

# REARMEMENT MORAL · CAUX

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## Centre de Rencontres Internationales

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TÉLÉGRAMME CAUXVAUD

MOUNTAIN HOUSE  
RUE DU PANORAMA  
CH-1824 CAUX

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

Monday, 14th August 1989

Dear Friends,

Well, here I am back from the mountains: no-one lost and nothing broken, a good deal fitter, and the soul stirred by this touch with nature and the raw beauty of rock, snow and ice. Back to a Caux still brimming with people and life. My wife, Eliane, was also away, to spend some days with Regula Borel and her children. Monday last was the anniversary of her husband Serge's death, in the midst of the conference last year.

Marie-Claude, his sister, said, 'We all spent those last moments with him in the dining-room, where we experienced this amazing discovery of the next world so near at hand to which he was heading.'

Regula had written to Marie-Claude, 'I think of you so much today. I hope you will not feel too lonely thinking of the day we spent together a year ago. In spite of all the difficulties, the physical sufferings and the heartache we have both had to cope with, I feel it has been a year full of rich experience, and I am profoundly grateful for it; I would not have missed it.'

Marie-Claude continued, 'Thanks to God, and to Serge on the other side that she is able to say this. Thanks too to all who have cared and do care so much for us all. Serge was an artist. He loved many things in this house, but above all the mural in the dining-room. It suddenly occurred to me how Serge, through his death below this fresco, brought the tremendous vision of Segerstrale alive. Segerstrale put in the painting something of his experience of the loss of his son on the battlefield. Serge died on another battlefield. In the middle of the painting you see a dark figure bending towards the living water as if he was dying, and at the same time rising towards the discovery of an incredible light. He has discovered the springs of the water of life, and was granted to make it available to the five continents. We all, with Serge, are granted the privilege to give away this precious gift of real life to the world, now and in all time to come.'

In a strange way that we cannot explain or understand, there seems to be some mysterious link between his going and the new life pulsing through this place.

This week has seen a change of mood and style. A friend

back here for the first time in several years was struck that the Europeans were no longer the hosts - the Africans, Asians and Pacific people were the real hosts. For Archie Mackenzie it was the best session ever of this kind, and a new generation was carrying it. He recalled U Nu's appeal for help in February for training in democracy for some of the students who are trying to overthrow the military regime. Now, after 'subterranean adventures' a first rate delegation was in Caux. Human rights in Burma and an end to 28 years of atrocities were meant to become a priority for the international community. 'We must maintain the impetus,' he said.

The Emir of Kano has been with us, along with another traditional leader from the Christian South. The Poles and the Nigerians had a tea to share experiences of the struggles in their two countries: in the latter, many students are still attracted by Marxist thinking. There was an important Korean group. After they had left, one of the young Japanese who had helped to look after them spoke of how this time had healed the bad feelings he had had against Korea, for the way his mother had suffered there at the end of the war. Indians and Pakistanis have been meeting together around meal tables, and finding deeper understanding. The before-breakfast 'day-breaker' sessions were taken by an Australian, a Nigerian and an Indian, working together, and the last morning was an inter-faith time of prayer. A Polish Catholic priest spoke, then a Muslim from Lebanon, and a Hindu. There's an amazing unplanned mix of people and experiences: Chinese from Taiwan and the mainland, Cambodians from the camps on the Thai border (while the negotiations in Paris on their country's future go on, with some of our friends at work in the wings).

At the final session, an international children's chorus, each wearing his or her national flag, sang 'He's got the whole world in His hands', as a small bird flew in the window, and sat on the shoulder of someone in the audience. A group of Polish girls have enriched the meetings and the variety/coffee in the hall evenings with hauntingly beautiful music from their country. We've seen a Pole on the platform, translating for a fellow Pole into English, but listening over the earphones to the translator in the Polish cabin for help with a difficult passage, to laughter in the hall.

Ramez Salame, before he left for Beirut, thanked his friends here for the generosity that had made it possible for thirty Lebanese to attend the conference. 'We leave with a sense of promise for the future,' he said. 'Through day by day guidance, God will show us what is to be done.' Then we heard that his group were delayed in Cyprus for 24 hours, as links were cut, before they were able to get home during a one hour lull in the bombardments. 'Your prayers were answered,' he phoned.

Now, as we prepare to receive the top industrialists for the Round Table, we start a youth-hosted session on 'Faith at work', of which more next week.

Yours ever,

Andrew Stallybrass