



Initiatives of Change

CANADIAN NEWSLETTER

Suite 403, 331 Cooper Street, Ottawa ON K2P 0G5 Tel: (613) 230 7197

March 2006

The Journey Towards A Community of Communities: From Solitudes to Partnership

Background

The idea of addressing the need for healing and reconciliation within Canada was mentioned during the 2004 Consultation, and began to take shape during the February 2005 visit of Initiatives of Change (IofC) Council Chair, Michael Prior and National Coordinator, Anne Hartnell to Ontario and Québec. Conversations with a wide range of people indicated a growing willingness to rethink relationships and work toward countrywide solutions in the spirit of IofC.

At the AGM in Alberta in May 2005, Michael Prior presented this vision in a paper. The question arose as to what role IofC should and could play in Canada at this time as we embark upon a journey towards a “community of communities.” This phrase is a quote from Joe Clark’s book *A Country Too Good to Lose*. A steering committee was created to explore how this might happen. The committee recognized an opportunity to link a significant event with the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Québec City in 2008, preceded by a large-scale process to take place across the country in the years 2006-2007 and beyond.

Teams Endorse the Proposed Initiative

Further to our visits to the Alberta cities of Edmonton, Calgary and Rimbey last year, we were able to visit IofC teams in Toronto, Oakville, Hamilton, Montréal, Ottawa and Québec City between February 1 and 9, 2006.

In each location, the teams enthusiastically endorsed the proposed initiative and expressed their commitment to it, although the title does not rest well with all. Some expressed their thanks for a “longed-for opportunity to present the IofC message across Canada in this new way” and were thankful for the vision expressed in the paper delivered at the last AGM. As we listened to the participants, it soon became apparent that our primary task as a committee needs to be one of clarifying the goals, and developing an operating philosophy and principles to support and guide those who will be involved in developing and implementing their local processes as determined by local needs and opportunities. In addition, we are to recommend a format for the proposed celebratory event suggested for Québec City in 2008.

It is clear that the process is to be God-led, spiritual in nature and transforming. The focus of the initiative is “socio-cultural” change, although it is hoped that there will be positive implications for the economic and political sectors of our society. Trained resource people will need to be shared across the land to assist with developing strategies for outreach, planning, and the facilitation of agreed processes. It is clear that courage will be a required key ingredient. The message from the west was reinforced in each eastern setting:

- ♦ The process needs to start with self-examination prior to engaging within a team and with other teams.
- ♦ The IofC Fellowship as a whole must form community before daring to facilitate rapport with the solitudes in society.

Feedback Please!

The steering committee encourages everyone to send comments on their thoughts and feelings regarding the *Community of Communities* initiative, to assist them in developing plans and processes that will be presented at the April AGM for discussion and approval. Implementation of the process will be discussed at the Consultation to be held in September 2006 in Calgary. *Michael B. Prior, Laurent Gagnon, Louise Lanctôt*

*Please send your comments on the Community of Communities initiative to:
Laurent Gagnon l.gagnon@ca.iofc.org or Anne Hartnell annehartnell@ca.iofc.org.*

*Copies of Michael Prior’s vision paper or the Consultation Report
can be obtained through Anne Hartnell.*

INITIATIVES OF CHANGE

Initiatives of Change (IofC) is an international network open to people of all cultures, religions, nationalities, and beliefs, who work towards change, locally and globally, by starting with change in their own lives.

IofC grew out of the Oxford Group which started among university students in the late 1920s. In 1938, as nations re-armed for war, its originator, Frank Buchman, called for a moral and spiritual re-armament to work towards a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world.

At the end of the war, under the name Moral Re-Armament (MRA), a programme of moral and spiritual reconstruction helped to reconcile former enemies.

In Canada, IofC is officially registered as a charitable organization under the name of Initiatives of Change Association (Canada).

Contributions to this work are tax deductible.

For more information please email to:

info@ca.iofc.org

website:

www.iofc.org

- GLOBAL INDIGENOUS DIALOGUE -

Understanding our Roots: From Healing to Harmony

GID 2006 will be part of the *Agenda for Reconciliation* session in Caux with the theme *Understanding our Roots: From Healing to Harmony*. Preparatory consultations are underway. Two meetings have taken place in Calgary, and it is hoped that more activity will be generated across the country. Ideas were shared on various topics: the purpose of the GID, the 2006 theme; fundraising, logistics and promotion, and GID outreach. The use of experiences and stories was emphasized.

