



# Understanding our history to build a stronger future

This exhibition is a snapshot of the birth of the global cooperative movement. In the coming months, this initiative will evolve to include other pieces of our collective history. A booklet with further historical information has also been produced by the ICA to mark its 125th anniversary.

Download the booklet here:



## Acknowledgments

This work has been made possible with thematic contributions by members of the ICA some of whom were represented during its creation in 1895. Contributions also came from resources from the Cooperative Heritage Trust, Cooperative News and the ICA Domus Trust Library, among others. We thank the ICA Cooperative Law Committee for their timely support to the initiative.

We also want to acknowledge the invaluable cooperation of ICA staff Antonina Guarrella, Gretchen Hacquard, Sabitha Venkatesan (retired as librarian from ICA-AP 2015), Zuraidah Hoffman, Hyungsik Eum, Sumi Cho and Bruno Roelants, and our friends Rebecca Harvey and Anca Voinea (The Cooperative News), Rita Rhodes (Renowned cooperative historian and formerly Secretary to the ICA Women's Committee and member of the Consultative Committee working on the review of cooperative identity ahead of the 1995 ICA Centennial Congress), Gillian Lonergan (Retired Librarian Cooperatives UK, Cooperative College UK and the Cooperative Heritage Trust), Ana Aguire (Spain), Justine John, Nagac (The Philippines), Anders Lago (Sweden), Korbinian März (Germany), Savitri Singh, Sanjay Verma and Chandan Singh (India) Sophie Leuenberger and Hans Rupp (Switzerland), Hans Goreneveld (The Netherlands), Adam Piechowski (Poland), Jean-Pierre Girard and Alexandra Wilson (Canada), L. Zaitseva (Russia), Gwangseong Hong (R.Korea), Hariyoshi Amano and Kenki Maeda (Japan), Lauren Naranjo (Cooperatives of the Americas), Danila Curcio and Stefania Marcone (Italy), Marjaana Saarikoski (Finland), Pavel Černý (Czech Republic), Diego Alejandro Galindo Gomez (Colombia), Geoffrey Asira (ICA Africa) Nadia Robledo and Patricio Suarez (Argentina), Emily Alice (USA) and many more friends, for their timely cooperation in helping us obtain images and information.

Our special thanks to the following persons for contributing with written testimonies of their countries' cooperative history: Daniel Plotinsky (Argentina), Eva Bauer (Austria), Jacques Debry (Belgium), Petar Stefanov (Bulgaria), Jean-Pierre Girard and Alexandra Wilson (Canada), María Eugenia Pérez Zea (Colombia), Pavel Černý (Czech Republic), Marjaana Saarikoski (Finland), Jean-François Draperi (France), Peter Gleber (Germany), Sudhir Mahajan (India), Mattia Granata (Italy), the NH Economic Research Institute (R.Korea), Alexander Sobolev (Russia), J.M. Hans Groeneveld (the Netherlands), Mieczyslaw Grodzki and Adam Piechowski (Poland), Anders Lago (Sweden), Franz Horváth (Switzerland) Bernadette Toledo Carmel Neri JUSTIN JOHN NAGAC (the Philippines), Rita Rhodes and Gillian Lonergan (UK), and Ann Hoyt (USA).

Read an interview with Rita Rhodes here: <https://www.ica.coop/en/newsroom/news/revisiting-icas-long-history-interview-dr-rita-rhodes>

Read an interview with Rita Rhodes here

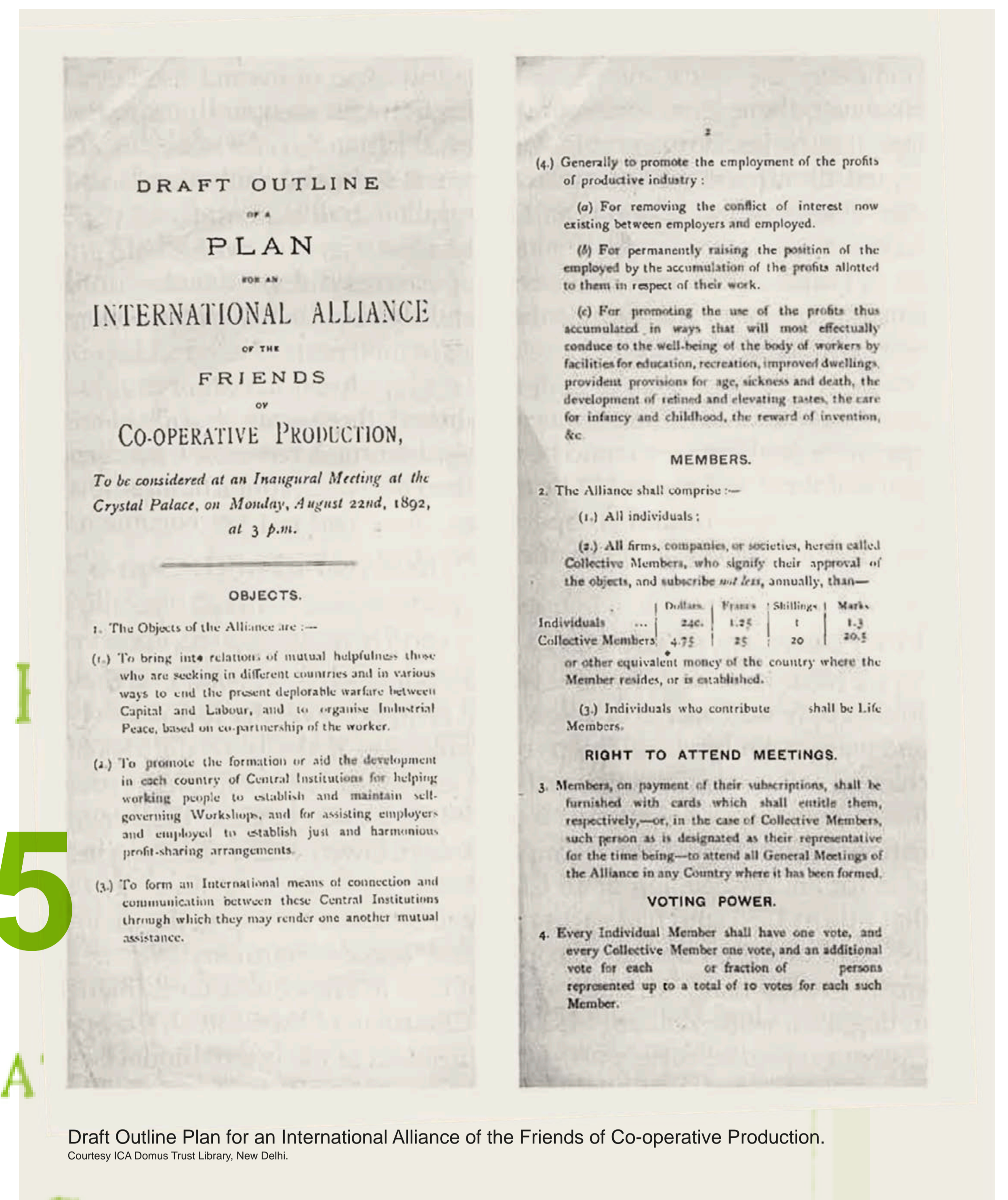




# The first beginnings **1895** ⇨ **2020**

The International Cooperative Alliance was founded in London in 1895 during the 1st International Cooperative Congress. In attendance were delegates and visitors from cooperatives from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Italy, Ireland, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Serbia, the UK, and the USA.

Since its creation, the International Cooperative Alliance has had the primary responsibility for defining the meaning of a cooperative. The idea of convening an international congregation of cooperators gained support in the latter half of the 19th century specifically after foreign cooperators participated at the first British Co-operative Congress in 1869. Further momentum was gained after the Paris International Cooperative Exhibition and the 4th Congress of the French Cooperative Distributive Societies in 1889, which witnessed the presence of representatives from Argentina, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Switzerland, the UK, the USA, among others.



## CO-OPERATIVE CONGRESS.

HELD IN THE  
 HALL OF THE SOCIETY OF ARTS,  
 ON

19th, 20th, 22nd,



P. S.  
 12 & 14 KING ST  
 THE INTERNATIONAL  
 15 SOUTHAMPT

*Identity is often explained as the sum of one's experiences. Today, our common cooperative identity is representative of the experiences of more than 100 national movements from diverse sectors. This reflects the international character of the cooperative business model, which has been nurtured by our universal values and principles.*

*This exhibition follows the spirit of the Chinese saying "become familiar with the past in order to understand the present" and resonates with this sentiment captured by William Pascoe Watkins:*

*"Social institutions, such as the International Cooperative Alliance, which lose sight of their past are in danger of losing control of their future."*

Download the booklet here:





## At the Business Meetings.

SE.—The 128th quarterly general meeting was held in the Co-operative Hall on Tuesday evening last week; Mr. Ross presided over a large attendance. The balance sheet, showing the sales for the quarter to amount to £512 less than last quarter, and £356 less than the quarter last year. The divisible profit, after defraying working expenses, amounts to £983 13s. 5d., and after £5s. 11d. to reserve fund, £2 10s. to educational and £1. £1 to Quarter Pit disaster, £1 to festival guarantee to band sports, admits of a dividend of 2s. 11d. in the members' purchases. Mr. James Donaldson was re-elected treasurer in room of Mr. C. McGregor, jun., was elected treasurer in room of Messrs. Wallace, Hunt, and Smith were elected committee in room of Messrs. Clement, Tough, and adjourned general meeting was held on Tuesday night. Questions came up for discussion, including the proposal to meet the requirements of the members residing at the central store. After discussion, it was agreed to continue the matter for twelve months. It was agreed to pay to the Falkirk Conference Fund from a half-penny per share-farthings per member.

—The usual bi-quarterly meeting was held in the Kingburn, on Friday evening last week. Mr. William Ross said the society was progressing very rapidly, forty having joined during the previous week, and he believed the coming would be one of the best they had had for sales. It was decided to make in the tailoring and dressmaking departments new buildings were being settled. It was also decided to had gone to local tradesmen, and the new buildings would also be given in the next year. The nominations for the next auditor for nine months; and the nominations committee, Messrs. Jas. Ferguson, Jas. Wilson, George Wilson, and Jos. Kerr; for auditor, Mr. Jas. Miller (Isley) was received as a deputy treasurer on the Seaside. It was also received to his appeal for a building fund of that institution. The quarterly meeting was also voted to the Quarter Pit disaster, £1 to festival guarantee and the Festival Guarantee Fund. By a large majority to continue the present mode of treasurership in favour of an employé treasurer.

DUNPACE.—The quarterly meeting of members was held on Thursday evening last week; the ninety-third quarterly meeting showed that the total sales for the quarter amounted to £128 over the corresponding quarter after defraying working expenses, adding £18 to the reserve fund, and £20 4s. 2d. to next quarter's dividend over all of £300. The quarterly meeting was held in the Institute Hall, where Mr. Wm. Leishman (president) and balance sheet were presented, and after making the usual arrangements for buildings, &c., and paying the quarterly dividend of £1. in the pound to non-member members were enrolled during the present membership increasing department of £114 18s. 6d. to the Quarter Pit disaster fund. Mr. Ross presided for twelve months, and Mr. C. McGregor, jun. was re-elected treasurer.

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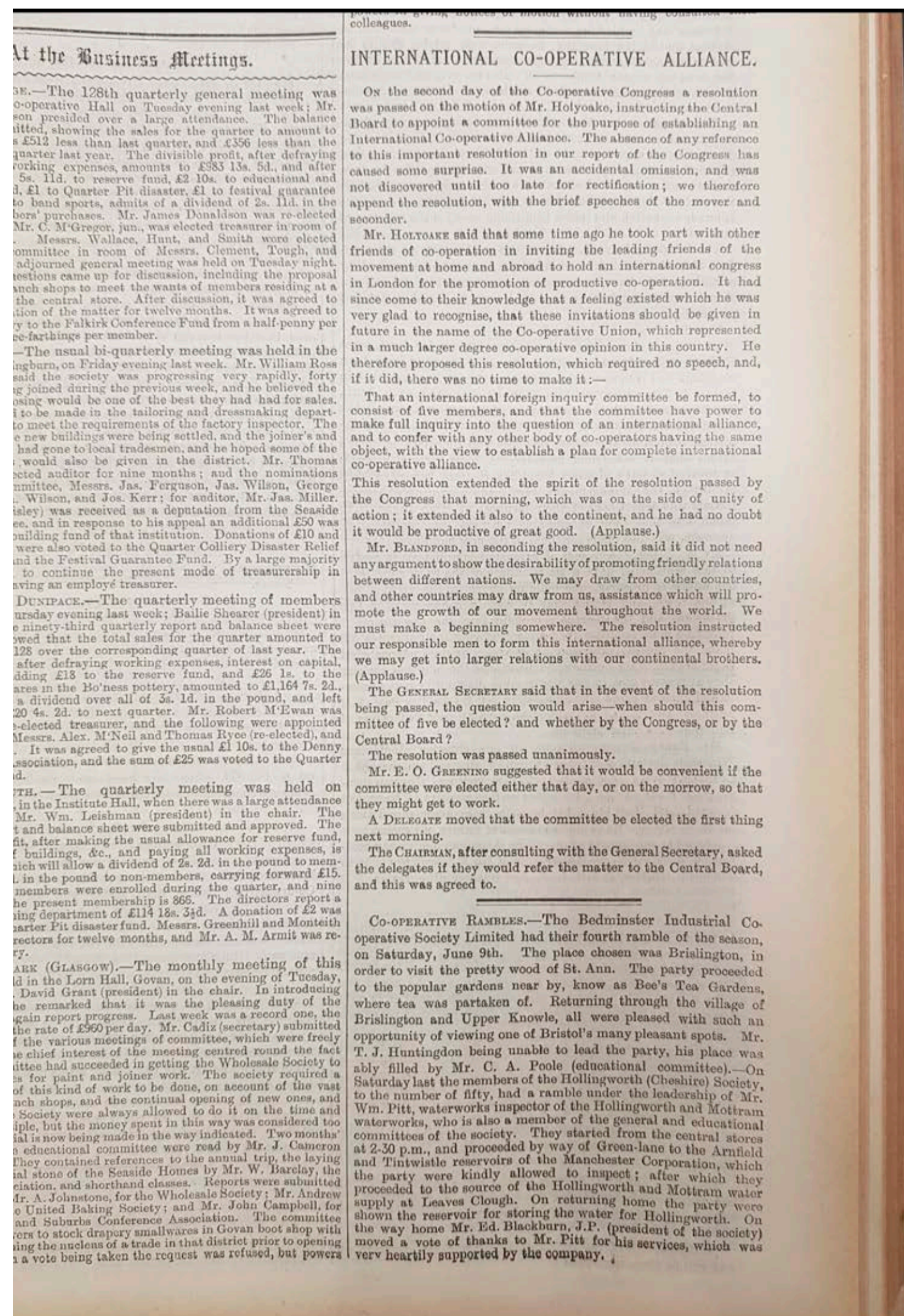
## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATIVE ALLIANCE.

