

# 1957-2007

CIRIEC  
50 YEARS IN BELGIUM  
FROM THE SHORES OF  
LAKE GENEVA TO  
THE BANKS OF THE MEUSE  
A RELOCATION STORY





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1957 - 2007

**CIRIEC: 50 YEARS IN BELGIUM**

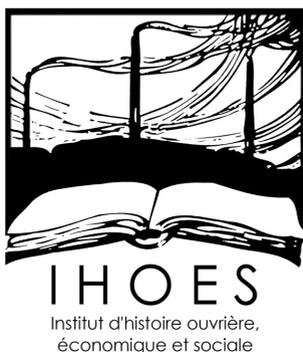
FROM THE SHORES OF LAKE GENEVA TO THE  
BANKS OF THE MEUSE - A RELOCATION STORY



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The IHOES (Worker, Economic and Social Historical Institute)



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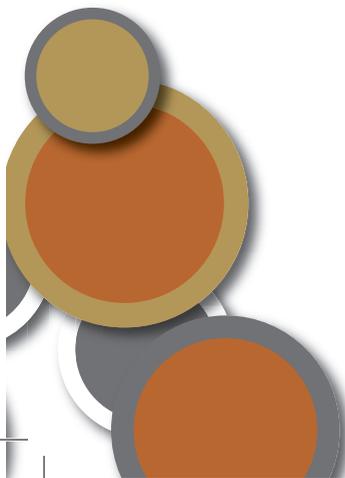
All of the persons mentioned in the text are listed at the end, together with their main roles, although these are given for information only.

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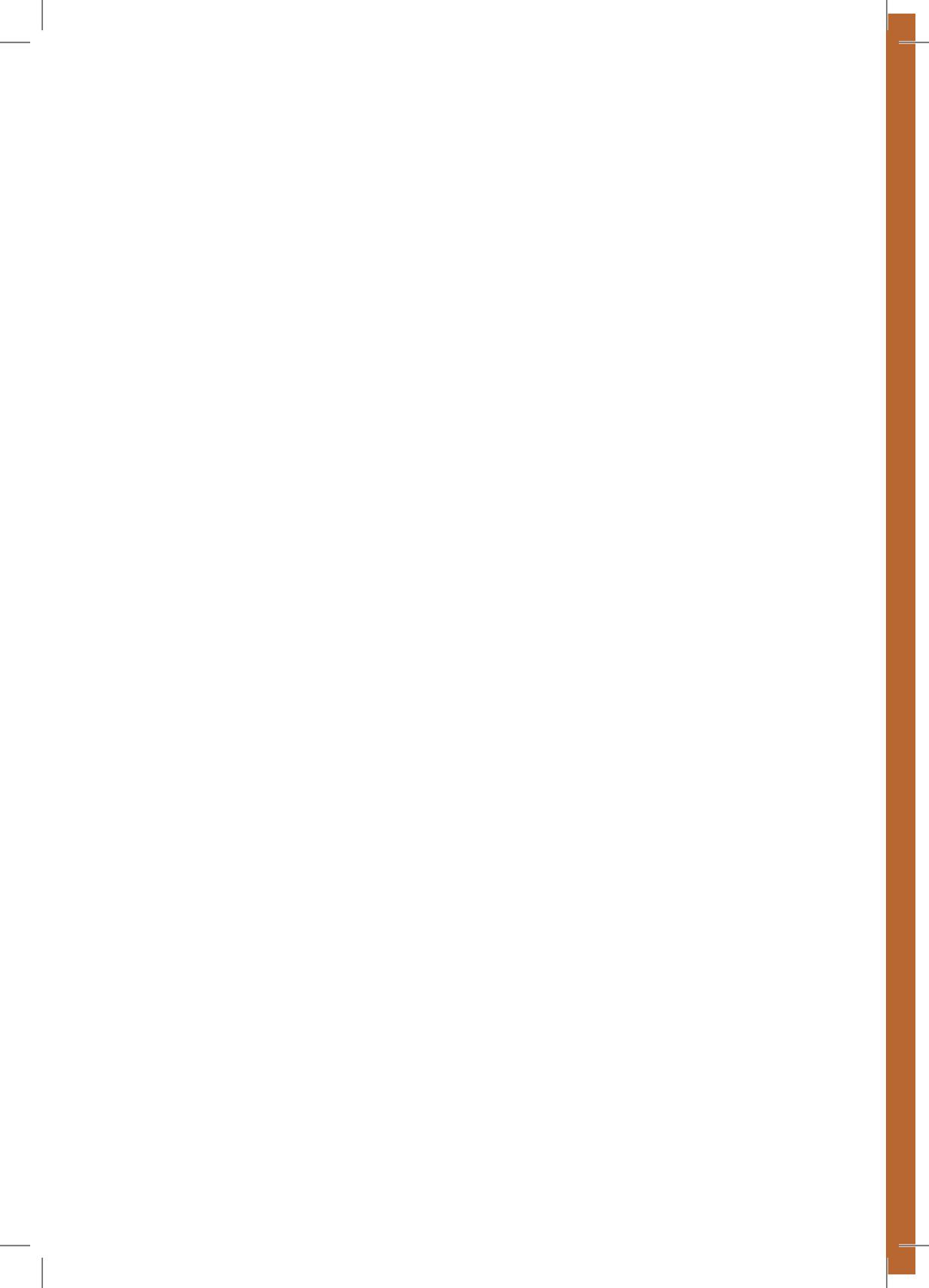
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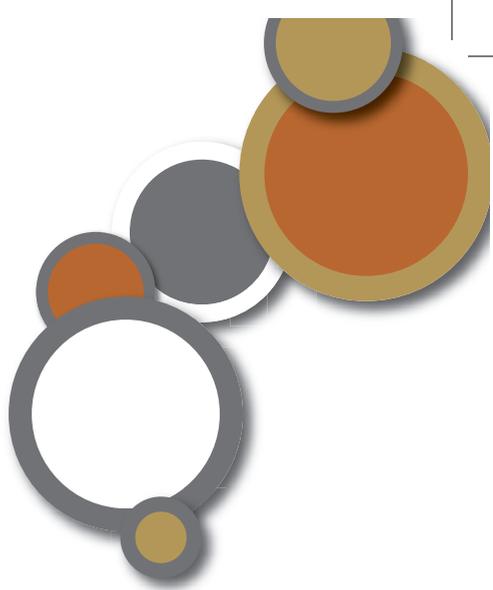
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## PREFACE

CIRIEC set up its headquarters in Belgium (Liège) 50 years ago. It was at the 3rd CIRIEC Congress held in Paris (Puteaux) in May 1957 that the members of the CIRIEC general assembly decided to move the international organisation's headquarters from Geneva to Liège, entrusting its Belgian section with the task of running the international association's permanent secretariat.

This anniversary coincides with CIRIEC's own 60th birthday, and comes just before the celebration of the centenary of our journal, the *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, founded in 1908 by Edgard Milhaud in Geneva. As a fitting celebration of this jubilee, the Belgian section offered both to organise an international colloquium in November 2007 and to produce a booklet looking back over the early days of CIRIEC and its Belgian section along with the circumstances and consequences of the headquarters' move from Geneva to Liège. We do indeed feel that it is crucially important to keep the memory of the ideals and issues of the past alive, along with the marks left by the men and women whose contribution and commitment have been decisive.

The job of putting the booklet together was entrusted to the *Institut d'histoire ouvrière, économique et sociale* (IHOES) and, more specifically, to one of its senior staff members, Ludo Bettens. We would like to thank them

for doing such a superb job. This historian's work will give the informed reader an opportunity to trace the journey made over the last 50 years. Although CIRIEC's situation today, with its thirteen national sections and its scientific network, is the direct result of the decisions taken half a century ago, our international organisation has never ceased adapting to new challenges, responding to new needs, and calling upon new methods, while at the same time not losing sight of its fundamental goals: to act as a forum for exchange, meeting, analysis, and dissemination about the various economic organisations devoted to the general interest or the shared interests of their members, and to do so without adhering to any particular ideology or doctrine.

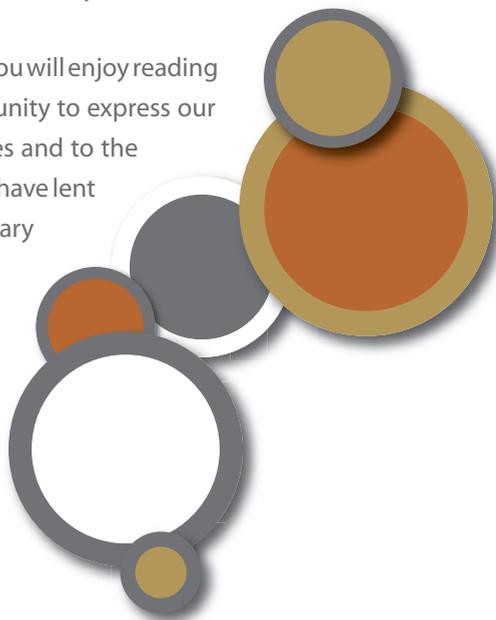
The language has changed: "collective economy" has become "public, social and cooperative economy". The methods have changed: nowadays the journal, the *Annals*, is for the most part distributed electronically; Edgard Milhaud's long letters have been replaced by short e-mails sent worldwide and access to CIRIEC is via a completely revamped website. A number of national sections have disappeared but others have come along to replace them, making up a network which covers eight European Union Member States, Turkey, Japan, Canada and two Latin American countries (Argentina and Brazil). This network of sections, which we hope to extend further, is now more than ever complemented by the involvement of a large number of scientific experts - more than a hundred of them - from all four corners of the Earth. The topics of analysis and debate have also changed: these days we hardly ever talk about planism and nationalisation, or even self-management and privatisation, but rather about general interest services, assessing the social economy, governance, and plural economy.

Our association's working methods have also been adapted to stay in touch with the Zeitgeist. So in 2004, at the instigation of the president of our International Scientific Council, Benoît Lévesque, we embarked upon a "strategic planning operation" to evaluate our strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities available to us, and the threats that loom over our organisation. The results of this strategic study, along with the 2006-2008 action plan which emerged from it, have been presented and

debated very extensively among CIRIEC's various governing bodies. We feel sure that CIRIEC is as relevant and important today as it has ever been in the past, and that it fulfils a unique need not catered to by any other organisation. By adapting the ways in which its scientific working groups operate, by reinforcing a sense of belonging amongst the researchers involved in our network, by increasing the visibility of our work, by opening our organisation up still further to other parts of the world, CIRIEC will be better able to respond to the expectations it arouses.

From this point of view, CIRIEC will always be able to rely on its Belgian section. This section is made up of many different people from a wide range of backgrounds and brings the various sectors which Edgard Milhaud called "collective economy" together under one scientific umbrella: cooperatives, mutual societies and mutual insurance associations, trade union organisations, intercommunal bodies, public enterprises or federal and regional enterprises with public participation, territorial authorities (provincial and local), etc. CIRIEC's Belgian section is a forum for meetings and exchange, and a centre for research and documentation and intends to strengthen its ability to provide the international centre and the other sections with a professional and well-equipped permanent secretariat. This is only possible because it adheres strictly to CIRIEC's scientific object, and because of constant support from its many members.

In this regard, before we finish, hoping you will enjoy reading this, we would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude both to the public authorities and to the many members of our association who have lent their financial support to this anniversary celebration. We have approached all the institutions, organisations and companies who were associated with the Belgian CIRIEC back when it started out fifty years ago, in order to guarantee the survival of CIRIEC's permanent office. Almost



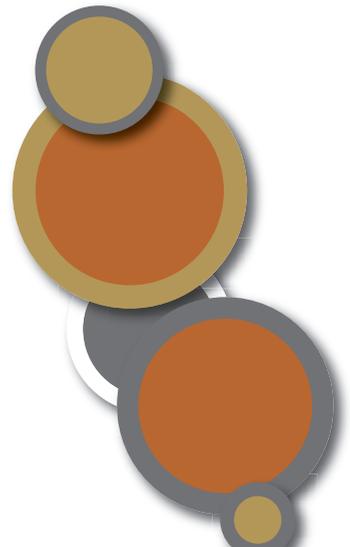
all of them have once again answered our call.

Looking beyond the name changes which have affected many of our members, institutional amendments, mergers and acquisitions, and deregulation, their trust and loyalty offer vital support both for ourselves and for the small secretariat team and we would like to thank them wholeheartedly.

We hope you enjoy reading this.

Bernard THIRY  
General Director

Leona DETIÈGE  
President



## INTRODUCTION

When the *Centre international de recherches et d'information sur l'économie publique, sociale et coopérative* (International Centre for Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy) asked us to take on a historical research project to mark the fiftieth anniversary of its head office moving from Geneva to Liège, the idea seemed a little strange to us and the purpose of the commemoration rather odd. We soon had to face the fact that it was a genuinely significant event. First of all obviously it was significant for the Liège region, in that it was playing host to an international body – which was rare in itself at the time – and one which was also a world-renowned scientific centre. But, looking beyond these local considerations, the relocation was a turning point in the history of CIRIEC. Indeed, by guaranteeing it long-term viability, it gave it a kind of rebirth.

In order to gain a better grasp of the scale of the event, we need to cast our minds back to the foundation and the early years of what was still called the *Centre international de recherches et d'information sur l'économie collective* (International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy - ICRICE\*). So the aim of this publication is not to give an exhaustive history of CIRIEC – that laborious task has already been successfully undertaken by Yvonne Gélard in the booklet published during the celebration of the International Centre's 50th anniversary in 1997, and which has been extremely useful throughout this project<sup>1</sup>. Our aim here is more modest: we are aiming to clarify the context and the reasons which led to CIRIEC leaving the shores of Lake Geneva and put down roots by the banks of the Meuse.

### I. CIRIEC: from small beginnings to international recognition (1947-1953)

#### 1. Founding context and objectives

CIRIEC came into being on 12th February 1947, at the instigation of Edgard Milhaud, professor of political economy at the university of Geneva. Milhaud was a professor

\* ICRICE is the English acronym of CIRIEC used as such till 1966, when the use of «CIRIEC» became generalised in the French and English languages. For the ease of reading, only «CIRIEC» is used throughout this publication.

1 GÉLARD, Yvonne, 1947-1997. *50 Years in the life of CIRIEC*, Liège, 1997, 68 p.

at the end of his career (he was 74!) and saw a prestigious future for his new creation which he hoped would eventually give birth to an international body working under the aegis of the United Nations and responsible for all collective economy issues.

Even so, the Centre's initial targets were a great deal more pragmatic. It was mainly a matter of restarting publication of the *Annals of Collective Economy*, the international scientific journal which Milhaud had founded in 1908 (under the title of the *Annales de la régie directe* (Annals of Direct State and Municipal Services – it was renamed in 1925) and which stopped coming out in 1943. For 35 years, he struggled to keep

this publication going, doing everything himself: from the management to

the secretarial work and including editing and handling translations<sup>2</sup>, and he had no hesitation in paying off its debts out of his own pocket in order to ensure its financial survival. This tenacity brought the journal to life and only the war managed to get in the way: in 1943, having lost of all his subscribers outside Switzerland, he was forced to halt publication.

Therefore, as soon as the war was over, he was determined to bring it back to life as quickly as possible. However, because of his age, he was aware that he would not be able to manage it all on his own. He

### **MILHAUD, Edgard**

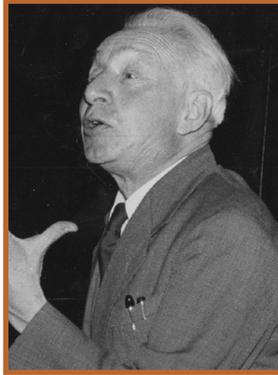
(Nîmes, 14th April 1873 – Barcelona, 4th September 1964) Edgard Milhaud was born to a family of Jewish merchants in the south of France in 1873. After graduating in Arts and obtaining the title of agrégé in philosophy from the Sorbonne, he very early became involved in socialist action. In 1893, together with some friends, he founded the *Ligue démocratique des écoles*, which aimed to defend "the progress of the Republic" and also became friend with Léon Blum. Having been influenced by the works of Karl Marx, he gravitated towards studying sociology and political economy and rounded off his knowledge of trade unionism, the cooperative movement and socialism during a long stay in Germany. From 1899 to 1901, he held the post of economic advisor to the ministry of Trade and Industry. As part of his duties, he came to work closely both with the Employment director Arthur Fontaine and with Jean Jaurès. Two years later, he left France and became the holder of the chair in political economy at the university of Geneva. He remained in this post until 30th April 1948, in the faculty of Arts and Social Sciences to begin with, and then from 1915 in the faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, which he helped found and of which he became the first dean (until 1918). Shortly after his move to Geneva, he got involved in socialist action in the Savoy region and, together with the *groupe français d'Études sociales* to which he belonged, he inspired the development or resurrection of several sections in this region. From 1905 to 1908, he took responsibility for the secretariat of the *Fédération socialiste des Deux-Savoies* and was appointed to the National Council of the SFIO. He also represented Savoyard socialism at three national congresses of the Socialist Party (Chalon 1905, Saint-Quentin 1911, Brest 1913) and was appointed Council delegate to the Allied Countries' Socialist Conference (Paris, 17th March 1917).

<sup>2</sup> Starting in 1925 the journal was published in three versions (French, English and German) and there was even a short-lived Spanish version from 1925 to 1930.

In 1908, Edgard Milhaud began the publication of the *Annales de la Régie directe* (renamed the *Annals of Collective Economy* in 1925), a scientific activist journal which aimed to defend collective enterprise and to which he devoted his whole life (he was its editor until 1960).

From 1920 to 1924, at the request of the International Labour Office and its director Albert Thomas, he led a wide-ranging international investigation into industrial manufacturing and the causes of economic depression. He was then given the job of director of the research department at the International Labour Office. At the same time, he held posts in a number of prestigious organisations: he was a member of the honorary committee of the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), and of the French *Haut Comité consultatif sur le commerce et l'industrie*. The League of Nations appointed him president of the Belgium and Luxembourg joint arbitration tribunal (1926-1929) and he was called to sit upon the French National Economic Council from 1928 to 1936. During the Second World War, Edgard Milhaud helped disseminate the Beveridge plan, which was to lead to the setting up of Social Security systems in some countries. Soon after the war, in 1947, he and some of his Swiss friends founded the International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy (ICRICE - CIRIEC), the aim of which was to restart publication of the *Annals* (interrupted by the war) and strengthen its activities defending public, cooperative and trade union organisations. He was the director of CIRIEC until 1957 and its chairman until 1960. In spite of this full-time activity, he still found time to convene the founding meeting of the Council of European Municipalities (1951) and went on to lay the foundations for a European Municipal Credit Community (1953).

Sources: MAITRON, Jean (editor), *Dictionnaire biographique du mouvement ouvrier français*, vol. XIV, Paris, Les Éditions Ouvrières, 1976, pp. 92-96; GÉLARD, Yvonne, 1947-1997. *50 Years in the life of CIRIEC*, Liège, CIRIEC, 1997, pp. 5-6.



Edgard Milhaud (Germaine Calame's private collection).

thus imagined founding a centre designed to provide scientific and logistical support for the publication of the *Annals*. Although that was not all it would do. The post-war period was one of economic reconstruction and the drive for social progress, both closely linked to the development of the various sectors of collective economy. There was a need both to support this up-and-coming movement and to combat the multiple campaigns of disinformation being put out in reaction to it by advocates of the private sector. These latter sought to belittle collective economy by blaming it for the difficulties which had arisen as a result of the war. In order to do this, they had no hesitation in misrepresenting the facts and distorting data.

So CIRIEC would therefore take on the task of supplying scientific information at international level relating to the experiments in the field of collective economy carried out in the various countries. And, as a result of this, encouraging cooperation between these different experiments and pursuing coordinated objectives (at both national and international level) designed to aid "a more conscious mankind in

becoming master of its destiny in an ever-increasing degree while at the same time securing the emancipation of the masses from all forms of exploitation and servitude in the full respect of the liberties and rights of the human being as well as peace”<sup>3</sup>. This was an ambitious programme and it bore witness to a committed stance, hardly surprising coming from a former colleague of Jean Jaurès, and a close associate of Léon Blum, Vincent Auriol and Albert Thomas.