In 2005, Monica Heincke, a Caux Scholar from Colombia studying in Calgary, along with other students, was invited to share her perspectives on a GID panel because of her interest in connecting ideas regarding indigenous wisdom and modern ways of living. Monica has now been hired on a part-time basis to assist in the coordination of these areas and the preparation of the 2006 session in Caux.

The creation of a GID Coordination Team is an ongoing process, supported by Lewis Cardinal, a Woodland Cree living in Edmonton, who heads up the *Global Indigenous Dialogue*, as well as other people involved with IofC, such as Thambi Silundika, Joy Newman and Jack Freebury. The team is inspired by the opportunities for the GID to facilitate: reconnection to the roots of indigenous wisdom; better understanding of indigenous people around the world; and reconciliation processes that build relationships amongst indigenous communities as well as between indigenous and non-indigenous people. The website www.gid.iofc.org is in the process of being redesigned.

Some of the indigenous delegates at Caux, and others, who have recently become associated with IofC, have expressed the wish to know more about the history of the involvement of indigenous people with IofC/MRA. As a result, it was decided at the GID in 2005 to prepare such a history. The Canadian GID coordinating committee has already begun work on this project. The immediate aim is to have 500 copies of the booklet available for distribution to delegates at Caux during the summer of 2006 as a contribution to the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Caux.

Monica Heincke gid@ca.iofc.org

- CANADIANS SERVING IN INDIA -

Justin Walford, Action of Life 3

Here at Asia Plateau, I have been learning how to play an integral but supportive role in our multi-faith, inter-cultural community. I have had to slow down and learn how to leave spaces for others to connect. I have tried to take on the attitude of a humble listener, while still utilizing my facilitation skills to act in dynamic and creative ways.

January and February will be full of adventure as I travel to the cities of Kerala and Tamil Nadu with a group of 13 others. March will be a busy time back at Asia Plateau, and in April and May I've been assigned to a small team working in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Mainland China.

I believe I am in the right place and am truly finding my connection, my faith, and my foundation in Spirit and the Universe.

Justin Walford justinwalford@hotmail.com

For more info about Action of Life, see www.afl.iofc.org.

Gwen McLean at Asia Plateau, Panchgani

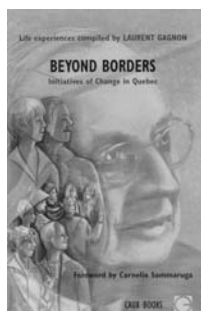
Since coming here I have learnt a lot of important things about my life journey, and continue to realize that I am the one that has to change! Though not always easy, I know this is helping to shape my character. I am changing my attitude about things being "impossible" and have decided to learn some Hindi. This past week we had 98 students from Symbiosis here and they are a source of energy for me! I have learned so much about myself and about them, during *The Train of Life* class.

Gwen McLean gwenmclean@accesscomm.ca

Peter Heyes with the North India group in Jamshedpur

We've just had a meeting with some of the Jamshedpur people to find out their programme for our time here. It's full of fascinating events and everyone is very happy. A highlight will be visiting the tribal villages to see what they are doing to improve the lot of the people living in them. This local team has held their weekly meeting without interruption for 26 years. How's that for a record? We had a good time with the students at Silicon College. They are a wonderful bunch of young adults – dedicated, caring, punctual and full of energy.

Peter Heyes



Beyond Borders

Initiatives of Change in Québec
Life experiences compiled by
Laurent Gagnon
Foreword by Cornelio Sommaruga
\$25.00 plus P & P

Copies available from Joy Newman

joy.newman@ca.iofc.org

2227, 1010 Arbour Lake Road NW

Calgary, AB T3G 4Y8 Tel: 403.208.1602

Comments from readers

From Toronto:

"Congratulations on a job well done."

"Thanks for the big task that you undertook to have this book published, first in French and now English, for everyone in Canada - and around the world - to read and to be inspired."

From the UK:

"I have just finished reading your book and with much enjoyment. A pleasure to meet so many old friends and get to know new ones. A very useful introduction to how IofC works in and through people's lives."

