



A JOURNEY THROUGH CAUX 2004

The Caux summer at Mountain House began in early July with an *Initiatives of Change Global Consultation* where the guiding principles of *I of C* were presented in the following statement:

‘Our world team is united by:

- The quality of our spiritual life, based on seeking divine direction and accepting absolute moral standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love;
- A shared global vision of a hate-free, fear-free, greed-free world, where the needs of the whole human family are met;
- Our commitment to changing society;
- All leadership offered within *Initiatives of Change (I of C)* will be servant leadership.’

One-to-One

As the Consultation started, so did the Intern Programme. Over the summer conferences 76 Caux Interns came from 27 countries. Over ninety-five percent of these people were aged between 18 and 35 and at least five came from Britain. Interns came to Caux to assist in the practical work of running the Conference Centre and to take responsibility for service,

cooking,

Economat

(Commissariat),

diet kitchen,

housekeeping,

reception, tele-

phone, informa-

tion technology,

secretariat, flow-

ers, kindergarten and the technical

(sound and electrical) needs of the

conference. The summer at Caux

could not have happened without

these people and all the Caux man-

agement team gave them an over-

whelming ‘thank you’ for their part

this summer.

The co-ordination team for the

interns consisted of Sheila Andren

(UK), Minna Palsio (Finland), Karen

Lea (UK), Lena Felonyuk (Ukraine)

and Phoebe Gill (UK) with help

from Gabrijela Leovic during the

Arts Conference.

Each intern was encouraged to

fill in a Caux Development Plan

(CDP) which helped the Interns to

think and plan for what they

wanted to learn through their time

at Caux and then a chance for three

one-to-one meetings to talk through

their experiences with a mentor.

This was greeted by all as a good

opportunity for deeper individual

contacts.



Service, Responsibility and Leadership

The first conference of the summer was entitled 'Service, Responsibility and Leadership'. *SRL* was organised by young professionals from Mexico, Switzerland, Eastern and Central Europe. One participant said, 'They were a lively and very engaging team... young people can successfully organise a conference, a very informative and transformative one at that.'

One of the interns for this session was Joe Swann who received the results of his degree whilst at Caux. He writes, 'Having finished a long and tiring final year at University I was glad to have the opportunity to arrive at Mountain House five days prior to the start of the *SRL* conference. The five day recuperation allowed me to approach the events fully refreshed and with an open mind.'

Unfortunately, a combination of kitchen duties, culinary accidents and perhaps one too many nights at the Montreux Jazz Festival prevented participation in as many of



Organisers of the *SRL* conference

the community sessions as, in retrospect, I would have liked. However, as seems traditional in the revered halls of Mountain House it soon became a great privilege to engage in insightful conversation on service, responsibility and leadership at all times of the day and with all kinds of people.

Having studied many aspects of Leadership during the 12 months prior to the conference I arrived at Caux with a picture of the ideal leader in my mind. The ideal leader is one who is focused, and driven, who is flexible enough to adapt to people and situations in order to achieve an aim.

A Different Tack

My preconception though took a different tack as a result of conversations over lunch and dinner during a single day. In a paraphrased form the following quotes significantly impacted my thinking.

- 'A true leader finds calm in their heart, they allow other people in.'
- 'A good leader allows other people to grow.'

So, a step removed from being focused and driven to achieve an aim, a true leader helps to develop other people and empties themselves to allow others to grow, leading by being the change they want to see. At the same time, though a leader has a responsibility to serve others in a practical and credible way by providing the tools and targets which allow other people to



Jean-Daniel Gerber, Lech Walesa, Bernard Margueritte



Tony Colman, MP

grow. So, the first step might be to find calm in one's heart in order to allow others to grow and also to be focused and driven to achieve the aim of helping people to develop towards their goals.

That at least is a summation of the thoughts that I took away from the SRL conference and from my time at Caux. I know that I will carry them with me into my future career and I hope very, very much that I am able to work towards allowing others to grow in order to achieve their aims.'

Omnia Marzouk gave an apposite simile on the subject: 'If leadership is a door, then the hinge is service and the handle is responsibility.'

Caux Scholars' Programme

At this time the Caux Scholars' Programme started. A four-week course that studies Conflict Resolution, this year brought together 20 students from around the world, including participants

from Nigeria, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan and Afghanistan.

Globalisation - Closing the Gaps

The Caux Conference for Business and Industry teamed up with the International Communications Forum, The Farmers' Dialogue and the Junior Round Table to explore the practical realities of closing the gaps. The Swiss State Secretary for Economic Affairs, Jean-Daniel Gerber, gave the Caux Lecture during this time, and Lech Walesa, Nobel Peace Prize winner and former President of Poland spent an evening on the Caux stage having a public discussion with his old friend Bernard Margueritte, President of the International Communications Forum. Lech Walesa encouraged us to 'begin a quest for new ideas and a change of mentality'. Mr Margueritte also spoke of it being the time to 'stand up and say that it is our principles, our ideas, our ethical values that

provide the motivation to make a difference in this world'.

