Overview

no longer be functioning as co-operatives or espousing co-operative values, he cautioned.

(Sources: *Manchester Guardian Weekly* and *Co-operative News cooperative-business listserver*)

Co-op Party Celebrates Landslide

The Co-operative Party in the UK celebrated a landslide victory in the general election on 1 May which saw all 26 Labour/Co-operative candidates victorious. They now form the biggest-ever group of Co-op backed members of parliament. The wins came in England, Scotland and Wales, and included seats in traditional Conservative strongholds. Majorities for Co-op Party candidates ranged from 23,931 to 3,636. Dr. Peter Clarke, National Secretary of the Co-operative Party said that the sitting MPs are joined by a new branch of MPs who have come up through the Co-operative Party and understand the agenda. He said these new MPs would work with long-standing members to promote co-operative ideals. For the first time candidates had been clearly labelled as joint Labour/Co-op Party candidates, and the high press coverage that Andrew Regan's bid had given the movement had established the Co-op and its ideals firmly in the voter's mind according to Mr. Clark. The Galileo bid had shaken up the Movement, he said, and now it was time for reform. Larnica has put the movement firmly in the media spotlight and we need to keep ourselves there, he stressed.

United States

Lawsuit Against the AT&T Family FCU

On 24 February 1997 the US Supreme Court announced that it will hear arguments regarding a lawsuit against the AT&T Family Federal Credit Union (FCU), brought by bankers challenging its field of membership. The Court will review the decision made by the US Court of Appeals on 29 July 1996, ruling that the National Credit Union Administration (NCUA) had acted beyond its scope of authority with the approval of membership expansions for the AT&T Family FCU to include multiple-employer groups. Bankers argue that the NCUA has been improperly interpreting the Credit Union Act since 1982 by allowing credit unions to include groups of employees with different employers. NCUA believes that the act allows these groupings, and that such groupings in a credit union provide strength through diversity. There is no court date as of yet, but a final decision by the Supreme Court is likely to

be handed down by the end of 1997 or early in 1998. (Source: *NCBA Cooperative Business Journal*, vol. 11, no. 2.)

Co-operative Development Forum

The 1997 Co-operative Development Forum, sponsored by the Co-operative League of the USA (CLUSA) Institute for Co-operative Development, will be held 13 to 15 June in St. Paul, Minnesota. The Forum will be held in conjunction with the annual conference of the National Association of Resource Conservation and Development Councils (NARC&DCs), which runs 14 to 18 June. The theme will be "The Co-operative Model, a Tool for Community Economic Development." The programme will focus on six major issues: co-operative approaches to community economic development: moderate income communities; co-operative approaches to community economic development: persistent poverty communities; meeting the needs of the growing elderly population; consumers and small businesses in the marketplace; technical resources; and financial resources.

Registration information for the 1997 Co-operative Development Forum and the NARC&DC annual conference is available from John Gauci, CLUSA Institute Executive Director, by telephone at (+1 202) 6386222, by fax at 6381374 or by e-mail at jgauci@ncba.org.

(Source: *NCBA News Release*)

The 1997 Co-operative Conference

The Value of Co-operation, the theme for the Co-operative Conference, was amply demonstrated April 23-24 as the National Co-operative Business Association (NCBA), in conjunction with the National Co-operative Bank (NCB), and the Co-operative Development Foundation, held its annual meeting and conference in Washington, D.C. The conference programme focused on the benefits of working together through co-operation and featured the annual meetings of each organisation as well as special joint programming concerning educational sessions on co-operative development, mergers and crisis communications. NCBA President and CEO Russ Notar called the joint conference an "historic event".

At the NCBA annual meeting, delegates approved the 1997 Statement of Policy and various bylaw amendments. NCBA Chair, Tom Lyon, CEO of Co-operative Resources International, told the delegates "through the efforts of your diverse and engaged board and a well qualified staff, NCBA is, within its

World Overview

limited resources, well positioned to advance the organisation's mission - to develop, advance and protect co-operative enterprise."

As in previous years, the Future Co-op Leaders Programme was part of the Co-operative Conference. The programme is designed to build leadership in US co-operatives by encouraging up-and-coming co-operators to attend the NCBA Co-operative Conference where they can meet and learn from other co-op leaders. Special activities were planned for the 18 future co-op leaders who were selected for this scholarship programme. The programme is funded, in part, by NCBA's Honored Co-operator Awards programme.

(Source: NCBA News Release, 28 April 1997)

Zambia

Zambian Co-ops to get new Lease of Life

The co-operative movement in Zambia which has been on the verge of collapse since the liberalisation of agricultural marketing in the country in 1992 may get a new lease of life if current government initiatives to revive the co-operative sector are implemented. After a miserable performance of the private sector in agricultural financing and marketing, the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries is contemplating reactivating co-operatives by amending

the Co-operatives Societies Act of 1970 and reviving the Co-operative Bank which was closed in 1995.

Government has since asked the co-operative movement to take stock of its performance since liberalisation, identify its weaknesses and strengths and come up with proposals for the way forward.

Agriculture Food and Fisheries Minister, Edith Nawakwi, told Parliament recently that government had stopped giving agricultural loans to individual farmers and was currently holding consultations on how to create an appropriate financing mechanism for farmers groups and co-operatives. Under this mechanism, deserving farmers' groups and co-operatives would be targeted for a wide range of financial services including capital investment support. During the last three years, the government had done away with co-operative institutions like the Credit Union and Savings Association (CUSA) and the Zambia Co-operative Federation's Finance Services in providing seasonal credit to about 600,000 small scale farmers who are mostly members of co-operatives. In March this year, Lima Bank which was a government owned agricultural financing company was closed due to liquidity problems while government bemoaned the loss of K26 billion, the equivalent of US \$20 million owed to it by Cavmont Merchant Bank and SGS - the two private institutions appointed by government to coordinate credit at the expense of co-operative institutions.

ICA Meetings (cont'd)

Housing Seminar

Less than ten months after the UN-HABITAT-II Conference in Istanbul, ICA Housing organised a conference during the Uganda Board Meeting, April 18 and 19. One of the goals of the conference was to present successful examples of co-operative housing and self-help schemes and to encourage the government of Uganda to prepare the necessary conditions for the foundation of new housing co-operatives.

The preconditions for economic growth and improved nutrition in the rural areas are good. There is intensive agriculture, fertile land, and in rural areas the Ugandan people are working hard to improve their standard of living. The ICA President for this region of Africa, Mr. Bernard Wolimbwa, who is also the Chairman of the Uganda Co-operative Alliance, did an excellent job preparing the housing seminar, which drew more than one hundred participants.

At the conference, the success of housing co-opera-



The Mayor of Kampala and Rolf Trodin, Chairman of ICA the Housing Committee, discuss the housing situation in Uganda.

tives in Kenya and Zimbabwe were shown as examples to help Uganda establish their own. Organisations of developmental assistance, such as NBBL and DESWOS, also presented examples of their successful work in South Africa.

Co-op People

On 24 February 1997, **Dr. Ivan Prikryl** was elected President of the Co-operative Association of the Czech Republic. His previous post was as the President of the Union of Czech and Moravian Housing Co-operatives.

All 26 of Co-operative Party candidates were successful in the recent UK general elections. Before the election on 1 May, there were 15 Co-operative Party MPs in Britain. There are also 4 Co-operative Peers in the House of Lords, and 6 Co-operative Party Members of the European Parliament. The following are new MPs: **Dave Lepper** (Brighton Pavilion); **Doug Naysmith** (Bristol North West); **Phil Hope** (Corby); **Andy Love** (Edmonton); **Tony McWalter** (Hemel Hempstead); **Jim Dobbin** (Heywood & Middleton); **David Taylor** (Leicestershire North West); **Louise Ellman** (Liverpool Riverside); **Andy Reed** (Loughborough); **Linda Gilroy** (Plymouth Sutton);

David Drew (Stroud). The following were re-elected: **Angela Smith** (Basildon); **Jon Owen Jones** (Cardiff Central); **Alun Michael** (Cardiff South & Penarth); **George Foulkes** (Carrick, Cumnock & Doon Valley); **John McFall** (Dumbarton); **Alan Keen** (Feltham & Heston); **Ian Davidson** (Glasgow Pollock); **Tommy McAvo** (Glasgow Rutherglen); **Barry Sheerman** (Huddersfield); **Mike Gapes** (Ilford South); **Don Touhig** (Islwyn); **Lewis Moonie** (Kirkcaldy); **Gordon McMaster** (Paisley South); **Ken Purchase** (Wolverhampton North East); **Dennis Turner** (Wolverhampton South East).