On the second day of the Co-operative Congress a resolution was passed on the motion of Mr. Holyoake, instructing the Central Board to appoint a committee for the purpose of establishing an International Co-operative Alliance. The absence of any reference to this important resolution in our report of the Congress has caused some surprise. It was an accidental omission, and was not discovered until too late for rectification; we therefore append the resolution, with the brief speeches of the mover and seconder.

Mr. HOLYOAKE said that some time ago he took part with other friends of co-operation in inviting the leading friends of the movement at home and abroad to hold an international congress in London for the promotion of productive co-operation. It had since come to their knowledge that a feeling existed which he was very glad to recognise, that these invitations should be given in future in the name of the Co-operative Union, which represented in a much larger degree co-operative opinion in this country. He therefore proposed this resolution, which required no speech, and, if it did, there was no time to make it:—

That an international foreign committee be formed, to consist of five members, and that the committee have power to make full inquiries into the existing state of international co-operation, and to report thereon to the Congress, or to the Central Board, or to the International Co-operative Alliance.

This resolution extended the spirit of the resolution passed by the Congress that morning, which was on the side of unity of thought, it extended it also to the continent, and he had no doubt would be the first step towards the formation of an international co-operative alliance.

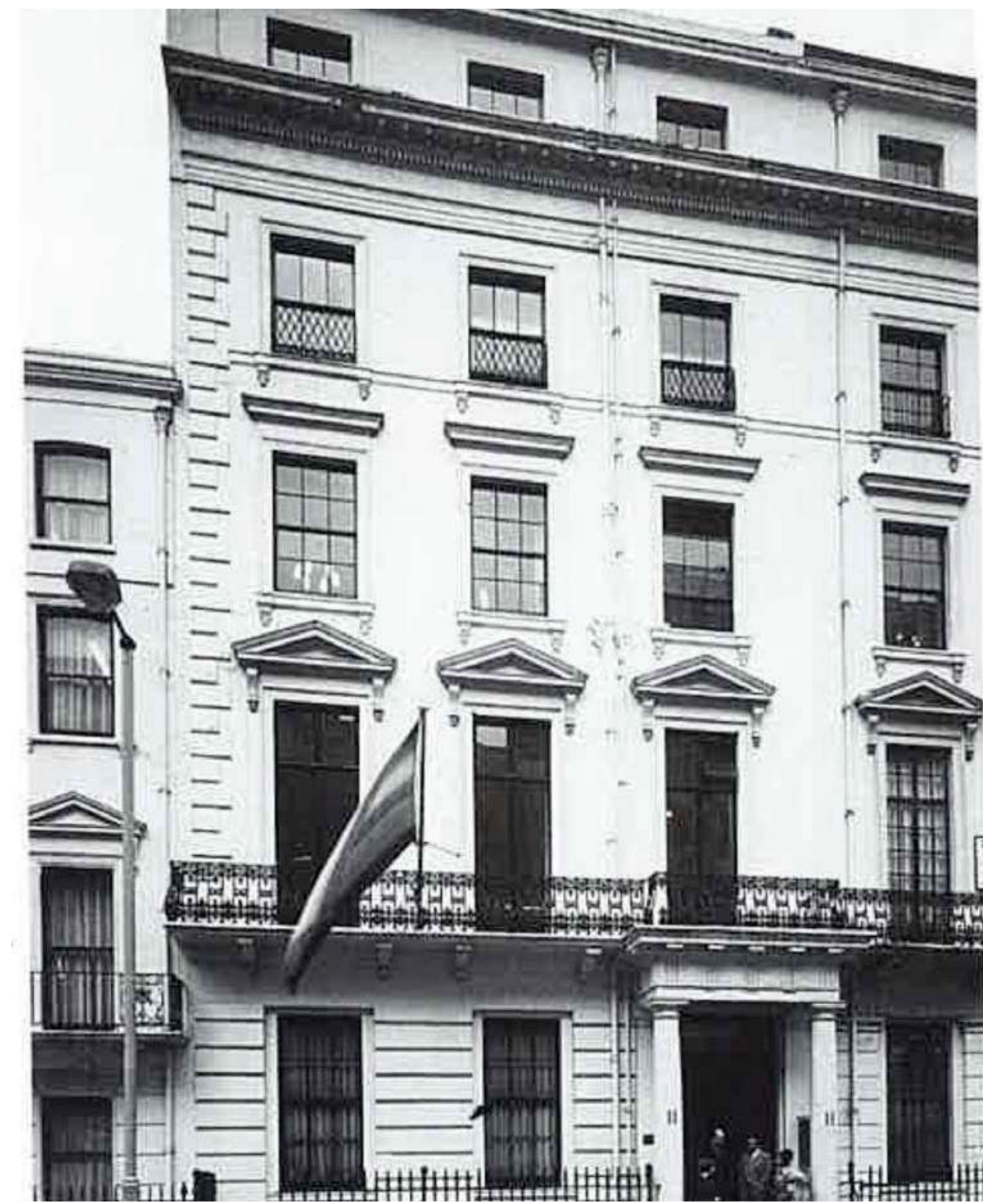


Report by the Cooperative News on the creation of the Foreign Inquiry Committee (1885). Courtesy The Co-operative News

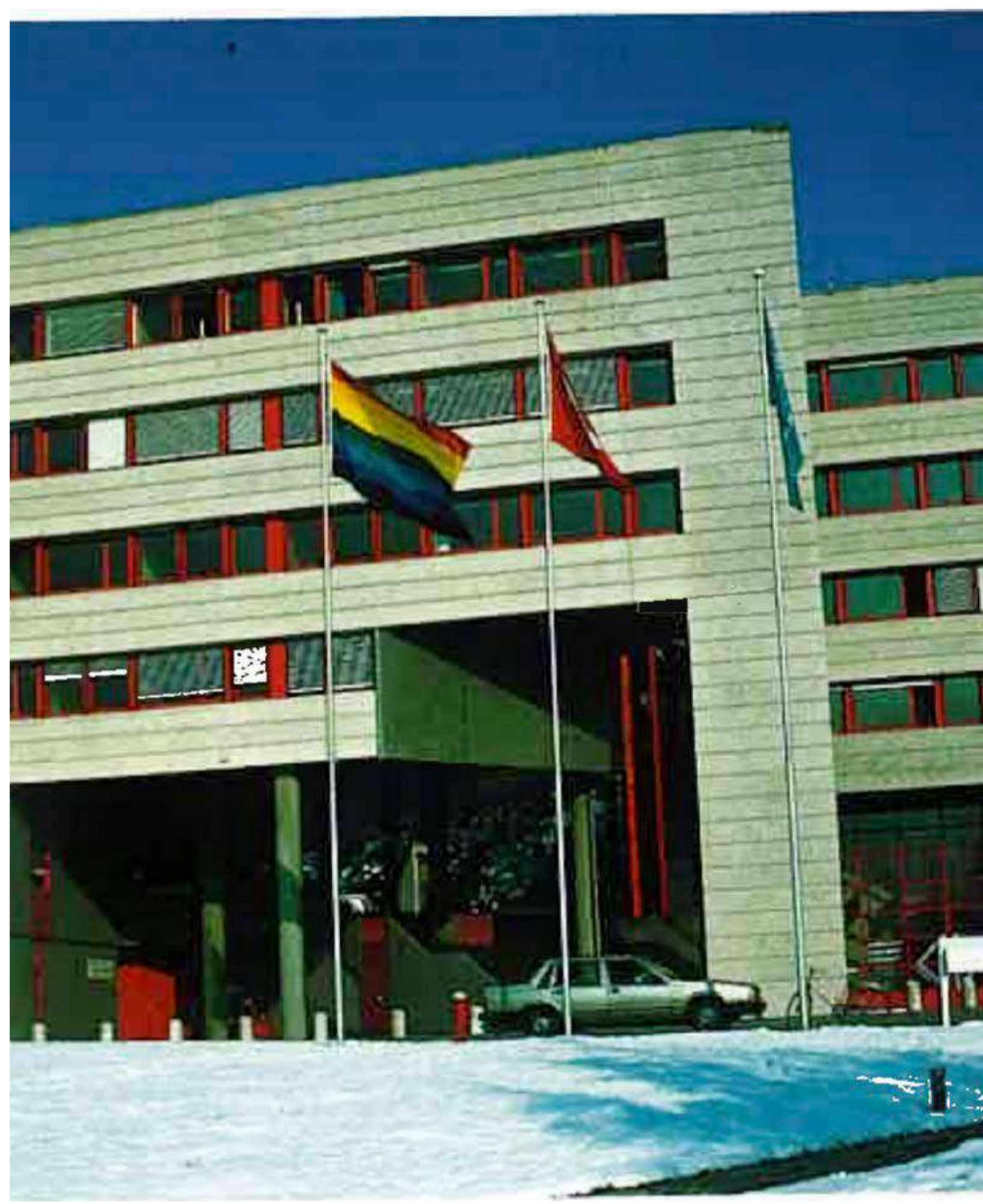
The Co-operative Union in Britain created a Foreign Inquiry Committee to examine the question of convening a First International Cooperative Congress. In 1892, Edward Owen Greening, chairman of the committee called upon Edward Vansittart Neale to undertake the task of appealing to cooperative producers outside the UK, to participate in the International Congress.

In 1893, an annual meeting of cooperators was held in place of the first International Cooperative Congress which had to be postponed due to the loss of Edward Vansittart Neale. At that time, the proposed name of the alliance was the “International Alliance of the Friends of Co-operative Production”.

During this 1893 meeting, a motion was introduced by Horace Plunkett and it was agreed to include within the scope of the international alliance, other forms of cooperation with the notable mention of cooperative banking which gained more admirers following the paper on People's Bank in Germany by Henry W. Wolff. Therefore, the meeting agreed to adopt the name International Cooperative Alliance to represent the interests of cooperatives across all sectors.



ICA office building in London, UK  
Photograph by the ICA Commission Department, published in 1956 by the ICA Commission Department.



Global office, Geneva, Switzerland (1982).



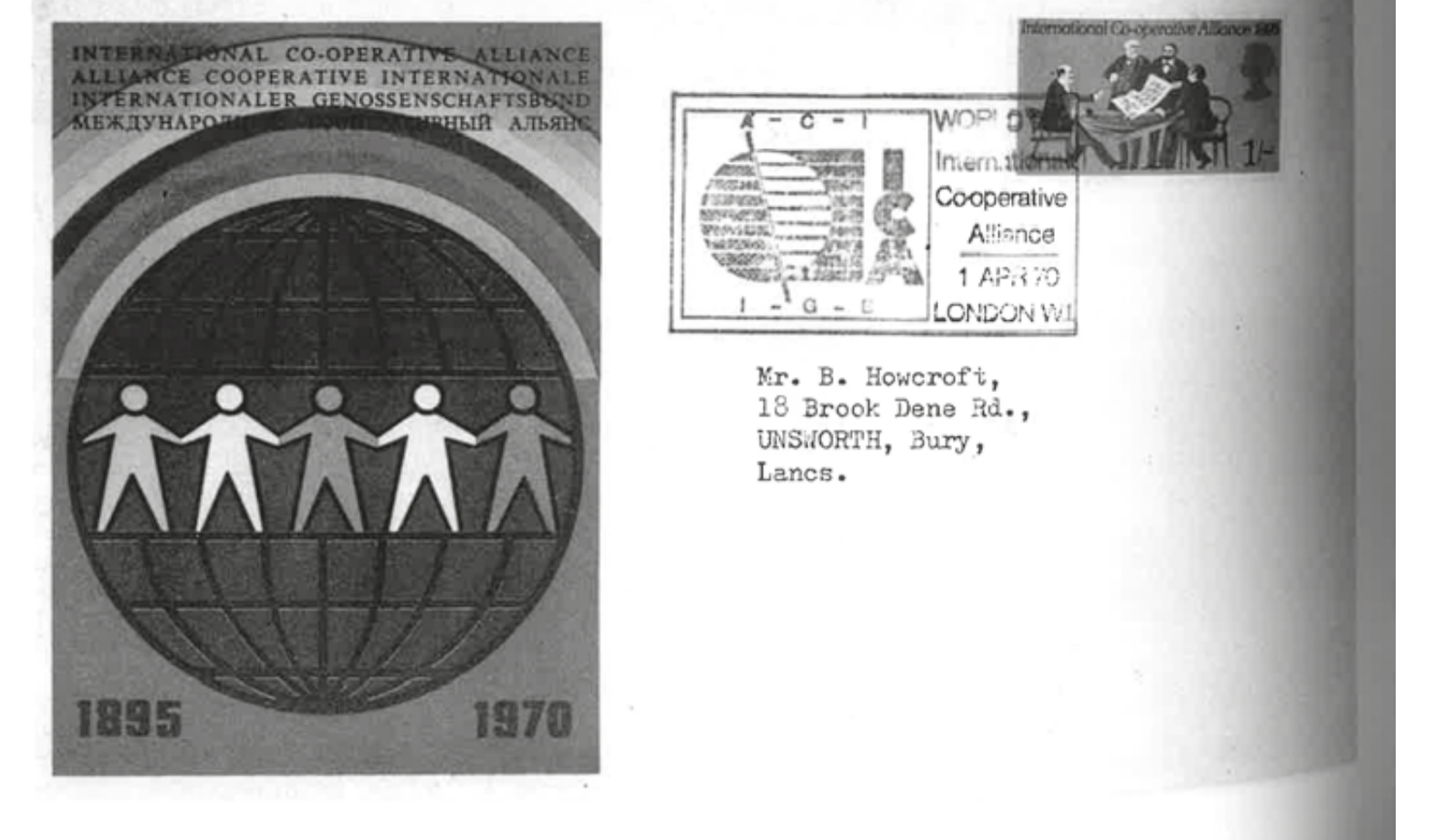
ICA Global Office Building today (2021)

The ICA was formally created between 19 to 23 August 1895 in London, and currently works out of its Global Office in Brussels, Belgium, and through its regional offices and sectoral organizations spread around the world.