## 2. The early years (1947-1953)

The decision to found CIRIEC came after two meetings held in Berne in December 1946 and February 1947, to which Milhaud invited a host of well-known Swiss people from the scientific world, from the French Section of the Workers’ International (SFIO) and from the trade union and cooperative worlds<sup>4</sup>. They set up an initiative committee (a kind of provisional board) responsible for making approaches at international level to any figures likely to support their ethical platform by becoming members of CIRIEC’s general council. Several leading statesmen came forward: notably from France there were Edouard Herriot, president of the National Assembly, Léon Blum and Paul Ramadier, former presidents of the Council of ministers, and Guy Mollet, secretary-general of the SFIO; from Belgium former Prime Minister Camille Huysmans, Pensions minister Joseph Merlot, minister of state Louis De Brouckère and Max Buset, the secretary-general of the Belgian Socialist Party. The Swiss contingent included Ernst Nobs, a member of the federal government. Several representatives of major public bodies also offered their support: these included Henri Hutoy, director of the *Société mutuelle des administrations publiques* (SMAP), Émile Vinck, secretary-general of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA), Willy Serwy, secretary-general of the *Société générale coopérative de Belgique*, Robert Bratschi, chairman of the *Union syndicale suisse* (USS), Léon Jouhaux, chairman of the French Economic Council and chairman of the French trade union *Force ouvrière* (FO), and Georges Gausset, chairman of the French *Société générale des coopératives de consommation*

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3 MILHAUD, Edgard, “The International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy (I.C.R.I.C.E.)” in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XIX, no. 1, Jan-March 1948, p. 27.

4 So, along with Edgard Milhaud, the founders of CIRIEC would include Jules Humbert-Droz, secretary of the Swiss Socialist Party, Hans Opdrecht, chairman of the Swiss Socialist Party and member of the National Council, Jean Möri and Charles Schürch, secretaries of the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions, Jean Treina, member of the State Council of the Canton of Geneva (responsible for the department of Trade and Industry), and Max Weber, chairman of the Board of the Swiss Union of Consumers’ Cooperatives, member of the National Council and professor at the university of Berne.

and chairman of the French *Comptoir National d'Escomptes*<sup>5</sup>. Representatives from the scientific world included Ernest Labrousse, Bernard Lavergne, Georges Lasserre, Henri Lévy-Bruhl, Jean Marchal and François Perroux. So there were the fairly prestigious patrons!

CIRIEC's aim, as set out in the statutes published in 1948, was "to initiate and promote by all means at its disposal all forms of research and dissemination of information on collective economy existing throughout the world in its various forms and their relationships: public utility agencies, co-operative societies, co-operative public agencies, other forms of undertakings of general interest, organised economy, plans' systems, etc."<sup>6</sup>. This willingness to tackle collective economy in its entirety is one of the unique characteristics of CIRIEC. Likewise the willingness shown from the very start to foster relationships between the various sectors of collective economy: so scientific synthesis is accompanied by a desire to coordinate in terms of action.

The founding of the Centre thus took place in an atmosphere of mild euphoria and indeed Edgard Milhaud was convinced that it would take off: he dreamt of it becoming a forerunner to the creation of an international collective economy organisation by the United Nations, following in the footsteps of the International Labour Office and the International Labour Organisation, which have replaced respectively the International Labour Office (created in Basel in 1901) and the International Association for Labour Legislation.<sup>7</sup>

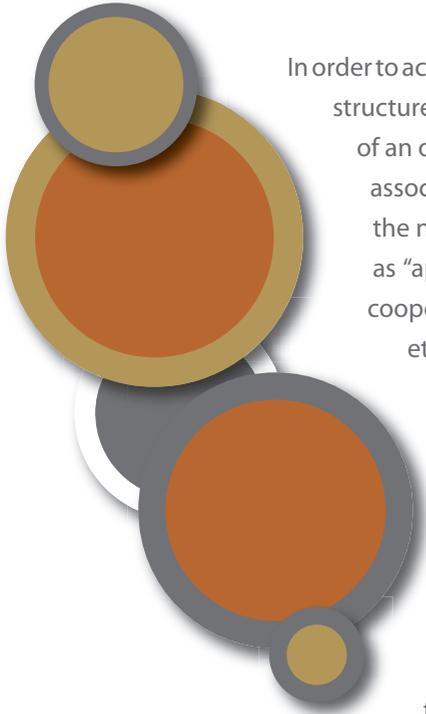
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5 MILHAUD, Edgard, "The International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy (I.C.R.I.C.E.)", *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37. See also the CIRIEC Archives (mentioned below CIRIEC), International Centre, Folder "1947-1957 Board", Invitation dated 29<sup>th</sup> December 1951 to attend the CIRIEC board of directors' meeting to be held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 1952.

6 MILHAUD, Edgard, "The International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy (I.C.R.I.C.E.)", *op. cit.*, p. 28.

7 We should note that, right from the very founding of CIRIEC, the issue of dissolution was highlighted by these specific examples (MILHAUD, Edgard, "The International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy" - *op. cit.*, p. 33-34). "The day will come when the question arises of the creation of an International Chamber of Collective Economy - just as necessary as the International Chamber of Commerce. The coming of that day must be hastened by action, by achievements and by uninterrupted progress." MILHAUD, Edgard, "The International Collective Economy Congress. Geneva, 28-31 May 1953" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXIII, no. 4, Nov.-Dec. 1952, p. 347).





In order to achieve these objectives, CIRIEC adopted a dual-focussed structure, inspired by the International Labour Office, consisting of an organ responsible for day-to-day management and an association. The latter was expected to draw support from the national sections, which were seen right from the start as “apolitical”, and made up of both group (trade unions, cooperative organisations, public authorities and services, etc.) and individual members. Edgard Milhaud’s desire to relaunch the *Annals of Collective Economy* could be clearly seen in the fact that all members automatically receive subscriptions to the journal, even though CIRIEC dues were no higher than the price of the subscription (and even often lower). No provisions were made to provide CIRIEC with operational resources, apart from hypothetical optional fees, appeals for donations and legacies. The financial support of the *Union suisse des coopératives de consommation* (USC) and the USS allowed the Centre

to remain afloat and above all to restart publication of the English and French versions of the *Annals* in 1948<sup>8</sup>. In terms of practical organisation, the new centre was no better off. Although there was provision for a permanent office in the statutes, it could not be set up due to a lack of funds. So CIRIEC rested entirely upon Edgard Milhaud’s shoulders. Its headquarters were actually located in the venerable professor’s flat. This lack of any real support combined with a certain complexity in the decision-making process explains why CIRIEC was to operate with no chairman, no general assembly and no board of directors for more than six years. It was only in May 1953, following the 1<sup>st</sup> International Collective Economy Congress held in Geneva and the general assembly which followed it, that CIRIEC was to achieve its true international stature.

However, this was not for want of commitment on the part of its director, who threw all of his energy into taking on all the responsibilities inherent in the new centre and who increased contacts abroad with a view to setting up CIRIEC’s national sections, designed to serve as intermediaries with the various sectors of collective economy

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8 The German edition began publication again in 1951.

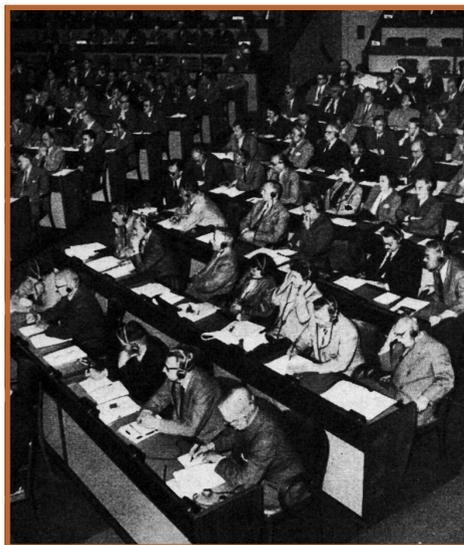
in their own countries. Once again, the underlying idea, going beyond defending and strengthening collective economy, was of course to guarantee the perenniality of the *Annals*, by developing its content thanks to the courtesy of the information assembled by the sections on collective economy initiatives carried out in their own countries, and also by recruiting members and thus new subscribers to the journal.

A Swiss centre opened in Zurich October 1947, under the name *Schweizerische Forschungsstelle für Gemeinwirtschaft*. Other sections were founded during the years that followed: in the province of Liège (May 1949), in French-speaking Switzerland (October 1949), in France (January 1950), in Luxembourg (October 1951)<sup>9</sup> and in Austria, with the founding of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der österreichischen Gemeinwirtschaft – AdöG* (May 1952).

### 3. The Geneva Congress and the recognition of CIRIEC at international level

It was above all in 1953 that CIRIEC took its place as a truly international centre with the 1<sup>st</sup> International Congress on Collective Economy. Organised with the very active help of local member organisations<sup>10</sup>, the congress took place in Geneva from 28<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 1953.

The date was not chosen at random: it came a few days before the International Labour Conference which, from 3<sup>rd</sup> June, was to bring numerous representatives



The First International Collective Economy Congress - Geneva, 1953 (taken from the *Coopérateur suisse*, no. 24, 10th June 1953, p. 317).

<sup>9</sup> We have been unable to find much information about this short-lived Luxembourg section. In a letter dated 1954, Edgard Milhaud refers to it mentioning the fact that it ceased operating after the death (on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1953) of its chairman, Hubert Clément, Luxembourg State Councillor and burgomaster of Esch-sur-Alzette (CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, Letter from Edgard Milhaud to R. G.-Orsini, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1954).

<sup>10</sup> An organising committee was put in place to this end, chaired by the State Councillor Jean Treina. A secretary was placed at the committee's disposal by the Swiss Union of Consumers' Cooperatives (CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "For the Liège file", letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 25<sup>th</sup> October 1959).

of workers' organisations, cooperatives, and even governments likely to be interested in collective economy matters together in the same town. The congress was therefore meant to be open (and not merely for CIRIEC members). Milhaud had high hopes that this event would increase the number of members and inspire the founding of national sections. But it was also to be a unique opportunity for the exchanging of information, the establishing of contacts between the various collective economy sections and subsections and a demonstration of its development in the various countries taking part.

Even so, the congress was not intended to be limited to this informative role alone: it was also meant to debate burning collective economy questions, namely:

- the role of the cooperative movement and of local and national enterprises in the building and safeguarding of the democratic economy;
- working conditions in collective economy organisations; workers' rights and responsibilities;
- the coordination of both national and international activities designed to tackle the problem of housing.

This agenda illustrated a desire to appeal to all of the sectors of collective economy represented within CIRIEC: trade unions, cooperatives, public enterprises, territorial authorities, etc.



Edgard Milhaud at the Geneva Congress  
(Germaine Calame's private collection).

With its 377 participants representing 202 organisations and institutions (among them international organisations such as the UN, the ILO, the WHO, UNESCO, the FAO, the ECSC and non-governmental bodies such as the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the IULA, the Council of European Municipalities and the International Confederation of Free Trade unions (ICFTU), etc.), the First International Collective Economy Congress was a real success. The delegates came from no fewer than 22 different countries<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Austria, Belgium, Burma, Bolivia, Canada, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, the Saar, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, the United King-

For the first time, the representatives of the various sectors of collective economy were brought together! The results achieved were also significant: three resolutions relating to the matters on the agenda were passed unanimously. Amongst other things the congress notably upheld the right to trade union representation for all those working in collective economy and public services and reaffirmed the right of organisations representing workers to share in decision-making and jointly manage enterprises. As far as the housing crisis was concerned, it called for a stepping up of collaboration between the State, municipalities and cooperatives and the involvement of the International Bank for Reconstruction. These stances, which were fairly daring for the time, demonstrated CIRIEC's ability to go beyond the scientific debate and get actively involved.

The congress also set up structures designed to ensure that the discussions which had got underway would continue. For instance, having noticed that the expression "collective economy" itself was understood in different ways in different sectors and countries, the participants decided to set up a terminology committee. Under the leadership of Professor Gerhard Weisser of the university of Cologne (Germany), it was given the task of coming up with a precise definition of this concept and of developing terminology which would be as standard as possible. Two other committees were also formed in order to look into the condition of workers in collective economy enterprises and the organisation of an International Collective Economy Association respectively<sup>12</sup>.

The first CIRIEC general assembly was held on the fringes of the Geneva congress, during which a series of decisions were taken, designed to improve the way that it operated and to emphasise its international nature. So CIRIEC's headquarters were kept in Switzerland (provisionally) and Edgard Milhaud was elected chairman (even though he had just made it known that he would be relieved to step down in favour of any young man wishing to take over as CIRIEC director). However, in order

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dom, the United States and Yugoslavia (CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "International Congresses"; Liège Section 1955, Note on the organisation of International Collective Economy Congresses and "the International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy"; 8<sup>th</sup> February 1955). For comparative statistics on the first four international CIRIEC Congresses, we refer you to the article entitled: "Les congrès internationaux de l'économie collective" in *Nouvelles du C.I.R.I.E.C Bulletin d'information interne*, Liège, no. 5, October 1959, pp. 5-7.

12 For more information on the work of the Geneva Congress and its resolutions, see the following article: "Report on The First International Collective Economy Conference and The First General Assembly of I.C.R.I.C.E." in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XV, no. 1, Jan-May 1954, pp. 1-296.



to back him up, the general assembly made provisions for the creation of an executive committee in Switzerland which would be responsible for day-to-day management matters. During the same meeting, Edgard Milhaud proposed a change to the statutes in order to take account of the national sections and ensure that they would be represented on the board of directors. Although up until then it had been made up solely of members close to the association's headquarters, the board needed to become fully international<sup>13</sup>.

The first board meeting held in this international form was to take place on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 1954, shortly after the setting up of a genuine Yugoslav section (December 1953) and a Swiss section (March 1954). Its main decisions were designed to take the weight off Edgard Milhaud by delegating some of his duties to two vice-chairmen: the Austrian Andreas Vukovich was to deal with financial issues, whilst his French colleague Paul Ramadier would be responsible for revising the statutes of CIRIEC, together with the organisation commission. Most importantly of all, Edgard Milhaud (finally!) got a secretary: Germaine Calame, whom he had asked to do some typing work from time to time since 1947, was taken on (officially on a part-time basis) in 1954. She became a devoted employee and took over responsibility for keeping CIRIEC's accounts from 1955 on.

At the time the International Centre's (meagre) finances consisted of revenue from subscriptions to the Annals, the support of various affiliates of the Swiss section, as well as (unregulated) fees from the national sections and from some direct member organisations from countries in which there was no section.

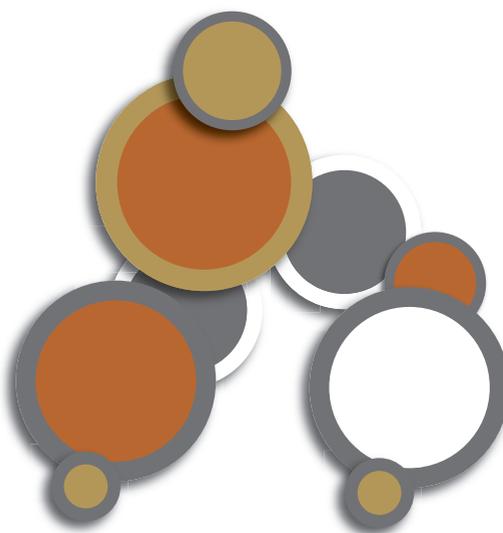
The new statutes passed during the general assembly held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1955 made explicit provision for the setting up of a permanent office. Although its role was

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<sup>13</sup> Each section was to nominate four people to join the board of directors while ensuring fair representation of the various sectors of collective economy. The amended statutes were only approved during the next general assembly, held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1955 on the fringes of the Liège Congress.

purely statutory and formal, as the majority of the tasks were still handled by CIRIEC's director-chairman, this new body was still a big step forward for CIRIEC and, once the headquarters of the International Centre had moved to Liège, it was called upon to play a leading role.

In order to gain a better understanding of the background to this relocation of the international headquarters from Geneva to Liège, first of all we need to look back at the story of the early years of CIRIEC's Belgian section.



## II. The early days of CIRIEC in Belgium (1949-1957)

### 1. The Liège provincial section of CIRIEC (1949-1951)

As we have previously mentioned, after Switzerland Belgium was the first country to respond to the appeal made by Edgard Milhaud in preparation for the setting up of CIRIEC's sections. In actual fact only one local section came into being on 9<sup>th</sup> May 1949, on the initiative of Joseph Leclercq, the governor of the province of Liège. He called a meeting with representatives of the Liberal, Catholic and Socialist parties with a view to founding a scientific body responsible for the

systematic study of the public sector and able to protect it and help it grow. "Our country has always been to the fore in progress. It would be paradoxical, after giving the public sector the development of which we are aware, for it to hesitate to create the organ for research, co-ordination and defense"<sup>14</sup>, he said in his address. Right from the start there was a clear desire to rise above any political differences<sup>15</sup> and to appeal to the three traditional parties, to the academic world and to heavy industry "persuaded that everywhere there are men sufficiently devoted to public welfare to disengage themselves from personal preoccupations, from group or class

#### **LECLERCQ, Joseph**

(Beyne-Heusay, 9th May 1886 – 12th April 1961)

Joseph Leclercq became an apprentice miner at the Wérister colliery while he was still a teenager. He soon found himself getting involved in trade union action, the cooperative movement and political life. During the First World War, he fought the occupying forces at Liège, and then

on the French front. In 1918, he became permanent secretary of the *Centrale des mineurs*, a post he held until 1940. Having gained an accounting diploma at night school, he became head of haulage at a transport company based in Micheroux. At the same time, he was rising through the political ranks of the Belgian Workers' Party (POB/PSB). He was elected as a district councillor for Beyne-Heusay in 1921 and became deputy burgomaster for Public Education and Municipal Services (1925-1932), provincial councillor (1932-1945) and



Joseph Leclercq (© Desarcy-Robyns Collection – Museum of Walloon Life - Province of Liège).

<sup>14</sup> Taken from the speech made by Joseph Leclercq during the setting up of the Liège provincial section, taken from MILHAUD, Edgard, "Belgium has heard our appeal. A Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy in the Province of Liège" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XX, no. 2, May-Aug. 1949, p. 108.

<sup>15</sup> Article 4 of the constitution act states: "It is a foregone conclusion that the fact that one is affiliated to the Centre does not mean that one adheres to any political, economic or social theory" (*Ibid*, p. 109).

finally a standing Member of Parliament of the province of Liège (1936-1940). During the Second World War, he was actively involved in the fight against the occupying forces as head of the *réseau Socrate*. In September 1944, the London government appointed him interim governor of the province of Liège, a post in which he was confirmed on 22nd December 1945. Joseph Leclercq played a decisive role in economic affairs. He was one of the founding directors of the Walloon Economic Council and played a key role in several intercommunal bodies (he was chairman of the ALE from 1939 to 1961, and founding chairman of the AIM, of Socolié and of the ALG). He also helped developing the oil-exporting port of Wandre and the port Monsin as well as improving navigation on the Meuse. Finally, in 1947, he distinguished himself by inaugurating the provincial Prize for the encouragement of industry, and, two years later, by setting up the Liège provincial section of CIRIEC.

Sources: DELFORGE, Paul, "Joseph Leclercq," in *Encyclopédie du Mouvement wallon*, vol. II., Charleroi, Jules Destrée Institute, 2000, pp. 934-935; *Joseph Leclercq. Discours prononcé par Monsieur le Gouverneur Gilbert Mottard, le 1er octobre 1984 devant le Conseil provincial de Liège*, s.l., [1984], 43 p.; *Mémorial de la Province de Liège 1836-1986*, Liège, MASSOZ print-works, [1986], pp. 111-114.

preoccupations."<sup>16</sup> Leclercq hoped to set up a Belgian section of CIRIEC, but he was aware that there were still obstacles to doing this immediately, so he stated that the primary aim of the Liège section was the forming of similar sections in other provinces, from which delegates would come to make up the future national section. The final legal form was to be shaped by it.