From Alberta:

"Beyond Borders - it is wonderful! So straightforward and interesting."

- ALBERTA -

Calgary: Vision & Values

On Wednesday, February 8, the first of two discussions took place at the Calgary Office looking at Vision and Values, aimed at exploring our deepest vision for our lives at this time, and the meaning of the core values in 2006.

The first session reviewed Frank Buchman's Visby speech, in which he laid out his vision of remaking the world. We examined the challenges he gave at that time, and asked if these challenges were still relevant.

Time was also given to a discussion on team-building and the reasons why misunderstanding happens in teams. One attendee expressed appreciation for the discussion, saying it is helpful to discuss these things in a group.

On Wednesday, February 15, the group looked at the Core Values, using a video of the meeting Randy Ruffin of Washington, DC, chaired in Toronto.

Keith Newman keith.newman@ca.iofc.org

- ALBERTA YOUTH ACTIVITIES -



The Compass Programme

The Calgary Board of Education has included the Compass Programme in their portfolio of opportunities, and information has been sent to all the high schools in Calgary already generating some interest. In consultation with high school counselors, the launch date was set for February 25.

The Initiatives of Change Club

The Club has been very active since December. Some of the newer members got involved in a planning session and then we started the semester participating in our first Clubs Week. This event gives all the official clubs of the University the opportunity to promote their objectives and activities. A week later, IofC and the IofC Club joined in the University's International Week where we offered our international programmes through an information session and a table at an NGO Fair. The NGO Fair worked well, connecting us with people interested in NGOs with an international perspective.



At the NGO Fair, Monica Lopez tells visitors about the summer conferences at Caux

In a small but very interesting meeting, the IofC Club delivered to the YWCA of Calgary a cheque for half of the funds raised in our raffle last December—\$442.00. Their genuine interest in why we chose them as a beneficiary and what IofC

is about created instant bonds between us and we will explore opportunities to continue working together in the future.

Recently, Dan Crane, a spiritual leader of the Tsuu T'ina First Nation in Calgary, organized a sweat lodge for our club. The experience added a strong spiritual factor to our activities. It went so well that it was decided to make this a regular activity of our club with the expectation that this will not only be an interesting experience but will also create bridges of understanding between club members and the Tsuu T'ina.



Dan Crane and the IofC Club before starting the sweat ceremony

At our February 8 meeting, information was given about forming a delegation to attend the *Tools for Change* conference at Caux this summer. Four spots were offered and six people applied. With the support of Keith and Joy Newman, we will select four people and work with them on the application process and fundraising to cover the main expenses. All of the Caux conference and programme information was shown to the students.

Paul Nation

We visited Edmonton on January 21-22, mainly to meet with Chief Daniel Paul, Rod Burnstick and Jack Freebury. Chief Daniel and Rod shared about their efforts to put their youth forward. One of the main achievements is a scaffolding apprenticeship programme that Rod Burnstick organized with the company he works for. After realizing the benefits of offering this kind of opportunity to their youth, a Career Fair was also organized and we helped them design promotional material. Their main concern is that despite these interesting opportunities, there is a big depression among all their people. After some deliberation, it was agreed that a version of the Compass Programme could help by providing motivation and encouragement to take advantage of the options available.

For more information on the above youth activities contact:

Alex Ramirez alex.ramirez@ca.iofc.org or

Monica Lopez monica.lopez@ca.iofc.org

- QUÉBEC -

Montréal: Partners for Lebanon

On January 28, a Round Table dialogue was held at Montréal University. This event was organized by the University, the new Chair on Islam, Pluralism and Globalization, Initiatives of Change and the Montréal Interfaith Circle. Estelle Drouvin and Laurent Gagnon are members of IofC and of the Interfaith Circle. Under the theme *What does the future hold for Lebanon?* it was a follow up to meetings last April in Montréal with an IofC Lebanese delegation.

Montréal: Looking Ahead Together

Mid-January, with the New Year resolutions not yet forgotten and the brand new year looming ahead, IofC Montréal became the place for taking stock of our regional presence. The meeting, aptly called *Ensemble vers demain (Together towards the future)*, was held at the Centre Afrika with 22 participants.