1895



## Approximately 200 persons from 14 countries participated in the 1st International Cooperative Congress held at the Hall of the Society of Arts, London and formed the International Cooperative Alliance with the following aspirations:

Make known the cooperators of each country and their work to the cooperators of all other countries by Congresses, the publication of literature, and other suitable means

Elucidate by international discussion and correspondence on the nature of **true cooperative principles**

Establish commercial relations between the cooperators of different countries for their mutual advantage.

The International Cooperative Congress adopted 14 resolutions including the creation of the Alliance which elaborated the preparation of a constitution of the ICA. Delegates decided to meet again for the second Congress in the late autumn 28 – 31 October in Paris (France) by which they intended to mark further progress in the work of collecting information and bringing together in mutual helpfulness the co-operators of all nations. The subsequent years witnessed the organic development of the ICA as one of the most well represented international non-governmental organisations, among the first to receive the consultative status with the United Nations and a true global voice for cooperatives.

# Birth of a new movement – the international one



Bolton Co-operative Guildswomen Celebrated their branch's 21st anniversary in October 1907, the beehive, symbol of industry

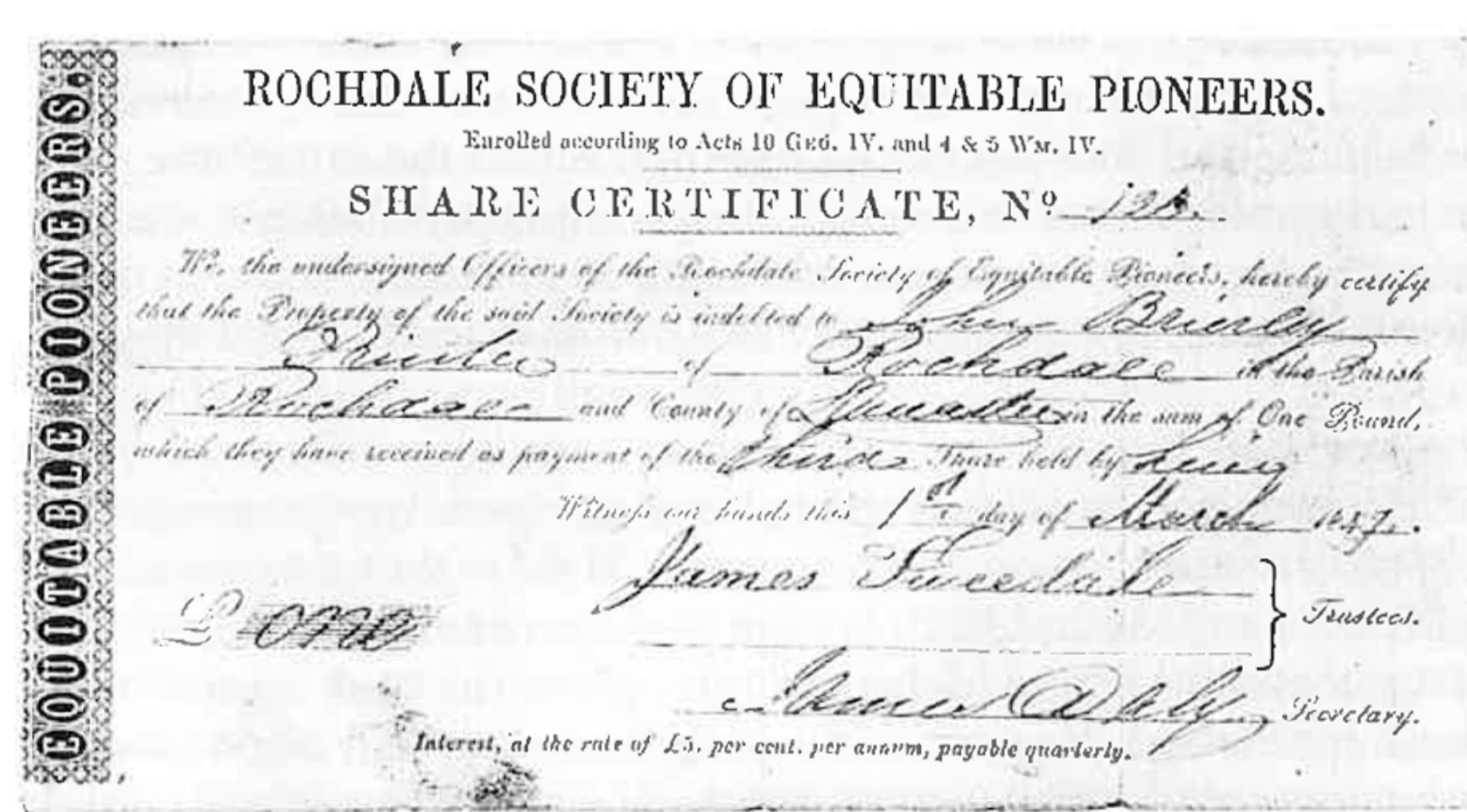
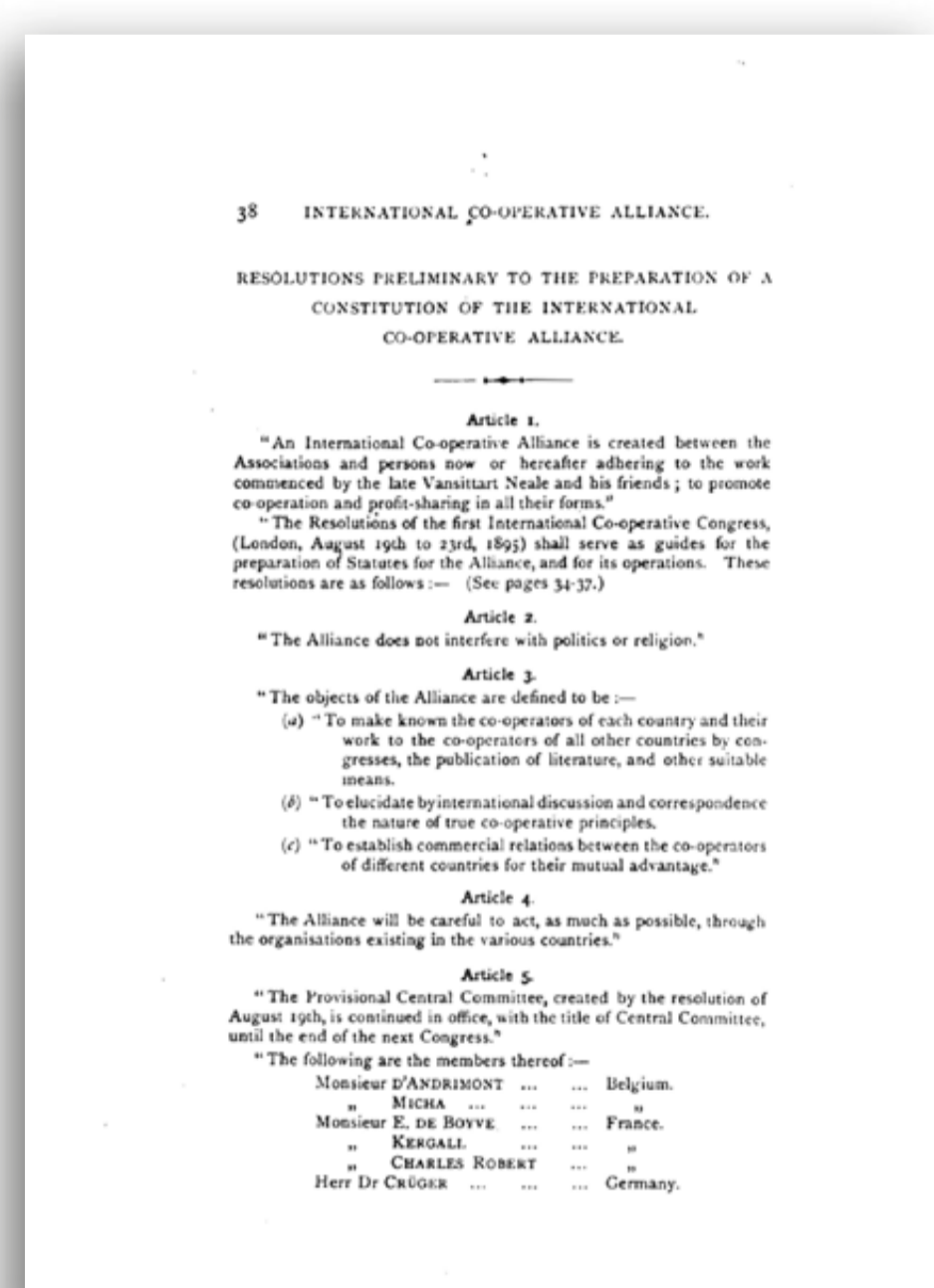
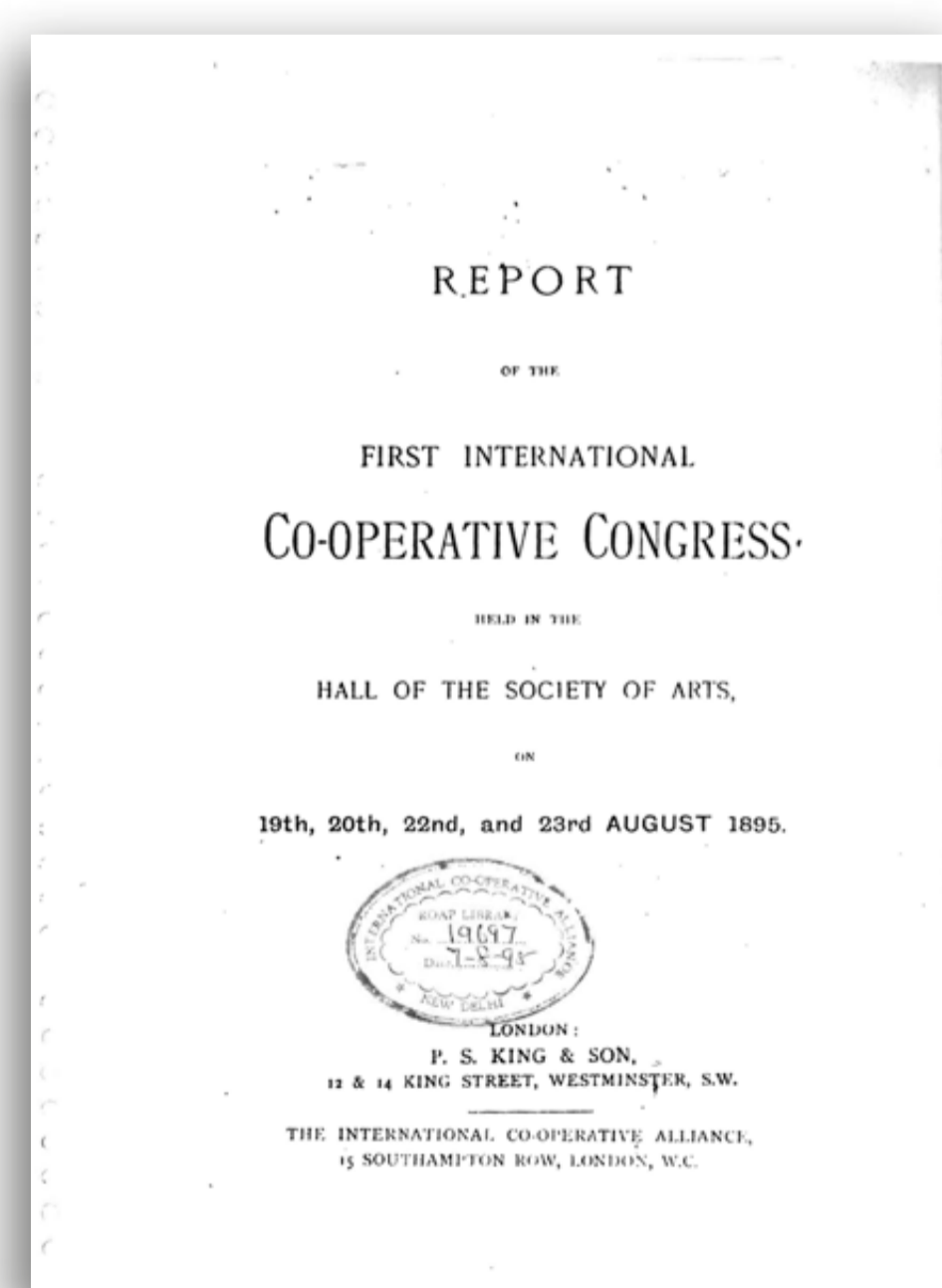