In reality, the Liège provincial centre would appear never to have gone beyond a simple *de facto* association<sup>17</sup>. Nonetheless, it did have a chairman (Joseph Leclercq) and two vice-chairmen: the senator and former Liberal minister Auguste Buisseret, on the one hand, and Félix Depresseux, chairman of the Bar, on the other, and a secretary Yerna, a business studies graduate<sup>18</sup>. Paul Gruselin, burgomaster of Liège, Armand Bricteux, secretary of the *Association belge pour le progrès social*, Henri Hutoy, director of the SMAP, Aimé De Spiegeleer, director of

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16 *Ibid*, p.106. Even so it should be noted that Leclercq's appeal to rise above political differences was not aimed at the Communists who, in spite of their political influence in post-war Belgium (they achieved 21% of the vote in the 1946 legislative elections), remained distanced from the body which had been set up (and indeed from the Belgian section subsequently). This distancing can probably be explained by the fierce competition between Belgian Socialists and Communists at the time. We should note that the same mistrust of Communism appears within CIRIEC International, which for many years would ban all contact with the countries of the East in the name of democracy and a desire for verified and verifiable scientific information only. This was a common stance right in the middle of the Cold War period!

17 We have been unable to find any trace of this Centre, either in *Le Moniteur Belge* (the Belgian Official Gazette), or in the *Mémorial administratif de la Province de Liège* (Administrative record of the province of Liège).

18 Although we cannot be completely sure, there is every reason to think this is Jacques Yerna, who had graduated from the university of Liège two years earlier and who went to work for the Work councils of the FGTB (*Fédération Générale du Travail de la Belgique*) in 1949 (see DOHET, Julien & JAMIN, Jérôme, *La Belgique de Jacques Yerna. Entretiens*, Brussels, Editions Labor, IHOES, 2003, pp. 24 and 32).

the Centre d'études coopératives and three professors from the university of Liège: Maurice Delbouille (faculty of Philosophy and Arts), Fernand Dehousse (faculty of Law) and Jules Lejeune (faculty of Law) completed the section's provisional board<sup>19</sup>.



Auguste Buisseret (IHOES collection).

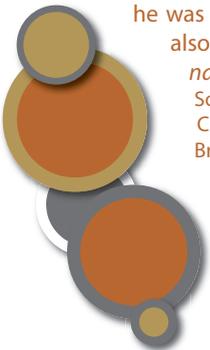
### **BUISSERET, Auguste**

(Beauraing, 16th August 1888 – Liège, 15th April 1965)

After graduating from the university of Liège in 1913, Auguste Buisseret quickly proved himself to be a brilliant young lawyer. He was called to the Liège bar and he undertook the defence of several patriots before the German courts during the First World War. His political career in the Liberal party led him to carry out duties at the district level as both councillor (1930-1965) and deputy burgomaster (1934-1939). When the Second World War broke out, he was stripped of his duties by the occupying forces. He reached England in 1943 and there he became legal advisor to various ministerial departments. After the war, he held several ministerial posts in Public Education, in the Interior (where he was involved in setting up the Council of State) and in Public Works. He finally became

minister for Colonies from 1954 to 1958, senator (1939-1961), provincial senator (1946-1949), and vice-chairman of the Senate (1947-1949). In 1949, he was involved in the setting up of the Liège provincial section of CIRIEC, of which he became vice-chairman. From 1959 to 1963, Auguste Buisseret held the post of burgomaster of Liège. One of the first Walloon activists (he was a member of the *Assemblée wallonne* from 1914 to 1923), he staunchly defended his ideas for Walloon autonomy in all the various positions he held throughout his career: these included president of the Walloon Guards, co-founder of the *Garde wallonne autonomiste* (1922), editor of the newspapers *La Barricade* and *L'Action Wallonne*, or while he was president of the *Ligue d'action wallonne de Liège* (1931). Auguste Buisseret was also a member of *Wallonie libre* (1942-1965), of the standing committee of the *Congrès national wallon* (1945-1961) and of the Walloon Liberal Movement (1962-1965).

Sources: DELFORGE, Paul, "Auguste Buisseret" in *Encyclopédie du Mouvement wallon*, vol. I, Charleroi, Jules Destrée Institute, 2000, pp. 206-208; *Sénat de Belgique. Manuel biographique*, Brussels, Ad. Goemaere, 1959, pp. 35-36.



There are two comments to be made about the make-up of this board: through three of its founders, the future Belgian CIRIEC had close ties with the university of Liège right from the beginning, and these ties would only be strengthened over the course of its history. In addition, the presence of three figures who would go on to play a key role in the

<sup>19</sup> In an article dated 1950, Edgard Milhaud named Léon-Eli Troclet as one of the founders of the provincial section. However, he does not appear in the aforementioned memorandum of association (MILHAUD, Edgard, "Municipalities and Centres of Research and Information on Collective Economy" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXI, no. 4, Nov.-Dec. 1950, p. 386).

Belgian section should be noted, namely Leclercq and especially Hutoy and Delbouille. The section had 39 individuals and 48 groups among its members. These included the Belgian Ministry of Public Works, the Liège and Seraing Social welfare boards as well as several local authority bodies, public enterprises (*Association liégeoise d'électricité* - ALE; *Association liégeoise du gaz* - ALG; *Association liégeoise de mécanographie* - ALM; the *Office de navigation*), cooperatives, trade unions (*Centrale générale des services publics* - CGSP, *Fédération chrétienne des syndicats de Liège*) and even the *Fédération des mutualités interprofessionnelles de la Province de Liège*, the forerunner of the current *Fédération des mutualités socialistes et syndicales* (FMSS).

In addition to an ongoing editorial contribution to the *Annals* designed to offer an introduction to collective economy in Belgium, the provincial centre increased its contacts in preparation firstly for the founding of other Belgian provincial sections and secondly for expanding its membership. A circular to this end was sent to local authorities, while the Centre d'études coopératives successfully

**DELBOUILLE, Maurice** (Chênée, 26th January 1903 - Liège, 30th October 1984)

After becoming a doctor in Roman philology at the university of Liège in 1923, Maurice Delbouille continued his training abroad (notably in Paris, at the Collège de France and the Sorbonne). On his return to Belgium, he taught at various

secondary schools (Ghent, Liège), before becoming lecturer at the university of Liège. There he taught linguistics, philology and medieval literature for 44 years. From 1932 to 1974 he ran the collection of publications *Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Philosophie et Lettres*, and for several years he was responsible for the publication of the *Dictionnaire wallon*. Even so, Maurice Delbouille did not limit his activities to his academic duties. He was a socialist activist and did a great deal of political action; from the Liberation onwards, he also contributed to the daily newspaper *Le Monde du Travail*. He was elected district councillor (1938) in Chênée and became deputy burgomaster for Public Education (1939-1941). Having been appointed burgomaster for his town in 1940, he opposed the constitution of *Le Grand Liège* required by the occupying forces. After being confirmed in this post in 1944, he continued as burgomaster without interruption until 1970. A passionate defender of Walloon interests and federalism, he was a member of the standing committee of the *Congrès national wallon* from 1945 to 1971. After becoming a provincial senator in 1958, he was directly elected to the Senate in 1961 (1961-1965). His political duties led him to sit on several intercommunal bodies (ALE, Socolié, AIM) in the region and he played a major role in the development of CIRIEC: he was the first chairman of the International Centre after the founder Edgard Milhaud (1959-1961).

Sources: DELFORGE, Paul, "Maurice Delbouille" in *Encyclopédie du Mouvement wallon*, vol. I, Charleroi, Jules Destrée Institute, 2000, pp. 433-434; TYSENS, Madeleine, "Maurice Delbouille" in *Nouvelle Biographie nationale*, vol. VIII, Brussels, Académie royale de Belgique, 2005, pp. 92-97.



Maurice Delbouille  
(Paul Delbouille collection).

recruited new members from within the cooperative movement. Edgard Milhaud was delighted by this and in the *Annals* he echoed the vitality of the young section and underlined the considerable importance attached at international level to the large number of Belgian groups affiliated to CIRIEC. By 1950, the section had roughly sixty group members, most of whom were local authority bodies<sup>20</sup>.

## 2. Official founding of the Belgian section

The plan to set up other Belgian regional sections had still not been accomplished when, on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1951, the Liège provincial centre made way for a Belgian section during an inaugural assembly bringing together the members of the former section. It would appear that this amendment took place at the express request of the International Centre, as Edgard Milhaud probably hoped it would act as a catalyst and extend CIRIEC's influence beyond just the Liège region<sup>21</sup>.

### DUTILLEUL, Émile

(Forchies-la-Marche, 7th November 1898 – Montignie-le-Tilleul, 15th August 1987)

Émile Dutilleul began his career in 1922 at the *Union des coopérateurs de Charleroi*, where he was a union propagandist. In 1935, he became social services director of the *Société générale coopérative*, a post that he held (apart from a break between 1945 and 1947) right up until his retirement, on 1st April 1964. His duties included responsibility for publishing *Le Coopérateur*. He was also a professor at the Workers' Higher Education School, where he gave classes on the cooperative moment. He was a member of the Central Economic Council from 1948 to 1957.

He was a founder member of CIRIEC's Belgian section (1951), and succeeded Charles Chaput as chairman of the section in 1961, a post he held until 1963.

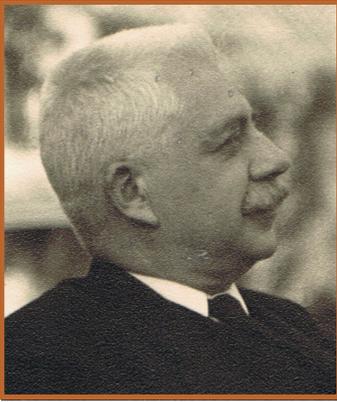
Émile Dutilleul was also politically active within his own region. He was a socialist and was elected district councillor in Mont-sur-Marchienne in 1932, before becoming deputy burgomaster for Public Education in 1933 and then burgomaster in 1934.

Sources: SERWY, Victor, *La Coopération en Belgique*, vol. IV, *La Vie coopérative. Dictionnaire biographique*, Brussels, Les Propagateurs de la coopération, 1952, p. 150; the Amsab-ISG biographical database.

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20 MILHAUD, Edgard, "The rapid progress of the Centre in the Province of Liège" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXI, no. 2, Apr.-May 1950, pp. 114-119.

21 Some years later, Edgard Milhaud admitted that it had been a mistake to push the Belgians into forming a national section without first setting up regional groups: "If they did forego this method in the end, it was, as we are well aware, in order to comply with our desires, not to speak of our entreaties. The National Section has no doubt outdistanced since then the Section of the province of Liège, but not to the extent hoped for. The other method, though slower, was the better one." He also once again recommended making an effort to try and set up provincial collective economy research and information centres (cf. "International Collective Economy Congress. Geneva, 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> May 1953. Assembly of the I.C.R.I.C.E. After six years of activity The I.C.R.I.C.E. in the Face of Tomorrow's Tasks. A Report submitted by Edgard MILHAUD, Director" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXIV, no. 1, Jan.-March 1953, p. 5). We will be returning to this matter of the regional sections, which was to remain a constant concern for the Belgian section throughout the nineteen fifties.



Henri Hutoy (Pierre Haverland collection).

### **HUTOY, Henri**

(Liège, 31st October 1890 – 17th November 1965)

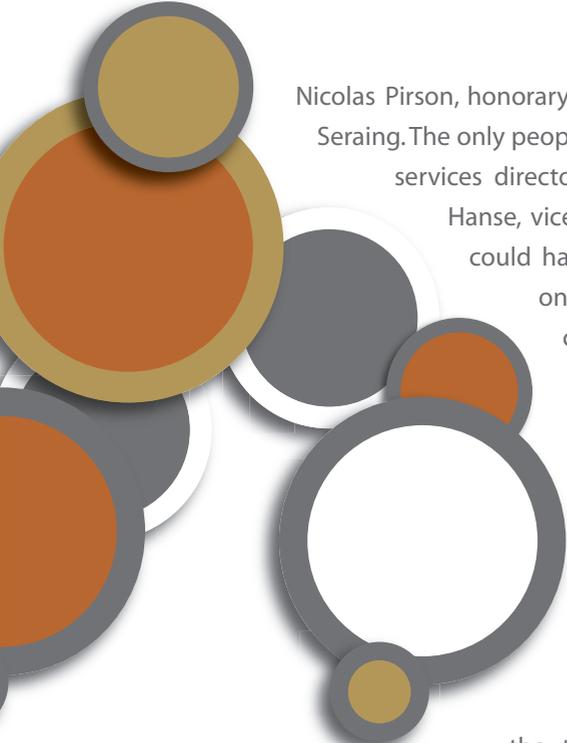
Henri Hutoy was orphaned when he was a teenager and was awarded a teacher degree at Liège, after which he went to Nivelles Teacher Training School with the intention of becoming a secondary schoolmaster. However, in November 1910 he gave up his studies to enter as a temporary clerk in the population office of the City of Liège, where he was involved in the ten-yearly census and then at the militia office and finally at the finance department. He was appointed employee of the City on 1st June 1912. At the instigation of Jules Seeliger, deputy burgomaster for Finance of the City of Liège, in 1919 he founded and became director of the *Société mutuelle des administrations publiques* (SMAP). He was to hold this position right up until his retirement on 31st December 1956. At the same time, he founded the *Association liégeoise de mécanographie* (ALM), later

renamed the *Association intercommunale de mécanographie* (AIM) the aim of which was to do printing work for the local authorities and the local public bodies. He directed the AIM until the early nineteen sixties and set up there a Belgian literary imprint *Les Lettres Belges*, which first published books by Belgian authors such as Marcel Thiry and André Baillon. Henri Hutoy was a close associate of Edgard Milhaud, supporting the founding of CIRIEC in 1947 and also involved in setting up its Liège provincial section in 1949. In 1952, he was appointed managing director of the Belgian section. Through the active role he played there, he had a profound influence upon the history of the Belgian CIRIEC.

Sources: Interview with Mr. Pierre Haverland; "Henri Hutoy" Documents, kept at the City of Liège Archives and at the Ethias Personnel Department.

In spite of his ambition, it has to be admitted that the new section remained essentially a Liège-based affair. Not only did the headquarters remain in the "Glowing City"<sup>22</sup> (although it was expected that meetings would be held in Brussels for the sake of convenience) but also nine of the thirteen constituent members were from the Liège region. Indeed, in addition to the former members of the provincial body (Buisseret, Delbouille, Depresseux, De Spiegeleer, Hutoy and Leclercq), there were Charles Bailly, deputy burgomaster of Liège, Joseph Merlot, a Socialist minister originally from Seraing and

<sup>22</sup> At 19, rue Forgeur. At the time, this address was the headquarters of the *Société mutuelle des administrations publiques* (SMAP).



Nicolas Pirson, honorary division head at the city administration of Seraing. The only people not from Liège were Émile Dutilleul, social services director of the *Société générale coopérative*, Jules Hanse, vice-chairman of the SMAP, and of course, we could hardly forget Edgard Milhaud<sup>23</sup>. To start with, only the provinces of Brabant and Hainaut were covered and other parts of the country were notable by their absence. Deeming it to be a good idea for the main provinces to be represented, the assembly decided to postpone the appointment of its board of directors<sup>24</sup>.

Thus directors were appointed at the general assembly held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1952, and care was taken to ensure that the three traditional political parties were all represented. All founder members are appointed (with the exception of Messrs Buisseret, Husdens and Milhaud).

Although the representation of the various provinces was not increased, the assembly nevertheless made plans to complete the board of directors by allocating five additional positions to representatives from the trade union and cooperative movements. Aimé De Spiegeleer was given the job of interceding with the Socialists and Félix Depresseux the Catholic wing. It should be noted that this desire for fair representation in decision-making procedures did not relate merely to political groupings, but also to the various sectors of collective economy (trade unions, cooperatives and public enterprises). It has been one of the special features of the Belgian section ever since the early days and is still with us today.

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<sup>23</sup> The thirteenth constituent member, a certain Jean Husdens, is mentioned only in these minutes. We unfortunately did not find any information about him.

<sup>24</sup> CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, founding meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1951.

At the extraordinary general assembly of 28<sup>th</sup> October 1953, the chairman, Mr Leclercq, mentioned the need to set up regional centres in order to improve the representation of the Belgian section with respect to certain regions. René Thône, standing deputy of the province of Hainaut and Henri Lemaire, director of the *Prévoyance sociale* in Brussels, were given responsibility for founding centres in the provinces of Hainaut and Brabant (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, report of the extraordinary general assembly held on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1953).

During the same meeting, Joseph Leclercq and Henri Hutoy were appointed chairman and managing director respectively. Nicolas Pirson took up the post of secretary-treasurer and, together with Maurice Delbouille, he was given responsibility for handling the day-to-day management of the association<sup>25</sup>.

The new section's financial resources were very meagre indeed: revenue came from a tiny proportion of the proceeds from subscriptions to the *Annals*. In 1952, these proceeds amounted to approximately 7,000 Belgian francs for the 174 subscriptions<sup>26</sup>, a derisory amount which meant that there was no chance of carrying out the section's work and prevented it from paying any dues to the International Centre. So its activities mainly boiled down to the distribution of the *Annals of Collective Economy*. In order to improve the treasury's cash position, the general assembly held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1952 made provision for approaches to be made through a circular sent to various authorities, with the aim of persuading them to join the section<sup>27</sup>. From 1953 onwards, a number of organisations answered the appeal and offered the Belgian section 6,500 francs as supporting dues or special dues, designed to cover the costs of the Belgian delegation at the Geneva Congress<sup>28</sup>.

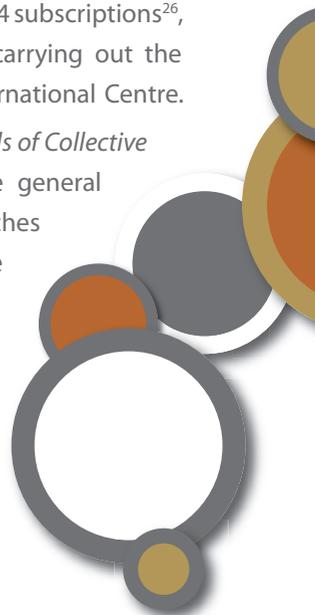
This congress was to be an opportunity for the Belgian section to show just how dynamic it was. Not only did it manage to assemble a large delegation of 35 participants (making it the largest group represented apart from Switzerland!), but it also took a leading role. François Van Belle chairs the plenary session several times, standing in for the congress chairman Léon Jouhaux; several of its members are elected onto the various

25 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, general assembly held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1952.

26 Even so the secretary-treasurer's allowance was set at 6,000 francs! (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, minutes of the general assembly held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1952).

27 The membership fee, which was separate from the cost of subscription to the *Annals*, was set according to the size of the organisations at 250, 500, 750 or 1,000 Belgian francs (Idem).

28 Supporting fees came from the *Maison des mutualistes* (250 Belgian francs), from the *Société coopérative liégeoise d'électricité - Socolié* and the *Association intercommunale de mécanographie - AIM* (500 Belgian francs each) and from the ALE (750 Belgian Francs). The ALE, the AIM and the SMAP also paid special fees of 1,500 Belgian francs (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, board of directors' meeting held on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1953).





committees created<sup>29</sup>; and two of the congress' resolutions (concerning economic democracy and the coordination of the effort to build housing) are based respectively on Marcel Gerlache and Fernand Brunfaut's reports. And, the offer from the City of Liège to host the Second Collective Economy Congress was "accepted unanimously, to cheers"<sup>30</sup>.

In the same way that the Geneva Congress had helped to cement the reputation of CIRIEC International, the period of preparation for the Liège Congress (the Second International Collective Economy Congress, in 1955) coincided with the genuine take-off of the Belgian section.

### 3. The Second International Collective Economy Congress (Liège, 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> September 1955)



Programme for the Second International Collective Economy Congress - Liège, 1955 (CIRIEC collection).

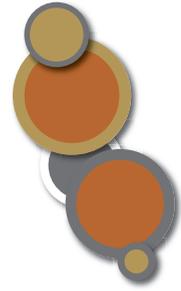
Because of the success of the First Collective Economy Congress in Geneva, CIRIEC was under some pressure. Not only did it need to be more professional and to avoid the organisational problems of 1953, above all it had to repeat the performance in terms of delegate numbers.

The preparations for the event were entrusted to an organising committee representing the various sectors of collective economy. With Maurice Denis, the deputy burgomaster of Liège in charge of industrial services, it brought together several active members of the Belgian section's board of directors (Charles Bailly, Maurice Delbouille, Henri Hutoy and Nicolas Pirson), a trade unionist (Joseph

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<sup>29</sup> Joseph Brusson, Georges Listré and Maurice Denis were elected as members of the committees responsible for workers' statute, for terminology and for the drawing up of the statutes of the international collective economy organisation respectively (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, report on the first International Collective Economy Congress).