NCBA elected board members and officers to lead the membership association in the coming year. **Rod Nilsestuen**, **Ralph Paige**, and **Gonze Lee Twitty** were elected to three-year terms on the NCBA board of directors. **Andy Ferguson** was elected to represent individual members on

the NCBA board. The following officers were re-elected: chair, **Thomas Lyon**; 1st vice chair, **David Miller**; 2nd vice chair, **Pete Crear**; secretary, **Herb Levy**; and treasurer, **Dr. Ann Hoyt**. Four others elected to join these officers on the Executive are **Ralph Paige**, **Joe Leiber**, **Jeff Stoburg**, and **James Van Houten**. Board members also elected **Harvey Sigelbaum**, **Gail Sokoloff** and **Michael Treadwell** to serve on the board. **John C. Fisher** was elected to fill the two-year unexpired term of **C. William Swank**.

In December 1997, **Gabriella Sozanski** was appointed Secretary of the ICA's European Council.

Corrigendum: it was Enzo Pezzini from CECOP, on the front page of the last ICA News, making the intervention on the founding meeting of IHCO.

ICA CALENDAR

■ 5 - 7 June 1997
Global Women's Committee
St. Petersburg, Russia

■ 13 - 14 June 1997
ICA Housing Board
Vienna, Austria

■ 11-13 September 1997
Global Women's Committee
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 September 1997
European Council
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 13 - 14 September 1997
Health Committee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 14 September 1997
ICA Board Meeting
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 14 September 1997
Consumer Cttee (ICCO)
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 14 September 1997
ICACC Executive Cttee
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15 - 16 September 1997
ICA General Assembly
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 15-16 September 1997
Audit & Control Committee
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
ICAHRD/ICACC
Joint Seminar on
Distance Learning
and Networking
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
CICOPA Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
ICA Fisheries Cttee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
Housing Cttee (ICHO)
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 17 September 1997
Banking Committee (ICBA)
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 18 September 1997
Agricultural Cttee (ICAO)
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 18 September 1997
HRD Committee Meetings
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 19 September 1997
ICAO Study Tour
Geneva, Switzerland

■ 3-5 October 1997
ICA Research Conference
Bertinoro, Italie



Argentine President Supports Co-operative Meeting



Co-operative leaders at the seminar on Economic Growth with Social Development: The Co-operative Experience.

The Co-operative Confederation of the Republic of Argentina (COOPERAR) and the ICA Project Office for the Southern Cone of Latin America held an international seminar on "Economic Growth with Social Development: The Co-operative Experience" from 17 - 18 June in Buenos Aires.

At the Seminar, several major agreements were signed between ICA and COOPERAR and the National Institute for Co-operative and Mutual Action (INACYM), as well as between COOPERAR and

the Provincial Institute for Co-operative Action (IPAC). Plans were formalized to both develop training activities and to strengthen commercial intersectoral networks among co-operatives.

The Seminar, which was declared to be of national interest by the President's Office, was sponsored by INACYM, IPAC, the National Secretariat of Social Development, the Ministry of Production and Employment of the Province of Buenos Aires, and supported by Credicoop, Mayo Banks, and Previsol AFJP.

It attracted over 400 participants including ICA Vice-President for the Americas, Roberto Rodrigues and Alternate Vice-President Miguel Cardozo, Director-General Bruce Thordarson and Senior Project Advisor, Arsenio Invernizzi of ICA, Geneva.

The Seminar's four plenary sessions established a foundation for strengthening relations between Argentine co-operatives and those from other parts of the world. A new vision of the public role of the co-operative economy was also developed.



ICA Housing continues Habitat Follow-up

The Executive of ICA Housing in its meeting in Vienna (Austria) in June, 1997 agreed on a plan for contributing to the follow-up of the Habitat Agenda adopted at the United Nations Conference on Human Settlement (Habitat II) in Istanbul. Regional seminars - one of which has already been held for East, Central and Southern Africa - will be held on how to promote the development of housing co-operatives. A package of materials is being developed to help organisations attending the seminar better understand how to start and manage a housing co-operative. The seminars will be tailored to needs of the region and will focus on regional issues. Their aim is to provide both a conceptual framework on how to establish housing co-operatives and tools to assist in the implementation.



The following seminars are currently planned: 17-18 September 1997 - Legal Frameworks for Housing Co-operatives, Geneva, Switzerland; November 1997 - Alternative Financing Systems, Mexico City, Mexico; and a Seminar in Asia in the Spring of 1998. For more information on the seminar programme, please contact Rolf Trodin, Chairman, ICA Housing.

ICA Global Women's Committee Meets in St. Petersburg

The Executive Committee of the ICA Global Women's Committee met in St. Petersburg (Russia). The Executive Committee discussed issues relating to the strengthening of the Committee (reviewing the more than 50 nominations received), initiatives taken to improve gender balance and mainstreaming, as well as future activities - conferences and training programmes/projects. It also reviewed preparations for the Women's Conference it organised in St. Petersburg on the theme of "Women and Market Economy" and heard reports on activities undertaken since the last Executive Committee in Costa Rica.

The Committee also finalised preparations for the September 1997 Women's Conference in Geneva on the theme "Women, Co-operatives and the Community", which is to address some of the issues listed below:

- How have women contributed to the economy of and services provided to the communities in which they live through co-operatives - specific experiences of women's entrepreneurship.
- How have co-operatives at the community level responded to the specific needs of women - pro-



vision of day care, social care, family-friendly policies including any specific provision from female-headed households, etc.

- What is the status of women's participation in community level co-operatives - membership, women in decision-making, education and training possibilities for women, etc.
- What has been the overall influence of women in the co-operatives on the community - programmes, events, etc.
- How can co-operatives create partnerships with local authorities to meet the needs of women now and in the future?

World Overview

Canada

SWP Reports Landmark Year

Canada's largest co-operative, Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, increased its net earnings in 1996 by 48 percent to 48.4 million Canadian dollars. It also successfully completed its conversion into a "publicly-traded co-operative". Under its equity conversion programme, existing member share capital was converted into Class A (voting) and Class B (non-voting) shares. The Class B shares, listed on the Toronto Stock Exchange, increased in value during the year. Class A shares are held only by active farmer-members in order to maintain member control. Revenue-wise, SWP is now the 54th largest company in Canada.

(Source: Saskatchewan Wheat Pool Annual Report, 1996)

India

News from *The Link*

* The Central Registrar of Co-operative Societies has exempted the NCUI and its President from Sections 36 & 37 of the Multi State Co-operative Societies Act.

* Kerala High Court stays a Government ordinance disbanding the Boards of 14 District Co-operative Banks in response to a petition filed by the affected Boards.

* The Uttar Pradesh Government has enhanced the Registrar's powers while severely curbing co-operative autonomy.

* Tamilnadu Government has announced intentions to amend the State Co-operative Act.

* 31 Gujarat co-ops are reported to be affected by the CRB scam.

* GOA co-operators unanimously decry draft new Goa State Co-operative Societies Act and demand a public debate.

For the full story, please contact: Sudarshan Srinivas, Managing Editor, *The Link*, C.I.P. Secretariat, IRMA Campus, PB No 60, Anand 388 001, Gujarat, India. Fax: (02692) 40188; E-mail srini@fac.irm.ernet.in; web site: <http://irma.irm.ernet.in/~cip/ciphome.html>

(Source: *The Link*, June 1997)

Indonesia

Exhibition Celebrates Year of Co-ops

An Exhibition on International Co-operative and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) took place in Jakarta in July 1997 as part of a series of events to mark the Year of Co-operatives declared by President Soeharto in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the Indonesian Co-operative Movement. Over 500 co-ops and SMEs from 27 Indonesian provinces and 100 from 15 other countries participated in the exhibition which was officially opened by the President and supported by ICAROAP during the Ministerial Meeting in April 1997. For more details, visit the exhibition homepage:

<http://www.rekkamedia.com/cooperative97>.

(Source: REKKA Media E-mail)

Japan

Quake Victims Link Hands

Although still struggling to recover from the earthquake which hit Kobe in 1995, Co-op Kobe mobilised its local volunteer centre and raised 3,912,771 yen to help residents of Yunnan Province in mainland China which was struck by an earthquake on 3 February of 1996. This money was combined with contributions from the local NGO Liaison Committee for the Relief of Victims from the Kobe earthquake, the YMCA, the International Co-operation Centre and other groups to total of 22,230,000 yen, which was used for the reconstruction of five elementary schools destroyed in the quake. These are now consolidated into one complex which has been named the Li Jiang Friendship Centre Elementary School to commemorate the growing friendship between the two countries. The aid programme, as well as a series of cultural exchanges between schools in Japan and China have also strengthened ties.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information*, June 1997)

Co-ops Help With Oil Spill Clean-up

The Japan Joint Committee of Co-operatives donated 2.6 million yen to the Conference Against the Oil Spill Disaster, a group established by ZENGYOREN, JCCU, ZENCHU and seven other

(see p.6)

Empowerment of Small-scale Farmers in Bolivia

by Alexis Gendron, ICA Intern, Smith College Junior Year Programme in Geneva

The province of Chuquisaca outside the city of Sucre is one of the poorest regions of Bolivia, which itself is the second poorest country in Latin America. In this region, the ICA-FOPROPE project, Empowerment of Small-scale Farmers, began in September 1994. The programme is financially supported by the Finnish government and by community counterparts, such as the saving and credit co-operative COSAL, local authorities and local non-governmental organisations.