The Rochdale Pioneers



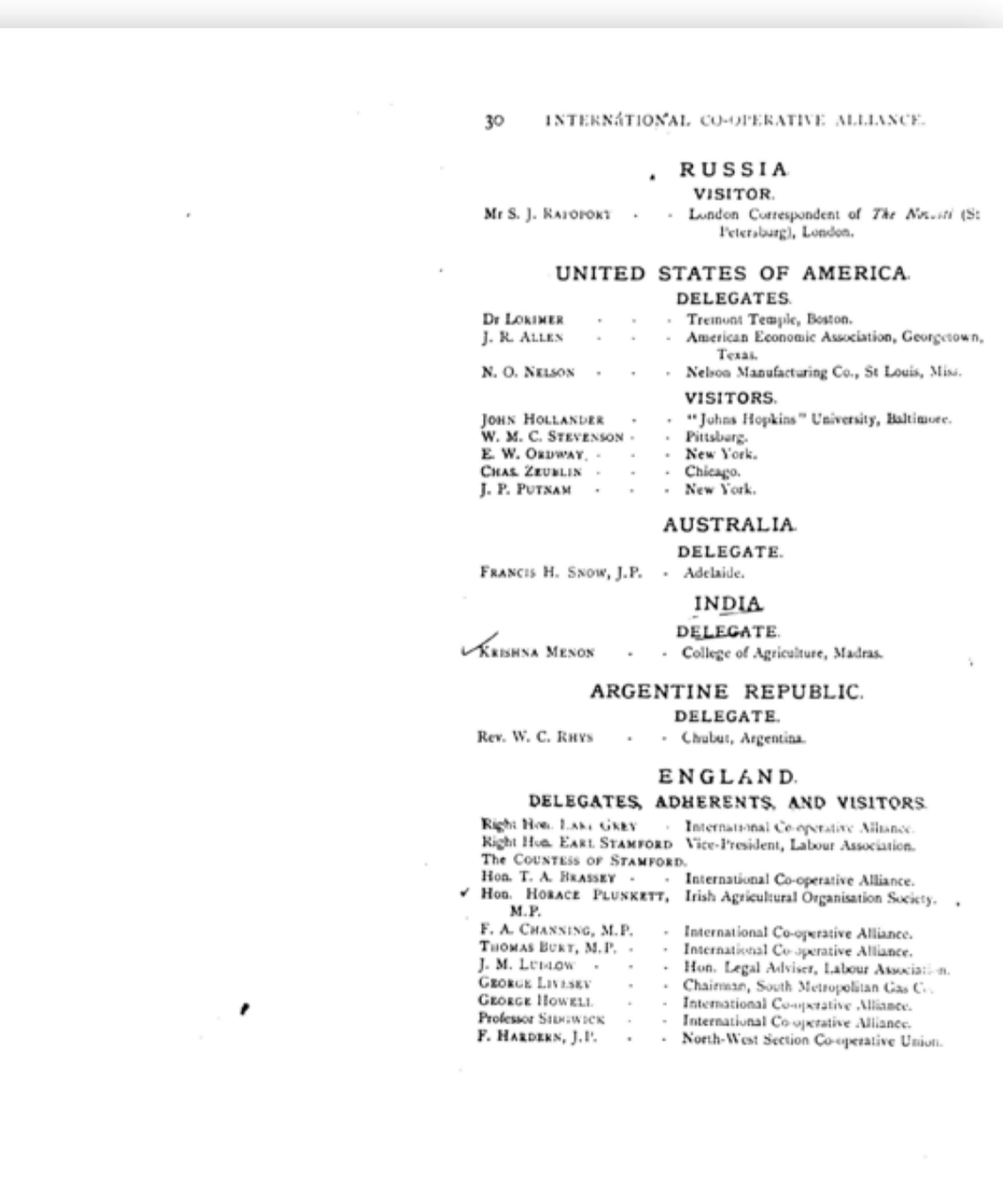
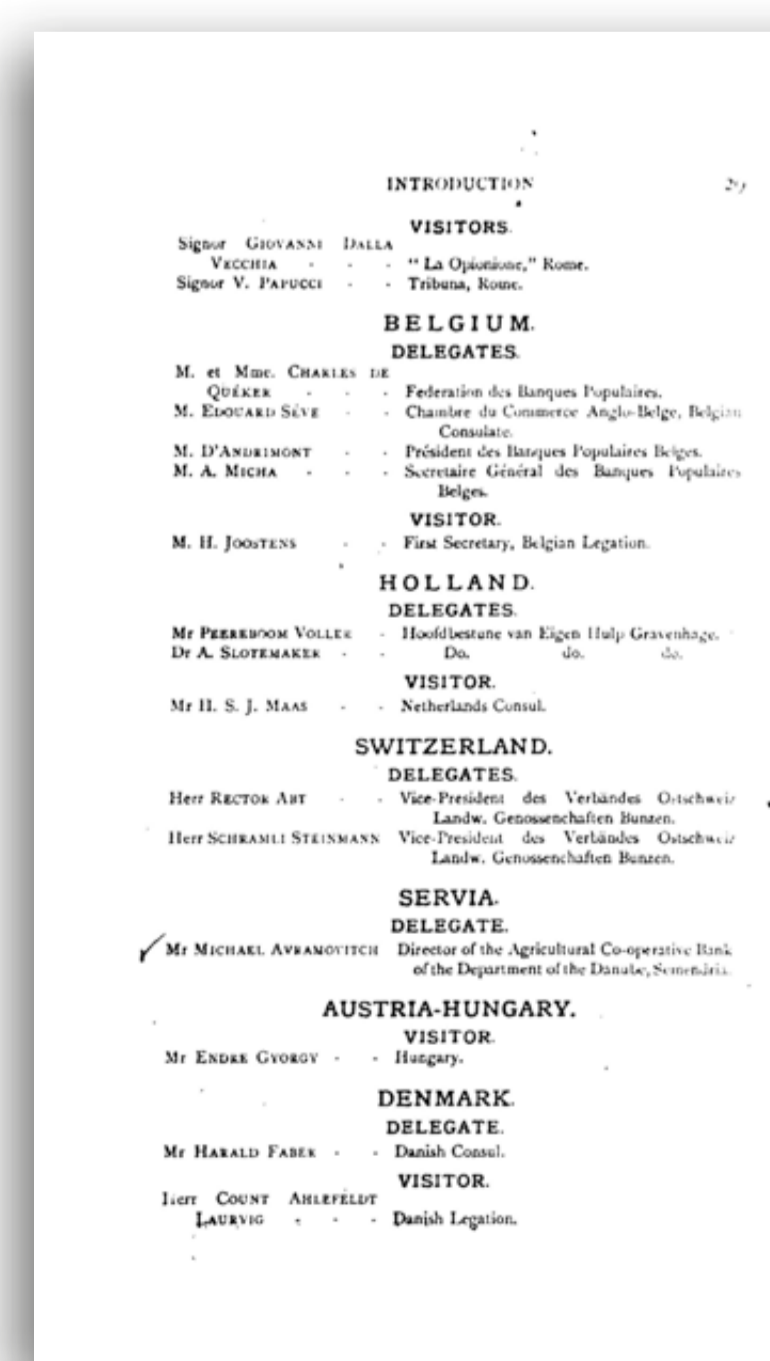
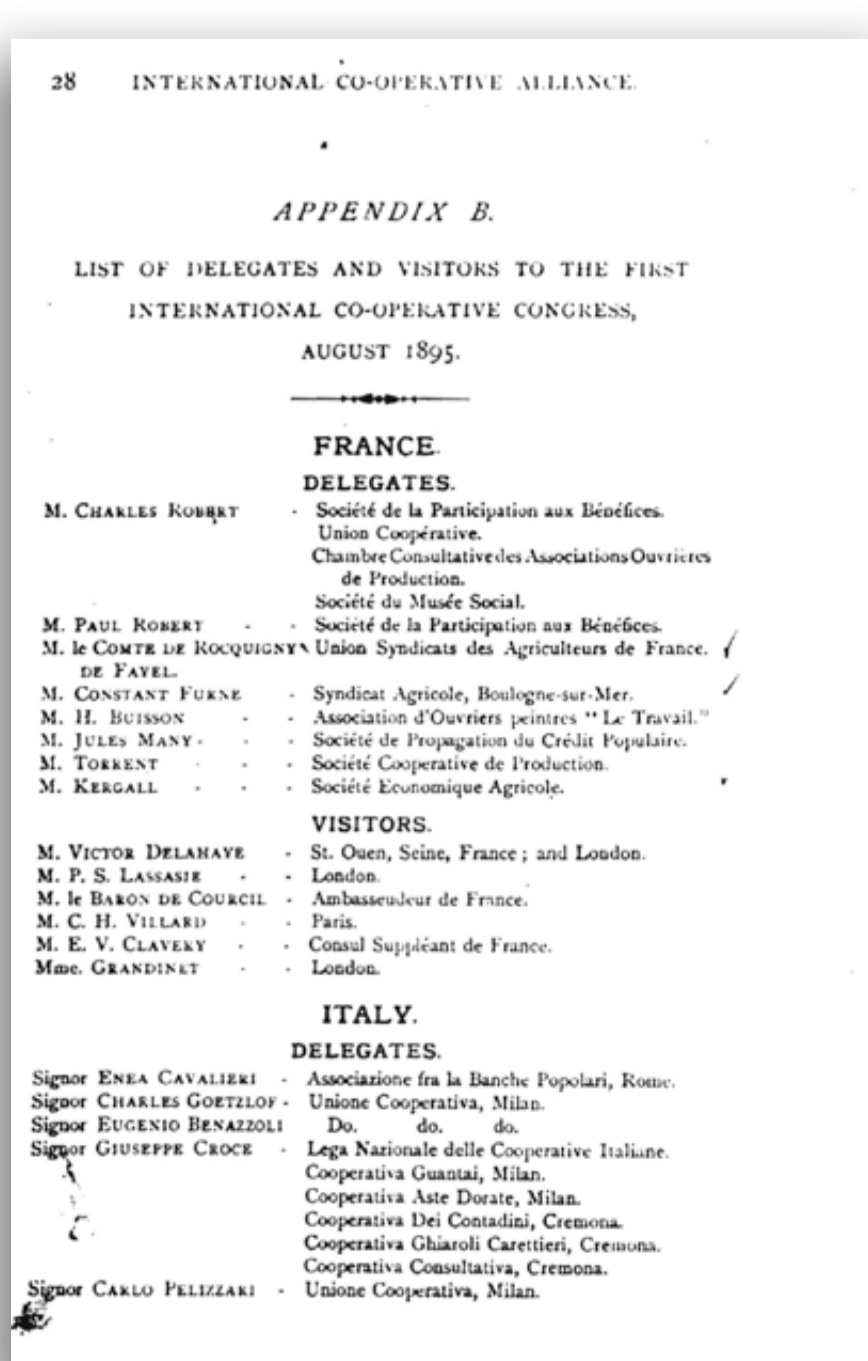
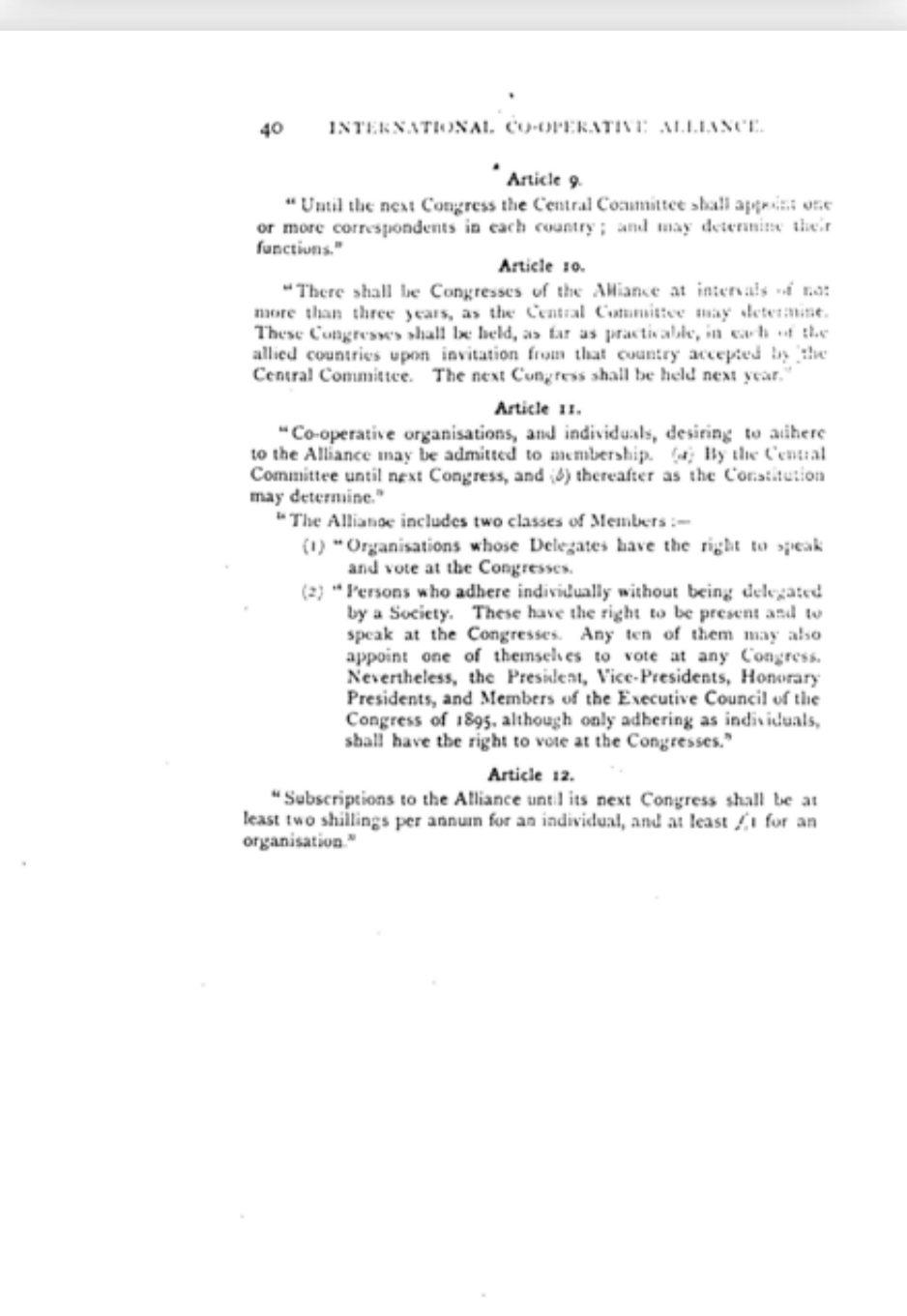
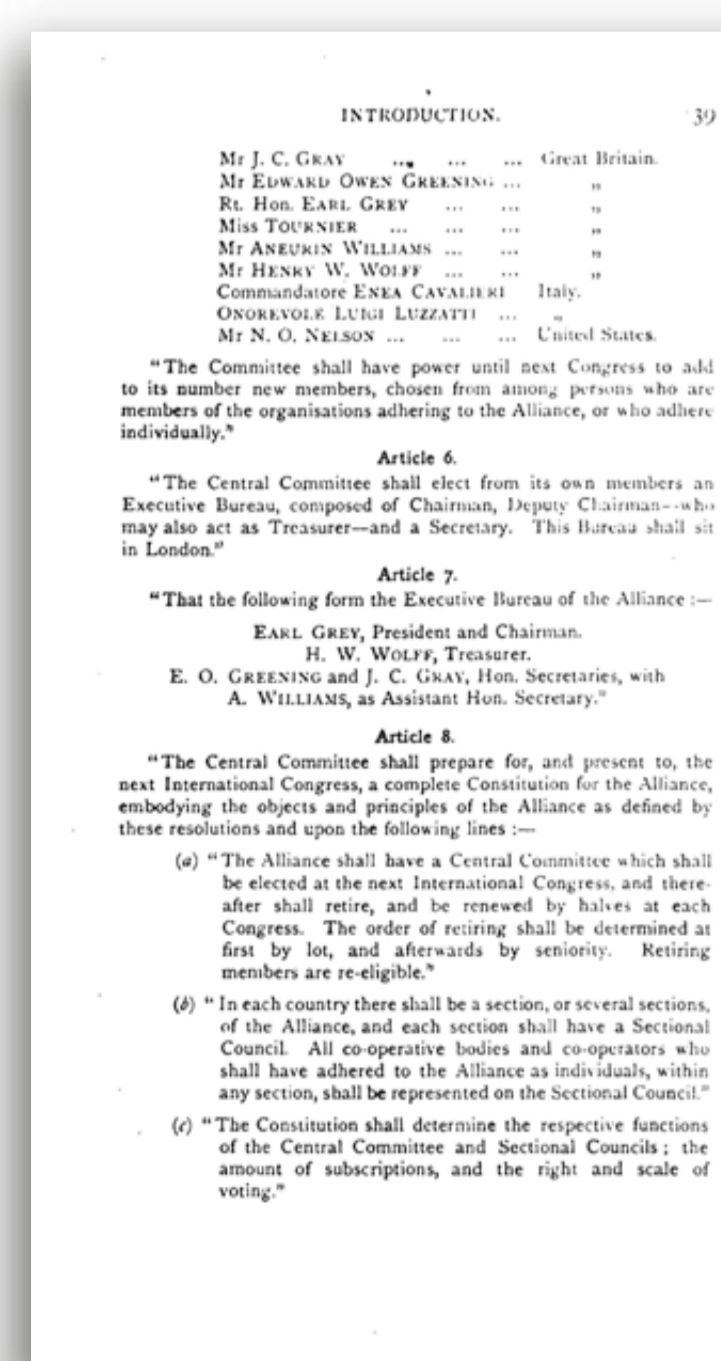
Group of ICA Delegates at its 1910 Congress in Hamburg, Germany, which welcomed representatives from Japan and India

The Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers and the Share certificate: ICA During War and Peace 1910-1960 by Rita Rhodes. Published in 1995 by the ICA



Rochdale Pioneers' Share Certificate

Resolutions preliminary to the preparation of the Constitution of the ICA  
 ICA Domain Trust Library, New Delhi (India)



List of Delegates to the first International Congress  
 ICA Domain Trust Library, New Delhi (India)





« I am distressed to see you so restrained, so modest and so prudent. With your 70 million cooperators to the ICA you represent a force and influence which justify you in speaking with no uncertain voice - whether it concerns the economic crisis or the struggle for peace and disarmament. »

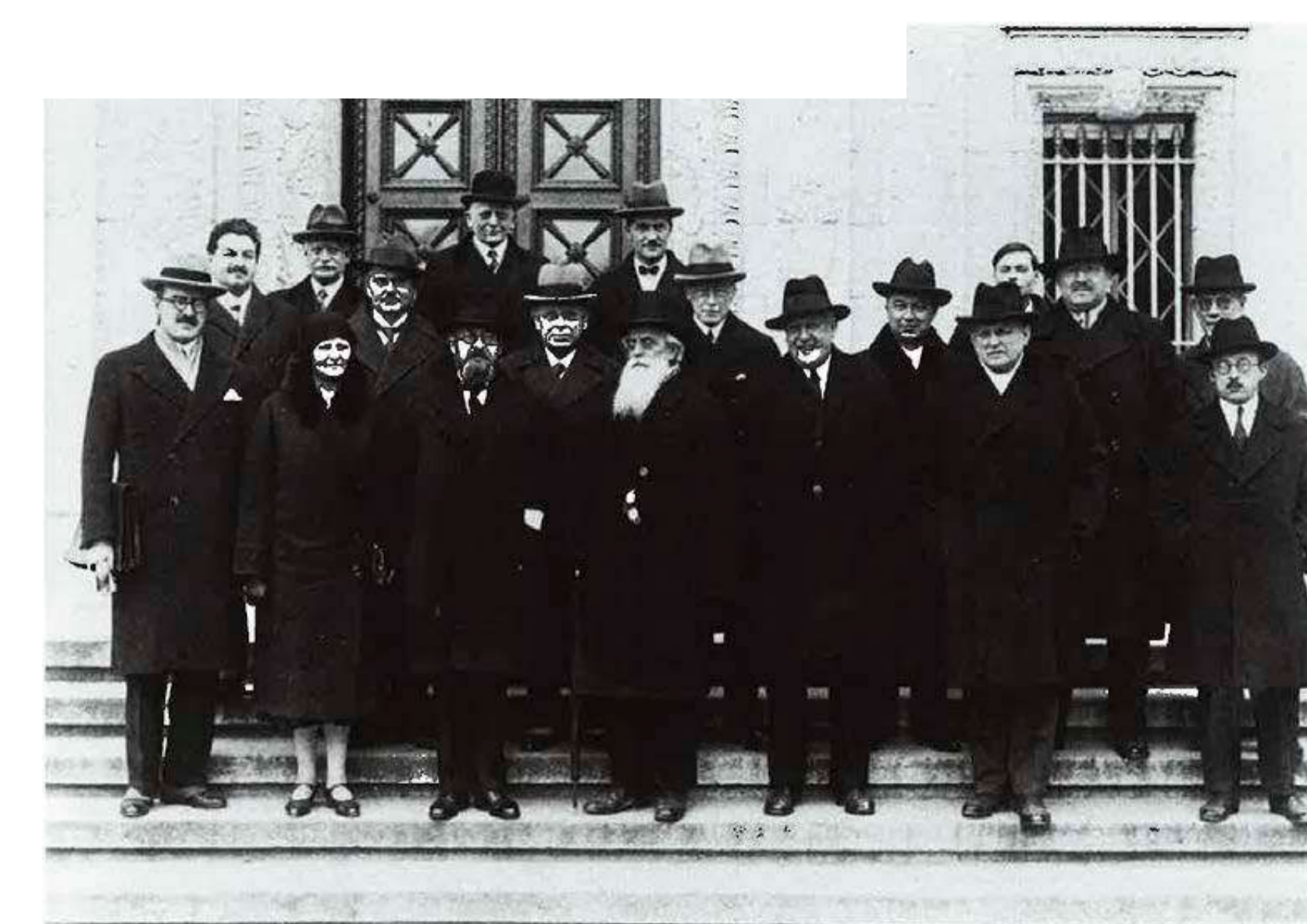
Albert Thomas, the long standing member of the ICA Central Committee and the First Director of the International Labour Organization said this to the ICA in 1931

# Milestones in shaping our identity

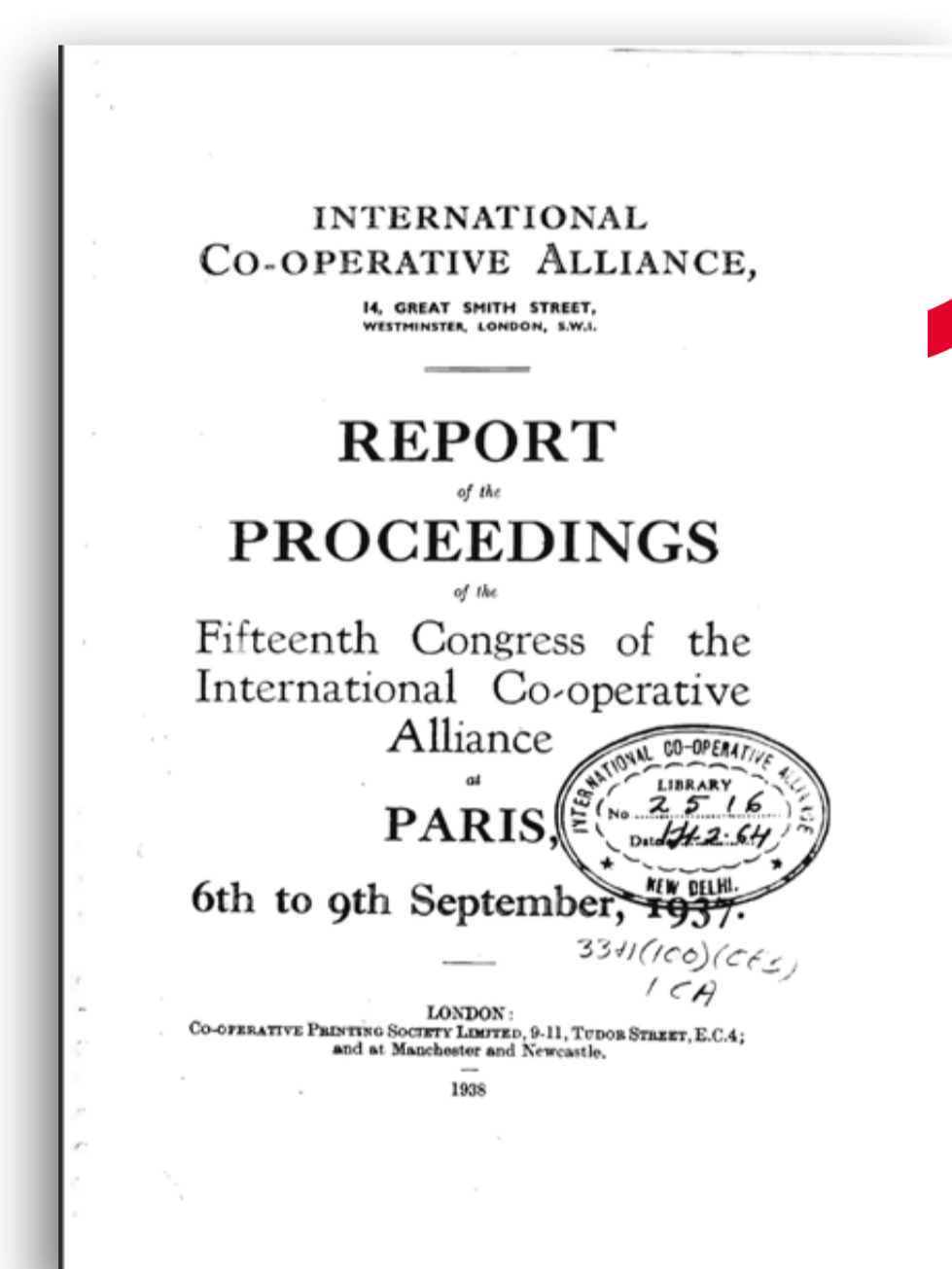
## Cooperative principles revisited

The 15th Congress in Paris in 1937 discussed a detailed report on the application of the Rochdale Principles as well as the principle of neutrality of cooperatives in politics and religion. It also reflected on the 'works of solidarity and of education' where the ICA, noted the importance of indivisible collective reserves which according to the

view of Philippe Buchez and Friedrich Wilhelm Raiffeisen constituted a collective heritage and guarantees the continuity of cooperatives from one generation to another (Report of the 15th World Cooperative Congress).



International Committee of inter-cooperative relations presided by Albert Thomas first DG of the ILO  
Domus Trust Library, New Delhi (India)



1937

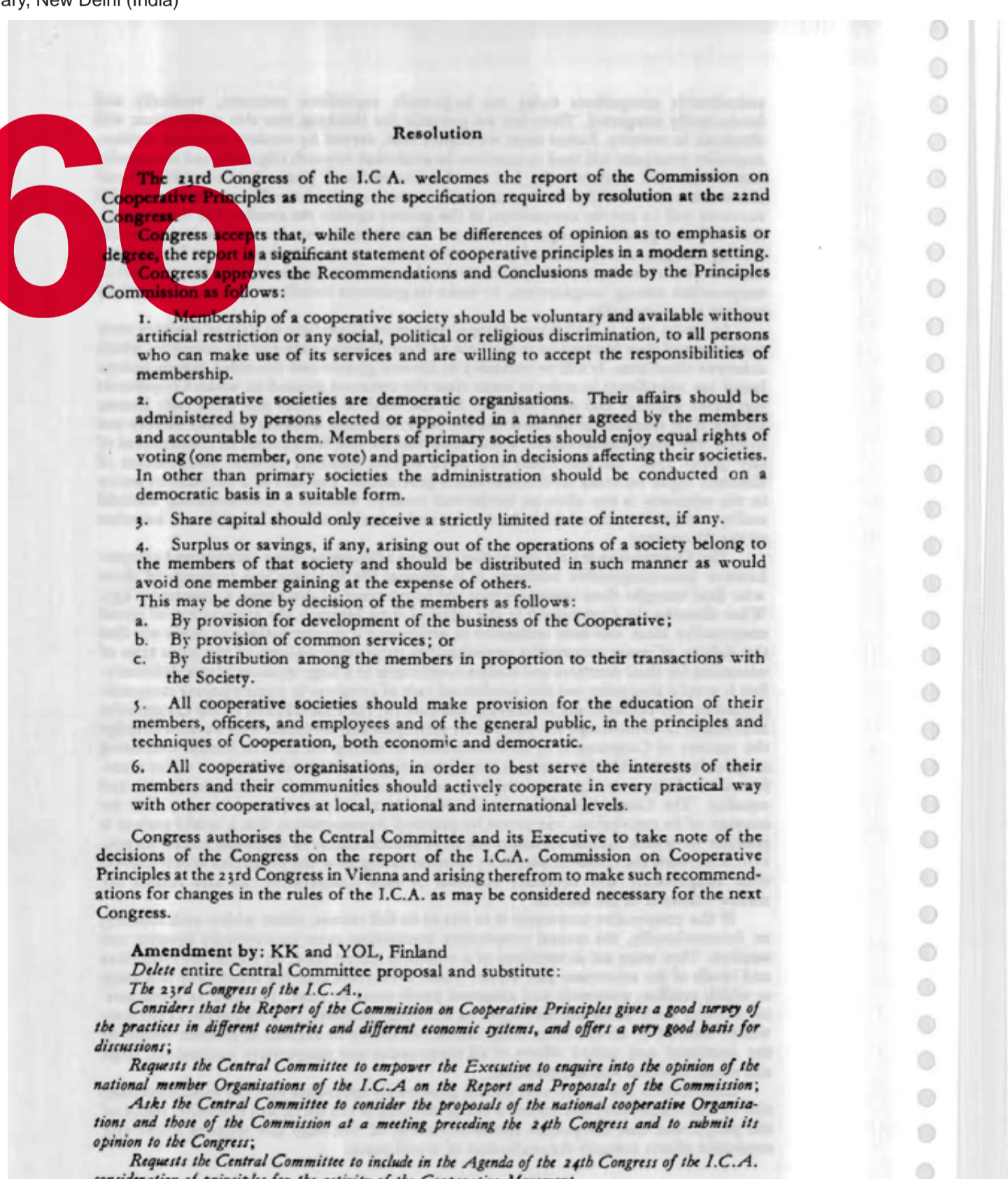


ICA Congress at Vienna (Austria) which adopted the resolution welcoming the report of the Commission on Cooperative Principles (1966).  
Domus Trust Library, New Delhi (India)