<sup>30</sup> *Idem*.



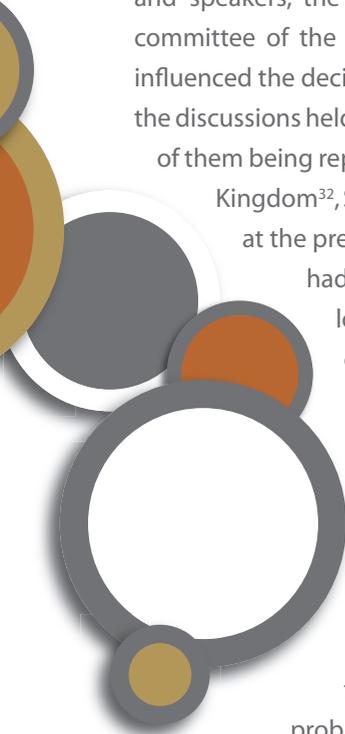
The VIP platform at the Liège Congress  
(© Desarcy-Robyns Collection – Museum  
of Walloon Life – Province of Liège).



The Liège Congress (IHOES collection).



Gathering at the Liège Congress: guests of honour in the foreground, including the Minister Léon-Éli Troclet, (2nd from left), followed by Pierre Clerdent, governor of the province of Liège, Daniel Lamazière (French Consul General) and Victor Gothot (professor at the university of Liège) (© Desarcy-Robyns Collection – Museum of Walloon Life - Province of Liège).



Brusson, from the Liège-Huy-Waremme *Fédération générale du travail de Belgique* - FGTB) and a representative from the cooperatives (Georges Listré, general secretary of the *Union coopérative*). The secretariat, at rue Louvrex 88 (in other words on the premises of the *Association intercommunale de mécanographie* - AIM), was run by a young political science graduate André Schreurs<sup>31</sup>. This organising committee was responsible for practical questions, while fundamental issues (choosing the agenda and speakers, the list of invitees) remained the responsibility of the executive committee of the International Centre. There were a number of concerns which influenced the decisions taken on these matters: firstly it was a matter of continuing the discussions held during the previous congress, although without giving the sense of them being repeated and secondly a desire to attract delegates from the United Kingdom<sup>32</sup>, Scandinavia and the Netherlands, regions from which attendance at the preceding congress had been very poor and where Edgard Milhaud had been trying to inspire the setting up of national sections for a long time. But the organising committee also wanted to reach out to the Middle East, Asia (especially India and Indonesia), New Zealand and the South-American continent. Maurice Delbouille would embark upon steps in this direction among diplomatic representatives in Brussels<sup>33</sup>. In the end, no fewer than 2,900 individual invitations and 2,100 invitations to organisations were sent out!<sup>34</sup>

The general theme of the congress was based around how the different sectors of collective economy could tackle the problems of economic expansion, raising the standard of living and

31 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> June 1954. This was actually the restricted committee. A more formal organising committee also included Joseph Leclercq, Félix Depresseux, Joseph Merlot and his son Joseph-Jean, member of the Chamber of Representatives and burgomaster of Seraing, Gustave Defise, director of the *Société générale coopérative de Micheroux*, and René Pouret, emeritus lawyer and member of the standing deputation of the province of Liège (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "International Congress"; Liège section 1955, Note on the organisation of International Collective Economy Congresses and the "International Centre of Research and Information on Collective Economy" of 8<sup>th</sup> February 1955).

32 The reason put forward for the non-appearance of the British was that the Geneva Congress clashed with the celebrations surrounding the Coronation of Elizabeth II.

33 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "Board 1947-1957", Minutes of the encounter of the Board of CIRIEC, Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 1954.

34 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "Board 1947-1957", Minutes of the meeting of the Board of CIRIEC in Geneva dated 16<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> April 1955.

full employment. With the aforementioned considerations in mind, David Ginsburg, research secretary to the Labour Party, was chosen as Rapporteur-General. CIRIEC was hoping to open the congress with a report on the worldwide collective economy. On a suggestion from Maurice Delbouille, the name of Paul Lambert, a professor at the university of Liège, was put forward as “a right-hand man of the Belgian unions”; and he was accepted as speaker<sup>35</sup>. The congress also offered an opportunity to present a progress report on the three committees set up by the Geneva Congress.

The event was held under the prestigious patronage of Jean Rey, minister for Economic Affairs, Victor Larock, minister for Foreign Trade, along with the City of Liège; the invitations were signed by Camille Huysmans, Léon-Eli Troclet and Paul Gruselin.



Participants at the Liège Congress (© Desarcy-Robyns Collection – Museum of Walloon Life – Province of Liège).

So, from 17th to 20th September, the hall at the Palais des Fêtes of the Jardin d’Acclimatation hosted 431 delegates from 16 different countries<sup>36</sup>. This was another

<sup>35</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “Board 1947-1957”, Minutes of the encounter..., op. cit. This is not an innocent suggestion on the part of the professor who, as we shall see subsequently, was already planning to succeed Milhaud and to move the international headquarters of CIRIEC to Liège.

<sup>36</sup> “Report of the Second International Collective Economy Conference and the Second General Assembly of the ICRIE. Liège, 17<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> September 1955” in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXVII, no. 2, March-Oct. 1956, pp. 69-332. Apart from the countries which had national sections at the time (Austria, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Yugoslavia), 11 countries were represented: West Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Luxemburg, Mexico, the Netherlands, the Saar, Sweden, Tunisia, and Turkey. Reports from the time (in particular *La Wallonie* of 17<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> September 1955, p. 1) also mention India, but it would appear that the country’s representative, M. Sidhwa, was taken ill during the journey and in the end stayed in London.

success in terms of numbers but even so, it concealed a rather less bullish reality: the high number of participants was achieved only thanks to the record Belgian attendance (221 delegates representing 76 different organisations). Only seven international organisations were represented<sup>37</sup>. In addition to this, Milhaud's hopes had only been very partially fulfilled in that the United Kingdom and Sweden were represented by just three people each.

Even so, the flawless organisation, the excellent content of the discussions and the results achieved (two new committees were set up, one to deal with housing and the other given a wide brief to carry out the general theme) had given the impression that the Second International Collective Economy Congress was a great success. The team from Liège had just proven that it was up to the task of running a huge project and the interest shown by the Liège authorities in collective economy made a strong impression. There can be no doubt that these points were to play to the advantage of the "Glowing City" when, several years later, it put itself forward as the choice for the new headquarters of the International Centre.

#### 4. Reorganisation as a prelude to development

The general assembly met at the end of the congress, on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1955, and gave the sections greater autonomy. Each of them now formed a centre and the various centres made up an association chaired by Professor Milhaud.

As for the Belgian section, since the spring it had already embarked upon a major reorganisation process, instigated by Maurice Delbouille and Paul Lambert. The latter had built up contacts in order to get representatives of national organisations (*Caisse générale d'épargne et de retraite* - CGER, *Banque nationale de Belgique*) and leaders of Socialist organisations interested in CIRIEC: Émile Dutilleul (*Société générale coopérative*), Henri Lemaire (*Prévoyance Sociale*) and André Renard (FGTB trade union). On the basis of these talks, he put together a plan for the reorganisation of the section: the setting up of a board of representatives drawn from the three sectors

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<sup>37</sup> The International Labour Organisation, the Council of European Municipalities, the European Municipal Credit Community, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the International Federation of Unions of Employees in Public and Civil Services, the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA) and the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone Workers' International.



Paul Lambert (CIRIEC collection).

**LAMBERT, Paul** (Seraing, 21st February 1912 – Brussels, 17th September 1977)

Paul Lambert was a doctor of law (1935) and an economic and social sciences graduate (1936) of the university of Liège. He was called up when Belgium was invaded by the Germans. As a prisoner-of-war for five years he wrote about these years of captivity in his book *Hommes perdus à l'Est*, written in 1946. Appointed to the university of Liège the same year, he was given the chair in political economy in the late nineteen fifties. He became secretary-general of CIRIEC's Belgian section in 1954, before succeeding Edgard Milhaud as director of CIRIEC International (1957) and then as editor of the *Annals of Collective Economy* (1960). He had close links to the socialist world and was one of André Renard's

advisors; at the latter's request he authored the economic report on the *Mouvement populaire wallon* which, when presented during the founding congress held on 16th and 17th November 1961, set out the movement's main economic demands. Paul Lambert is the author of *La doctrine coopérative*, an internationally influential book on the subject. Moreover, he was chairman of the socialist cooperative movement (Febecoop), which he represented on the ICA central and executive committees, and was a member of the management committee and of the board of directors of the *Société nationale de crédit à l'industrie* (SNCI).

Sources: DELFORGE, Paul, "Paul Lambert" in *Encyclopédie du Mouvement wallon*, vol. II, Charleroi, Institut Jules Destrée, 2000, p. 911; GÉLARD, Yvonne, 1947-1997. *50 Years in the life of CIRIEC*, Liège, CIRIEC, 1997, pp. 25-26.

of collective economy (union, cooperative and public enterprise), greater emphasis on the apolitical and scientific nature of the centre by opening up the board of directors to the Catholic and Liberal parties<sup>38</sup>, and a rotating chairmanship lasting two years with the aim of alternating between different political or philosophical outlooks (Maurice Delbouille was chosen as the first chairman). Finally, Paul Lambert

<sup>38</sup> The make-up of the board of directors on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1956 is proof of this opening up and balanced redistribution between the various sectors of collective economy. Indeed, the trade unions had 8 members (A. Colle representing the *Centrale générale des syndicats libéraux de Belgique* (CGSLB); five directors – among them André Genot and André Renard – from the FGTB; while the *Confédération des syndicats chrétiens* (CSC) had expressed a desire to limit its representation to two directors, namely L. Dereau and Claude Jozs). The cooperative sector also had 8, including a representative of the *Office des pharmacies coopératives de Belgique* (OPHACO) and three from cooperatives with links to the Christian world. Finally, public enterprise was represented by 11 members. It also brought together people from the three traditional parties and improved the geographical area represented by the board: alongside the first deputy burgomaster of Brussels (Guillaume Verheven) and a standing Member of Parliament from the province of Hainaut (René Thône), there were directors from the north of the country namely G. Nachez, deputy burgomaster for the municipal services of the City of Ghent, and Carl Lebon, deputy burgomaster of the City of Antwerp with responsibility for trade and shipping.



agreed to take on the role of secretary-general for the section, with the help of a university assistant.<sup>39</sup>

The renewed vitality brought by Paul Lambert was even more noticeable as a result of the promise made by the SMAP to provide a building for CIRIEC and the improved financial state of the section as a result of the growing number of fees<sup>40</sup>. The team also grew: from May 1955, a shorthand typist (Miss Luppens) was employed to help André Schreurs with preparations for the congress. André Schreurs left CIRIEC shortly afterwards, as the result of a clash with

Paul Lambert. André Baeyens was then taken on as assistant to the secretariat. Yvonne Schreder, a young business graduate, joined CIRIEC in July 1956, replacing Miss Luppens. She was to remain there for the whole of her career and helped Paul Lambert and his successors<sup>41</sup> enthusiastically and efficiently.

Activities were also expanding. Apart from the big circular distribution campaign to increase affiliations to CIRIEC in Belgium, they focussed on creating a permanent research centre given the task of setting up a specialised library and collecting precise information in preparation for conducting research and studies. The section also set up a bimonthly newsletter, *Expériences*, the first issue of which came out in 1956.<sup>42</sup> From now on, in return for their fees, Belgian CIRIEC members received

39 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and meetings of the board of directors, Meeting of the committee of CIRIEC's Belgian section and some members of the organising committee for the Congress held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 1955 at the SMAP and CIRIEC, Belgian section, Register of minutes of general assemblies and meetings of the board of directors, the CIRIEC general assembly held on Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March 1955.

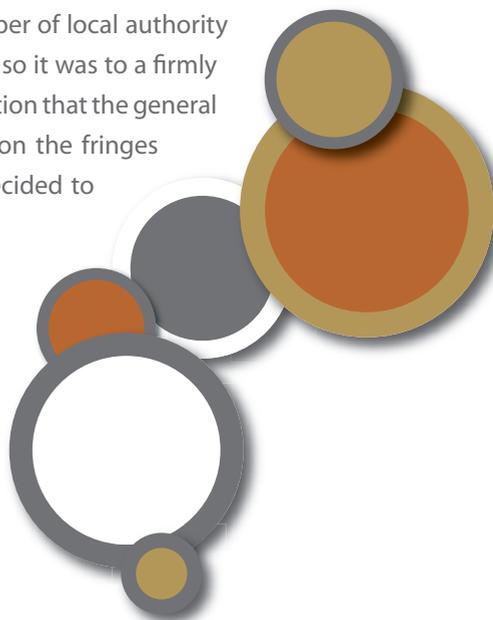
40 Revenue for 1956 amounted to 354,204.45 Belgian francs (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "General assemblies 1955-1960", Accounts 1956), including 337,900 francs relating to 97 sets of fees, a ten-fold increase on what was being paid prior to the reorganisation.

41 Guy Quaden, the current governor of the *Banque Nationale de Belgique*, was director of CIRIEC from 1978 to 1990. Bernard Thiry has had the job of director since that time.

42 The choice of printer for this newsletter turned out to be problematic and is a further demonstration of CIRIEC's desire to remain apolitical. There could be no question of going to a private company. But all Belgian cooperative print-works have their own political stamps and whichever one was chosen, there would be a risk of upsetting some of the directors. This is why Paul Lambert wanted *Expériences* to be

two journals: Professor Milhaud's *Annals of Collective Economy and Experiences*. They also had the opportunity to ask the research centre for any information relating to collective economy, a service to which non-members could also subscribe, but which proved not as successful as expected.<sup>43</sup>

CIRIEC's Belgian section had the wind in its sails and gradually its membership grew to include not just the majority of the cooperatives and all the trade union federations, but also a great number of local authority bodies and the main public enterprises<sup>44</sup>. And so it was to a firmly established and rapidly expanding Belgian section that the general assembly of 28<sup>th</sup> May 1957 (held at Puteaux on the fringes of the Third Collective Economy Congress) decided to hand over the reins of CIRIEC International.



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printed by the AIM. Henri Lemaire and Georges Listré (head of the *Union coopérative*) were reluctant to see CIRIEC affiliating to the AIM (a compulsory precondition), and forced him to take the issue to the meeting of the board of directors held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1956, which decided to ask for bids from both the AIM and the *Union coopérative*. In the end, the AIM was given the job of printing the newsletter (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "1956-1958 Administrative business," Correspondence between Paul Lambert, Henri Lemaire and Georges Listré between 14<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May 1956 and letter from André Baeyens to Paul Lambert dated 7<sup>th</sup> June 1956).

43 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "General assemblies 1955-1960", Minutes of the general assembly of CIRIEC's Belgian section held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1957.

44 So in 1956, it included 3 ministries (Communication, Labour and Economic Affairs), 3 provincial governments, 19 local authorities or local municipal services, 19 intercommunal bodies, 6 subsidised housing associations, 13 cooperatives, the major trade union organisations and 17 individual members (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "General assemblies 1955-1960", Minutes of the general assembly of CIRIEC's Belgian section held on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1957).

### III. The issue of moving CIRIEC International's headquarters (1954-1957)

#### 1. The reasons behind the move and the first attempt (1954)

As we have previously mentioned, Edgard Milhaud was ending his academic career, when he had embarked upon the CIRIEC adventure in 1947. Although he was certainly an energetic, passionate and determined man, he carried a huge weight of responsibility on his shoulders. Whereas during the early years he had been able to count on the active support of his Swiss friends, he gradually saw a falling off of interest in CIRIEC in Switzerland (in around 1954). Without this help, the job was becoming too much for him – he was 81 years old, after all! The issues of who would succeed Edgard Milhaud and at the same time the relocation of CIRIEC's international headquarters were on the agenda even as far back as 1954. Three years were to pass before they were finally settled.

There were various reasons for the delay. It was partly due to "rivalries" between the national sections, partly due to the difficulty of finding someone capable of taking on all Edgard Milhaud's responsibilities (and willing to do so), and finally, his own reluctance to give any ground. Throughout his life he had totally identified with "his" journal and then with "his" association. So, understandably, he was probably unable to bring himself to entrust the future of his "children" to anyone else.

So he found himself in a painful position in which he knew he could not continue to carry out his overburdening responsibilities indefinitely, but appeared to be watching jealously to ensure he did not too quickly lose his hold over what he felt was his life's work, especially as there appeared to be no serious contenders for the job of carrying on what he had started.

Milhaud's paradoxical state of mind is clearly apparent during the meeting of the board of directors held on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 1954, at which the directors were looking for ways to take the weight off the ageing director-chairman. So they decided to recruit a secretary (a decision which was only to become effective six months later with the appointment of Germaine Calame) and to create an *Annals* committee made up of Edgard Milhaud, Gabriel Ventejol (France), Andreas Meyer

(Switzerland) and Erwin Hasselman (Germany). Charles-Henri Barbier also suggested bestowing the chairmanship on the Austrian Andreas Vukovich. Milhaud immediately retorted that the decisions which had just been taken would relieve him of minor tasks which meant he would be able to continue with his work, adding that if he were unable to remain fully active, his job was over and he would return to his studies: “so, it’s either total and absolute devolution, or else we carry on with the essential work,” he proclaimed rather emphatically<sup>45</sup>. The French delegation also reacted to an idea it associated with relocating the headquarters of the International Centre to Vienna, by putting forward three counter-arguments: the first was a moral one, namely that it was unthinkable that CIRIEC should be separated from the man who personified it; the other two are geopolitical and relate to the fact that Switzerland was in an ideal geographical location (including the fact that so many high-prestige international organisations were based there) and that Austria was too close to the Iron Curtain.

The way Edgard Milhaud told the story in a letter addressed to Léon Jouhaux is clear proof that he was not yet ready to give up his prerogatives:

“The Board’s work has been productive. In line with its plans, it has considerably strengthened the central body by ensuring that the essential work of the secretariat is carried out normally. [...] Words have been spoken and decisions have been taken which now formally guarantee that CIRIEC will survive and that it will soon move into a phase of broad expansion. One danger from an unexpected quarter has been avoided. During the discussions about the organisation, certain recent events which appear to indicate a weakening of interest in CIRIEC in Switzerland (I believe that we are talking about passing circumstances rather than deep-rooted problems) have led to the suggestion that CIRIEC’s headquarters should be moved to Vienna. There is a very powerful workers’ movement in Austria, and there is considerable interest in collective economy activities within it. On the other hand, Austria is not used to international political rivalry and might, quite rightly, be thought able to provide a sanctuary for a set of values specific to an economic and social institution such

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<sup>45</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “1947-1957 Board”, Record of the Minutes of the meeting of the CIRIEC board of directors held on 31<sup>st</sup> March and 1<sup>st</sup> April 1954, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1954.

as CIRIEC. But the sudden – immediate – relocation of activities which have been developing within CIRIEC for 7 years and in the *Annals of Collective Economy* for 45 years, in Geneva, would be a dangerous venture. The French delegation immediately reacted with vigour and powerful arguments which made quite an impression<sup>46</sup>.

So the meeting of the board of directors ended more or less with the *status quo*: the headquarters stayed in Geneva and Milhaud remained chairman. Only the appointment of two vice-chairmen was upheld, as we have already mentioned. Although Barbier's suggestion had been rejected, it seemed nevertheless to have had the effect of breaking the taboo on the issue of the move. From this time onwards, it was brought up regularly both in CIRIEC discussions and in Milhaud's correspondence.

It was against this background that the Belgian section began thinking about the possibility of providing a home for the International Centre and Liège gradually emerged as a possible location for the CIRIEC headquarters.