The president of Bolivia, Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada, in a September 1996 speech to the presidents of Latin America, stressed that all Latin American countries "should make accessible to the poorest parts of the population small loans and appropriate technology... instruments that could allow these people to free themselves from poverty." ICA, in conjunction with the Finnish government, instituted their programme with objectives that encompassed those of the Bolivian president. The main goal of the project is to empower rural small-scale producers by providing small loans and technical assistance; other objectives include a general improvement in living conditions, combatting migration to urban areas, and providing training and educational services to improve utilisation of scarce resources. The programme's most important aspect is the credit scheme; however, in order to overcome the technical and economic constraints of rural producers, the scheme is accompanied by training courses, information programmes and technical supervision at the



The traditional flag of the peasant movement in Bolivia. Called "Wiphala"

grass-root level. The credit scheme involves giving loans to small-scale farmers, limited to US\$ 50 to 200, which are used for commercial production and subsistence farming. The annual interest rate is 24 per cent, the lowest market price for this type of loan in Bolivia. Loans are typically repeated several times to the same families, but new access is contingent upon the repayment of the previous loan. The credit scheme began in May 1995, when the first US\$ 170,000 was put into the credit and guarantee fund of COSAL. Little demand existed in the beginning of the project, with only 31 per cent of the money in the fund circulating. However, demand has grown steadily, and in August 1996, 100 per cent of the money was in circulation. The fund grew to US\$ 300,000 by the end of 1996, but due to requests by new communities to enter the credit programme, along with heavy demand from participating communities, the fund was unable to grant loans to all who applied. However, with the extension of the programme by the Finnish govern-

ment through the year 2000, demand will be met and new communities will soon be able to participate.

ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL supply loans for a variety of different projects, but families mainly take loans to help with agricultural production. Agricultural loans are broken down into two categories in order to be better able to examine the results: loans in regions with irrigation and loans in areas of rain-fed irrigation. In areas with irrigation (all figures approximate), the production of families rose 35 per cent, the area of land under cultivation was extended by 30 per cent, and the average income increased 40 per cent. Food security remains the principal objective in regions of rain-fed agriculture, and the main function of loans is subsistence rather than commercial production. In all cases in these areas, the harvest value was slightly higher than the production costs, with the sales income covering all the financial inputs for production but covering only partially the labour costs. People

in the participating communities have also taken the initiative to borrow money for projects other than agriculture. In two communities women took loans to purchase sewing materials for the commercial production of clothing. They earned a monthly net revenue of \$US 50 to 60, \$US 20 to 30 higher than what they would have earned in the city as servants; this therefore successfully combats migration to the cities and prevents the separation of families. Other groups took loans to buy cattle and dairy cows, both of which proved to be sound investments.

Another important aspect of the programme is the training courses. These courses are available not only to the loan recipients, but to all members of the community. Organisation of the courses began in April of 1996, and currently 42 courses are being offered in the communities participating in the credit scheme. In addition, there are 26 courses offered in communities not involved in the scheme. Courses are given on better production techniques, co-operative organisation and management, administration and book-keeping, and other relevant topics.

Although the impact of the training courses is hard to measure qualitatively, it is certain that they help to guarantee profitability of loan investments, as well as provide the families with bet-



Pospo village. The main street (Bolivia).

ter technical knowledge to improve production and raise their quality of living.

The programme also incorporates feasibility studies to support the decentralisation of development resources in Bolivia. Studies are done on the micro-investments of municipalities, co-operatives and other institutions favorable to the communities. The goal of these studies is to create favourable developmental conditions in the villages and encourage the adoption of new technology. Another component of the project is support for trading and the commercialisation of handicrafts and agricultural products. Communities are given help in planning their production so as to maximize commercial profit.

In addition, the project supports rural co-operatives and works with co-operative organisers to help them maximize investments with the ultimate goal of self-sufficiency. There are also plans to support a women's service co-operative for the commercial production and sale of traditional textiles made in the communities.

It is unarguable that this project has had a very positive impact on the communities involved.

Both ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL believe that what is needed to continue the success of the project is a sustainable credit scheme, not simply a short-term programme. At present, the credit scheme is not self-sustainable, as it does not cover the costs of credit distribution, of recovering loans, nor of the technical supervision necessary to help families maximize the productive capacity of their loans. The scheme is effective due to external financial support during the first two years of the project, covering the cost of technical assistance as well as 50 per cent of the credit fund. With the extension of the project to the year 2000, self-sustainability may be reached with the implementation of other supplementary measures, such as an increase in credit co-operatives' total credit funds, more active and organised community representatives in the governing bodies of COSAL, and continued support at the grass-root level to supervise the loan destination and utilisation by the families. It is the hope of ICA-FOPROPE and COSAL that with the progressive implementation of these measures the credit scheme will one day be able to operate with no external assistance.



The coop provides local women with a regular income.

World Overview

societies, to help local fishermen and residents remove oil following a Russian oil tanker spill off the Japanese coast in January 1996. Many co-ops established links with people in the affected areas and offered to help. For example, Co-op Sapporo in Hokkaido raised funds and collected relief supplies and sent 15 staff members to help with the clean-up operations. Co-op Yamanashi also sent volunteers, warm clothing and cleaning utensils and Fukui Co-op of Fukui Prefecture sent a volunteer to serve meals and provide relief supplies to those involved in the clean-up.

(Source: *Co-op Japan Information*, June 1997)

Kazakhstan

Kazak Co-operators Visit Geneva

A delegation from co-operatives in Kazakhstan visited the ICA Secretariat in Geneva in July 1997 to discuss working methods in Western Europe, financial management and the promotion of membership. The visitors met with Bruce Thordarson, Director-General, to discuss the principle aims of the organisation, with Mats Ahnlund to discuss member services and with Alina Pawlowska, who presented the database project on statistics.

The visitors particularly appreciated the guided tour of Mr. H. Corneli from Coop Geneva's distribution centre and discussions with Mr. Lechaire, Director of Coop Geneva, on competition and development strategy.



The end of the tour - beginning of a friendship. The Kazak delegation meet with Coop Genève top management.

Kazakhstan has developed a dynamic co-operative movement. The consumer co-operatives, which are to be found in rural areas, manage a huge network of stores and distribution centres, together with enterprises for the transformation of agricultural products and restaurants.

Owing to inflation and privatisation, the movement's market share dropped from 30% in 1990 to

6% in 1996. Its main priority is to overcome the crisis and to adapt to the environment where competition has become a keyword in order to provide the best service possible to its members.

Korea

NACF Training Courses

The National Agricultural Co-operative Federation (NACF) of Korea will organise a two-week international training course on agricultural marketing for 20 participants in late September. The course, which will be sponsored by NACF and the Korean Government, is part of an ongoing programme supported by the government. The last event under the programme was a training course on rural development and agricultural co-operative management held at the Agricultural Co-operative College in April and May this year, which included participants from Indonesia, Iran, Sri Lanka, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Butan, Nepal, Mongolia, Senegal, Gabon and Honduras.

(Source: *NACF e-mail*)

Moldova

ICA Europe Visit to Moldova

Gabriella Sozanski, Secretary of the European Council, visited the Republic of Moldova in June, after the consumer movement requested ICA assistance in lobbying the government and parliament of Moldova in support of a newly proposed law on consumer co-operatives. Ms. Sozanski met the Vice Prime Minister, Valerij Bulgaru, the deputy speaker of the Parliament, Dumitro Djakov and the chairman of the Parliamentary Commission in charge of co-operative legislation, Ion Curkanu. Visits were also arranged to the Co-operative Commercial University, Co-op hospital, as well as to various enterprises belonging to the movement. Co-op societies in Moldova are still restricted to the rural areas where they provide 64% of the population with consumer goods.

Philippines

MacPherson Meets Philippine Co-operators

Dr. Ian MacPherson, an internationally recognised authority on co-ops who led the ICA's latest review of co-operative principles, was the keynote speaker

World Overview

at the 20th general assembly of the Philippines' National Confederation of Co-operatives (NATCCO) held in May. The assembly in Tagaytay City, south of Manila, had the theme "Philippine Co-ops into the 21st Century." NATCCO is the country's biggest national federation of co-ops in terms of geographical reach, membership, financial base and array of services. It now has more than 1,700 affiliate co-ops with about a million people comprising the membership base.

(Source: NATCCO e-mail)

Russia

Centrosoyus is First to Achieve Gender Balance

In 1995, the ICA General Assembly adopted a resolution, "Gender Equality in Co-operatives" which called for the improvement of gender balance in co-operatives. The ICA Board in 1996 called on the ICA President to write to and to ask member organisations to formally plan to increase the representation of women at all levels.

The ICA Secretariat is happy to announce that Centrosoyus of Russia is the first ICA member organisation to register a gender-balanced delegation of representatives to the ICA General Assembly. Eight women and eight men will vote in the election of the ICA President, Vice-Presidents, Board Members and Audit and Control Committee. In this way, Centrosoyus has concretely contributed to increasing women's participation in ICA decision-making.