Warm wishes were exchanged around the potluck lunch and everyone got into the mood despite the icy winter weather outdoors. It started with a few moments of silence guided by Louise Lanctôt. The self-introductions followed in a most innovative fashion! A ball of wool was tossed around from one participant to another as each spoke, each one holding on to his/her end of the yarn. We soon had a network of people right before our eyes! This was followed by a PowerPoint presentation created by Estelle Drouvin with commentary by Adalbert Otou-Nguini on the 2005 highlights of IofC in Montréal and Québec.

Then in a *Talking Circle* led by Estelle, each participant declared what he/she wanted to nurture at and through IofC. Deep sharing took place and many participants echoed the mutual need of IofC for youth, and of youth for IofC. A great pointer for what lies ahead!

In small groups participants discussed specific themes for the year ahead: 1. *Healing the wounds of history where cultures and civilizations meet.* 2. *Strengthening moral commitment in economic life.* 3. *Forging networks among people from different faiths and cultures.* The groups then presented their visions and plans of action at a plenary session.

Laurent Gagnon outlined the various events lined up for IofC Montréal in 2006 and participants enumerated their possible contributions, closing the day on the right note.

Bindu Timiri, Montréal

- UPCOMING EVENTS -

Creators of Peace Display at International Women's Day Event

The IofC programme *Creators of Peace* will have a display at the International Women's Day Event in Montréal. *Creators of Peace* is a women's initiative that invites people of every background, race and position to discover their own peacemaking potential. See <http://cop.initiativesofchange.org/> for more info.

Date: **March 5, 2006**

Theme: *Global Reengineering, Modern Slavery, and the Feminization of Migration*

Venue: Montréal

Information: Contact Karen Bamboyne muneza@hotmail.com

Global Consultation, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Date: **March 9-15, 2006**

Rosalind Weeks from Ottawa will be part of the Preparation Team.

Michael Prior from Calgary will visit Seoul en route to the Consultation to link up with participants from Korea and learn about their local experiences.

Public Meeting in Québec City – sharing and dialogue

Date: **March 15, 2006 – 7:30 p.m.**

Theme: *Truth will make you free*

Guest Speakers: Marie-Lise Gingras, author, and Rachid Raffa of the Islamic cultural centre of Québec.

2006 Annual General Meeting, Québec City

The Québec City Regional IofC team warmly invites you to join them for this opportunity of collective discernment and decisions.

Date: **April 7 (supper time) to April 9 (lunch time).**

Theme: *Partners in a Common Mission*

Venue: Campus Notre-Dame-de-Foy, Pavillon André-Coindre
5000, rue Clément-Lockquell,
Saint-Augustin-de-Desmaures, Québec, G3A 1B3

Information: Lucie Pagé, Laurent Gagnon: l.gagnon@ca.iofc.org

Financial News

The IofC Canada Council has agreed to contribute US\$300 to allow someone from a less privileged background than those of us in the western world to attend the **Consultation in Malaysia**. This money will cover the cost of their stay at the Consultation.

If you would like to support this sponsorship, or other activities you see in this Newsletter, or the general expenses of Initiatives of Change in Canada, donations are very welcome and are tax deductible. Cheques should be made payable to Initiatives of Change and sent to the Accountant, Mr. Bruce Murray at 2114 Weiler Avenue West, Sidney, BC V8L 1R4.

For more information on Initiatives of Change, please email info@ca.iofc.org or visit the website at www.iofc.org.

Copy for next Newsletter

Please send copy for the next Newsletter by **May 8** to hilaryka@telus.net and annehartnell@ca.iofc.org.

Note from the Editor: What a wonderful array of exciting activities are taking place across the country and abroad! I am thrilled to be the new editor of the Canadian Newsletter and have the opportunity to work closely with the teams in Vancouver and Montréal to bring you the news highlights. I have been connected with Initiatives of Change for many years through Anne and Chris Hartnell in Vancouver, and have learned so much through the events organized by the team here. The proposed initiative *Community of Communities* reminds me of the enlightening time we had at the *Bridges to Community* event in 1991. As some people have already commented, this concept of connecting communities ties back to the original vision of Frank Buchman and I am eager to learn how we can develop this vision for Canada. *Hilary Kariotis*