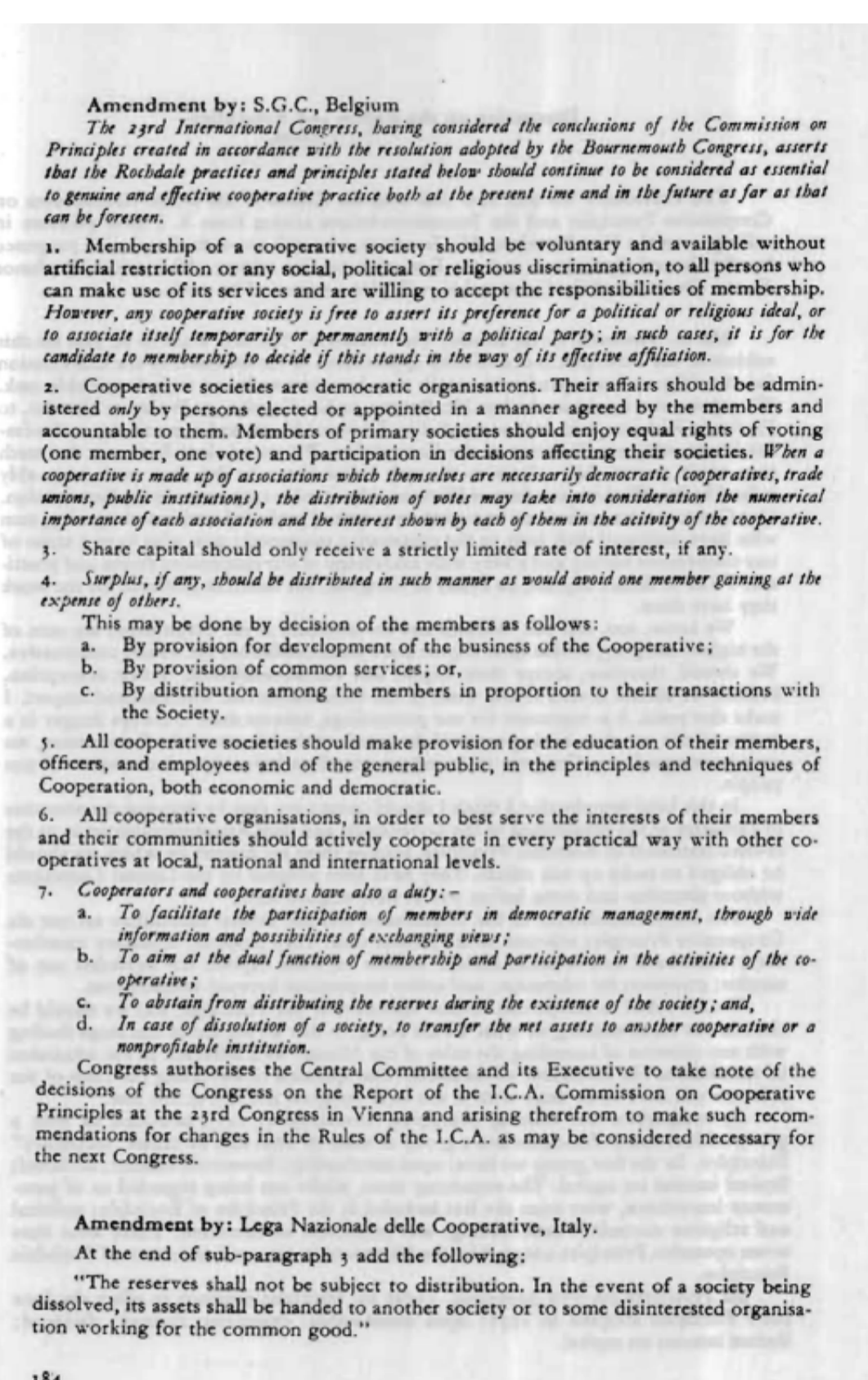
The 23rd Congress in Vienna in 1966 witnessed the participation of 528 delegates and approved the recommendations and conclusions of the Principles Commission comprised of members from the UK, USSR, India, USA, and Germany,

which elaborated on the following key aspects of the cooperative business model – Voluntary membership; democratic management by members, limited returns on capital; surplus and savings; education; promotion of best interests of members at local, national and international levels. The Congress discussed the strengthening relationship of the ICA with the United Nations.

1966



Congress at Vienna (Austria) which adopted the resolution welcoming the report of the Commission on Cooperative Principles  
Courtesy: ICA Domus Trust Library, New Delhi (India)



Cooperators bearing the rainbow flag of cooperation in Finland



President of France Giscard d'Estaing welcoming delegates to 1976 Paris ICA Congress  
Courtesy: The Cooperative Heritage Trust, UK

## Basic values examined

The 29th Congress in Stockholm in 1988 heard a report on Cooperatives and Basic Values presented by ICA President Lars Marcus who identified the following values as having an importance bearing on cooperative development for then and for the future : Self-help (activity, creativity, responsibility, independence); mutual-help (cooperation, unity, collective-action, solidarity, peace); non-profit interest; democracy and participation; voluntary efforts, universal values of openness and global perspectives; education; purposefulness including benefit to members. Continuing its reporting on the activities of the ICA

with the United Nations, the Congress adopted a resolution with special emphasis on youth and the participation of cooperatives in UN Youth Year 1985. Further, it appeals to support the United Nations International Children's Fund Immunization campaign which resulted in generous contributions by industrialized countries for vaccinations to various other countries including those that were then less developed.

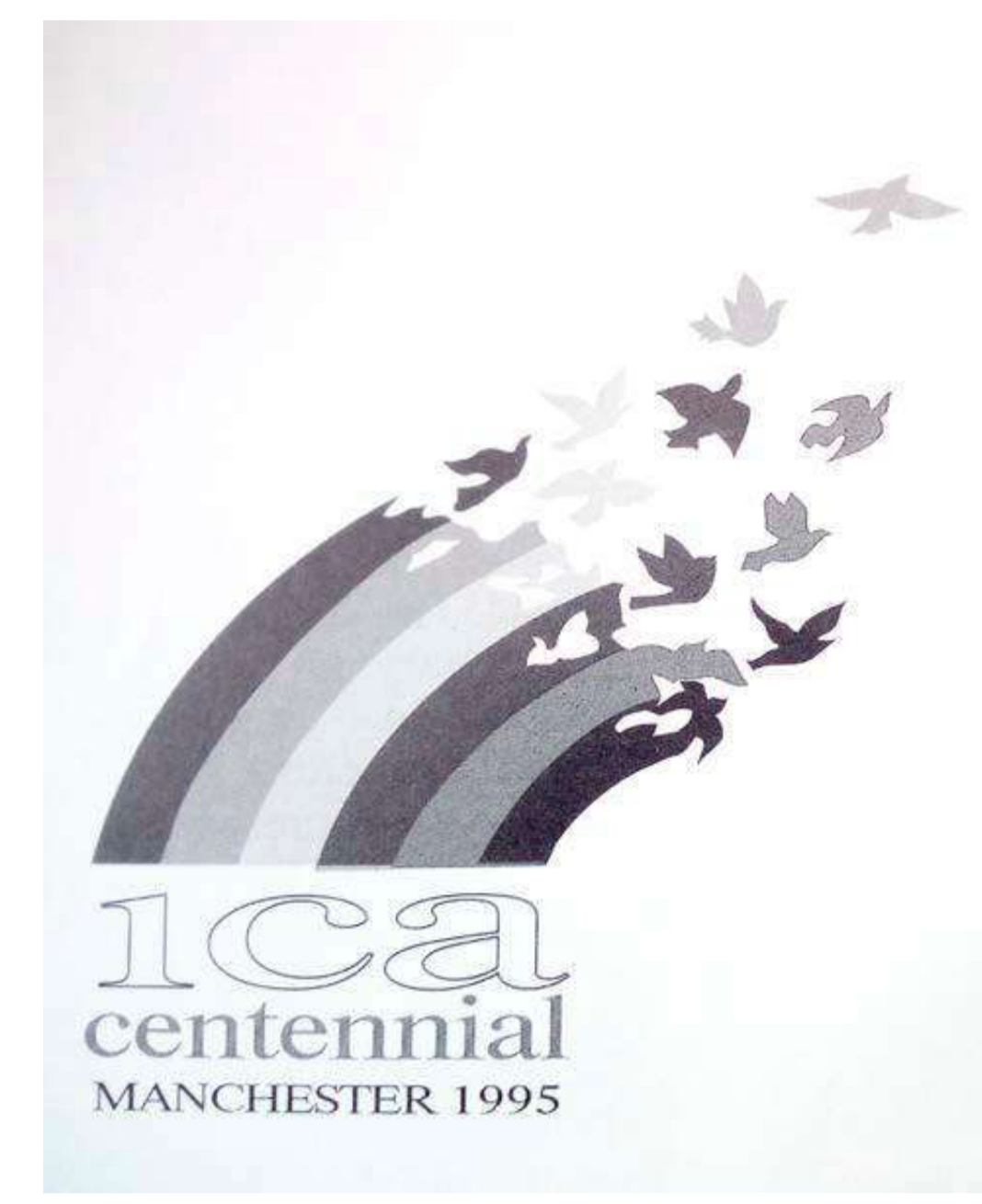
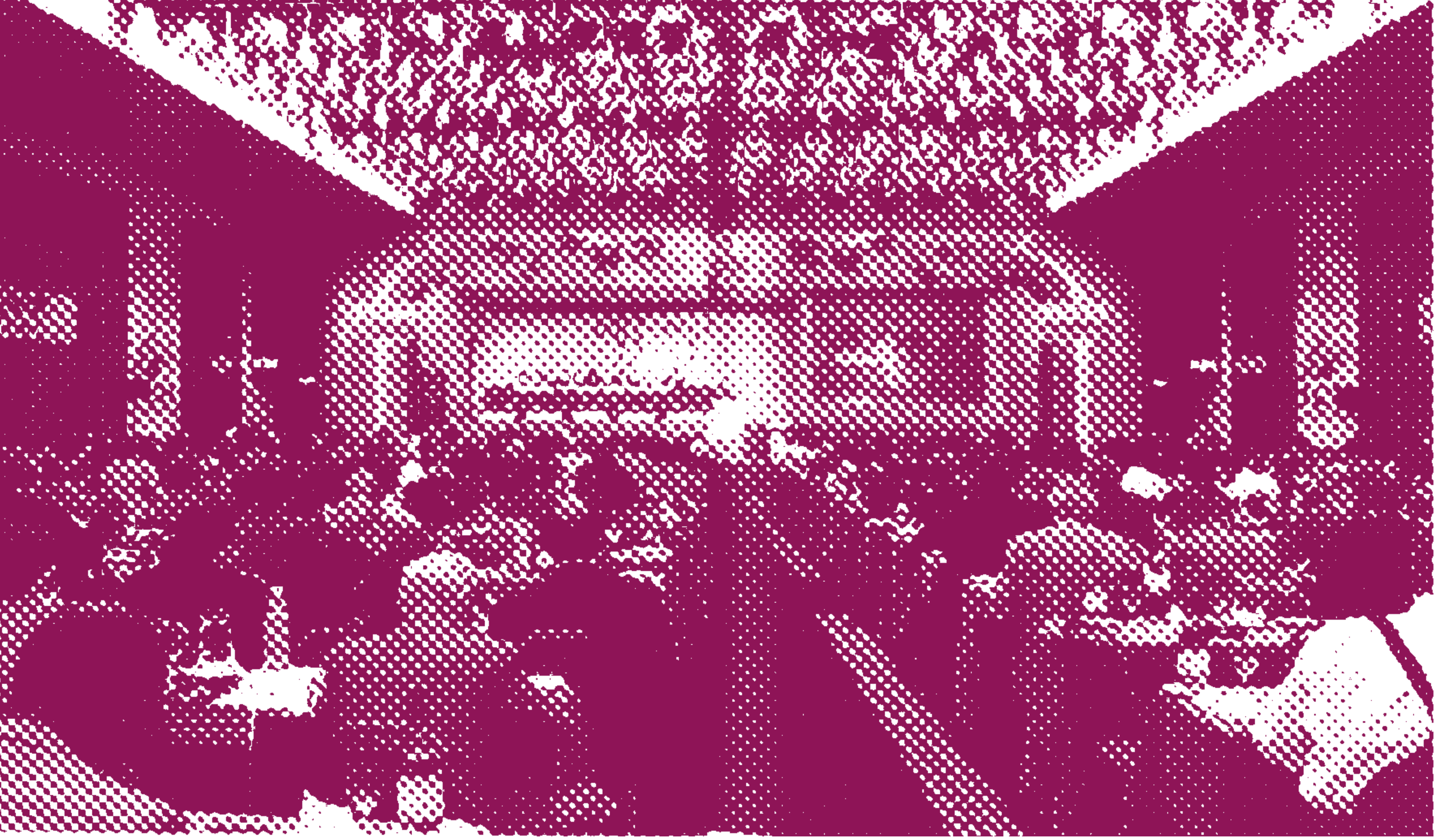


Farewell reception for the participants of the 29th ICA Congress in 1988 at the City Hall, Stockholm – the venue of the Nobel Prize dinners  
Domus Trust Library, New Delhi (India)

1988







Centennial Congress logo

# Sustainable Development and concern for community become part of the Cooperative Identity

## 1995

### The evolution of the Cooperative Principles



Cooperators marking the 1983 International Cooperative Day



Women cooperators manifesting their pride in the Kenyan cooperative movement

Practices 1844, 1845 and 1854	4 mandatory principles and 3 non mandatory ones in 1937	6 principles in 1966	7 principles in 1995
1. Open Membership	1. Open Membership	1. Voluntary membership	1. Voluntary & open membership
2. Democratic Control	2. Democratic Control	2. Democracy	2. Democratic member control
3. Distribution of Surplus in proportion to trade	3. Dividend paid according to business done	3. Limited interest on share capital	3. Member economic participation <small>Limited interest on capital, distribution of surplus, contribution to capital, common property of capital.</small>
4. Payment of limited interest on capital	4. Limited interest on capital	4. Distribution of surplus (included in voluntary membership)	4. Autonomy and Independence
5. Political and religious neutrality	5. Political and religious neutrality	5. Provision for education	5. Education, training and information
6. Cash trading	6. Cash trading	6. Cooperation among cooperatives	6. Cooperation among cooperatives
7. Promotion of education	7. Promotion of education		7. Concern for Community



Centennial congress, 1995.