Tony Colman MP, a former board member of the Burton retail group, said, 'Business can close the gap between rich and poor. It cannot do it alone.... The businesses which will help close the gap will be those which are sustainable, equitable, which bring together labour and management, and which look to the long term.'

Transforming the Way Things Are

The intensity of the dialogue on 'Globalisation – Closing the Gaps' was then taken over by music, dance and expressive art. The Arts Conference, *Transforming the Way Things Are*, included an amazing group from Canada's First Nation – dancers from the plains of southern Alberta, known as *Red Thunder*. Seven of the group were members of the Crowchild clan, descendants of Chief Walking Buffalo who was a friend of Frank Buchman. The dances they performed carried a message from their traditional culture, the importance of looking after Mother Earth, the circle of life where everything is equal, the stories of hunting and healing that are passed from generation to generation.

Stephen Broadbent, a sculptor from Liverpool, suggested that artists had fallen into a 'sub-culture'. The idea of an artist as an individual only went back some

500 years, he said. Many communities had lost their sense of identity because artists had withdrawn into their studios, only looking for meaning within themselves. One result was that many towns looked the same. 'We should talk about creativity, which belongs to us all, rather than the cult of the artist,' he said. He showed slides of some of his works that have set out to express the aspirations of various communities, including some of the most deprived, in the UK. 'Creativity will transform,' he declared.

Human Security through Good Governance

The first of two conferences hosted by 'Agenda for Reconciliation' brought the participation of a group of people who acted as AfR interns. This group carried the practical side of running the two AfR conferences and provided invaluable support as the house became more and more full.

Lily Mudahemuka, originally from Burundi, wrote, 'I was struck by the ethnic diversity and especially by the strong presence of Sudanese coming from England, Canada and Sudan.'

This conference included a dialogue between the indigenous citizens of Chile, Bolivia, Nagaland, Australia and Russia as well as three workshops facilitated by 'Hope in the Cities UK', on Trust-building, The Relationship between



Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele

Police, Youth and Community and looking at the role Asylum Seekers can play in enhancing our communities.

The conference participants were challenged to think through different aspects of our human security. Dr Eric Laroche from UNICEF spoke of human security by evoking the situation of children in conflict situations, especially child soldiers. He spoke of education as having a prime role in bringing about human security.

Ginn Fourie and Letlapa Mphahlele challenged their listeners with their story of conciliation, telling how Ginn had forgiven Letlapa for his part in ordering the attack on a bar in Cape Town, where her daughter Lyndi had been gunned down. Letlapa told how, by forgiving him, Ginn had restored his humanity and now they are working together to create the Lyndi Fourie Foundation, to deal with the challenges of poverty and ex-combatant anger, as well as using

their story to enable true cultural diversity. (www.lyndifouriefoundation.org.za). A Sudanese living in London shared that in Caux, 'I discovered the significance of forgiveness'.

Creating a Space for Peace

Mountain House was at its fullest for this last conference of the summer. Many people had been prevented from attending the opening by storms in different parts of the world. A party of Jamaicans was delayed and others arrived without their luggage. The challenge of creating a space for peace, was initially set by members of the Geneva Initiative, two Israelis and two Palestinians who spoke to a packed Main Hall on one of the summer's public forums.

The following day, Rabbi Michael Melchior, a Member of the Israeli Parliament declared, 'We will not have peace for Israel without peace for the Palestinians, there is no future for Israel without a future for the Palestinians.... How can we learn to live with the pain of the past without being captives of the past?'

No more an enemy

From Africa, the voices of reconciliation and forgiveness spoke to every heart. Imam Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa, the Imam of Kaduna, and Rev. James Movel Wuye, are the joint directors of the Inter-Faith Mediation Centre in their city, scene of the worst reli-



Imam Muhammad Nurayn Ashafa, and Rev. James Movel Wuye, from Nigeria – working ‘to create space for peace and understanding.’

gious violence in Northern Nigeria in recent years.

‘We were two militant religious activists,’ said the Imam, ‘but now we are working to create space, not just for peace, but also for the transformation of society.’ Rev. Movel Wuye continued, ‘We were both programmed to hate one another, to Islamise or evangelise at all costs. This threatens the very existence of Nigeria.’ ‘We were both victims of the situation that we had both had a part in creating,’ Muhammad Ashafa added. His spiritual master and two brothers had been killed by Christian Militias; the Reverend had himself lost an arm in the violence.