On the Eve of the 3rd Millennium

The 5th General Assembly of the Russian Federation of Consumer Co-ops was held in Kirov 31 July - 1 August. The participants discussed the social and economic problems facing consumer co-operation and adopted the following appeal to Russian co-operators. Russian consumer co-operatives face decreasing retail turnover, procurement of agricultural products and raw materials, and production. Many co-operatives have lost assets and are in debt; two thirds finished last year with losses. A radical modernisation of corporate governance and management control is necessary. A new Federal Law, on «consumer co-operation in the Russian Federation», passed in July 1997, states that consumer co-operation is recognised by and protected

by the Russian State. The Law outlines reforms, including the promotion of the members' role in decision-making, modernisation of governance and control structures, and strengthening leaders' responsibilities and discipline. To conform with the law, Consumer societies will form new governing and executive bodies to increase membership, ensure strict control over the management of co-operative organisations and enterprises and improve the quality of leadership.

(Source: Centrosoyus, Moscow, 6 August 1997)

Slovakia

Producer Co-op "Best Supplier" for IKEA

The Slovak Producer Co-operative Society "KNK" in Lubietova has received the 1996 award as "Best Supplier for IKEA," accompanied by a prize of 100,000 Swedish Crowns. The 240-employee co-operative has been supplying furniture accessories to IKEA for eight years, with sales rising from 3 million to 12 million Swedish crowns during that period.

(Source: Slovak Co-operative News, issue no. 1, 1997)

Switzerland

Coop Switzerland and Organic Products

Coop Switzerland has recently inaugurated a web site providing information on its product line - NaturaPlan - of organic and environmentally-friendly products. The product line has been a success with consumers in Switzerland and is being expanded. NaturaPlan products are expected to cover 15-20% market share by 1998, representing a turnover of CHF 400 million (approx. USD 250 million). For information on Coop NaturaPlan, see the Co-op Switzerland web site: <http://www.coop.ch>

United Kingdom

Top Speakers for UKCC Forum

Graham Melmoth, President of ICA and Chief Executive of CWS (UK) is to be a keynote speaker at the UK Co-operative Council's Annual Forum at the CIS Headquarters in Manchester on 21-22 November. Places can be reserved in writing from Peter Walker, Chief Executive, UKCC, c/o The Co-operative Bank plc, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester M60 4EP.

ICA Europe Flood Appeal

ICA Europe is launching an appeal for financial assistance on behalf of consumer co-operatives in Central and Eastern Europe following the severe floods which have claimed many lives and caused widespread material damage.

To give an example of the disastrous consequences of the flooding, a faxed letter from the Union of Czech and Moravian Consumer Co-operatives based in Prague reports:

In this natural calamity, a lot of facilities belonging to the Union or respective co-operative organisations were either completely or partially damaged. A number of our newly-built supermarkets were flooded with water, and all stock and interior equipment including recently installed cold-storage technology were devastated. Some of the smaller retail shops were just swept away.

In Prague, at the Consumer Co-operative Union office, we have been collecting information on the scope of the damage in particular regions and we are trying to help in the worst cases, but our financial resources are rather limited."

Another appeal reached ICA from the National Co-operative Council of Poland requesting assistance in any possible form:

Your help will be a token of the international solidarity of co-operators....Please remember that the Polish co-operative movement is only just in the process of reconstruction after years of planned economy and the later period of government hostility and now it has been stricken by natural disaster. We need your help - this is the moment to substantiate the international solidarity of co-operators."

ICA Europe is establishing a fund to enable ICA members and readers of the *ICA News* and *Review* to respond with financial aid for co-ops in the devastated area of Europe.

By co-ordinating efforts with the Movement, it should be possible to raise a significant sum and ICA Europe will do everything possible to ensure that the money goes to those co-operatives in greatest need, both in the Czech Republic and elsewhere in the region.

Therefore, a special dollar account has been set up in Geneva. Please transfer donations in US dollars to: UBS Geneva Account Number 205 202 60Q; mark your transfer FLOOD APPEAL. Many thanks for your solidarity.

ICA CALENDAR

For all meetings related to the ICA General Assembly in Geneva in September 1997, please consult the schedule attached in the special issue for the General Assembly

■ 3-5 October 1997
ICA Research Conference
Bertinoro, Italy

■ November 1997
Regional Conference for the Americas
Mexico City, Mexico

■ August 1998
Regional Assembly for Africa
Lusaka, Zambia

■ 15-16 October 1998
Regional Assembly for Europe
Paris, France

■ October 1998
Regional Assembly for Asia & the Pacific
Seoul, Korea

■ November 1998
Regional Assembly for the Americas
Montevideo, Uruguay



Co-operatives and the Internet

There are more and more resources on and for co-operatives available on the Internet everyday. Here is a summary of some of the ICA's online resources, followed by some highlights of co-operative resources available on the Internet. It is by no

means an exhaustive list. Explore the ICA web site for more links and resources, and feel free to contact ICA to suggest additional internet and web sites for co-operators.

New ICA Web Site Announcement *<http://www.coop.org>*



The International Co-operative Alliance is proud to present the new ICA web site. The increasing amount of information presented on the web site led the Communications Department to improve

the overall structure to facilitate navigation and enable users to easily download relevant information, informing them at all times of their location within the site.



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E mail: ica@coop.org - Website: <http://www.coop.org>

The largest section of the site contains the information in English, and has been separated into four main chapters. Each chapter has an index page which you can reach by clicking on the images at the top of each page. The four chapters and their contents are as follows:

The ICA: information concerning the International Co-operative Alliance

Co-op Info: information related to the co-operative movement and other co-operative organisations.

Outreach: information related to the Internet, to the Co-operative Gopher, to Newsgroups, to relevant business sites and international organisations.

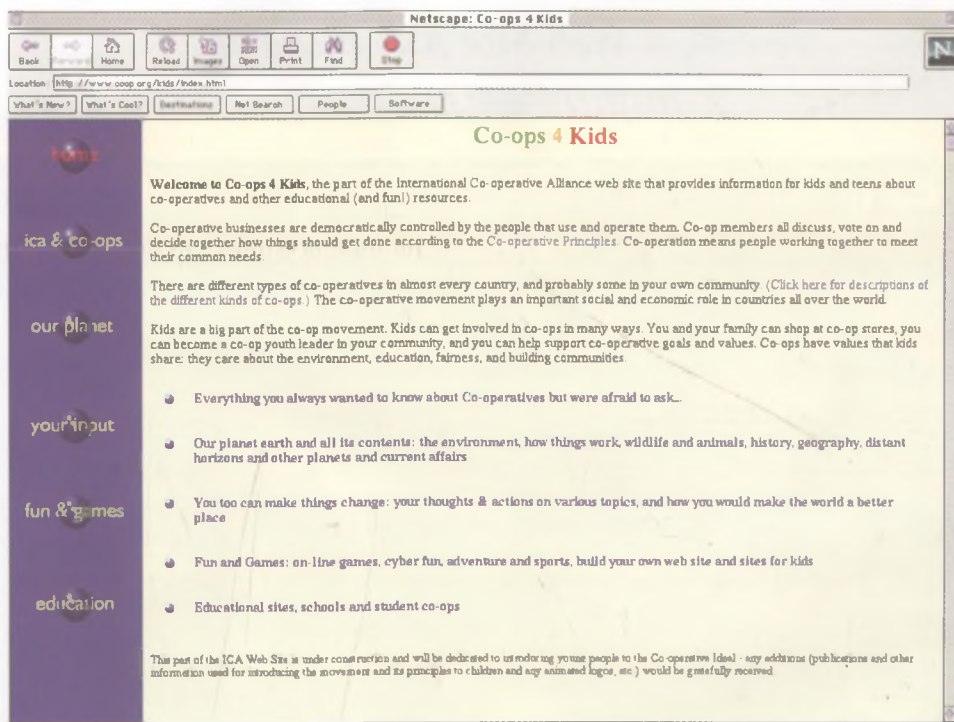
New!: regularly updated new information. Any new additions to the web site will be included in this section, and eventually placed in their relevant

chapter. This section contains a link to a new site called Co-ops for Kids (see below).

The ICA also contains information in other languages, including French, German, Spanish, Swedish and Portuguese. At present, this information is limited - any additions to this part of the site or translations of the original English information would be gratefully received in any language. Each language section contains an index page accessible through a flag on the home page, or at the top of each language page.

You can return to the ICA home page at any time by clicking on the ICA logo at the bottom of each page. You will also be able to search the ICA web site by using a search engine. The Communications Department would appreciate any feedback concerning the recent changes.

Co-ops 4 Kids <http://www.coop.org/kids/>



ICA is going to be launching a new part of our web site entitled "Co-ops 4 Kids" in September 1997, which will introduce children and young people to the co-operative movement.

To make Co-ops 4 Kids both fun and informative, the site will emphasise interactive elements and will encourage input from young people (articles, pictures, photos, etc.), communication and networking with other kids and co-op members around the world.