## **2. Liège asserts itself as the future CIRIEC International headquarters**

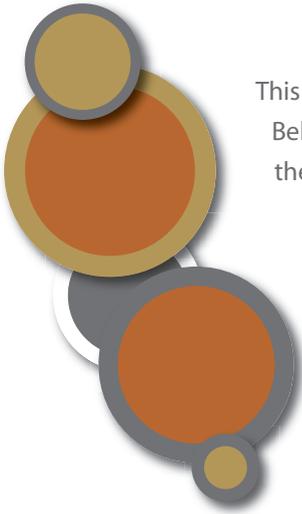
In November 1954 (while the preparations for the Liège Congress were in full swing), and after consulting Joseph Leclercq and Joseph Merlot, Maurice Delbouille organised a restricted meeting of the board of directors during which he underlined the social and political deadlock into which Switzerland had sunk, as well as "the German-speaking countries' hold over CIRIEC and their obvious desire to award the International Centre's headquarters to themselves"<sup>47</sup>. He called upon the Belgian section to position itself as possible headquarters for the move. He suggested Paul Lambert as a possible successor to Edgard Milhaud. However he had taken the thinking process farther. He suggests checking with the SMAP and the Prévoyance Sociale to see whether they might be able to provide equipped premises. Approaches would be made to the sectors of collective economy in order to provide finance<sup>48</sup>.

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46 CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to Mr Léon Jouhaux (copied to Dardel, Hirschfeld, Lutfalla, R. G.-Orsini, Rouanet and Ventejol), 7<sup>th</sup> April 1954.

47 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Record of the minutes of general assemblies and board of directors' meetings, restricted meeting of the board of directors held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1954.

48 *Idem*.



This was an almost exact picture of the future situation of the Belgian CIRIEC only three years ahead of schedule. The fact that they were able to see the future so clearly is very impressive!

At the meeting of the board of directors held on 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> April 1955, Edgard Milhaud found himself in charge of an information-gathering mission about the possibility of moving the organisation's headquarters. At the executive committee meeting held shortly afterwards on 9<sup>th</sup> May, he weighed up the favourable climate in Liège but at the same time offered a reminder of Geneva's advantages. He even looked at the possibility of hiring the ground floor of the European Municipalities Centre and of collaborating with the United Nations Library, which he hoped to see housing CIRIEC's documentation. As can be seen, the question of the move was still far from being resolved at this point!

Might other sections try to put themselves in the running? A quick summary of the positions of CIRIEC's various sections in the mid nineteen fifties may help us pinpoint their respective strengths and weaknesses.

#### *A. Outline of CIRIEC's national sections in 1956*

CIRIEC had eight national sections in 1956: Austria, Belgium, France, Greece, India, Italy, Switzerland and Yugoslavia (not counting Germany which would only found its own section in 1960). We have already talked at great length about the Belgian section. Now we are going to take a brief look at the others.

#### **Austria**

Since it was formed in 1952, the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der österreichischen Gemeinwirtschaft* (AdöG) had continued to grow, bringing together the three main sectors of collective economy (cooperatives, public enterprises and trade unions). It published a journal, the *Neue Technik und Wirtschaft* and its delegates played an active role on CIRIEC's decision-making bodies and various committees. So it was

at its suggestion that the organising committee given the task of revising CIRIEC's statutes was set up and chaired by Karl Pröbsting. Finally, as vice-chairman of CIRIEC International, Andreas Vukovich had been responsible for the financial aspects of the Centre since 1954.

Austria was also one of the countries where the interest aroused by collective economy was most obvious: there was organisational contact between the various sectors (nationalised public, municipal, cooperative, trade union) and the workers' movement there was very powerful. Also, because of its neutrality, from 1955 onwards Austria looked an interesting refuge for an economic and social institution such as CIRIEC.

In spite of all this, Edgard Milhaud remained sceptical, because of Vienna's geographical proximity to Eastern Europe and because he "felt sure that this relocation would be detrimental to the expansion of the organisation in Western European countries, in Switzerland itself, in France, in Belgium and in England, where we still haven't managed to break through"<sup>49</sup>.

## France

As a Frenchman, Edgard Milhaud naturally retained close ties with his home country. In 1950, his friend Léon Jouhaux founded the French section which was heavily dependent on the trade union FO and on the *Fédération nationale des coopératives de consommation* (FNCC) although little, if at all, on the public sector. In spite of the leading figures in its fold (Paul Ramadier, Gabriel Ventejol, André Hirschfeld, etc.), the French centre had not really grown and its contribution to CIRIEC had for a number of years



André Hirschfeld (left) and Paul Ramadier (right) greet each other during the Liège Congress (Germaine Calame's private collection).

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<sup>49</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to R. G.-Orsini, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1954.

been limited to group subscriptions to the *Annals* and active participation in the early congresses.

When the French section had the prospect of additional revenue in 1954 (thanks to the involvement of a large number of nationalised industries), René G.-Orsini, the then secretary-general, did not seem particularly keen to increase its contribution to the International Centre, preferring to maintain his own schedule of activities and allocate most of these new profits to paying for special projects for which orders were placed with teachers and students. Milhaud was extremely disappointed because he was hoping that France would take responsibility for CIRIEC's finances in proportion to its place on the international map<sup>50</sup>.

It should be added that the French political context was not very favourable at the time: back then France was facing chronic government instability made worse by the problems of decolonisation: the war in Indochina had been over for barely six months when the Algerian war broke out.

### **Greece**

The Greek section was founded in 1956 on the initiative of a friend of Edgard Milhaud, Professor Angelos Angelopoulos. It was chaired by Stratis D. Someritis, a lawyer and vice-chairman of the Greek Socialist League. At the time it was more of a group of people sympathising with Edgar Milhaud's ideas and/or people interested in collective economy than a genuine section.

### **India**

The All India Federation of Local Authorities of Bombay was mentioned among CIRIEC's national centres in a letter in 1956<sup>51</sup>, and it appears to be no more than a modest association affiliated to CIRIEC by Mr

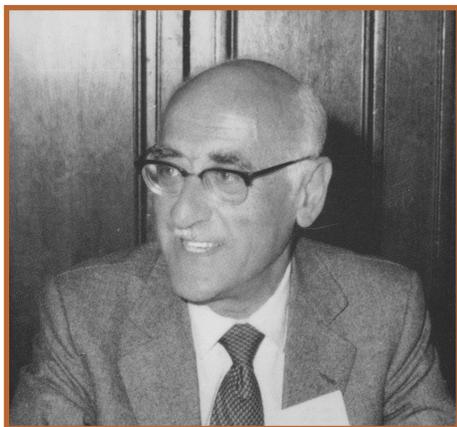
<sup>50</sup> "I can quite understand your difficulties at international level, but I believe we will be doing you a service if we manage to do some work on things in France. I feel that this work can only be carried out in the way I've explained to you; this has now been tried out in a way about which unfortunately, there can be no real dispute" (CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from R. G.-Orsini to Edgard Milhaud, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 1954).

<sup>51</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "1947-1957 Board", Letter from Edgard Milhaud "For the Executive Committee" 14<sup>th</sup> January 1956.



Sidhwa. It is likely that this federation never really operated as a section, in spite of Edgard Milhaud's hopes. In this respect it should be noted that there was no Indian representative on the board of directors elected at the general assembly held in Puteaux in 1957. In her history of CIRIEC, Yvonne Gélard mentions that an "Indian Group of CIRIEC" was only formed in 1970<sup>52</sup>.

## Italy



Dottore Alberto Mortara (Germaine Calame's private collection).

The *Centro italiano di ricerche e d'informazione sull'economia pubblica e sulle imprese di pubblico interesse* was also the work of a single man, Dottore Alberto Mortara, who founded it in Milan in early 1956. This "section" was mainly a group made up of representatives of the public sector of the economy and had close ties to the Italian academic world. It was primarily oriented towards research and collaborated on *L'Impresa pubblica*, a journal published by the *Confederazione della Municipalizzazione*.

## Switzerland

In this country which had played such a key role in the early years of CIRIEC (the Geneva Congress was organised with the help of some of Milhaud's Swiss friends), the initial enthusiasm had gradually turned into lethargy. The national Swiss section was officially founded on 27<sup>th</sup> March 1954 with Andreas Meyer (the editor of the *Schweizer-Konsumverein*) as chairman and Jean Treina as vice-chairman. So it was a young section. It suffered from being aligned exclusively with the consumers' cooperatives and the trade unions, and in the end it would be unable to open up to the public sector.

## Yugoslavia

The Yugoslav section was formed on the initiative of Ašer Deleon in Belgrade on 15<sup>th</sup> December 1954. Deleon was one of Edgard Milhaud's former pupils and a member

<sup>52</sup> GÉLARD, Yvonne, 1947-1997. *50 Years in the life of CIRIEC*, Liège, CIRIEC, 1997, p. 60.

of the Union of Yugoslav Economists' Associations. At the time in question, the section was an integral part of this Union and its activities were limited to an editorial contribution to the *Annals* (by way of some articles on the Yugoslav experience in the field of workers' self-management). It was only when it was reorganised, in 1958, that it grew in importance, thanks to the affiliation of the



Fourth International Collective Economy Congress - Belgrade, 1959. Dorde Mijić welcomes Edgard Milhaud (Germaine Calame's private collection).

most powerful economic organisations in the country (the railways, electricity, steel industry, etc.), and also the Yugoslav Cities' Conference, trade unions and the General Union of Agricultural Cooperatives. It was to take responsibility for organising the Fourth International Collective Economy Congress held in Belgrade, in 1959.

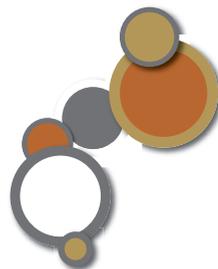
As can be seen, Edgard Milhaud was not exactly spoilt for choice when he came to choose the new CIRIEC headquarters. Greece, India and Italy had only just founded their sections; the Yugoslav one lacked the necessary stature and he had already ruled out Austria himself. That only left France, Belgium and Switzerland. Although, as we have seen, the last of these was clearly his preferred choice<sup>53</sup>, he was

<sup>53</sup> "But there has been total consistency in terms of action, and it requires a body which we now need to provide with real muscle. Even if it is only by means of one or two supports provided regularly and completely, at least through devotion, relating to it. Will it be in Switzerland or in Belgium? That is the question and it is one that requires an answer. The way that the secretariat of the Liège Congress works shows us what can be expected from an organisation whose members are committed to making the necessary effort to retain the services of certain well-qualified people. Surely by the time the Liège Congress takes place, the Belgian section will have its "collective economy centre", the acquisition of which is to be made possible by some large intercommunal bodies and for which those parts of the budget not covered by CIRIEC will be supplied by the region's local and provincial authorities? Will our Swiss friends manage to find the extra energy they would need to allow work to continue in such favourable material conditions in Switzerland, with the twofold advantage of the global internationalism of Geneva and Swiss neutrality, while this neutrality would incorporate the active cooperation of the German, French and Italian cultures? This is a very big question and one which I would like you to think about before perhaps having meetings with men such as Barbier." (CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to André Hirschfeld, 11<sup>th</sup> April 1955).

well aware of the fact that the International Centre could only operate in a country “which, by providing appropriate premises and helping with the necessary work, will show a genuine desire to allow it to carry out work which everyone understands to be both possible and necessary”<sup>54</sup>.

This is where the strength of the Liège candidature lies...

### *B. Arguments in favour of Liège*



#### **A strong section**

As we have seen, the Belgian section had recently organised itself at the instigation of its new secretary-general, Paul Lambert. Very unusually for a national section, it had two permanent employees assisting the chairman, the secretary-general and the secretary-treasurer. This was more than Edgard Milhaud had ever had in Geneva. In addition to this, the preparations for the Congress in Liège highlighted its organisational strengths. It also had the advantage of being the only one (apart from Austria) to represent all sectors of collective economy and took particular care to present itself as a scientific body whilst retaining its political independence.

In addition to this it was financially healthy and in contrast to other sections (especially France), it had always wanted to contribute to CIRIEC International’s expenses in accordance with its financial means.

#### **Suitable premises**

The SMAP’s commitment to provide premises for CIRIEC was undoubtedly one of the key arguments in the choice of the new headquarters for the International Centre. Indeed, this was a symbolic point for Edgard Milhaud who had always been forced to keep the CIRIEC documentation in his own home<sup>55</sup>. For a long time he had dreamed

<sup>54</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to R. G.-Orsini, 18<sup>th</sup> April 1955.

<sup>55</sup> “I don’t know how to express all the joy I feel that finally, after 10 years of semi-existence in a private home, with no way of methodically classifying documentary material which we didn’t dare add to for fear of being unable to guarantee it space [...], CIRIEC is at last going to have suitable premises of its own, and where its future will be different from its present only in terms of the possibilities for unlimited expansion which from now on will not only be offered, but guaranteed. It has been worth waiting 10 years for the inexpressible pleasure of such an outcome.” (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder

of setting up a “Collective Economy Centre”, a guarantee of the visibility and longevity of his work.

Edgard Milhaud also especially admired the SMAP as a collective economy enterprise which was the only one of its kind working in its field. Indeed, his *Annals of Collective Economy* devoted articles to it several times<sup>56</sup>.

Although the principle of providing premises for CIRIEC appeared to have been established by 1954-1955, it was to take some time for the project to come to fruition. Originally, the SMAP decided to offer the Belgian CIRIEC a house worth from 2 to 2.5 million Belgian francs. However, because of financial difficulties due to the re-establishment of credit in Belgium, it was unable to keep this commitment and suggested giving the section a special grant of 20,000 francs to help it rent a flat. At the same time, it looked at the possibility of setting aside for CIRIEC<sup>57</sup> the ground floor of a building to be built at the Quai de Rome in Liège. So it was that the Belgian section moved into a small flat at 60, rue Charles Magnette at the end of February 1957<sup>58</sup>. These first official CIRIEC premises were furnished thanks to the generosity of collective economy enterprises which granted a special “start-up” grant<sup>59</sup>. This was very much a temporary set-up, until the start of November 1957, when the Belgian and International CIRIEC (the decision to move had been taken in the meantime) was to move into the ground floor of the new SMAP building at 45, Quai de Rome<sup>60</sup>.

<sup>56</sup> “1957 Correspondence”, letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 6<sup>th</sup> August 1957).

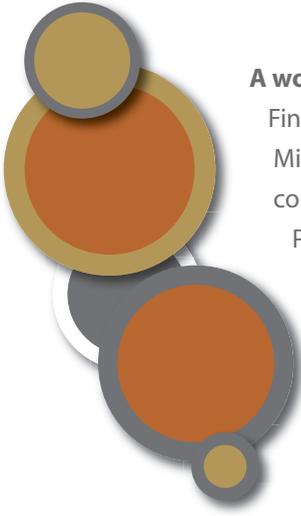
56 See especially: HUTOT, Henri, “The Mutual Society of Public Administrations. Insurance and local authorities in Belgium”, in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XX, n° 2, May-Aug. 1949, pp. 110-117.

57 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder “1956-1958 Administrative business”, letter from Paul Lambert to Joseph Haverland, 30<sup>th</sup> January 1957.

58 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder “1956-1958 Administrative business”, letter from Yvonne Schreder to Paul Lambert, 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1957.

59 The *Société générale coopérative*, the *Prévoyance Sociale* and the ALE each offered 25,000 francs; the *Crédit communal de Belgique* 10,000 francs; the *Caisse générale d'épargne et de retraite* (CGER), the *Économie populaire de Ciney* (EPC) and *Socolié* gave 5,000 francs each. The AIM also offered assistance to the tune of 13,954 francs (by cancelling its last bill for the Liège Congress) and the *Union coopérative* granted a discount of 8,101 francs on the price of equipment it had delivered. This came to a total of 122,055 francs (LAMBERT, Paul, “L’installation du C.I.R.I.E.C.” in *Expériences*, no. 3, 1957, pp. 183-184 and CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder “Setting up the CIRIEC office. 1957 Start-up”, Donations for start-up expenses).

60 ETHIAS, Administrative committees, minutes of 18<sup>th</sup> March 1957. The correspondence between Paul Lambert and Joseph Haverland, Henri Hutot’s son-in-law who became head of SMAP on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1956, suggests that Paul Lambert would have preferred the SMAP to buy the flat on rue Charles Magnette which would have given the CIRIEC proximity to the university and its library (see, among others, CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder “Setting up the CIRIEC Office. 1957 Start-up”, letters from Paul Lambert to Joseph Haverland, 14<sup>th</sup> February 1957 and letter from Joseph Haverland to Paul Lambert, 1<sup>st</sup> March 1957).



### **A worthy successor to Edgard Milhaud**

Finding someone who would be capable of replacing Edgard Milhaud and willing to do so, and in whom he would also have complete confidence was a real challenge. So, in this respect, Paul Lambert was an absolute godsend as a candidate. A doctor in Law, and with a degree in Economic Sciences from the university of Liège, he had held the chair in political economy at the faculty of Applied Sciences since 1950. Edgard Milhaud had had the chance to see Paul Lambert's scientific abilities for himself, during the Liège Congress, where he set out an overview of collective economy. Also, in spite of major differences in personality (the asceticism of the former was in sharp contrast to the Epicurean tendencies of the latter), Edgard Milhaud and Paul Lambert did share the same values, the same political ideas and the same commitment to the cooperative and trade union movements. Finally, and perhaps above all, Edgard Milhaud had found in his young colleague someone who was both willing and able to throw himself totally into carrying on his own work.

### **Belgium's stake in collective economy**

Finally, Edgard Milhaud probably rather liked the idea of choosing Belgium, which he saw as the home of some of the most innovative achievements in the collective economy field (mixed enterprise, SMAP, etc.). In any case this is the impression given in a letter sent to Paul Lambert by his son Maurice: "There is one thing I can never forget; when I was attending my father's classes on collective economy from 1927-1930 as a student at the university of Geneva, he showed his audience such conviction when describing the Belgian mixed enterprises which covered various large sectors of your country's economy and in which he saw an ideal way forward for the future, combining both the public interest and flexibility in management terms. So it seems perfectly appropriate for the CIRIEC headquarters to be in your country"<sup>61</sup>. Even if the argument only appeared sporadically, it seems likely that Milhaud had probably also been aware of the fact that Belgium would house the European Communities Commission in the near future.

<sup>61</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "For the Liège file," letter from Maurice Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1964.

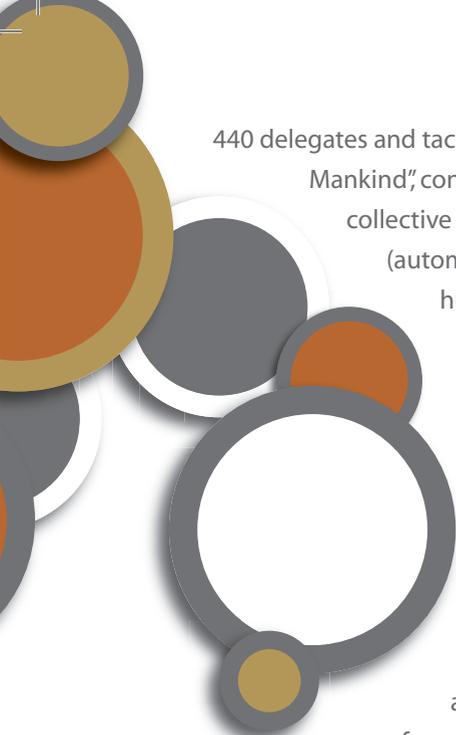
A Monsieur Paul Gruselin  
 Bourgmestre de la Ville de Liège  
 trente ans après ...  
 cette brochure à laquelle le précédent Ramadan  
 a fait allusion au Congrès  
 en témoignage d'enferme gratitude pour ce  
 que la Ville de Liège a fait pour le Congrès  
 de ce homme de cœur  
**La Coopération**  
 dans *Ed. Milhaud*  
**l'ordre international**  
 Genève, le 25 Sept. 1955

Handwritten dedication from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Gruselin in *La coopération dans l'ordre international*.  
 Discours prononcé par Edgard Milhaud dans le cadre de la semaine parlementaire de la coopération. 31 mars  
 – 4 avril 1925, Paris, FNCC, 1925 (IHOES collection).

Lastly, as we have previously seen, the Professor was very impressed by the enthusiastic welcome he received from Liège city councillors during a congress organisational meeting, and by the effort of Belgian collective economy enterprises in setting up a sound structure for CIRIEC.

### 3. The decision to move

The Third CIRIEC Congress was held from 25<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 1957 at Puteaux (near Paris), under the patronage of the President of the Republic, René Coty. It was attended by



440 delegates and tackled two broad themes: firstly “Collective Economy and Mankind”, considered as part of the twofold question of the place of collective economy in the face of the “new industrial revolution” (automation, the nuclear industry) and its relationship to human rights; and secondly “The State and collective economy undertakings”.