‘What motivated us to transform hate into love, vengeance into reconciliation?’ the Imam asked. ‘In our hearts, we were weeping, but we were still full of hate.’ For him, a turning point had come when he

heard another Imam preaching in the mosque at Friday prayers about the power of forgiveness, and the example of the Prophet. This had led to a war within, he said, but embracing the man beside him, he added, ‘He is no more an enemy but a friend.’ Rev. Wuye said it had taken him three years to overcome his hatred and to start to trust the Imam; it had started when ‘he visited me when my mother died’. An American evangelist had told him that you cannot preach to someone you hate. ‘Nurayn Ashafa was radiating love, but I’d been blinded by hate and pain.’

Now they were working together with other spiritual leaders ‘to create space for peace and understanding’.

(This can only be a brief summary of the Caux conferences but a full account can be found on: www.caux.ch and in the next issue of ‘For A Change.’ Editors)

Photos: Blair Cummock and Joanna Margueritte

One of the final evenings was taken up with a variety show, when Niketu Iralu from Nagaland sang ‘the Telephone Song’, with God trying to get through on a mobile phone. A senior Palestinian, leaving the next morning, joked that the many hours he was going to spend in waiting for connecting flights would allow him plenty of time to listen in to ‘his own telephone’.

Hope in the Cities Event in Liverpool - July 2004

Hope in the Cities (HIC), in co-operation with Liverpool Hope University College and Liverpool Community Spirit, a local multi-faith community partnership, gave a public presentation in The Methodist Community Centre in Toxteth on the potential of HIC 'Honest Conversation' Dialogues, as a 'tool for community-building'. The event was attended by a variety of people, including representatives of various community organisations, residents associations, local government officers and the police.

It Built Trust

Among those who contributed their experience were four of the diverse group of eleven, who had taken part in the HIC Facilitation Training in Liverpool in the autumn. One, who has been involved in community regeneration, said of the training, 'It was empowering. It brought people together who do not normally come together. It built trust. Now we can call upon each other.' Another said, 'It changed our own ideas and prejudices, not just in making rash judgements. It was a chance to walk for a mile in the other's moccasins. By the end of the six days we were all good friends.' A third told how it led her to be reconciled to a member of her own family.

Those from Liverpool were reinforced by Barrie Brazier, Executive

Officer of the Nottingham Race Equality Council. 'I, as a community worker, have never seen an initiative that works like this,' he commented. He described how he and colleagues had used the HIC dialogues as 'a process that can activate action that is sustainable, because real relationships have been built'.

Change what they could change

He told how it had helped create a network of people in Nottingham committed to change what they could change. It had led to developing a project linking young people in St. Ann's, Nottingham, directly to Jamaica, where he had just been with two young people.

John Sephula, a community worker in Leeds, working with young people, said that, taking part in the HIC Dialogues had 'moved me out of my comfort zone'. 'It gave listening skills, communication skills. It was an approach from the heart. It helped me use my heart as well,' he commented.

Further facilitation training will take place in Liverpool in the autumn.

Gerald Henderson

BBC Radio 4, 15 August

An extract of Leif Hovelsen's story in Michael Henderson's book, *Forgiveness: breaking the chain of hate* was read during the early

Sunday morning programme, 'Something Understood' on BBC Radio 4 on 15 August. Hovelsen's story, of how he had an 'inner imperative' to forgive the Gestapo agent who had tortured him during World War II, was repeated during the rebroadcast of the same programme late that evening. Presented by BBC World Affairs correspondent, Mike Wooldridge, the programme was on the theme, 'Life behind bars' and included music, extracts from other books and a poem by Irina Ratushinskaya.

'Understanding Europe - Living Europe'

*Europe: a geographical reality
an economic hope
a political vision*

What do you make of Europe?
What do you expect from Europe?
What would you like to do for Europe?

A winter conference on this theme will be held in Caux from December 26 to January 2.

Invitations with application forms are available from 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD

Video of 'Action For Life'

A new 30-minute video is available – *Friends We Haven't Met*. It gives a lively portrayal of 'Action for Life' and its aims. It shows the group preparing to leave Panchgani for their adventures in other parts of Asia. It also gives a good picture of the Asia Plateau centre with two of the programmes which took place while AfL were there. Copies are available from Howard Grace as videos or as DVDs. Contributions towards costs welcome.

Contact Howard.Grace@uk.iofc.org, or:
15 Lewis Walk, Newbury, Berks, RG14 6TB.

New Pamphlets

FLT films announces the availability of two new pamphlets by Michael Henderson, which are ideal for giving enquirers an up-to-date picture of IofC and its ways of working.

- 1) *Innovative Approaches To Peace Building*
- 2) *Forgiveness – A Dilemma of Democracy.*

Details from FLT films, 24 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1RD

This issue was edited by Ann Carpenter and Phoebe Gill with layout by Blair Cummock. Please send material for the next issue by September 22 to Mary Jones, Oakley Cottage, Kirkcudbright, DG6 4AH.
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