The site will provide basic information on the co-operative movement, educational resources, and will also include links to online games and fun sites. By teaching kids about co-ops, we hope to encourage them to become co-op members, consumers and leaders in their own communities.

Comments, feedback and volunteers to help build this site and from teachers or schools interested in participating in the project are appreciated.

The Cooperative Gopher

gopher://wiscinfo.wisc.edu:70/11/info-source/coop

An ever-growing inventory of co-operative information, the Gopher is the product of a joint effort between ICA, Geneva and The University of Wisconsin Center for Cooperatives (UWCC) in Madison, Wisconsin. Essentially a large database of text from various co-operative resources including newsletters, articles on specific topics such as board trainings and co-op history, and publications, the Gopher is a comprehensive, and internationally accessible source of information about co-operatives.

COPAC Web Site

<http://www.copacgva.org>

The Committee for the Promotion and Advancement of Cooperatives (COPAC) now has its own web site. COPAC is a successful and on-going partnership between representatives of the cooperative movement together with farmers' and workers' organizations, and the United Nations and its agencies. Members work together on equal terms to promote and coordinate sustainable cooperative development through policy dialogues, technical cooperation and information, and concrete collaborative activities. The web site contains sections on COPAC's mission and structure, services and activities, member organisations and publications.

Society For Co-operative Studies

<http://www.coop.org/scs/coopstudiesintro.html>

Information on the Society For Co-operative Studies based in the UK is now available on the Web through a site linked to the co-op education section of the ICA web site. The Society is an independent voluntary organisation committed to public education on all aspects of the movement. It aims to commission, identify and publish research on the co-operative movement, and actively promote the exchange of

information and experiences of co-ops through research and publication. Co-op members, employees, managers, specialists and academics from overseas as well as the UK are welcome. The Society convenes an annual conference (this year's will be held on 20-21 September on the theme, "Working Towards a Stakeholder Society"), publishes the quarterly *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, and maintains the International Register of Co-operative Research. In May, the ICA established a searchable database for the Register. At present, entries coming via the internet and those received through completed questionnaires are being processed by Dr. Peter Davis, from whom further information can be obtained at Fax (+44 116) 252 3949, E-mail: pd8@leicester.ac.uk

Working Group on Trade and Communications Web Site

<http://dief106001.usask.ca/wg/wg.html>

ICA Communications Committee Working Group on Trade and Communications Network Technology now has its own web site. This includes information on the group's projects, resources, background papers, members, and links to other related sites.

The Working Group also maintains a list called ICN, which all interested co-operators are invited to subscribe to. Just do the following:

1. send an email message to: ICN-request@usask.ca
2. Include no subject in the subject line of the message
3. In the body of the message include the following:
SUBSCRIBE ICN
4. Do not enter any other text and turn off automatic signatures, if you use them.

Byron Henderson, Director of Communications of the Centre for the Study of Co-operatives, University of Saskatchewan would be pleased to answer any questions you might have about the Working Group or about electronic commerce for co-operatives. Contact him by email at hendersb@duke.usask.ca

Co-op Listservers

The "Cooperative bus"

Sponsored and maintained by the University of Wisconsin Center for Co-operatives, the listserve is an electronic bulletin board intended to facilitate discussion about strengths and weaknesses of co-operatives in solving people's economic and social needs. The Co-op bus is probably the largest co-op listserver, and many subscribers are based in the U.S., but co-operators from around the world also subscribe. To subscribe, send email to listserver@relay.doit.wisc.edu, with the message: `subscribe co-operative-bus [your name]`

Co-operativen - 1

A source of news from and about co-operatives, with subscribers providing news releases and full articles or edited abstracts from their newsletters. Co-operativen-1 is committed to promoting co-operative philosophy and principles.

The list is maintained by Co-operative Energy Ltd. of Victoria, Australia.

To subscribe, send email to majordomo@peg.apc.org with the message: `subscribe cooperativen-1.`

Co-opNet

Co-opNet is a new initiative set up by the Southampton Co-op Network in the UK to promote co-ops in their area and to encourage communication, networking, and positive discussion about co-ops and co-operation. Subscribers are mostly UK-based, but are welcome from all parts of the world. Discussion often focuses on the European movement and on worker co-ops. The list is maintained by Total Coverage, a co-op graphic design consultancy in Southampton. To subscribe, send email to Listserver@total.tco.uk, with message: `subscribe co-opnet.`

ICA Member Web Pages Service

ICA is pleased to announce a new service for its members. Beginning in September 1997, individual pages for each ICA member organisation will be added to the ICA web site. This will make information on all member organisations accessible electronically, whether or not members have set up their own web sites. This new service is an effort to give priority to members, and to facilitate information dissemination between ICA member organizations, and to their own members, and vice-versa. Links will be provided for those organisations

that already have their own sites. Each member page will contain the co-op's logo, mission statement, basic contact information and, when available, e-mail addresses. Please send us any specific information you wish to be included - either by mail, on computer disk, or by e-mail.

Just two years ago, there were no ICA members on the World Wide Web. Now over 10 percent of the total membership has its own websites, in addition to the thousands of other co-ops on the web.

ICA Members Already on the Web

Confederação Brasileira das Cooperativas de Energia
Telefonia e Desenvolvimento Rural (CONBRAC)
<http://www.conbrac.com.br>

Organização das Cooperativas Brasileiras (OCB)
<http://ocb.org.br>

Unimed do Brasil Confederação Nacional das
Cooperativas Medicas (UNIMED)
<http://www.unimed.com.br>

Canadian Co-operative Association (CCA)
<http://www.cca.usask.ca/CCA/CCA.Home.html>

Central Agricultural Co-operative Union, Egypt (CACU)
<http://www.icc.egnet.net/member/Egypt.cacu>

Confédération Nationale du Crédit Mutuel (France)
<http://www.creditmutuel.fr/>

Central Union of Agricultural Co-operatives, Japan
(JA-ZENCHU) (CUAC)
<http://www.rim.or.jp/ci/ja/ejahome.html>

Faellesforeningen for Danmarks Brugsforeninger (FDB)
<http://www.si.dk/sam/dod/249119.htm>

Japanese Consumers' Co-operative Union (JCCU)
<http://www.co-op.or.jp/>

Korean Federation of Community Credit Co-operatives
(KFCCC)
<http://www.kfcc.co.kr/kfccc-m1.htm>

National Agricultural Co-operative Federation, Korea (NACF)
<http://www.nacf.co.kr>

Instituto António Sérgio do Sector Cooperativo, Portugal
(INSCOOP)
<http://www.inscoop.pt/>

Folksam Insurance Group
<http://www.folksam.se>

HSB: Riksförbundet (Union of Housing Co-operatives)
<http://www.hsb.se>

Koopertiva Förbundet (KF)/Swedish Co-operative Union
<http://www.kf.se>

Lantbrukarnas Riksförbundet (LRF)/Federation of
Swedish Farmers
<http://www.lrf.se>

Riksbbyggen, Sweden (Co-operative Housing Union)
<http://www.riksbyggen.se>

Coop Suisse
<http://www.coop.ch/f/>

Co-operative Bank plc, UK
<http://www.co-operativebank.co.uk>

Co-operative Insurance Society, UK
<http://www.cis.co.uk/>

Co-operative Union Ltd., UK
<http://publish1.co-op.co.uk/UKCM/Union/>

Co-operative Wholesale Society Ltd., UK
<http://www.co-op.co.uk>

Plunkett Foundation, UK
<http://www.co-op.co.uk/UKCM/plunkett/index.htm>

National Cooperative Business Association, USA
<http://www.cooperative.org>

Nationwide Insurance, USA
<http://www.nationwide.com>

World Council of Credit Unions, USA
<http://www.woccu.org>

Confederación Uruguay de Entidades Cooperativas
(CUDECOOP)
<http://www.chasque.apc.org/cudecoop/>



Roberto Rodrigues from Brasil Elected as ICA President

The ICA General Assembly unanimously elected Roberto Rodrigues of Brazil as ICA President at the conclusion of its business session on 16 September. Mr. Rodrigues, 55, is the first non-European, as well as the first representative from a sector other than consumer co-operation, to hold the presidency during the ICA's 102-year history.

The President of the Organisation of Co-operatives of Brazil, Dejandir Dalpasquale, officially nominated Mr. Rodrigues, describing him as a top leader in Brazilian agricultural, co-operative, political, academic and media circles for more than two decades.

In his acceptance speech, the new ICA President spoke of his gratitude to all who had supported him, of his fear in dealing with the great challenges facing ICA and co-operatives world-wide, and of his confident hope that co-operatives are the right solution for today's challenges. He said that he would continue the current direction of ICA by emphasising four priorities: strengthening the co-operative identity, strengthening and integrating the different economic sectors, fostering participation in co-operatives by women and young people, and supporting co-operative development in Africa.

