

Press Release

Concern for Community: The Relevance of Co-operatives to Peace

By Ian MacPherson & Yehudah Paz

Edited by Joy Emmanuel

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A new e-book on the history, theory, and practice of co-operatives and peace by the late Dr Ian MacPherson and the late Dr Yehudah Paz will be published in early December.

As part of several initiatives focused on co-operatives and peace, Ian and Yehudah were working on this publication at the time of their unfortunate passings in November 2013. *Concern for Community: The Relevance of Co-operatives to Peace* contains the distillation of the authors' convictions on how peacebuilding is at the core of the co-operative model of enterprise and how co-operatives can make a fundamental contribution to peace making initiatives.

Drawing on their many years of direct experience in the co-operative sector and their contributions to the field of Co-operative Studies, the authors lay out their insights on the subject of co-operatives and peace. From a review of the historical record to the development of the Co-operative Identity Statement in 1995, the authors illustrate how peace has been a significant theme in the life of the international co-operative movement. From an examination of how co-operatives empower their members to address inequalities and social tensions in local communities, to defining the role co-operatives can play in building relationships among all parties in war-torn regions, they explain how the co-operative movement has developed a set of values and practices that build on a concern for community and form a natural bridge to building a more just, peaceful world.

“Peacebuilding happens in communities not on battlefields,” claims Dr Ian MacPherson. “And it is in this context that co-operatives can make their greatest contribution to building a more peaceful world.”

“Peacemaking is central to the growth of the co-operative movement,” asserts Dr Yehudah Paz, “and co-operatives are relevant to matters of peacemaking and conflict resolution at the level of neighbour-to-neighbour within and across communities, regions, and nations.”

The writings of the authors are complimented by nine case studies illustrating how co-operatives embody practices of peacebuilding from employment creation for marginalized groups of people and establishing savings plans in impoverished communities; to addressing discriminatory practices around race, ethnicity, gender, and religion; to engaging in sensitive practices of peacebuilding in communities affected by outright violent conflict.

“This book is part of the legacy of two men who deeply believed in co-operatives as a value-based tool for development, as well as the role of the co-operative movement in brokering peace,” states Vivian Silver, Former Co-Executive Director, AJEEC-NISPED, Israel.

“The co-operative movement has not yet been awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace, but this book makes one hopeful that it might one day be more fully acknowledged for its role in promoting an ideal longed for with more urgency in recent days.” Charles Gould, Director General of the ICA

Concern for Community: The Relevance of Co-operatives to Peace will be available as of December 10, 2015 as a free e-book. See: www.peace.coop.

Thanks to the Co-operative News for assistance in distribution and promotion of the publication and other co-operative organizations for support in promoting the publication, including: the ICA Research Committee (ccr.ica.coop), Negeva Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development (<http://en.ajeec-nisped.org.il/>), the Co-operative Development Foundation (www.cdfcanada.coop) the Canadian Co-operative Association (www.coopscanada.coop), Co-operatives and Mutuals Canada (CMC) (<http://canada.coop/>), the Canadian Association for Studies in Co-operation (CASC) (<http://www.coopresearch.coop/>), and the Co-op College, UK (<http://www.co-op.ac.uk/>).

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Dr Yehudah Paz was founder and Chair of the Negva Institute for Strategies of Peace and Development (NISPED). Yehudah served as director of the ICA Board from 1993-2005, he was chair of the ICA Human Resource Development Committee from many years, and also served as a member of the Standing Committee of the Asia-Pacific region. He was Chairperson of the Department of International Relations of the Central Union of Co-operative Societies in Israel and academic Director of the Israel Co-operative College. In 2005, he was awarded the Rochdale Pioneers Award from the ICA and in 2006 he received the Golden Dove of Peace prize from the Institute for International Research Disarmament Archives (IRIAD) in Italy. Dr Paz was a member of Kibbutz Kissufim from 1951 until his death in 2013. Throughout his life, he worked for peace, political justice, and the cause of international co-operation.

Ian MacPherson was a leading figure in both the Canadian and International Co-operative Movement. He was an historian, a scholar, a co-operative activist and a strong promoter of the field of Co-operative Studies. For many years, Ian was the Director of the British Columbia Institute for Co-operative Studies a research center he founded at the University of Victoria in 1999 to promote Co-operative Studies. He served as Chairperson of the ICA Research Committee at the time of the revision of the 1995 Principles and the development of the Co-operative Identity Statement for the Twenty-First Century. He played a leading role in the founding of the Canadian Co-operative Association and the Canadian Association for the Study of Co-operation. For over forty years, Ian served on the board of many co-operatives including serving as president of Credit Union Central of British Columbia, and on the boards of consumer, financial, and health care co-operatives. Along with teaching, Ian contributed to the field of Co-operative Studies

through his prolific writing. He wrote and co-edited over 20 books, 150 articles and gave over 300 conference presentations.

Joy Emmanuel,

Editor, *Concern for Community: The Relevance of Co-operatives to Peace*

Turning Times Research and Consulting

Joy.turningtimes@gmail.com