But apart from its scientific excellence, the Third Congress was a genuinely significant moment in the history of CIRIEC because this is where the decision to move its headquarters was taken. Indeed, at Edgard Milhaud’s suggestion, the meeting of the board of directors and the general assembly held on the fringes of the congress on 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 1957 declared themselves to be in favour of moving both CIRIEC’s headquarters and its permanent office from Geneva to Liège. Paul Lambert was appointed director of CIRIEC International, a post he held alongside that of secretary-general of the Belgian section. Edgard Milhaud remained chairman of the organisation and editor of the *Annals of Collective Economy* (the headquarters of which remained in Geneva). And so began a difficult period of collaboration between two men with equally strong but very different personalities.

The diplomacy shown by Maurice Delbouille, who had become vice-chairman, proved its worth on more than one occasion when it came to defusing tensions<sup>62</sup>.

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62 The following quote is taken from a letter from Paul Lambert to Maurice Delbouille and we feel that it clearly demonstrates the communication problems between Milhaud and Lambert, as well as the valuable role played by Delbouille: “I admit that my style is always direct and I recognise the philologist in you. Harsh? Well, it depends. Sometimes it’s harsh, sometimes it’s affectionate. I think that, to a large extent, our good friend Milhaud’s reluctance is because he reads things which were never meant to be there in my ideas. Indeed, his own style is indirect and his main ideas are couched in phrases or subordinate clauses beginning with “unless”... But please don’t think me harsh with him. I don’t mind telling you that, at the end of the last executive meeting, our friends Hirschfeld and Weisser came to tell me that they were amazed by the diplomacy and patience I’d shown towards our chairman. I’m really glad that you are prepared to contribute to the friendly arrangement which we would all like to see by writing to Edgard Milhaud yourself. I know how much he trusts your judgement” (CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder “1956-1958 Administrative business”, letter from Paul Lambert to Maurice Delbouille, 27<sup>th</sup> January 1958).

#### IV. Securing Edgard Milhaud's legacy (1957-1961)

Less than six months after moving the international headquarters to Liège, CIRIEC took possession of its new premises at Quai de Rome: there were three huge offices with their own entrance<sup>63</sup>. They were to be officially opened on 8<sup>th</sup> November 1957, on the occasion of a specially-convened board meeting in Liège, and in an atmosphere which Edgard Milhaud certainly felt deeply, as he told Jules Humbert-Droz, the secretary of the Swiss Socialist Party:

“The new CIRIEC headquarters have been opened amid great satisfaction. The events which took place on this occasion were proof that very large numbers of organisations have devoted themselves passionately to supporting the work begun in Switzerland ten years ago, and which has led to results which mean that the future is now finally taken care of in Liège. You would have been there if you had been able to come and, like Mr Barbier and myself, you would have been able to make comparisons in your mind between our two meetings in Berne and the events, sponsored by Liège's City Council and a delegation from the Belgian Government, which greeted the setting up of the new institution in Liège. CIRIEC now has a home of its own, on the ground floor of a very large building which the Belgian ‘Société mutuelle des administrations publiques’ had recently built.”<sup>64</sup>

Although the future of CIRIEC appeared now to be secure, moving the headquarters did nevertheless raise a number of practical issues which had to be dealt with by the new permanent office.

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<sup>63</sup> The organisation was to remain stay there until 1981, when it moved into the new buildings in the upper part of the city at Sart Tilman, built by the university of Liège to house the faculty of Law and Economics. So this once again confirmed the ties which CIRIEC had always maintained with the scientific and academic worlds. We should note that the ground floor at Quai de Rome is still currently reserved for use by CIRIEC.

<sup>64</sup> CIRIEC, International Centre, Green Files Switzerland, letter from Edgard Milhaud to Jules Humbert-Droz, 12<sup>th</sup> November 1957.



## 1. Legal and financial problems

### Legal status

The Swiss Civil Code automatically granted legal personality to international political, cultural or scientific associations. So the legal status of CIRIEC was clear while it was based in Geneva. But by moving to Liège, the organisation now came under Belgian law, which was far more restrictive in these matters, and was thus stripped of this legal personality. This meant that it could not own any assets in its own right, receive donations or take legal action. In order to sort out the situation and fulfil the conditions required by the Vandervelde law on international non-profit organisations (25<sup>th</sup> October 1919), the statutes would have to undergo various amendments before being approved by the Ministry of Justice. The process was a long, tiresome one, as the members of the general assembly (and above all Edgard Milhaud) were loath to bring in any amendments which in their minds were likely to diminish the international nature of CIRIEC<sup>65</sup>. CIRIEC only finally obtained legal personality in 1961, by means of the Royal Decree of 27<sup>th</sup> July<sup>66</sup>.

### Financial position

Securing the financial survival of the International Centre was unquestionably the main challenge needing to be addressed by the Belgian section. Indeed, the organisation had no funds of its own, as CIRIEC International was supported almost exclusively by subscriptions to the *Annals* and by some occasional subsidies.

Moving the headquarters to Liège also resulted in increased duties which could only be handled on by increasing the number of staff employed by the Belgian section. At first, the Belgian section took charge of financing the International Centre, but more structured solutions needed to be put in place. At the meeting of the board of directors held on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> July 1957, a new financial framework was planned in order to separate the funds of the International Centre from those of the *Annals*. The

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<sup>65</sup> Edgard Milhaud was of the opinion that Belgium, a possible choice for the headquarters of various international institutions, should replace its law with legislation modelled on the Swiss Civil Code. Approaches in this direction were also made by Paul Lambert to the foreign secretary, Victor Larock, and his successor Pierre Wigny, although all to no avail (CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "Prof. Milhaud 1958"; letter from Paul Lambert to Victor Larock, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1958 and CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "For the Liège file", letter from Paul Lambert to Pierre Wigny, 27<sup>th</sup> August 1959).

<sup>66</sup> *Moniteur Belge*, no. 185, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1961, p. 6202.

journal kept what it had already acquired; CIRIEC set itself the task of finding new members (it being clearly understood that all subscriptions to national sections would include a compulsory subscription to the *Annals*). This was the purpose of a financial reorganisation exercise which Paul Lambert proposed to the various national sections from August 1957 onwards. In it, he recommended that they should pay a fixed subscription to the International Centre (which took account both of the country's economic strength and the section's development). This new income was designed not only to allow the journal's past debts to be discharged but also to allow it to expand and cover the running costs of the International Centre (including the employment of two full-time academics). This plan was deemed to be too ambitious<sup>67</sup> and restricting, so unfortunately it was not followed and the board meeting held in Liège in November 1957 left the job of deciding on the size of their subscription to CIRIEC up to the sections themselves<sup>68</sup>. This means that income would not reach the forecast budget of 50,000 Swiss francs and initially only a new university-level secretary, Miss Morval (who devoted a third of her working time to the International Centre), and some occasional part-time researchers were added to the staff of the Belgian section.

Although the financial aid which the various sections agreed to over the next few years was significant (the amount raised by their subscriptions went up from 11,635 Belgian francs in 1957 to 98,000 Belgian francs in 1958<sup>69</sup>), even so it was totally insufficient and forced the Belgian section to take on a disproportionate part of the International Centre's budget, which alone came to more than the subscriptions of all its foreign colleagues put together.

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67 Indeed, this issue later prompted the resignation of Paul Ramadier as chairman of the French section. In a letter to Edgard Milhaud, André Hirschfeld quoted an extract from a letter that Paul Ramadier had sent to him: "It is very clear from the correspondence that has taken place that the new direction taken by the Liège office is totally incompatible with CIRIEC's resources, as I understand them. It will need far greater means, and for the person who leads the Association to do a lot of work on it. This underpins my decision to resign as CIRIEC chairman. [...] As I live in Cazeville, I am unable to undertake the necessary work." (CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from André Hirschfeld to Edgard Milhaud, 29<sup>th</sup> October 1957).

68 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "IC – Board 1957-1959", Minutes of the board meeting held in Liège on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 1957.

69 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "IC – Board 1957-1959", Minutes of the board meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1959.

This eventually resulted in an accumulated loss in the Belgian section's accounts totalling almost 250,000 Belgian Francs at the start of 1960. This unsustainable situation (especially as the section found itself responsible at the time for both chairing CIRIEC and editing the *Annals*) was only eventually resolved with the assistance of the major Belgian players in the collective economy world, who agreed to increase their subscriptions substantially, thus enabling the Belgian section to balance the books and therefore guarantee the financial viability of the International Centre<sup>70</sup>.

## 2. The work of CIRIEC from Puteaux to Vienna (1957-1961)

### An all-out recruitment drive

The recruitment of new members and the founding of new national sections obviously remained CIRIEC's main concerns. While Edgard Milhaud was building up contacts abroad with Germany, Sweden, Great Britain, and even the United States, the permanent office began talks with the Netherlands, Turkey, Morocco, Latin America and Luxembourg. However, the results were rather disappointing. In 1958, the people from Luxembourg, seeing that there was no way of breathing life back into their dying section, merged with the Belgian section, which took the name "Belgian-Luxembourg section" and welcomed a Luxembourg representative, the journalist and trade unionist Joseph Hanck, onto its board of directors.

Altogether more significant was the official recognition of the *Gesellschaft für öffentliche Wirtschaft* (GöW) as the German section in 1960. This was a non-profit organisation founded some ten years earlier in Berlin, at the instigation of a number of well-known figures from the scientific and public enterprise worlds.

The permanent office also attempted to obtain support from the ECSC, the Common Market and the International Labour Office and to establish productive relationships with the IULA, the ICA and the ICFTU.

We should note that around the same time CIRIEC made shy overtures to Eastern Europe. It was advocated at the Puteaux Congress by the Yugoslav section, which hoped to see CIRIEC help the Eastern European countries get involved in its work<sup>71</sup>.

<sup>70</sup> *Nouvelles du C.I.R.I.E.C. Bulletin d'information interne*, no. 7, June 1960, pp. 10-11.

<sup>71</sup> To this end, Miladin Kora, professor at the university of Belgrade, asked for the terms "dictatorial and

This willingness also showed through in a letter from Edgard Milhaud to the editor of the journal *Europe de l'Est et Union soviétique* in which the professor revealed his intention "to follow developments closely right across Eastern Europe"<sup>72</sup>. Even so, CIRIEC's rules remained very strict: a bar on individual members belonging to a country with an authoritarian regime and on the publication of any articles from any of these countries in the *Annals*. CIRIEC took sole charge of gathering the information delivered to its readers about these countries. It was on the basis of these principles that the 1961 general assembly refused to allow two Hungarians (one of whom was Bogнар Jozses, Professor of Political Economy at the university of Budapest and a Member of Parliament) to join CIRIEC as individual members.

On a national level, the Belgian section put several strategies into place in order to strengthen itself. The idea to create regional sections came up once again. Hervé Brouhon, Émile Dutilleul, Georges Nachez and Carl Lebon were given responsibility for investigating the possibility of setting them up in Brussels, Charleroi, Ghent and Antwerp. In December 1957, Dutilleul announced the imminent founding of a group in Charleroi as an experiment, designed to bring together intercommunal bodies, cooperatives, trade union sections, subsidised housing associations etc., but later on the plan was never mentioned again<sup>73</sup>. Paul Lambert's idea of publishing a Dutch edition of the journal *Expériences* and thus securing substantial growth for CIRIEC in Flanders (or even in the Netherlands) never came to anything either. It has to be said that in the meantime the future of the journal was itself in some doubt, as we shall see.

In addition to this, from December 1957 onwards, the section began wondering whether to look for new types of member: mutual societies and mixed (shared public/private ownership) intercommunal bodies. The question of the affiliation of mutual societies may seem strange on the face of it, since the future FMSS had already been

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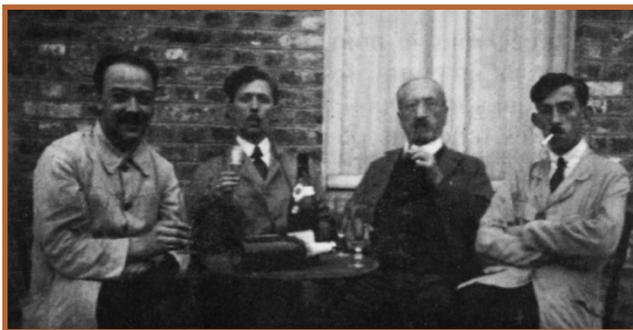
bureaucratic communism" to be replaced by "stalinism" in the text of the resolution on workers and collective economy ("Third General Assembly of the ICRIEC held at Puteaux following the Third International Collective Economy Conference in the Big Assembly Room of the Town Hall (28<sup>th</sup> May 1957, 10.15 a.m.)" in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXIX, no.1, Jan-Aug. 1958, pp. 230-252).

72 CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, Folder "Various"; letter from Edgard Milhaud to J.C. Toutain, 26<sup>th</sup> November 1959.

73 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "1956-1958 Administrative business", Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1957.

among the first members of the Belgian section. Even so the question arose because mutual societies were not purely economic bodies. However, the objection was quickly dropped due to their historic relationship with the cooperative movement and their many links to collective economy. The directors were far more reluctant when it came to mixed intercommunal bodies, which were seen as offshoots of the private sector pursuing private interests. On the basis of the amendments to the 1922 law on intercommunal bodies and the assurances that they provided for the safeguarding of the public interest, the board of directors finally decided to admit them as future members.

More than ever, Paul Lambert was working to maintain the political and sectoral balance on the board of directors. During the general assembly held in Puteaux in 1957, Maurice



Charles Chaput (with glass) surrounded by three pioneers from *La Populaire condruzienne*: Henri Viroux (left), Louis Lamy and Joseph Fondaire (CARHOP collection).

**CHAPUT, Charles** (Ciney, 17th June 1898 – 8th July 1972)  
Charles Chaput was an important figure in the Christian cooperative world. For more than 50 years he presided over the fortunes of the *Économie Populaire de Ciney* (EPC) which he founded in Ciney on 7th May 1919 (under the name *La Populaire condruzienne*) with some well-known local figures (including Abbé Knood, social welfare chaplain). Appointed commercial director and inspector-propagandist from this time, he held this position of leadership until 1st July 1970. Shortly before his retirement, coinciding with the commemoration of the cooperative's 50th anniversary on 27th April 1969, he was made a Commander of the Order of Léopold II. Throughout his career, he held positions in numerous national and international organisations, such as the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), the *Conseil national de la coopération*, the International Catholic Cooperation Centre, the *Chambre syndicale des maisons à succursales multiples*, the *Foyer cinacien*, etc. He was also a member of the Central Economic Council from 1948 to 1968. Charles Chaput was closely aligned to the Christian Workers' Movement and was made a Commander of the Order of St. Sylvester by the Vatican.

Alongside his work as a cooperator, he also distinguished himself fighting in the Resistance, as part of the réseau Mill during the Second World War. Finally it is worth mentioning his work for the Walloon cause which led to him taking on the post of Chairman of *Rénovation wallonne pour Ciney-Dinant* in 1963.

Sources: *L'histoire de l'Economie populaire de Ciney racontée à l'occasion de son septantième anniversaire*. 1919-1989, EPC, [1989], p. 4.; SERWY, Victor, *La Coopération en Belgique*, vol. I, *La Vie coopérative*. *Dictionnaire biographique*, Brussels, Les Propagateurs de la coopération, 1952, pp. 109-110; Charles Chaput, notre ancien « patron », Ciney, EPC, 1972, 17 p.

Delbouille stood down as chairman of the Belgian section and was succeeded by the trade unionist Hervé Brouhon (from the FGTB), with a Catholic cooperative member, Charles Chaput (from the *Économie populaire de Ciney* - EPC) as vice-chairman. Two years later, this latter became chairman with Brouhon becoming vice-chairman. Paul Lambert would later cite his obligation to maintain CIRIEC's political neutrality to justify this choice to representatives of the socialist cooperatives (who ought logically to have taken the chairmanship)<sup>74</sup>.

### **CIRIEC's place on the international map**

While CIRIEC was hardly spreading like wildfire abroad, there were two projects rekindling anxieties because of the possible competition they might bring about.

At the end of the Erlangen conference in 1957, a group of academic institutions specialising in cooperative issues embarked on the project of creating an international cooperative science association. The fear came particularly from the fact that, first of all, the delegates had rejected the idea of incorporating this new structure into

**BROUHON, Hervé** (Etterbeek, 18th June 1924 – Anderlecht, 10th April 1993)

After graduating from the Charles Buls teacher training school in 1944, Hervé Brouhon embarked upon a teaching career the following year. He came into contact with the Centrale générale des services publics (CGSP) – enseignement (education section) and got involved in trade union activity. He was chosen first as assistant secretary of the CGSP – enseignement (1947), then as secretary of the Hal-Vilvorde arrondissement section of the Fédération générale du travail de Belgique (FGTB) and finally as chairman of that regional section. Elected district councillor for the City of Brussels (1952), he became a Member of Parliament (1958) and was rapporteur for the Socialist group in the Chamber. During the same period, he was elected chairman of the Belgian section of CIRIEC (1957-1959). In 1978 he again became section chairman for a number of years. In 1965, he was given the Social Welfare portfolio in the Harmel government. Appointed deputy burgomaster for Public Welfare (in 1971, and again in 1977), he set up the Brussels consultative committee for non-Belgians (1974). In 1983, he became burgomaster of the City of Brussels, the first non-liberal to hold this post since 1830. In 1993, weakened by ill-health, he stepped down from his duties in favour of the first deputy burgomaster, Michel Demaret. He died a few months later.

Source: HOSLET, Danièle, "Hervé Brouhon" in *Nouvelle Biographie nationale*, vol. VI, Brussels, Académie royale de Belgique, 2001, pp. 65-66.

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<sup>74</sup> "The reason why [...] we nominated Mr Chaput at the meeting was because, up till now, two consecutive socialists have been chairmen: our friends Messrs Delbouille and Brouhon. As, furthermore, the general secretariat is run virtually permanently by as dyed-in-the-wool a socialist as myself, the neutrality of CIRIEC might have seemed entirely theoretical if a socialist had once again become chairman. Even so, I am very much aware of the problem this situation creates for the socialist cooperative members. They are CIRIEC's strongest supporters and it goes without saying that measures should be taken to ensure that, during the next cycle, a socialist cooperative member will become chairman." (CIRIEC, Belgian Section, Folder "1955-1960 general assemblies", letter from Paul Lambert to E. Dutilleul, L. Desmet, H. Lemaire and G. Listré, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1959).



CIRIEC and, secondly, it was precisely the countries which did not have national sections (namely, the United States, the United Kingdom, Turkey and Pakistan) which were the most enthusiastic. The episode would have the positive effect of leading to closer links between CIRIEC and the Desroches Institute, an international association dealing with the sociology of cooperation.

In addition in 1961, when the GöW (i.e. the German section of CIRIEC) began the process which led to the creation of the European Centre for Public Enterprises, the International Centre ensured that it was involved in the consultation process, whereas the Belgian section attempted to take up a clear position as the organisation representing the public sector in Belgium<sup>75</sup>.

### **Stepping up the scientific work**

As part of its remit to provide information, the permanent office diversified its activities: it got down to the work of drawing up a bibliography of various publications relating to collective economy which was published first in *Expériences* and then in the *Annals* starting in 1960. On the basis of information passed on by national sections, it provided comparisons by country on various collective economy-related issues (including the position of university teaching on the subject). A short-lived press office was even be formed, with the aim of getting scientific dispatches published in various journals in CIRIEC's member countries. The failure of the first attempt, devoted to Volkswagen factories, was to sound the death knell for this initiative. In October 1961, the Belgian section held a conference in Brussels devoted to Belgium's intercommunal bodies, which was attended by around 110 delegates<sup>76</sup>.

At international level, it is worth mentioning the special issue of the *Annals* devoted to collective economy in Belgium which was published to mark the universal exhibition held in Brussels in 1958. This publication, which also came out in a pullout form, was printed by the AIM. Apart from a contribution from the ministry of Public Education, it was financed mainly by Belgian collective economy organisations in

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<sup>75</sup> CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "1956-1958 Administrative business", Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors of the Belgian section held on 14<sup>th</sup> December 1961.