Mr. Rodrigues succeeds Graham Melmoth, chief executive of the Co-operative Wholesale Society of the U.K., who did not seek



The ICA welcomes Roberto Rodrigues (Brazil) and says good-bye to Graham Melmoth (UK).

re-election. Mr. Melmoth was honoured at the General Assembly for his distinguished service as ICA Board Member, first Chairman of

ICA Europe and 12th ICA President.

(see p. 12 for profile of new president)

ILO Welcomes ICA Collaboration

The Director-General of the International Labour Organisation,



Michel Hansenne is optimistic.

Michel Hansenne, spoke at the Opening Ceremony of the ICA General Assembly about the commitment to economic progress and social justice that was common to both the ILO and ICA. He described the ILO's large technical assistance programme of support to co-ops, which he said is based on the three priorities of democracy, employment, and workers' protection.

He expressed optimism that the already considerable degree of collaboration between ILO and ICA would grow in the future.



ICA Elections

Two New Vice-Presidents

The General Assembly ratified on 16 September the four nominations for ICA Vice-President as submitted by the regions.

Yang Deshou of China becomes the new Vice-President for Asia and the Pacific. Miguel Cardozo of Uruguay becomes Acting Vice-President for the Americas, filling the position vacated by Roberto Rodrigues, until such time as the Americas' Regional Assembly meets to officially elect its vice-presidential nominee.

Lars Hillbom of Sweden and Bernard Wolimbwa of Uganda were re-elected respectively as Vice-Presidents for Europe and for Africa.

Expanded ICA Board

As a result of the General Assembly's decision to expand the size of the ICA Board from 16 to 20 (including the President and four Vice-Presidents), elections were held during the General Assembly for the other 15 positions.



Members of the ICA Board smile for the photographer.

The successful candidates were: Rahaiah Baهران, Malaysia; Claude Béland, Canada; Ousseynu Dieng, Senegal; Valentin Ermakov, Russia; Jens Heiser, Germany; Hiroshi Kohno, Japan; Stefania Marcone, Italy; David Miller, U.S.A; Cyril Moravcik, Slovakia; Yehudah Paz, Israel; Etienne Pflimlin, France; Ivan Prikryl, Czech Republic; B.S. Vishwanathan, India; Lloyd Wilkinson, U.K; and Churll-Hee Won, Korea.

New Audit & Control Committee

Elections were also held for the ICA's Audit and Control Committee. Elected were: Shigenori Takemoto, Japan; Wilhelm Kaltenborn, Germany; Pal Bartus, Hungary; Gun-Britt Martensson, Sweden; and Ivar Hansen, Norway. Mr. Takemoto and Ms. Martensson fill the vacancies created by the retirement of members Markus Schelker of Switzerland and Jacques Moreau of France.

Seminar on Global Role of Co-ops

A special seminar on the second day of the General Assembly focussed on the global role of co-operatives. Introducing the topic, the chair of the session, ICA Board Member Yehudah Paz, noted that co-operatives have an unprecedented opportunity to participate in and influence major global issues, but that to do so requires a greater commitment and a closer collaboration with like-minded allies.

Following an introductory speech by John Langmore of the United Nations Secretariat in New York, leaders from ICFTU, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, IFAP, the International Federation of Agricultural Producers, and FIIG, the Federation of International Institutions Established in Geneva, made presentations which stressed the potential for mutually beneficial closer collaboration between co-operatives and institutions representing trade unions, farmers, and the civil society.

Following interventions by ICA Member Organisations and Specialised Bodies, Yehudah Paz summarised the discussion by noting that the ideas expressed would be used by the Board in its planning of future activities and priorities for ICA.

Millenium Congress in Quebec City

The General Assembly decided that, in conjunction with the ICA's 1999 General Assembly, a World Co-operative Congress should also be held in order to provide opportunities for extended participation, discussion, and publicity. It was agreed that the theme of the Congress will be: Adding Value to Membership - the Co-operative Challenge for the Next Millennium. On behalf of the ICA's two Canadian member organisations, ICA Board Member Claude Béland invited participants to Quebec City during the last two weeks of August 1999.

General Assembly

ICA Rules and Procedures Amended

The General Assembly approved proposals from the Board to amend the ICA Rules and Procedures in a number of areas. The major areas of change include:

- * Changing the objectives of ICA to include efforts to promote sustainable human development and to promote equality between men and women in co-operatives.
- * Replacing the old ICA Principles with the Statement on Co-operative Identity that was adopted by the 1995 Manchester Congress and General Assembly.
- * Introducing a category of associate membership.
- * Increasing the size of the maximum General Assembly representation per country from 20 to 25, and increasing the size of the Board from 16 to 20.
- * Encouraging a closer working relationship between ICA and the Specialised Bodies.

The complete text of the revised ICA Rules and Procedures may be found on the ICA's Web Site at: <http://www.coop.org/en/rules.html> and will be published in written form in January 1998.

Resolutions Support Countries in Transition

The General Assembly approved three Resolutions submitted by ICA member organisations in Russia, Bulgaria, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (C.I.S.), calling upon co-operatives, governments, and international institutions to support efforts of reform, rebuilding, and education in these countries. The Resolutions are also available on the ICA's Web Site (<http://www.coop.org/en/resolution.html>).

Stable Financial Situation

The General Assembly approved the reports from the Audit and Control Committee, and from the ICA's external auditors, concerning the financial years 1995 and 1996. It was agreed that the surplus of the two years, amounting to 226,317 Swiss francs, be divided as follows: 150,000 donated to the Corpus Fund of the ICA Development Trust, becoming its initial capital; a maximum of 50,000 allocated to

restructuring of the ICA offices in Geneva; and the remaining minimum amount of 26,317 transferred to the ICA's General Reserve.

The ICA Board, having reviewed the Subscription Formula as part of its examination of the ICA Rules, did not propose any change in the Formula, with the exception of the housing sector, where further consultations are needed with the members involved.

1998 Regional Assemblies

The General Assembly took note of the planned meetings of ICA's regional governing bodies in 1998: African Regional Assembly, Lusaka, Zambia, late August; European Regional Assembly, Paris, France, October 15-16; Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly, Seoul, Korea, late October; Americas Regional Assembly, Montevideo, Uruguay, mid November.

As decided previously by the ICA Board, the Asia-Pacific Regional Assembly in Korea will also feature a global seminar on the theme of successful Asian co-operative experiences. ICA members from all regions will be invited to attend this meeting.

Over 300 Million Hear Co-op Message

Participants to the General Assembly had the opportunity to view the first ICA Video News Release which featured agricultural co-ops in Kenya and discussed the role co-operatives play in contributing to world food security. The four-and-a-half minute VNR, produced by World Television, was distributed in its entirety or in partial form by several of the major news distributors to approximately 200 TV stations worldwide and official estimates show that the newsreel was seen by 300 - 400 million viewers worldwide. Plans are underway to produce a VNR on health co-ops in Japan and to make another featuring the new ICA President on mission in South America.

News from the ICA Board

The ICA Board met on 14 September in Geneva in order to finalise preparations for the General Assembly. As its first item of new business the Board approved the recommendations of the Elections Committee, which had met in June in order to deal with the election of the new ICA President and other election issues.

The Board decided to accept proposals by the Global Women's Committee to remove the reference to co-options to the Board from the new Rules and amend the proposed composition of the new Elections Committee. The Board agreed upon a Resolution concerning co-option at this General Assembly only, which was subsequently approved by the General Assembly.

The Board also agreed that TICA (International Co-operative and Associative Tourism Organisation) should not be removed as an ICA Specialised Organisation, in view of its claim that it still maintains a separate identity and membership. This proposal, also accepted by the General Assembly, brings the total number of ICA Specialised Bodies to 15.

The Board accepted 11 new organisations into membership, ten from the Americas and one from Sweden, and agreed to reinstate into membership the Mauritius Co-operative Union, which has succeeded in paying its outstanding dues.

The Board accepted the end-August finance report, which shows an above-budget projected year-end surplus in the area of 100,000 Swiss francs as a result of higher-than-expected General Assembly registrations and investment income.

The Board received and discussed detailed reports on the implementation of the membership services strategy, and on gender, which will remain on the Board's agenda for future meetings.

Retiring Members Honoured

In addition to the retiring President, Graham Melmoth, the General Assembly paid tribute to the other five Board Members who had not sought re-election: Raija Itkonen of Finland (the longest-serving Board Member, first elected in 1984), Ota Karen of the Czech Republic, Holger Hasle Nielsen of Denmark, Hakaru Toyoda of Japan, and Ivano Barberini of Italy.

More Women on ICA Board

The elections of Stefania Marcone and Rahaiah Baهران effectively doubled the number of women on the ICA Board, whose only female representative had been Raija Itkonen of Finland, who did not seek re-election.

The General Assembly also approved a resolution from the ICA Board as follows: "The ICA Board proposes that a provisional measure of co-option be accepted at this General Assembly to ensure that at least one woman per region is included on the Board. The Board further recommends that at least one woman be nominated from each region at the next and subsequent General Assembly elections." Accordingly, the ICA Board will co-opt a woman representative from Africa and from the Americas at its next meeting.