Cooperative Principles for the 21st Century by Ian Macpherson (1996)



Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundland at the 150th Anniversary of the Rochdale Cooperative Society (1994) and at the ICA Conference Kuala Lumpur (2017)

The Tokyo Congress, 1992 and the Manchester “Centennial” Congress, 1995 marked decisive moments in the history of cooperatives because of the resolutions adopted on integrating sustainable development within the nature of cooperatives represented by the ICA.

The 1992 Congress discussed the subject of the Environment and

Sustainable Development while taking serious note for concrete actions to safeguard the planet against environmental problems such as extinction of species, industrial pollution, slash and burn techniques, droughts, deforestation, among others. Following the theme of the 1988 Hamburg

Congress, the 1992 Tokyo Congress received a report titled “Co-operative Values in a Changing World” which was presented by Sven Åke Bööck of Sweden.

The Congress, based on its experiences of recent decades and with respect to the possibility of more ambitious revision, recommended two types of principles –

The basic cooperative principles which are based on basic values to capture explicitly the universal essence of cooperation and are eternally placed, and second, the basic cooperative practices (or Rules) which should be related to different sectors and should concretely express the essential practice and rules for cooperative activity. It also discussed the possibility of an International Year of Cooperatives to mark the centenary of the ICA in 1995. The 1995 Congress in Manchester received a clear statement of Cooperative Identity which was presented by Prof. Ian Macpherson of the University of Victoria (Canada). While the statement reflected the traditions, activities and ideology of the first hundred years of the ICA, it was intended to assist the ICA as the second century of international cooperation began.

Download the booklet here:





# Contributions from national cooperative movements to mark the 125 anniversary of the ICA

## Argentina



El Hogar Obrero Cooperative, founded in 1905. First non-European entity to be accepted as a member of the ICA (1910). (1913) First collective housing built by the cooperative.  
 Photo: Archivo Histórico del Cooperativismo Argentino (EHC).  
 Progreso Agrícola. El Progreso Agrícola (Pigüé, Buenos Aires) founded in 1898.  
 Photo: Archivo Histórico del Cooperativismo Argentino / Museo Histórico Pigüé.

Reverendo William Casnodyn Rhys director of Cooperativa del Valle del Rio Chubut represented Argentina in the founding Congress of the International Cooperative Alliance in 1895. The first cooperative experiences in the country were in the last decades of the 19th century, and were linked to European immigrants who contributed not only to work techniques and procedures, but also cooperative traditions and organisations. There were approximately 60 cooperatives in the late 19th century that were faced with similar discussions as were taking place at the time in Europe.

## Canada



Portrait d'Alphonse Desjardins, A.R. Roy, vers 1890  
 Caisse populaire Desjardins de Maria, 1909  
 Caisse populaire Desjardins de Saint-Jérôme (Métabetchouan), année inconnue  
 Archives du Mouvement Desjardins

M/s F.s. Simms & Co Profit Sharing Brushmakers, M/s T.W. Bushill & Sons Profit-sharing manufacturing stationers, and the WM Davies Co. Ltd. Profit sharing bacon curers were the adherents to the ICA previous to the meeting of the first Congress. The 1st ICA Congress noted the flourishing purchase of cheese by French wholesale cooperative societies from cooperative factories in Canada and the United States.

## Finland



Prof. Hannes Gebhard and Mrs. Hedvig Gebhard are hailed as the father and the mother of the Finnish cooperative movement. Hannes was the founder and chairman of the Board of Pellervo. Hedvig was one of the first women members in the Parliament of Finland since 1907. At that time Finland was an autonomous part of the

Russian Empire (Grand Principality of Finland) and got its independence in 1917. Hannes and Hedvig Gebhard were travelling abroad studying the cooperative business models in Germany, UK and France. Those relationships and connections may have been the reason for Pellervo to join to the International Cooperative Alliance so early as 1902.

## France



President of France Giscard d'Estaing welcoming delegates to 1976 Paris ICA Congress.  
 Courtesy: Cooperative Heritage Trust

France sent a delegation of 14 persons to the 1st international Congress. The success of the 1889 French Congress in bringing visitors from various countries in Europe is seen as a concrete step towards the birth of the international cooperative movement. The 1st Congress noted that it was Louis Blanc who first made the term "solidarity" familiar, and it also noted France as the fertile land of ideas. Successful examples of cooperation, particularly workers, and production cooperatives were shared. The 2nd, 4th, 15th, 19th and 26th editions of the ICA Congress were held in Paris, France.

## Austria



Post war reconstruction-cooperative housing estate set up by refugees near Linz in 1953

A large part of the journey towards the creation of the International Cooperative Alliance was based on the mutual correspondence, travels and exchanges among cooperators of different countries, mainly in Europe. Cooperators of the erstwhile Austro-Hungarian empire played a crucial role in maintaining meaningful contacts with cooperators from "abroad", particularly in and after the 1870s, 20 years after the founding of the first credit cooperative in Klagenfurt in 1851. Detailed accounts concerning cooperatives in Austria and Hungary were received by the 1st Congress.

## China



Women spinning thread under the logo Gung-Ho  
 As field secretary Rewi Alley regularly travelled thousands of kilometres, often by hitch-hiking or bicycle.  
 Courtesy: New Zealand China Friendship Society <http://www.worldofgung.org>

Gung Ho is the slogan and nickname of the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives, a project founded by Rewi Alley to foster genuine democratic cooperatives in various parts of China. The New Zealand China Friendship Society supports this movement both materially and morally as one of our major projects. The Chinese name for "China Industrial Cooperatives" was Zhongguo Gongye Hezhoushe. This was abbreviated as Gong He (the first characters for the two words for "Industrial Cooperatives"), or "Gung Ho", as it was then written. In 1938, Rewi Alley, Peg and Edgar Snow, and some other friends in Shanghai together set up an International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives. At that time, the Japanese invaders had already captured most of China's industrial cities and looked to occupy all of China in the near future.

## Germany



Central office of the Volksbank Weiden (1940). Due to numerous mergers, the bank is today called Volksbank Raiffeisenbank Nordoberpfalz eG.  
 Photograph:Georgi / G20 Berlin

Raiffeisen inspired many pioneers who set up banks or credit unions at the beginning of the 20th century. He created the first credit union in 1862 and went on to inspire many.  
 Cooperative History Institute (Stiftung GIZ - Genossenschaftshistorisches Informationszentrum)

A publication on the People's banks in Germany prompted cooperators in the early 1890s to extend the scope of the ICA to the banking sector. The German delegation could not participate in the 1st Congress due to the dates which clashed with the German Cooperative Congress. The 8th, 24th and the 28th editions of the ICA Congresses were held in Germany in 1910, 1969 and 1984 respectively.

## Belgium

The 1st International Cooperative Congress was attended by 5 Belgians including Mr. & Mrs. Charles De Queker of the Federation des Banques Populaires. The success of people's banks, particularly the 1st such bank in Liege in 1869, and their benefits to agriculturists was noted by the Congress. It also noted the law did not recognize cooperatives until 1873 when the repeated appeals from the Belgian Federation of People's Banks, helped stimulate further the cooperative movement in the country. The 11th ICA Congress 1924 was held in Ghent.

## Czech Republic



1st Cooperative Act, First Headquarters, Act No. 70 of the Imperial Code of 1873 on Communities for the Promotion of Trade and Economy.  
 House in Stašov, where one of the first consumer cooperatives in the territory of the Czech Republic - Bee Cooperative was founded in 1905.

The 1st Congress of the ICA noted the presence of 10 Industrial Productive Societies that used Czech as their business language and identified a Czech federation of credit cooperatives and a Slav Cooperative union of credit associations. The Congress also noted the existence of certain cooperatives that promoted Czech literature and drama. The 17th ICA Congress was held in Prague in 1948.



Read the complete testimonies sent by our members and friends

## India



Early days of IFFCO which recently marked its 50th anniversary.  
 Dr Pranab Mukherjee, the 13th President of the Republic of India presided over the 16th National Cooperative Congress in 2013. Seen also, Dame Pauline Green the then president of ICA and Mr. Sharad Pawar, the then Minister of Agriculture.

The Indian delegation at the 1st ICA Congress was represented by Mr. Krishna Menon, a student at the College of Agriculture, Madras who was introduced as another evidence of the international character of the congress. Mr. Menon pointed out that labour in India, particularly agricultural labour, was not fairly remunerated because of the alteration brought in by the administrative rules by the British Indian government to the system of profit-sharing with landowners and community participation. He urged the congress to make widely known the principles it was advocating and the advantages and benefits of cooperation. Dadabhoj Naoroji, the first Indian to have been elected to the House of Commons in the UK was an adherent to the 1st Congress. India has a tradition of convening its national cooperative congresses that take place once every five years

## Bulgaria



Original seal of the first cooperative society in Bulgaria, 1890, Mirkovo, Sofia District.  
 Headquarters of CCU, Bulgaria: The Central Cooperative Union unites, protects, and represents the interests of 115 000 cooperative members, 27 cooperative unions, 673 cooperative societies and 5000 employees.

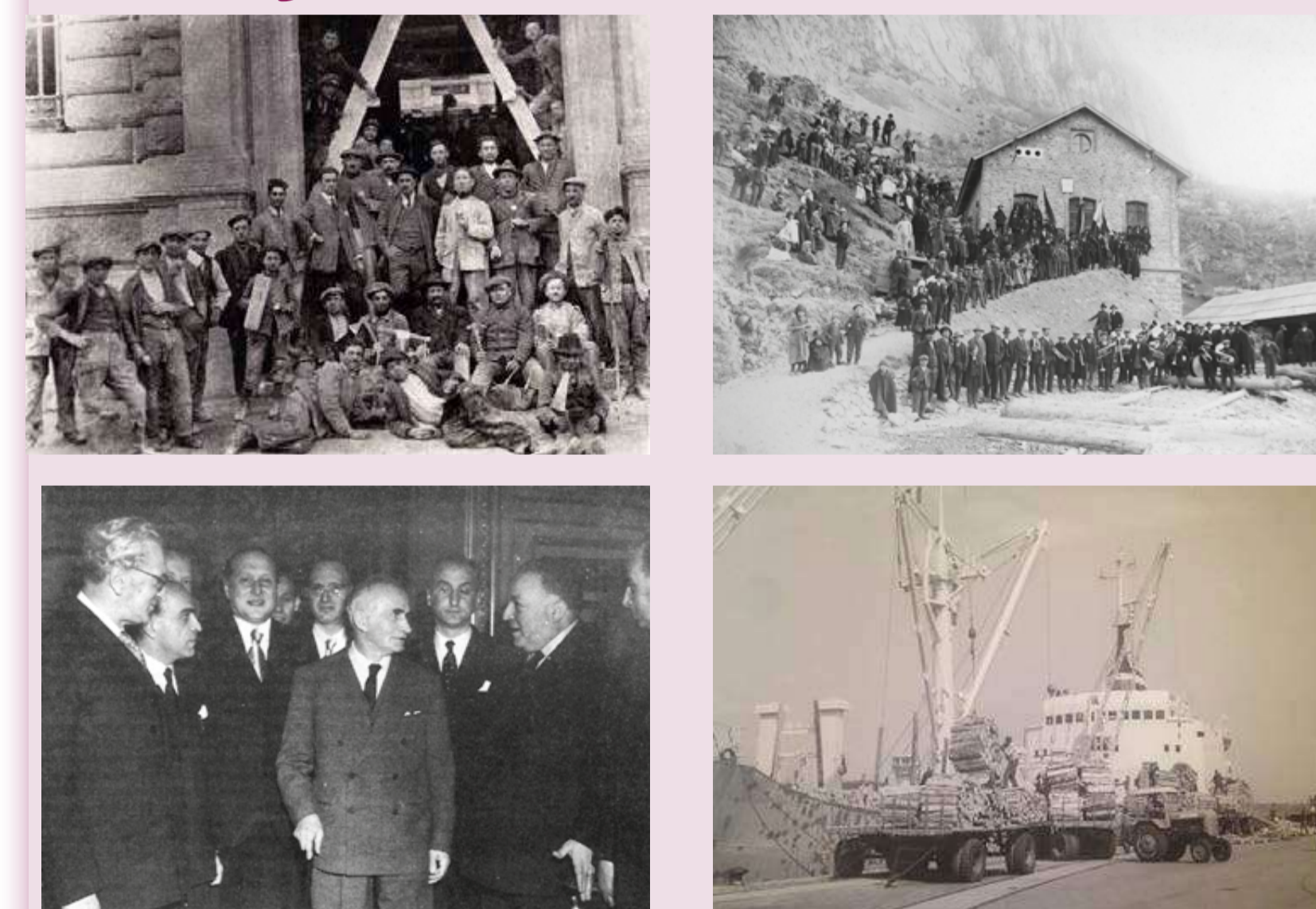
The first Bulgarian cooperative society – Agricultural Savings Society «Oralo» - was established in Mirkovo Village, Sofia District in 1890 by the revival Bulgarian leaders Todor Yonchev and Todor Vlaykov. In 1902 the Bulgarian cooperative movement became one of the first members of the International Cooperative Alliance. The Central Cooperative Union was founded in 1947 at the initiative of eight branch cooperative unions.

## Colombia



The emblematic photo of Colonel Pinzón signing the act of constitution of Ascoop takes us back 60 years to 6 August 1960, when 105 cooperators met in Cali to create the Colombian Association of Cooperatives, convinced of how much a country with so much inequality, inequity and marginality needed cooperativism.