<sup>76</sup> "Un colloque organisé par la section belge sur les intercommunales" in *Nouvelles du C.I.R.I.E.C. Bulletin d'information interne*, no. 11, Nov. 1961, p. 27.

the form of grants or by booking advertising pages. This would definitely pose a problem for Edgard Milhaud, because of his steadfast commitment to the principle of independence for the *Annals*<sup>77</sup>. As we shall see, this subject would remain a constant bone of contention with Paul Lambert during the discussions on the future of the *Annals*.

This whistle-stop tour through the work of CIRIEC would not be complete if we did not mention the congresses. They took up a huge amount of energy, not just during the preparation with the national section concerned, but also during and especially after the event, with the publication of the proceedings in the various editions of the *Annals*; which involved a lot of laborious translation work.

The Fourth International Collective Economy Congress was held in Belgrade from 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> May 1959, with the main theme being “Collective economy and economic development”. With Marshal Tito himself as patron<sup>78</sup>, it was



Programme for the Fourth International Collective Economy Congress - Belgrade, 1959 (CIRIEC collection).



On the fringes of the Fifth International Collective Economy Congress - Vienna 1961: Maurice Delbouille and his wife (left), Edgard Milhaud, Paul Lambert and his wife (right) (Paul Delbouille collection).

77 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “Prof. Milhaud 1958”; letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 10<sup>th</sup> May 1958.

78 In this respect it should be noted that there had been various exchanges of letters between CIRIEC members about whether agreement to Tito’s patronage should be made conditional upon the pardoning of Djilas, a régime detractor imprisoned shortly beforehand. This did not happen in the end and Edgard Milhaud made do with bringing the issue up verbally during an official dinner. Djilas’ imprisonment probably had something to do with the poor attendance at the congress, with trade unionists (especially the French) deciding to boycott the event.

attended by only 203 delegates (64 of whom were Belgian!). However the next congress was anew successful. It was held in Vienna from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> May 1961, and the theme was “Three aims of collective economy: Freedom, Security, Welfare”, and it attracted a total of 899 participants!<sup>79</sup> !

### 3. CIRIEC and the *Annals* pass into Belgian hands

The transfer of the International Centre’s headquarters to Liège exacerbated the problem posed by the existence of several CIRIEC journals. Although small on the face of it compared to the legal and financial problems mentioned above, this issue did nevertheless take up a lot of time in discussions at CIRIEC between 1957 and 1960. It would be a source of regular conflict between Professors Lambert and Milhaud. This seems a good place to expand on it, as it probably influenced the latter’s resignation, in March 1960, from his post as (co)director of the *Annals* and chairman of CIRIEC.

#### **Confirmation of the *Annals* as the only official CIRIEC publication**

As they developed, a number of the national sections (including the Belgian one) started to collaborate on (or themselves publish) journals dealing with the subject of collective economy. Although these publications were no threat to the *Annals* (as they were only distributed locally), they were at the very least competition in terms of editorial content and went against the ideal upheld by Edgard Milhaud, namely that the various national sections should help to fill the pages of the *Annals*<sup>80</sup>.

Because of recurrent financial problems, a lack of staff and the fact that there were three different editions, publication of the *Annals* was irregular and subject to huge delays. In order to alleviate this problem, the general assembly held in Puteaux suggested that, alongside the *Annals*, CIRIEC should publish a newsletter designed to keep directors informed and help them recruit new members. French and German editions of the first *Nouvelles du C.I.R.I.E.C. Bulletin d’information interne* were published in February 1958.

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<sup>79</sup> “Closing Speeches. Speech by Mr Maurice Delbouille” in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXXII, no. 3-4, July-Dec. 1961, pp. 608-609.

<sup>80</sup> For instance during 1957, *Expériences*, the journal founded by Paul Lambert, featured scientific articles on subjects as varied as the problems and evolution of the Christian cooperative movement in Belgium, German co-management, the cooperative movement in Soviet Russia and the role played by collective economy in the United States etc. These are all topics which would have been quite at home in the *Annals*.

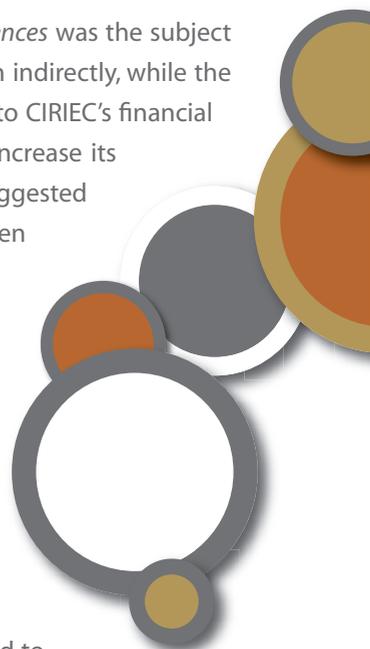
In the meantime, the merger between the *Annals* and *Expériences* was the subject of bitter arguments. In actual fact the question was dealt with indirectly, while the November 1957 board meeting was trying to find a solution to CIRIEC's financial problems. As the Swiss section said that it was prepared to increase its contribution, but wanted something in return, Paul Lambert suggested annexing the Belgian journal to the *Annals*. This was when Edgard Milhaud came up with the suggestion of merging the two journals. The Belgian section's board rejected the idea at its meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1957, fearing negative repercussions from its members if the journal disappeared. It also wanted a general agreement to be reached on the national sections' various journals<sup>81</sup>.

In the face of the wish expressed by various members of the international board (Barbier among them) to move the running of the *Annals* to Liège, Paul Lambert said that he was prepared to consider the possibility of sacrificing *Expériences*, out of respect for the history of the *Annals*, its wider circulation (especially in countries like the United States where there was no CIRIEC) and its trilingual publication<sup>82</sup>. However, faced with the reluctance of the directors of the Belgian section, in practice the solution agreed upon was a compromise: *Expériences* continued purely to provide information about collective economy in Belgium, switching to quarterly publication, whereas the more general interest articles were sent on to the *Annals*. A series of measures were taken to firm up the review's foundations. First of all an editorial committee was set up. It was made up of Edgard Milhaud, Paul Lambert, Charles-Henri Barbier, Erwin Hasselman, André Hirschfeld and Franz Rauscher, and was given responsibility for both publishing (starting in January 1958) and editing the journal (starting in July of the same year). Secondly, each section was asked to nominate a person who

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81 Apart from the *Annals* and *Expériences*, there were three more collective economy journals in the countries affiliated to CIRIEC: *Archiv für öffentliche und freigemeinwirtschaftliche Unternehmen* and *Öffentliche Wirtschaft* were two journals published by the German public enterprises (which were not members of CIRIEC, although they were seen as the possible core of a future German section) and the Austrian CIRIEC journal, *Neue Technik und Wirtschaft*. While influencing non-CIRIEC mouthpieces seemed genuinely unthinkable, it has to be said that, unlike *Expériences*, the existence of the Austrian journal was never in any serious doubt.

82 CIRIEC, Belgian section, Folder "1956-1958 Administrative business", Minutes of the meeting of the board of directors held on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1957.





would be responsible for distributing the *Annals* and provision was made for one-fifth of the payments made to the Centre to be refunded to the journal.

It was beginning to look increasingly inevitable that the headquarters of the *Annals* would move to Liège. One more step was taken in this direction when, in 1958, the printing of the special edition of the *Annals* devoted to collective economy in Belgium was entrusted to the AIM<sup>83</sup>. Milhaud kept increasing the pressure to merge the journals, even to the point of issuing threats: “I can’t imagine,” he wrote “what will happen when I am gone, and into what kind of chaos my weakness would have allowed our organisation to slip in this area: Lambert

editing the ‘Annals’, Lambert editing ‘Expériences’, Lambert editing the ‘Bulletin d’information interne’ torn between doing exactly the same jobs on three different publications and barely keeping all three of them alive [...]. I can see that it makes genuine sense to give both the editing of the *Annals* and the leadership of CIRIEC to one man. The resulting consistency between the office that does the actual work and the mouthpiece for information could be very valuable. [...] But there is one *sine qua non* condition: this is that all public interest information contributions are kept in one organ, so that the director can devote all his efforts in this regard to that single organ: the ‘Annals’. If this condition cannot be fulfilled, it will be instead become necessary to find someone else who is able to devote himself solely to the ‘Annals’ along with his economic teaching.” Further on he went as far as to compare the reciprocal links between CIRIEC and the *Annals* to a “monogamous marriage [...] in the fullest sense of the phrase, in other words with equal rights and responsibilities for both parties”<sup>84</sup>. A week later, with the board of directors of the Belgian section in the meantime giving its consent to the merger, a new disagreement arose between the two men, when Paul Lambert

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83 In 1960, the *Annals*, which had up until that time been printed by the Dessaint print-works in Doullers (the Somme) was taken over by the AIM.

84 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “For the Liège file,” letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 25<sup>th</sup> October 1959.

suggested making an application to the Belgian Government for a grant to publish the *Annals*. Edgard Milhaud completely vetoed this on the grounds of the journal's independence<sup>85</sup>. Paul Lambert's response was scathing: "If I had [...] to leave CIRIEC," he wrote, "in order to preserve my dignity, neither my scientific work, nor the international influence of my ideas, nor my collective economy work would be affected by it. Only my feelings. I have a deep-rooted desire to serve both CIRIEC and the 'Annals'. But I do not need either CIRIEC or the 'Annals'"<sup>86</sup>. In the end they did come to an agreement: the merging of the journals was to take place starting with the first issue of 1960 and the *Annals* would be jointly edited by both Edgard Milhaud and Paul Lambert. End of story... Well, not quite!

### Edgard Milhaud passes on the torch



Edgard Milhaud (Germaine Calame's private collection).

Indeed, there was still one final dramatic twist left for the first edition of the *Annals* published in 1960. In an article entitled "*Annals of Collective Economy*" and "*Expériences*" unite their Destinies, Edgard Milhaud revealed that he had decided to resign from his posts as both editor of the journal and chairman of CIRIEC. This decision was prompted by the fact that the association still had a series of challenges it needed to take up, and that this would only be possible if the person in charge were able to take immediate decisions

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85 "Any [mouthpiece for ideas and doctrine](#) which receives any government grant whatsoever is a mouthpiece which has given up its freedom and which virtually accepts that, if it doesn't have to say certain things, it at least has not to say certain things. This is servitude, once and for all unthinkable for the 'Annals', because the publication was born out of the need to create a completely unrestricted mouthpiece to fight the good and essential fight for collective economy against capitalism's massive domination of the press" (CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "For the Liège file", letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1959).

86 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder "For the Liège file", letter from Paul Lambert to Edgard Milhaud, 4<sup>th</sup> November 1959.

“without having to consult any person other than one with whom contact may be immediate and the exchange of views complete”<sup>87</sup>.



Edgard Milhaud (middle) greeted by his colleagues, including Gabriel Ventejol (left) and Paul Lambert (far right) (Germaine Calame's private collection).

All of the members saw the decision as sudden and unexpected. But they had soon forgotten that Edgard Milhaud had asked for advice on standing down as chairman in May of the previous year. The decision had been put back to the next general assembly (scheduled to be held in Vienna in 1961!) on the pretext that a change in chairman would have been liable to aggravate the internal problems faced by some sections<sup>88</sup>.

Nevertheless, there was still the question of the deep-seated reasons driving Edgard Milhaud to cut the “umbilical cord” with his life’s work so abruptly. The disagreements mentioned above probably did play a role, having led the professor to question his vision for CIRIEC in a profoundly changing world. A distressing letter sent to his friend André Hirschfeld shows us his true state of mind:

“I hope you will be able to understand me as well. CIRIEC continues to shuffle along without much energy, in a manner which is both sloppy and self-neglecting, a

87 MILHAUD, Edgard, “‘Annals of Collective Economy’ and ‘Expériences’ unite their Destinies. A Prospect for Great Progress. Two decisions” in *Annals of Collective Economy*, vol. XXXI, no. 1, Jan-March 1960, pp.1-23.

88 CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “IC – Board 1957-1959”, Minutes of the CIRIEC board meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1959.

muddle-through punctuated, in a few flashes, by magnificent and hypnotising talks at our congress and by some also moving and lucid articles in the “*Annals*”. But the boom of the early years is behind us. Socialism is on the decline in some of our CIRIEC countries. There is a conviction that if things are not really shaken up, we run the risk of danger because our growth will be stunted and there will be a contagious kind of despondency. I could have dragged another 10 or 15 years of life out of a weakened, lifeless, listless CIRIEC, devoid of any fervent, deep-rooted faith. But instead I decided, quite suddenly, to put all my trust in a complete disengagement motivated by a need for radical change. Will I carry it off? Well, I’ll find out within a week [editor’s note: at the extraordinary general assembly of CIRIEC scheduled to take place in Geneva on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1960]. But muddling through is no life for me. CIRIEC’s sections today number the same as they did 4 or 5 years ago – at the time we met in Paris – and even then, if we exclude Greece, all the current bodies were represented and CIRIEC’s meetings were attracting more delegates who were more committed”<sup>89</sup>.

These lines show how tired this 87-year-old man was feeling, how disillusioned he felt in the face of the collective economy movement’s half-heartedness: the awful feeling that the association’s development could only take place through radical changes which he did not have the means to implement<sup>90</sup>; radical changes that he may have had no desire to bring about, as they ran against principles he had held all his life<sup>91</sup>.

The bravery of this decision, and the self-sacrifice it involved, commands our respect. As does the outcome of his work, which Edgard Milhaud greatly underestimated. It

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89 CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to André Hirschfeld, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1960.

90 “I think that the last meeting of the CIRIEC board will have dispelled any lingering doubts you might still have harboured about whether my decision of 18<sup>th</sup> March of this ending year was the right one. Seeing what has happened since, as opposed to what might have happened, is proof enough that I had no right to act in any way other than as I did. I hope that one day when you have the chance you will be able to make our French friends understand that seeing how much muscle our Belgian friends have at their disposal, so much more than I had, made it my strict duty – a categorical imperative – to step down. [...], I had a DUTY to do this.” (CIRIEC, International Centre, Blue Files France, letter from Edgard Milhaud to André Hirschfeld, 8<sup>th</sup> November 1960).

91 We can see a demonstration of this inner struggle in a letter in which he once again questioned the principle of subsidising the *Annals*, which he had accepted a few days earlier: “Last night was, like so many others before it, a night of constant meditation which, however painful it may have been, allowed me to take up my final and irrevocable position on this point. It means that my conscience is clear, I have freed myself and I have ruled out the hideous idea of turning my entire life into a lie.” (CIRIEC, International Centre, Folder “For the Liège file”, letter from Edgard Milhaud to Paul Lambert, 17<sup>th</sup> November 1959).



was because of his tireless work of canvassing and persuasion that CIRIEC had a stable staff and national sections which were growing slowly but surely. And, it was during this period that an official section was formed in Germany, which went on to play a key role among CIRIEC's national centres. As for the *Annals*, in 1960 they were distributed in 55 countries (including various countries in Africa and Asia), reaching 1,000 institutions, including 275 universities and 90 public libraries. This is a more than respectable result when you remember that the journal only started coming out again in 1948.

As a mark of gratitude for his devotion to CIRIEC, Edgard Milhaud was appointed honorary chairman. A ceremonial tribute was later organised by the Swiss Union of Consumers' Cooperatives in Geneva on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1961, at which he was offered the *Second Political and Social Economy Anthology*, a collection of extracts compiled by Paul Lambert in his honour.

### **Belgian over-representation in CIRIEC**

The resignation of Edgard Milhaud would increase Belgian influence on the future of CIRIEC still further. Indeed, Paul Lambert, who already held the posts of both secretary-general of the Belgian section and director of CIRIEC International, found himself in sole charge of editing the *Annals*. In addition to this, Edgard Milhaud suggested Maurice Delbouille to succeed him as chairman. This was rather a surprising decision coming from a man who, some years previously, had made it part of his dream that Paul Ramadier would succeed him as chairman and Charles Barbier as editor of the *Annals* and wrote "[...] I wouldn't want both CIRIEC and the "*Annals*" to be run by a single section. This is about principles, not people"<sup>92</sup>.

In spite of some resistance to this concentration of "power" in Belgian hands, the extraordinary general assembly held on 14<sup>th</sup> May 1960 appointed Maurice Delbouille as chairman of the International Centre. The reason for this decision probably lies in the urgent need to face up to Edgard Milhaud's withdrawal and a desire not

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<sup>92</sup> CIRIEC, Blue Files France, letters from Edgard Milhaud to André Hirschfeld 28<sup>th</sup> March 1957 and 18<sup>th</sup> December 1957. We have been unable to find any document to show whether these two "candidates" were actually approached and what their decisions might have been.

to destabilise CIRIEC too much (Delbouille already held the post of deputy vice-chairman). In addition, it was planned that the issue of the chairmanship would be placed upon the agenda for the Vienna general assembly, scheduled to take place in 1961. Maurice Delbouille was actually then re-elected in Vienna, but he insisted on the need to resort to a rolling chairmanship for the following meeting (in Rome in 1963), for fear that CIRIEC “might become too much of a Belgian operation”<sup>93</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

So this outline of almost fifteen years of history of the International Centre of Research and Information on Collective Economy comes to an end with a new beginning (almost a rebirth). Many different challenges had been taken up: CIRIEC had its own premises, a team of employees, clear legal status and much healthier finances. In 1961, for the first time in a long time, all three issues of the *Annals* were published on time and the journal was given a makeover to revitalise it. Yes, the Centre was still to see many changes, many ups and downs and many successes. If any proof of this be needed, you have only to flick through the aforementioned booklet on 50 years of CIRIEC.

Today, as it celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, CIRIEC shows that the Quixotic struggle for an ideal of greater social and economic justice led by an old man in the twilight of his life remains as relevant as it ever was. Certainly, Edgard Milhaud’s dream has not been entirely achieved: There will probably never be an international collective economy organisation under the aegis of the United Nations.

The world has changed in so many ways over the last 60 years... And it is very much to CIRIEC’s credit that it has been able to move with the times while ensuring that it maintains its scientific character. But even if the militant lyrical flights of fancy of the early days have gradually given way to a more scientifically neutral discourse, Milhaud’s spirit is still here with us, along with his unquenchable thirst for justice and peace.