Women's Advice Heeded

The Global Women's Committee at its meeting in Geneva, considered the proposal of amendments to the Rules from a gender perspective. Unanimously agreeing that the text proposed for adoption at the General Assembly regarding women's participation did not reflect the views of women in the movement and more importantly did not take gender issues into consideration, the committee informed the ICA Board of its concerns. The ICA Board, with the help of the Secretary of the Women's Committee, was able to reformulate the text regarding ensuring women's representation on the ICA Board and Election Committee. This new text was presented to the members of the ICA General Assembly, who unanimously adopted the revision.

New Board Prepares the Future

At a brief meeting following the conclusion of the General Assembly on 16 September, the newly-elected members of the ICA Board decided to hold a review and planning session in Mexico City on 18 November, just prior to the Regional Conference of ICA Americas.

In keeping with the decision of the General Assembly, the Vice-Presidents from Africa and the Americas were asked to present female candidates for co-option to this next Board Meeting.

The regular meetings of the Board in 1998 are scheduled for Japan in April and France in October.

European Council

The meeting of the European Council on 13 September in Geneva unanimously adopted recommendations by the Working Group reviewing relations between ICA Europe and the co-operative sectoral associations in Brussels to create an institutional framework to facilitate collaboration between ICA Europe and the European sub-committees of the ICA Specialised bodies.

This would allow the latter to participate in the Regional Assembly for Europe with a right to vote, provided that half of their members are directly affiliated to ICA. As long as both parties agree, the European Committee can be represented by the competent sectoral association. An example of this is CICOPA's decision to accept CECOP as their European sub-committee.

A closer collaboration was encouraged with all sectoral associations, and in particular with COGECA.

Regarding future strategy, the Working Group recommended that ICA Europe concentrate on three specific areas: the defence and promotion of the co-operative idea; East-West relations; and the promotion of collaboration in the Mediterranean rim.

On the recommendation of the Working Group some additional activities were added to the workplan for 1998, including information collection and dissemination on key issues of common interest, particularly legislation, the process of demutualisation, training tools, the creation of co-operatives in non-traditional industries and added value to members.



Sectorial Associations of Brussels attend meeting of European Council.

The 1998 Regional Assembly for Europe from 15-16 October in Paris will focus on "Threats to co-operatives" as well as the European elections. Two seminars will be organised with the ICA Development Trust, one in collaboration with IRU and WOCCU on identifying the development needs of Central and Eastern European countries, and another on North-South collaboration including the EuroMed programme.

During the coming year a development plan on assistance to co-operatives in Central and Eastern Europe will be designed, and a gender programme will be drafted for Europe as a follow-up to the General Assembly resolutions.

ICA Europe will continue to deal with projects upon the request of member organisations. The project on the collection of co-operative statistics in Europe, co-financed by EC-DGXXIII, will continue in 1998.

After the data of member organisations has been received and evaluated, a workshop will be held for the national statistical coordinators of the programme.

Membership issues will take an increasing role in the activities of ICA Europe, with special focus on analysing cases of members leaving the ICA and of some negative developments which have occasionally lead to bankruptcies.

The Council decided to transform the European Secretariat into an official ICA Regional Office effective from 1 January 1998.

Two co-options were approved until next year's elections, replacing G.Vecchi by Luigi Marino, President of Conf-cooperative, Italy; and J.L. Arrieta by J. Salaberría, President of the Confederation of Euskadi Co-operatives, Spain.

A seminar on the impact of the European Union's enlargement on co-operatives will be held in Prague on 3-4 November. This event will begin the process of assisting candidate countries' co-operative movements to adapt to the requirements of joining the European Union while helping long standing ICA and EU members to make the necessary adjustments involved in the reform of the European Union.

Scenes from the C

Geneva, Sept



2



Votes being counted at the general election (1-2), the publication stand and co-op exhibition.



Katarina Apelqvist (Sweden), Chair of the Global Women's Committee, hugs Irena Drazewska, Vice-Chair (Russia). Both leave after many years of dedicated service (4).



5

Stefania Marcone from the Lega, Italy, was one of two women elected to the ICA Board in Geneva (5).



Delegates and staff joined the ICA President and Director-General for a relaxing evening at the Auto Museum in Geneva (8-9).

9

General Assembly

September 1997

6



MBLY



Roberto Rodrigues of Brazil making his inaugural speech (6) and outgoing President Graham Melmoth of the United Kingdom (7).

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10



11

The newly elected ICA President, Roberto Rodrigues, commenced his new role by meeting with ICA Head Office staff (10), holding discussions with Director-General, Bruce Thordarson (11) and calling a meeting to welcome new members to the organisation (12-13).

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13



14



A study tour to visit agricultural co-ops in Switzerland was well attended (14).

Specialised Bodies

Global Human Resource Development Committee

Joint HRD/ ICACC Seminar

The seminar on "Overcoming Geographical Barriers through Electronic Networking and Distance Learning" was a joint activity of the HRD and Communications Committees with the support of the ILO COOPNET Programme.

The morning session dealt with networking and the role the Internet can play in facilitating distance learning - the subject was introduced by Yehudah Paz, Chairman of Global HRD Committee, and Gabriele Ullrich from the ILO. Tony Luscombe, General Manager for Communications at Co-operative Wholesale Society (CWS UK), Byron Henderson, Director of Communications at the Centre for Co-operative Studies of the University of Saskatchewan and Jim Spohrer from Apple Macintosh in California were the keynote speakers.

Distance learning by traditional methods was the topic of the afternoon session with presentations by Dr. Peter Davis from Leicester University and Prof. Suleman Chambo, Principal of the Co-operative College in Moshi, Tanzania. The two papers showed two sides of 20th century reality, but with one common denominator: both concluded that there is a need for distance learning, and that co-operative HRD will continue in the future to depend on distance learning.

Future HRD Meetings

An international HRD seminar on value-based professional management will be hosted by the Indian Movement in Puna, India, 2-13 February 1998.

The theme of the seminar will be linked to the issues of implementation of the co-operative identity, competitive advantage and performance, as well as the multi-cultural aspect. Participants from the various

countries will be asked to contribute short papers on persons who were important conceptual founders and who established values in the early days of the movement. One day will be dedicated to a discussion on networking.

The joint seminar with the ICACC on electronic networking and distance education which took place in Geneva will be followed by discussions with the Research and Women's Committees in line with the HRD Committee policy to work with other ICA specialised bodies.

The Chairman, Yehudah Paz, reported on the Board's decision to approve the Constitution of the Global HRD Committee and informed participants that the regional HRD committees in Asia and Africa have new Constitutions with research added to their mandates. Finally, Prof. Dr. Asar (Egypt) and Dr. Andrade (Colombia) were elected to the Executive.

INTERCOOP

At its meeting in Geneva, INTERCOOP decided to move its secretariat from Copenhagen to Geneva and to replace the present Secretary, Ole Dueholm, by Mats Ahnlund of the ICA, following the decision in 1996 to form a separate joint buying company.

The new secretariat will focus on training and providing services to the working groups on co-operative retailing and will also assist the ICA Development Trust to set up a project assisting consumer co-ops in the Caucasus region.

CICOPA

The CICOPA meeting approved new rules changing the composition of the Executive Committee and including provision for associate membership and the creation of regional sub-committees and development organisations. CECOP is now the official sub-committee for Europe and CICOPA Développement, France the first CICOPA development organisation.

Mr. Marián Rybár of Slovakia was elected President of CICOPA and Arsenio Invernizzi confirmed as Secretary. Future meetings will be held in Paris in October 1998 and in Quebec in 1999.

Specialised Bodies

Co-operative Fisheries (ICFO)

The highlight of the Plenary meeting of the ICFO was the adoption of a resolution calling for member organizations' efforts for the labelling of product origin concerning imported as well as domestically produced products. It is considered of paramount importance to supply consumers with fresh, healthy and quality produce at fair prices.

In many countries, fishermen claim that unfairly cheap imported fish and fish products adversely affect domestic producer prices without benefiting the small scale producers of exporting countries.

Another highlight in 1998 was a decision to hold an international fish cooking contest. The event will be hosted by the National

Federation of Fish Producers in Hungary.

In view of the increasing importance of environmental conservation and food security, the chairman, Shoji Uemura, called for members' to comply with the provisions of the FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. Furthermore, he emphasized the need to promote international trade among co-operatives in such a way that it does not run counter to the interest of producers. Such trade should assist the co-operative sector to establish a better position in food distribution and market share vis-à-vis commercial companies, he stressed.

The ICFO decided to deprive members not paying their dues of

their voting rights and demote them to associate members. From 1997, auditing would take place only every two years. The next "ODA Seminar" in 1998 will be hosted by the new member organisation in Brazil.

OBITUARY

The representatives present at ICFO meetings prayed for one minute in silence for the soul of the late Mr. H. Eddiwan, auditor of ICFO and president of Indonesian Fishermen's Co-operative Societies. Mr. Eddiwan was vice-chairman of the ICA Committee on Fisheries for Asia and the Pacific.