## Italy



Cinello Balsamo bricklayers (1910).  
 Big party for the inauguration of the Fontanone Hydroelectric Plant, the development engine of the Alto But in Friuli, Italy (1913).  
 Representatives of Confcooperative met President of the Italian Republic Luigi Einaudi in 1950, the advocate of Article 45 of the Italian Constitution, which recognizes the social function of cooperatives. There were three national organizations in Italy: AGCI, Confcooperative, and Legacoop until 2020, they merged into one named the Italian Cooperative Alliance in 2021.  
 The «Filippo Corridoni» port company, active since 1930, operates mainly in the ports of Olbia and Golfo Aranci, in Sardinia  
 Courtesy: Mercaid Cooperative Italiana

Five cooperators and two journalists from Rome, Milan and Cremona participated in the 1st ICA Congress in London. Mr. Enea Cavalieri led the delegation and conveyed Italy's support to convening regular international congresses. The successful example of cooperation among workmen's associations, and the working of cooperative banks was discussed at the Congress. The 7th ICA Congress 1907 was held in Cremona.





Approximately 200 persons from 14 countries participated in the 1st International Cooperative Congress and formed the International Cooperative Alliance.

The ICA marked its 125th anniversary in 2020 and in the run up to the 33rd World Cooperative Congress, we are sharing thematic contributions by members of the ICA some of whom were represented during its creation in 1895.

## Japan



A bandwagon promoting the enactment of the Co-op Law, which in 1948 gave the Japanese consumer co-op movement an important foothold.

A scene from a cookery course in the 1950s.

In the early 1980s, there were widespread calls from retailers to regulate consumer cooperatives. JCCU organised a number of rallies and collected petition signatures to oppose unfair regulations.

Courtesy: Japan Consumers Cooperative Union

Japan has been on the forefront of promoting cooperatives in Asia and Pacific for several decades. Strong cooperatives ply in sectors such as agriculture, consumer and health, insurance, among others. Japanese cooperatives are among the pioneers who developed students-led cooperatives in the AP region. The 30th ICA Congress in Tokyo was a milestone for the ICA in more than one way. It was the first time the world cooperative Congress was convened in Asia, and an important event in history for the ICA pursuit of sustainable development gained momentum here, which eventually led to the formulation and addition of the 7th cooperative principle on Concern for the Community - Cooperative work for the sustainable development of their communities through policies approved by their members.

## Kenya



Current offices of the ICA Africa (2021).

The ICA Africa is currently seated in Nairobi, Kenya and represents 39 member organizations from 23 countries (2021). The cooperative method, which by the early 1900s proved so valuable to Europeans, the Americas and Asia, had also permeated through to Africa in as early as 1908 when the Lumbwa cooperative society. By the 1920s, two major national bodies functioned - the Kenyan Farmers Cooperative Association and the National Creameries Cooperative. The advent of the first cooperative ordinance in 1931 The period from 1931 to 1969 witnessed the registration of close to 2000 cooperatives in Kenya. The colonial policy of growing cash crops following the Swynnerton Plan was influential in the surge in numbers, and just as seen in many countries in erstwhile colonies, cooperatives and cooperators played an important role in securing self-rule and independence of their nations.

## Poland



The House under the Eagles, constructed in 1913-1917 as the seat of the Bank of Cooperative Societies, was one of the few buildings in the centre of Warsaw to survive World War II. (1920s). Stanislaw Wojciechowski (1869-1953), co-founder of the consumer cooperatives, cooperative historian and researcher. In 1922-1926 he was the second President of the independent Republic of Poland.

Students' cooperative "Sila" (Strength) in Draganówka (Eastern Poland, 1930).  
 Author: Dr Adam Puchowski National Cooperative Council

The first Polish cooperative, or rather an organised form of economic cooperation resembling modern cooperatives, is considered to be the Hrubieszów Agricultural Society for Common Rescue in Misfortunes, founded in 1816 by Stanislaw Staszic. Regular cooperatives appeared half a century later. Among the oldest ones were: cooperative bank under the name Loan Society for Industrialists of the City of Poznań (1861), on the area of the German partition, based on the model of H. Schulze-Delitzsch's; Rochdale-type consumers' cooperative «Mercury» (1869) in Warsaw, on the Russian partition; and from the Austrian partition a cooperative bank in Brzeżany (1864). The 25th ICA Congress in 1972 was held in Poland.

## Republic of Korea



Pioneers of the Agricultural Cooperative in the 1960's.  
 Courtesy of the NH Economic Research Institute

Pioneers were the activists who contributed to the settlement of the agricultural cooperative movement by promoting village cooperatives in the rural area during the early period. They concentrated in emphasizing the necessity of 'agricultural cooperative' among poor farmers in order to enlighten them for improvement of lives and farming. The federation provided bicycles to these agents to be used for on-site education.

The National Agricultural Cooperative Federation (NACF) launched a new vision for 2020-2025, in order to actively adapt to the rapidly changing environments and to build a foundation on which agriculture, rural area and farmer may achieve sustainable growth. The vision, '100 years, Together with Nonghyup,' pictures a future where agriculture and farmers are respected and rural area becomes the hope for the society.

## Russia



ICA Congress in 1980 Moscow.

II-nd All-Union Bookselling Conference of Consumer Cooperation (1928).

Zaraisk factory of Centrosoyuz. Sewing department (1918).

M. de Keussler of St. Petersburg was one of the Honorary President of the 1st International Cooperative Congress, and S.J. Rapoport, London correspondent of The Novosti attended the 1st International Congress. J.C. Gray of the Cooperative Union of Great Britain informed the Congress of the "bravery of Russian hopefulness" while referring to Russia. Representatives of the Russian cooperation, who attended the first ICA congresses, were highly interested in foreign cooperation and thoroughly learned its experience, as key types of cooperatives in Russia were originally based on the models of Rochdale, Schulze-Delitzsch and Raiffeisen. The 27th ICA Congress in 1980 was held in Moscow.

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## Sweden



Stockholm Congress 1957.  
 Courtesy of Cooperatives Heritage Trust

HSB Hyresgästernas sparkasse - och byggnadsförening; «the Savings and Construction Association of the Tenants» From the workplace in KV Fatet

Sweden has played a leadership role par-excellence in the ICA. Among its many contributions, including hosting the ICA Congresses in 1927, 1957 and 1988 in Stockholm, the Swedish cooperative movement were among the pioneers who took work of the ICA to other parts of the world, notably, with their support and leadership in developing the ICA Regional Office and Education Center for South East Asia (later ICA Asia and Pacific) following missions at the time by Dr. G. Keller.



Read the complete testimonies sent by our members and friends

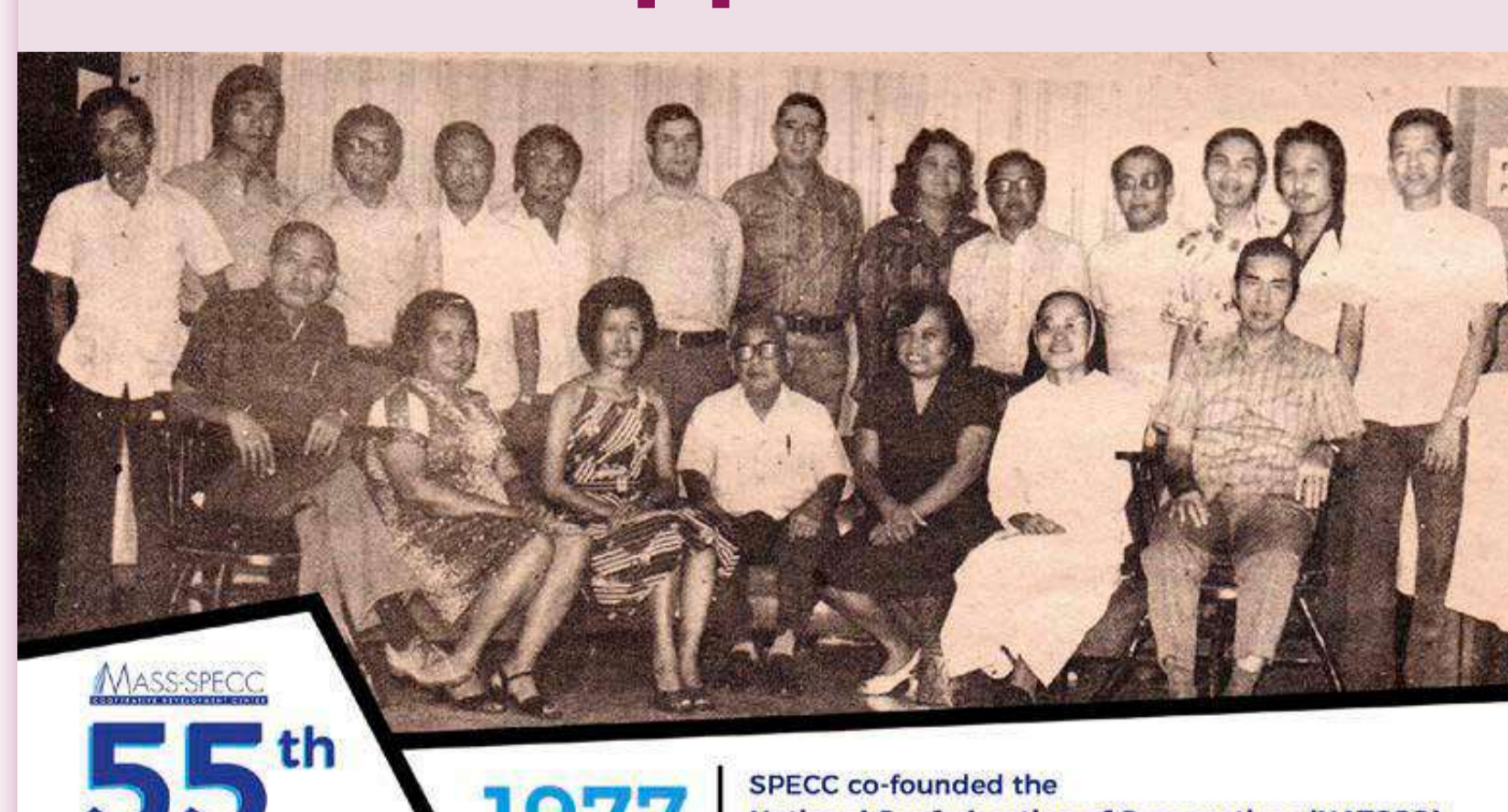
## The Netherlands



Former Boerenleenbank and mobile Raiffeisen branch. The apex is Rabobank Nederland (merger between RAiffeisen and BOerenleenbanken in 1972).

Three persons from Holland participated in the first Congress including representatives of Hoofdbestune van Eigen Hulp Gravenhage. Dutch cooperators were part of the annual meeting that coined the proposed name of the ICA as such in 1893. The 1st Congress noted the success of Dutch agriculture and remarked at the work of M.A. Kerdyle a Dutch cooperator and later member of the Dutch parliament. Noteworthy is the Congress's notig of Eigenhulp or self-help of cooperative unions formed in the Netherlands in the 19th century.

## The Philippines



The travels of Dr. Jose P. Rizal and Gov. Teodoro Sandiko to Europe in the 19th century helped the cooperative idea traverse the Pacific and reach the Philippines in the late 19th and early 20th century. Teodoro Sandiko, then governor of Bulacan, prepared a bill patterned after the Raiffeisen type of credit union and had Rep. Albert Barreto of Zambales sponsored the bill in the lower House of Congress where it was supported unanimously. The bill failed to become law as the Philippines Commission turned it down. The bill was later presented in both Houses was finally passed into law on February 11, 1914 and became Act 2508. When this Act was finally made into law, Gov. Sandiko earned the title, Father of Cooperation in this country.

## Spain



The first cooperative of the MONDRAGON Corporation - ULGOR Early MONDRAGON cooperators on a visit to Brussels

The 1st Congress received a report on the cooperative movement in Spain by Joaquin Diaz de Rabago, Directeur de Banco de España and honorary vice president of the Congress, where the Congress noted, among other things, the existence of La Union Obrera Balear whose objectives were the mutual association of workers, the creation of provident funds, the establishment of production and distribution societies, as well as schools including medical clubs and the establishment of Montepios for needy workmen, creation of credit banks and the foundation of asylums and orphanages. The Congress also noted the existence of cooperatives whose object was not economic, such as La Cooperativa de Parcent in Alicante founded in 1892. Spain is also home to the MONDRAGON Corporation based in the Basque country. It was founded in the town of Mondragon in 1956 by José María Arizmendiarieta and a group of his students at a technical college he founded. Its first product was paraffin heaters.

## UK



Bournemouth Congress (1963).  
 Courtesy of the Cooperatives Heritage Trust

The British Cooperative movement has had many contributions to the cooperatives worldwide. Often considered as the cradle of cooperation, the work and commitment of cooperators from Rochdale and the whole of Britain, in the internationalisation of the cooperative movement has been remarkable. Not only did the 1st international cooperative Congress take place here, the centennial Congress was also celebrated in the UK in 1995 which gave us the ICA Statement on the Cooperative Identity. In total, the UK has hosted 5 of the 32 International Cooperative Congresses hosted thus far.

## Switzerland



Inauguration of the «Freidorf», a model housing cooperative for collaborators of consumer cooperatives and affiliated organisations, 1921 during the ICA congress at Basel photos by Th. Hoffmann, Basel.  
 Picture credits: SABL, PMA&B (S&B archives Basel)

Swiss cooperators Herr Rector ABT, Vice president of Verbandes Ostschweiz Landw. Genossenschaften Bunzen, and Herr. Schramli Steinmann attended the first ICA Congress where the Swiss examples of democracy and referendums were hailed. Switzerland was among the few countries that actively pursued the creation of an international alliance in the 1870s. The 10th, 16th, and the 21st ICA Congresses were held in Switzerland in Basel (1921), Zurich (1946), and Lausanne (1960) respectively.

## USA



Records of the Rural Electrification Administration, Record Group 221; National Archives at College Park, MD. Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection.

Eight persons from the USA attended the 1st International Cooperative Congress, including John Hollander from John Hopkins University, Baltimore. Mr. Dana Horton was among those who called on for the 1st international congregation of cooperatives in 1894. The Congress noted the publication of the 1888 book titled "Co-operation in the United States" by John Hopkins Press and the existence of among other cooperatives with sizeable membership, the Johnson County Cooperative with a capital of USD 100,000 and a surplus fund of USD 28,000.