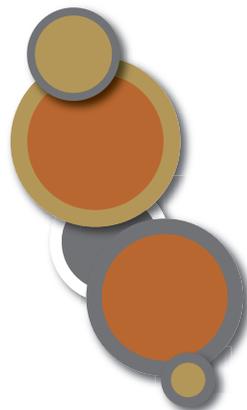
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93 “Procès-verbal de l’Assemblée générale du CIRIEC tenue à Vienne le 25 mai 1961” in *Nouvelles du C.I.R.I.E.C. Bulletin d’information interne*, no. 10, June 1961, p. 20.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- AdöG** – *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der österreichischen Gemeinwirtschaft* (Austrian Collective Economy Working Community)
- AIM** – *Association intercommunale de mécanographie* (Intercommunal Mechanography Association - Belgium)
- ALE** – *Association liégeoise d'électricité* (Liège Electricity Board - Belgium)
- ALG** – *Association liégeoise du gaz* (Liège Gas Board - Belgium)
- ALM** – *Association liégeoise de mécanographie* (Liège Mechanography Association - Belgium)
- CARHOP** – *Centre d'animation et de recherche en histoire ouvrière et populaire* (Centre for Coordination and Research on Popular and Working Class History - Belgium)
- CGER** – *Caisse générale d'épargne et de retraite* (General Savings and Pensions Bank - Belgium)
- CGSLB** – *Centrale des syndicats libéraux de Belgique* (General Union of Belgian Liberal Trade Unions)
- CGSP** – *Centrale générale des services publics* (General Union of Public Services - Belgium)
- CIRIEC** – *Centre international de recherches et d'information sur l'économie collective* (International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy); *Centre international de recherches et d'information sur l'économie publique, sociale et coopérative* in French since 1974 (International Centre for Research and Information on the Public, Social and Cooperative Economy, since 1964)
- CODEP** – *Coop-Dépôts* (Belgium)
- CSC** – *Confédération des syndicats chrétiens* (Confederation of Christian Trade Unions - Belgium)
- ECSC** – *European Coal and Steel Community*
- ENAP** – *École nationale d'administration publique* (NSPA - National School of Public Administration - Canada)
- EPC** – *Économie populaire de Ciney* (Belgium)
- FAO** – *Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations*
- FEBECOOP** – *Fédération belge de l'économie sociale et coopérative* (Belgian Federation for the Social and Cooperative Economy)
- FGTB** – *Fédération générale du travail de Belgique* (Belgian General Labour Federation)
- FMSS** – *Fédération des mutualités socialistes et syndicales* (Federation of Socialist and Trade Union Mutual Societies - Belgium)
- FNCC** – *Fédération nationale des coopératives de consommation* (National Federation of Consumers' Cooperatives - France)
- FO** – *Force ouvrière* (Workers' Power - France)
- GöW** – *Gesellschaft für öffentliche Wirtschaft* (Public Economy Association - Germany)
- ICA** – *International Cooperative Alliance*

- ICFTU** – International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
- ICRICE** – International Centre for Research and Information on Collective Economy (acronym in use till 1996)
- IHOES** – *Institut d'histoire ouvrière, économique et sociale* (Worker, Economic and Social Historical Institute - Belgium)
- ILO** – International Labour Organisation & International Labour Office
- IULA** – International Union of Local Authorities
- OPHACO** – *Office des pharmacies coopératives de Belgique* (Belgian Cooperative Chemists' Union)
- POB** – *Parti ouvrier belge* (Belgian Workers' Party)
- PSB** – *Parti socialiste belge* (Belgian Socialist Party)
- SFIO** – *Section française de l'Internationale ouvrière* (French Section of the Workers' International)
- SMAP** – *Société mutuelle des administrations publiques* (Mutual Insurance Company for Public Authorities - Belgium)
- SNCI** – *Société nationale de crédit à l'industrie* (National Industry Credit Society - Belgium)
- SOCOLIÉ** – *Société coopérative liégeoise d'électricité* (Liège Electricity Cooperative Society - Belgium)
- ULB** – *Université libre de Bruxelles* (Free University of Brussels - Belgium)
- UN** – United Nations
- UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
- UQAM** – *Université du Québec à Montréal* (UQM - University of Quebec in Montreal - Canada)
- USC** – *Union suisse des coopératives de consommation* (Swiss Union of Consumers' Cooperatives)
- USS** – *Union syndicale suisse* (Swiss Federation of Trade Unions)
- WHO** – World Health Organisation



## LIST OF PERSONS MENTIONED IN THE TEXT

Their positions at the time of their contact with and/or relationship to CIRIEC are given for information only.

**ANGELOPOULOS, Angelos** – professor at the university of Athens; professor at the “Panteios” school of political sciences (Athens); president of the Greek Planning Association. He was behind the founding of the Greek section in 1956.

**AURIOL, Vincent** – French Socialist politician, President of the Fourth Republic (1947-1954).

**BAEYENS, André** – assistant to the secretariat of CIRIEC’s Belgian section in 1955; member of the coal industry’s executive board (1961-1972); secretary-general of the ministry of Economic Affairs (1971-1992).

**BAILLY, Charles** – deputy burgomaster and then burgomaster of the city of Liège (1973-1976); member of the board of directors of *La Maison Liégeoise* (1959).

**BARBIER, Charles-Henri** – member of the USC board; member of the executive committees of both the ICA and CIRIEC.

**BLUM, Léon** – French Socialist politician, founder of the newspaper *Le Populaire*; president of the first Government of the *Front populaire* (June 1936-June 1937) and President of the Fourth Republic (Dec. 1946-Jan. 1947); director of the French UNESCO delegation.

**BOGNAR, Jozses** – professor of political economy at the university of Budapest and Member of Parliament.

**BRATSCHI, Robert** – president of the USS; president of the International Transport Workers’ Federation.

**BRICTEUX, Armand** – secretary of the *Association belge pour le progrès social*.

**BROUHON, Hervé** – see biography p.55.

**BRUNFAUT, Fernand** – architect, Brussels district councillor (1921-1958); Brabant provincial councillor (1921-1925); Member of Parliament for the arrondissement of Brussels (1925-1961); vice-president of the Chamber of Representatives (March-Nov. 1946 and 1947-1961); member of the board of directors of *La Prévoyance Sociale*; chairman of the standing committee of the national office for the completion of the Nord-Midi rail link.

**BRUSSON, Joseph** – director of the engineering department of the Liège-Huy-Waremme section of the FGTB.

**BUISSERET, Auguste** – see biography p.22.

**BUSET, Max** – politician (POB/PSB); senator for the arrondissement of Thuin (1932-1959), Minister of State; president of the Belgian Socialist Party (1945-1959); member of the ECSC Common Assembly (1952-1954).

**CALAME, Germaine** – secretary of CIRIEC International from 1954 to 1986.

**CHAPUT, Charles** – see biography p.54.

**CLÉMENT, Hubert** – Luxembourg State councillor and burgomaster of Esch-sur-Alzette.

**CLERDENT, Pierre** – barrister at the Liège court of appeal (1934-1945); governor of the provinces of Luxembourg (1946-1953) and Liège (1953-1971); founder of the *Société provinciale d'industrialisation*; president of the Walloon economic council (1962-1968).

**COLLE, Armand** – national president of the CGSLB.

**COTY, René** – French politician, President of the Fourth Republic from 1954 to 1958.

**DARDEL, Georges** – French politician (SFIO); mayor of Puteaux; member of the general council of the Seine; chairman of the organising committee for the Third International Collective Economy Congress.

**DE BROUCKÈRE, Louis** – Belgian politician (POB); ULB professor; editor of *Le Peuple* (1907-1910); Brabant provincial councillor (1900-1906); president of the Socialist International (1934-1938); Minister of State in 1945.

**DEFISE, Gustave** – Director of the *Société générale coopérative de Micheroux*; vice-president of the *Union coopérative* (Belgium).

**DEHOUSSE, Fernand** – Belgian politician (PSB); professor at the university of Liège (law faculty); senator (1950-1971); member of the ECSC Common Assembly (1952-1958); member of the Council of Europe Consultative Assembly (1954-1961); president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (1956-1959); Member of the European Parliament (1958-1965 et 1968).

**DELBOUILLE, Maurice** – see biography p.23.

**DELEON, Ašer** – member of the Union of Yugoslav economists' associations, founder and then vice-president of CIRIEC's Yugoslav section (1954); secretary of the central council of the confederation of trade unions of Yugoslavia; president of the Fourth International Collective Economy Congress organising committee.

**DENIS, Maurice** – deputy burgomaster of the city of Liège for Industrial Services; responsible for organising the Second International Collective Economy Congress (Liège).

**DEPRESSEUX, Félix** – president of the Bar, vice-president of CIRIEC's Liège provincial section.

**DEREAU, Louis** – secretary-general of the confederation of the CSC (1946-1972).

**DESMET, Louis** – director of the cooperative society *Au Progrès*; senator for the province of Hainaut (1950-1965).

**DE SPIEGELEER, Aimé** – director of the *Centre d'études coopératives* (Belgium).

**DETIÈGE, Leona** – Belgian politician (SPA); secretary of State for Pensions (1988-1992); regional Flemish minister for Work and Employment (1992-1995); burgomistress of the city of Antwerp (1995-2003); currently president of CIRIEC and of its Belgian section.

**DJILAS, Milovan** – member of the politburo of the Yugoslav Communist Party from 1940 and then president of the federal Parliament, he was expelled from the Party in 1954 for taking unorthodox stances. He was arrested and imprisoned in 1955 because of statements he made to foreign correspondents and for divulging "State secrets". He was granted an amnesty in 1966.

**DUTILLEUL, Émile** – see biography p.24.

**GAUSSET, Georges** – president of the *Société générale des coopératives de consommation*; president of the *Comptoir national d'escomptes* (France).

**GÉLARD, Yvonne** – see SCHREDER Yvonne.

**GENOT, André** – co-founder of the CGSP (1945), president of the Namur regional CGSP (1949), assistant secretary (1950-1953) and then national secretary (1953-1961) of the FGTB.

**GERLACHE, Marcel** – head of the FGTB research department.

**GINSBURG, David** – British politician; research secretary of the Labour Party.

**G.-ORSINI, René** – director of the technical services department of the *Société générale des coopératives de consommation*; director, secretary-general (1954) and treasurer of CIRIEC's French section.

**GOTHOT, Victor** – professor at the university of Liège (faculty of law).

**GRUSELIN, Paul** – burgomaster of the city of Liège (1945-1958).

**HANCK, Joseph** – Luxembourg journalist and trade unionist; member of the board of directors of CIRIEC's Belgian section (1958-1961).

**HANSE, Jules** – founder member of CIRIEC's Belgian section (1951); vice-president and then president of the SMAP; member of the board of directors of the *Crédit communal de Belgique* (1957); vice-president of Brabant provincial council (1957).

**HASSELMAN, Erwin** – member of the board of the *Zentralverband Deutscher Konsumgenossenschaften*.

**HAVERLAND, Joseph** – general director of the SMAP from 1956 to 1984.

**HERRIOT, Edouard** – French politician (Radical Party); French Prime Minister (in 1924, 1926 and 1932); leader of the Radical Party (1932-1935); president of the Chamber (1936); president of the French National Assembly (1947-1953); mayor of Lyon; honorary president of the Council of European Municipalities.

**HIRSCHFELD, André** – agricultural engineer; member of the board of directors of the *Union des coopérateurs de la région parisienne*; professor at the *Collège coopératif* and at the *Institut des hautes études de droit rural* (Paris); secretary-general of CIRIEC's French section (1957).

**HUMBERT-DROZ, Jules** – principal secretary of the Swiss Socialist Party; member of CIRIEC's executive committee.

**HUTOY, Henri** – see biography p.25.

**HUYSMANS, Camille** – Belgian politician (POB/PSB); secretary (1905-1922) and then president (1939-1944) of the Second Socialist International; burgomaster of the city of Antwerp (1933-1940 and 1944-1946); president of the Chamber (1936-1939); Minister of State (from 1945); Prime Minister (July 1946-Nov. 1947).

**JAUJÈS, Jean** – French politician; Member of Parliament for the Tarn region; deputy mayor of Toulouse with responsibility for Public Education (1890-1893); founder and editor of the newspaper *L'Humanité*. He was pro-socialist unity and one of the architects behind the creation of the SFIO.

**JOSZ, Claude** – CSC trade unionist.

**JOUHAUX, Léon** – vice-chairman of the world federation of trade unions (1945); president of the French economic council (1947); president of the FO trade union (1948); Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1951).

**KORAĆ, Miladin** – professor at the university of Belgrade; vice-president of CIRIEC's Yugoslav section.

**LABROUSSE, Ernest** – doctor in economic history; chair in economic history at the Sorbonne; director of the *Revue socialiste* (1947-1954); principal director of cabinet to Léon Blum and vice-president of the council of ministers (1946).

**LAMAZIÈRE, Daniel** – French consul-general.

**LAMBERT, Paul** – see biography p.33.

**LAROCK, Victor** – Belgian politician (PSB); political director of *Le Peuple* (1944-1954); minister for Foreign Trade (1954-1957); minister for Foreign Affairs (1957-1958).

**LASSERRE, Georges** – French economist; professor at the faculty of law of the university of Lyon (1945-1950) and then professor at the faculty of law and economic sciences of the university of Paris I; member of the economic council (1947-1951); member of the FNCC national committee and of the executive committee of the *Institut des études coopératives*; president of Christian socialism.

**LAVERGNE, Bernard** – French economist; professor at the university of Paris (faculty of law); director from 1921 on of the *Revue des études coopératives* and of the *Année politique et économique*.

**LEBON, Carl** – deputy burgomaster of the city of Antwerp for Trade and Shipping.

**LECLERCQ, Joseph** – see biography pp. 20-21.

**LEJEUNE, Jules** – professor at the university of Liège (faculty of law); president of the *Ecole supérieure de sciences commerciales et économiques* (1947-1948).

**LEMAIRE, Henri** – director of *La Prévoyance sociale* in Brussels (1955-1995) and president of the board of directors (1974-1995); secretary of the ICA insurance committee (1946-1969); member of the board of directors of CODEP (1952-1969); member of the board of directors of the CGER; president of the board of directors of the publishers *Le Peuple* (1957-1969); president of FEBECOOP.

**LÉVESQUE, Benoît** – associate professor at the national school of public administration (ENAP) and at the university of Quebec in Montreal (UQAM); currently president of the International Scientific Council of CIRIEC.

**LÉVY-BRUHL, Henri** – professor of Roman law at the university of Paris; director of the *Institut de droit romain*; president of the *Institut français de sociologie*; member of the constitutional committee.

**LISTRÉ, Georges** – secretary-general of the *Union coopérative* (Belgium).

**LUPPENS, Léa** – secretary employed to help André Schreurs in the preparation of the Liège Congress.

**LUTFALLA, Georges** – president and managing director of the insurance company *La Nationale*; editor-in-chief of the *Revue d'économie politique*; secretary of the *Institut français de sociologie*; member of the economic council.

**MARCHAL, Jean** – French economist; professor at the university of Nancy (faculty of law); founder of the *Revue économique* (1950); member of the *Comité consultatif des universités*; member of the economic and social council.

**MERLOT, Joseph-Jean** (known as J.J.) – Belgian politician (PSB); burgomaster of the city of Seraing (1947-1969); member of the Chamber of representatives (1954-1969); vice-president of the Council of European Municipalities; minister for Public Works (1961-1962).

**MERLOT, Joseph** – Belgian politician (POB/PSB); burgomaster of the city of Seraing (1921-1946); Member of Parliament for the arrondissement of Liège (1924-1958); served as a minister several times between 1936 and 1949 (including as minister of Pensions in 1948-1949); Minister of State (from 1945); president of the SMAP (1928-1959).

**MEYER, Andreas** – Editor of the *Schweizer-Konsumverein* at the USC; president of CIRIEC's Swiss section (1954).

**MIJIĆ, Dorde** – senior councillor on the Federal Executive Council (Yugoslavia).

**MILHAUD, Edgard** – see biography pp. 10-11.

**MILHAUD, Maurice** – son of Edgard Milhaud. Engineer working at the International Labour office (from 1920 onwards), in 1946 he was given responsibility for setting up the Social Affairs division at the United Nations secretariat in New York. He became director of the European office of the administration for technical assistance (1949-1961). He was the designer of the United Nations European social service programme, and the organisation made him responsible for social and economic work in Africa and Central America (from 1961 onwards).

**MOLLET, Guy** – French politician (SFIO); secretary-general of the SFIO (1946-1969); president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (1954-1956); Prime Minister (Febr.- 1956-June 1957).

**MÖRI, Jean** – secretary of the USS.

**MORTARA, Alberto** – founder and then secretary-general of CIRIEC's Italian section.

**MORVAL, Miss** – secretary of CIRIEC's Belgian section.

**NACHEZ, Georges** – deputy burgomaster for Public Corporations of the city of Ghent; member of the board of directors of *La Prévoyance sociale*.

**NOBS, Ernst** – Swiss politician (Swiss Socialist Party); first socialist federal councillor (1943-1951).

**OPDRECHT, Hans** – leader of the Swiss Socialist Party and member of the National Council.

**PERROUX, François** – director of the *Institut de sciences économiques appliquées*; member of the executive committee and director of the International Association for Research in Income and Health (1949); member of the International Statistical Institute and of the *Comité supérieur du revenu national*.

**PIRSON, Nicolas** – honorary division head at Seraing district council, secretary-treasurer of CIRIEC's Belgian section (from 1951).

**POURET, René** – emeritus lawyer and standing Member of Parliament for the province of Liège.

**PRÖBSTING, Karl** – director of the *Arbeitsgemeinschaft der österreichischen Gemeinwirtschaft*; member of the board of directors of the *Österreichische Forschungs- und Informationsstelle für Gemeinwirtschaft*; director of the *Stadtwerke Wien*; director of CIRIEC's Austrian section; president of CIRIEC's organising committee.

**QUADEN, Guy** – professor of economics at the university of Liège; director of CIRIEC and secretary-general of its Belgian section from 1978 to 1990; currently governor of the *Banque nationale de Belgique*.

**RAMADIER, Paul** – French politician; mayor of Decazeville, president of the Council of Ministers (Jan.-Nov. 1947), French Defence minister (1948-1949) and minister for Economic Affairs (1956-1957); vice-president of CIRIEC, and president of its French section.

**RAUSCHER, Franz** – secretary of State; chairman of the *Österreichische Forschungs- und Informationsstelle für Gemeinwirtschaft*.

**RENARD, André** – Belgian trade unionist; co-founder and assistant secretary-general of the FGTB; chairman of the Huy-Waremme section of the FGTB and of the federation of the province of Liège metalworkers trade unions – FGTB (1956-1962).

**REY, Jean** – Belgian Liberal politician; minister for Reconstruction (1949-1950) and Economic Affairs (1954-1958); chairman of the ECSC council of ministers (1954-1956); president of the European Communities Commission (1967-1970).

**ROUANET, Gabriel** – assistant secretary of the public and health services workers' federation – FO; secretary of the trade union FO.

**SCHREDER, Yvonne** (married name GÉLARD) – secretary of both the Belgian section and the International Centre of CIRIEC (1956-1957 to 1993).

**SCHREURS, André** – a young political science graduate who handled the secretarial work for the Second International Collective Economy Congress (Liège). First director of the Liège Congress Palace (1957-1983).

**SCHÜRCH, Charles** – secretary of the USS.

**SERWY, Willy** – secretary-general of the *Société générale coopérative de Belgique*.

**SIDHWA, R.K.** – Home Secretary; mayor of Karachi; president of the Federation of All-India Local Authorities.

**SOMERITIS, Stratis D.** – lawyer and vice-president of the Greek Socialist league; president of CIRIEC's Greek section from 1956.

**THIRY, Bernard** – professor of economics at the university of Liège; general director of CIRIEC and director of its Belgian section from 1990-present; Ethias international relations director.

**THOMAS, Albert** – French politician who was close to Jaurès, a member of the French government during the First World War, first director-general of the International Labour Office (1920-1932).

**THÔNE, René** – standing Member of Parliament for the province of Hainaut; member of the *Union des coopérateurs du Bassin de Charleroi* (Belgium).

**TITO (BROZ, Josip, known as)** – Yugoslav Statesman; president of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (1953-1980); secretary-general of the Yugoslav Communist Party and then leader of the Yugoslavian League of Communists.

**TOUTAIN, J.-C.** – Editor of the journal *Europe de l'Est et Union soviétique*.

**TREINA, Jean** – Member of the State council of the canton of Geneva (in charge of the department of Trade and Industry); member of CIRIEC's executive committee; vice-president of CIRIEC's Swiss section (1954).

**TROCLET, Léon-Éli** – Belgian politician (POB/PSB); senator (1944-1968); minister for Social Providence (1945-1946), Economic Affairs (1946), and for Employment and Social Providence (1946-1949 and 1954-1958); minister of State (from 1969). Known as the “father of the Belgian Social Security system”.

**VAN BELLE, François** – Belgian politician (POB/PSB); deputy burgomaster and then burgomaster of Tilleur; deputy from 1919 to 1958; vice-president of the Chamber (1936-1958); vice-president of the Chamber of Representatives; chairman of the *Compagnie intercommunale des eaux de l’agglomération de Liège et extensions*.

**VENTEJOL, Gabriel** – French trade unionist; national secretary of FO.

**VERHEVEN, Guillaume** – engineer; deputy mayor of the city of Brussels.

**VINCK, Émile** – secretary-general of the International Union of Local Authorities (IULA).

**VUKOVICH, Andreas** – director of the *Zentralverband der österreichischen Konsumgenossenschaften*; member of the board of directors of the *Österreichische Forschungs- und Informationsstelle für Gemeinwirtschaft*; vice-president of CIRIEC.

**WEBER, Max** – chairman of the board of the USC, member of the national council and professor at the university of Berne.

**WEISSER, Gerhard** – Professor at the *Forschungsinstitut für Sozial- und Verwaltungswissenschaften* at the University of Cologne.

**WIGNY, Pierre** – lawyer and Belgian politician, minister for Colonies (1947-1950), minister for Foreign Affairs (1958-1961) minister for Justice (1965-1968); member of the ECSC Common Assembly (1952) and Member of the European Parliament (1958).

**YERNA, [Jacques]** – Belgian trade unionist; national secretary (1959-1962) then national president (1962-1983) of *Gazelco* (socialist gas workers’ and electricians’ trade union); secretary of the Liège-Huy-Waremme regional section of the FGTB (1962-1988).







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