Communications Committee (ICACC)

The ICACC Executive meeting in Geneva on 14 September agreed to hold a Seminar on lobbying in Paris to coincide with the regional assembly next October. Speakers will be invited to focus on lobbying within the UN and EU systems and with national governments, as well as mobilizing members.

The special sub-committee on Trade and Communications, led by Byron Henderson of the University of Saskatchewan, met on 16 and 18 September to discuss trade and technology for co-ops.

The sub-committee agreed to offer technological support to enable all ICA members to have a presence on the World Wide Web within one year. Space will be provided on the ICA Web Site. Apple are donating hardware, software and some technical support to set up interactive pages so that co-operatives can input and update their own pages, with a provision to enable those without internet access to input their information via fax. The group members also committed themselves and their organisations to a number of other concrete projects which have a clear benefit to co-ops, including

assistance to the ICA in its aim to set up a new Web Site dedicated to co-operative trade with an interactive bulletin which members can use to post trade information by e-mail and fax. Apple and Xerox will host the next meeting of the group in February 1998.

Finally, the ICACC held a Seminar with the ICA HRD Committee, with funding from the ILO CoopNet Project, on 17 September. This is detailed in the HRD report.

Specialised Bodies

ICA Global Women's Committee



The ICA Global Women's Committee meets in Geneva.

A new Chairperson and Executive were elected at the Plenary meeting of the Committee. The new Chair, Britten Lagerkvist Tranströmer and the Executive Committee defined priorities for the future. The Committee will look at practical ways of ensuring follow-up to the 1995 Congress resolution on

Gender Equality. Consultations are expected to begin with the specialized bodies to discuss how to improve the representation of women in the sectorial organizations. The Committee will also provide input to the Board regarding the progress of women's representation in the co-operative movement.

After numerous years of excellent work, Katarina Apelqvist turned down the request of members to stand for re-election. Members of the Committee expressed their gratitude for her hard work and persistence in ensuring the women co-operators' voices and concerns were heard. The Committee had grown under her leadership and the women's network was strengthened. The Plenary also thanked outgoing Executive members for their contribution to the work of the Committee. A special thanks was given to Ms. Irena Drazewska (Poland).

Consumer Co-operatives

The meeting of the International Consumer Co-operative Organisation focused on several important programmes: the project on developing and strengthening consumer co-operatives in Latin America will continue to be co-financed in 1998 by ANCC, Italy and KF, Sweden. UK organisations, Co-op Union and CWS, are examining the possibility of subsequent co-financing of the project. CWS materials on education and training programmes will be the basis for a proposal to set up an international training and education programme for members and elected officials of consumer co-operatives.

A Conference on "biotechnologies and sustainable consumption", will be co-funded by the European Commission in Brussels on 23 October 1997.

During elections Giuseppe Fabretti, ANCC-Italy, and Hisashi Tanaka, JCCU-Japan, were confirmed as Chairman and Vice Chairman. Executive members are Silvester Adamca, Slovakia; Sigurd Bak, Germany; Petr Brozek, Czech Republic; Anne Buch-Jorgensen, Denmark; Lars Hillbom, Sweden; Patrice Jolivet, France; Zoltan Szoke, Hungary; and Lloyd Wilkinson, UK.

Research

The Research Committee met in Bertinoro, Italy, from 2 - 5 October 1997 to discuss the role of co-operatives in the present economic climate. Over seventy researchers participated, over forty papers were presented and eleven workshops discussed issues ranging from Innovation and Community and the Co-operative Image to New Social Co-ops to Gender and Privatisation, Public Policy and Legal Issues. Future annual conferences will take place in Cork, Ireland, in 1998 and Quebec, Canada, in 1999.

Banking

The ICA specialised organisation for co-operative banks focused on the issue of capital formation. This has been on the agenda for some time as international standards specify capital requirements which many co-operative banks have had problems meeting. ICBA also arranged a seminar on the topic, which was attended by some 80 people from co-operative banking worldwide.

Development Meetings

Development Trust Advisory Board

The first meeting of the Advisory Board met on 18 September when the members, individuals and representatives of organizations dealing with co-operative development were given an introduction to the ICA Development Trust before discussing their role and function to provide guidance on policy, strategy and the direction of the Development Programme to the Trust Board.

The Advisory Board will meet again in December in Marburg to decide on working methods and discuss the first draft of a new ICA Development Strategy.

The Advisory Board will discuss key issues facing the ICA Development Trust which will be incorporated in the new strategy. These include the role of co-operatives in development strategies, the environment, policy framework and practice, co-operative legislation and other regulatory frameworks, and new relationship with governments.

Other issues concern adjustment process and transition, identity and democracy, leadership and value-based professional management, capital, women and youth, new structures, new areas of activity and weak apexes/member organisations. These issues will be reflected in the new development policy/strategy.

Regional Directors' Meeting



Ada S. Kibora, Robby Tulus, Gabriella Sozanski, Vincent Lubasi and Juan Diego Pacheco are ICA staff responsible for the different regions. They are shown here with Roberto Rodrigues, ICA President.

Dates, venues and programmes of regional meetings for 1998 were agreed with themes reflecting that of the 1999 General Assembly "Adding Value to Membership - the Co-operative Challenge for the Next Millennium".

A number of other development events are planned in conjunction with the Regional Assemblies: global members meeting and meetings of regional specialised committees (Asia/Pacific), Ministerial Conference follow up, Regional Council and regional committee meetings (Africa), conference on trade blocs, youth conference and sectorial meetings (the Americas), Development Trust Advisory Board and Regional Directors' meeting (Europe).

Other Meetings

Baltic Sea Co-op Environmental Project

A part of the ICA long-term environmental strategy is to find models for transferring experience from environmentally successful co-ops to other ICA members. The models must also be economically successful as we want to show that it is good business to "go green". ICA is therefore monitoring and evaluating a project exchanging experiences of 16 ICA members in the Baltic Sea area. The project is led by a Steering Committee which met in Geneva in September. The main topic discussed was the joint development of an environmentally friendly detergent to be sold by all consumer co-ops in the region.

Business Opportunities

When ICA asked its members what it could do better, the members answered that "providing business opportunities" was a very high priority. A lunch seminar, attended by some 40 people, was arranged in Geneva.

The successful business work among co-operatives was presented by the Regional Director for the Americas, Juan Diego Pacheco, while Byron Henderson of the University of Saskatchewan, outlined the work of the new ICACC Sub-Committee on Trade and Communications.

Profile of New ICA President



Left to right, back row: Son Paulo, son-in-law Darcy, Roberto and son Rodrigo. Front row: daughter-in-law Lia, daughter Candida, wife Eloisa and daughter Marta.

An agricultural producer, Roberto Rodrigues became president of his local sugarcane planters' co-operative in 1973, and served two terms as President of the Organisation of Co-operatives of Brazil from 1985-91. In 1990 he founded and presided over EXIMCOOP, which is now one of Brazil's five largest soybean exporters. He subsequently served as Minister of Agriculture of São Paulo State, and as President of the Brazilian Rural Society.

Mr. Rodrigues has been a member of the ICA Board since 1992, Chairman of the ICA Americas' region since 1993, and Chairman of the ICA Agriculture Committee from 1992-95.

Good-Bye Co-operative Friends!



Graham Melmoth



Hakaru Toyoda



Ivano Barberini



Raija Itkonen



Ota Karen



Jacques Moreau



Holger Hasle Nielsen



Markus Schelker

Departing Board and Audit & Control members.

ICA CALENDAR 7

■ 3-4 November 1997
ICA Europe Seminar
on EU Enlargement
Prague, Czech Republic

■ 18 November 1997
ICA Board Meeting
Mexico City, Mexico

■ 19-21 November 1997
Regional
Conference
for the Americas
Mexico City, Mexico

■ 5-7 December 1997
Development
Trust Advisory
Board
Marburg, Germany

■ February 1998
ICACC Trade
& Communic.
Cupertino, CA, USA

■ February 1998
ICA Housing Seminar
Manila, Philippines

■ 20 March 1998
ICA European Council
Helsinki, Finland

■ April 1998
ICA Housing Board
& Seminar
Cairo, Egypt

■ 21-22 April 1998
ICA Board Meeting
Tokyo, Japan

■ 13-17 May 1998
ICA Research Committee
Cork, Ireland

■ August 1998
Regional Assembly
for Africa
Lusaka, Zambia

■ 15-16 October 1998
Regional Assembly
for Europe
Paris, France

■ 17 October 1998
ICA Board Meeting
Paris, France

■ October 1998
Seminar on Co-ops
& Lobbying
Paris, France

■ October 1998
Regional Assembly
for Asia
& the Pacific
Seoul, Korea

■ October 1998
ICA Housing Board
& Seminar
Algarve, Portugal

■ November 1998
Regional Assembly for the
Americas
Montevideo, Uruguay

■ August 1999
ICA General Assembly
& Congress
Quebec City, Canada