

# REARMEMENT MORAL · CAUX

## Centre de Rencontres Internationales

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TÉLÉGRAMME CAUXVAUD

MOUNTAIN HOUSE  
RUE DU PANORAMA  
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27th August, 1990

Dear friends,

There at last! Yesterday morning, at the last main meeting of the summer, we thanked God for all He has given - with a Christian prayer in German, a verse from the Koran in Arabic, explained in French, and a Sanskrit, Hindu prayer. Last night, the weary harvest labourers celebrated with a Swiss tribal meal - a fondue - and rewards for those many from beyond our boundaries and far away who have carried so much through all the conferences. We think too with gratitude of all the thoughts and prayers and financial generosity that have carried us from afar.

The editorial teams of 'Changer' and 'Caux Information' are setting to the unenviable task of summarizing and filtering on paper this deluge of human experience, and Mike Brown is crafting a lead story for 'For A Change'. Others now bravely head for Dingy-en-Vuache, near Geneva, but in France, for the next world consultation, and further heartsearching and mental exertions on Caux and its long-term use. Yet others set to work closing and cleaning, tidying, collecting and sorting lost property...

It is amazing the way that Eastern and Central Europe has been present right through the summer. The accompanying press story talks of 350 from these countries, but Lotty Wolvekamp reckons that the true figure, including all those from these countries who came from elsewhere, was over 400. This last week, we have had a good group of Czechs. One lady in the group recognized herself in the front row of a demonstrating crowd in Prague in a still shot in the new Gandhi film! One morning, ten of them were on the platform, singing their national anthem, and other national songs, and then presenting books and crystal glassware 'to express our thankfulness'.

Numbers have dropped, below 300, then 200, and today below the 100 mark. The dormitories have gone, and the bunk beds have been dismantled and returned by a large and enthusiastic team (including a French Member of Parliament!). But right up to the end there has been a very high quality of content. Dr Jamali, a senior arab educator, and a former Prime Minister of Iraq, spoke another morning. He had been condemned to death; 'Then my thoughts turned to God,' he said, 'and now too they turn to my country and to God.' Moral Re-Armament is a Christian movement, he said, but it is also Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist. 'We all share in it.' And he quoted ten verses from the Koran that expressed this common ground.

At the last meeting yesterday, an Algerian lawyer spoke of the welcome he had received here, and how it had helped him to open up. He had been imprisoned by the French, and then again after independence for his political beliefs. A Frenchman followed him, with a moving apology for the lack of understanding, the pride that lay behind the French wrongs. We must understand, he said, the Great Satan within us that is working for division between the Muslim and the Christian worlds.

A young Chinese student from Taiwan shared his decision to stop watching videos late into the night (with the excuse of learning English) so that he could have an adequate time of quiet in the mornings. Eight South Africans gave a

much-appreciated seminar on their country, with realism about the great dangers and the present tragic killings, but also tears of gratitude for the changes beyond hope that have taken place. One of the translators confessed that he had been unwilling to hand over to his relief, so taken was he with what was being said.

An East German woman Church minister wrote after her stay in Caux that 'Caux is a place where there are between 400 and 600 guests and between 400 and 600 servants.' 'I am a conservative Czech,' said another participant, 'but I live here in Caux communism - and the worst of it is that I like it!' Another of his compatriots added, 'MRA is the idea of the 21st century. We have to start from zero in our country.' We heard that the wife of the Russian play director who was here earlier, when she heard how Caux was run, commented, 'When I was seven years old, I thought Communism was going to be like that.' We also heard that the Slovene Members of Parliament who were here earlier are circulating a report of their time to some of the leadership of their republic in Yugoslavia.

The good Latin American group felt that they had been taken into the family of nations in a new way, and that the language barriers had been overcome. One said that she would no longer skip over the news of Asia, she had been so moved by all that she had heard of Cambodia. Real friendships have grown between rich and poor within the group. In their situation, we learned, "the people from the asphalt" are the better off, who come from the paved-street parts of town, whereas for the young blacks from London or Atlanta, the street has another meaning.

There have also been several Burmese, from different factions. One Burmese locked himself in his room when he heard the name of one of the others coming. Several went from here to spend a day meeting people at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva. A Colombian Ambassador from another country said as he left, 'This experience has added a dimension to my life.' Those responsible for the African, Asian, Pacific, Latin American session expressed the need to do more in each others' countries. They do not plan a similar session for Caux next year, but hope that much of their efforts will go towards the women's initiative session, and towards a possible session at the end of the summer dealing with 'answering conflicts'.

An Austrian girl, after giving her life to God exclaimed, 'I feel so light, I could fly.' I was bearded in the dining-room the other day by a trade unionist I hardly know, who just wanted to express his gratitude to Caux. 'This is re-making the world,' he said. 'This is just what first drew me to MRA. I came here tired, but I leave invigorated. The spirit and the meetings have been fantastic.' A final café-concert in the Great Hall on Saturday night brought us a last amazing mix - gypsy music, Swedish folksongs, Indian cartoonists (Vins of Himmat fame and a friend), a danced-out poem by Tagore.

At the last meeting, several of those who've worked through the summer spoke. A Bulgarian theologian told how he had heard of MRA for the first time in June. 'Caux is the best place in the world,' he said. 'My people have deep needs of this way of life here. I want to take some of this spirit there with me.' For the last month, he has been projecting films and videos. A young Indian student of hotel management quoted, 'Find a job you enjoy, and you'll never work a day in your life,' and then added, 'I've not been working here!' And 'Amen' say I to that.

So, farewell, until next time,

Andrew Stallybrass

(some rough ideas for Caux 1991, and the invitation)

### DEMOCRACY STARTS WITH ME

Leaders and nations wrestle with titanic problems: in East and West, North and South. There is growing agreement that a vital factor in development, in creating a sense of community, and in resolving old conflicts and divisions is the mobilization of whole populations through democratic participation. But where can we find a model for democracy? What are the necessary ingredients?

1991 marks the 700th birthday of the Swiss Confederation. Through the 1991 Caux conferences we want to search out the moral and spiritual foundations for a democracy that works, where all are encouraged to feel responsible, that they matter and their voice is needed and heard; where majorities heed the hurts and fears of minorities; where minorities contribute their best to a wider human society; where all discover the true patriotism of treating other groups the way we want others to treat us.

Geography cannot be changed; relationships can. Neighbours will always remain neighbours, even if the frontiers that divide or include may need to be changed. Our only security for the future will be the love and respect of our neighbours in a global community. Thus democracy comes back to the individual's willingness to think and care for the whole, our readiness to take risks and take responsibility. These qualities require a change of heart, a renewal and broadening of our concerns. They are just as needed in the old democracies as in the new. Democracy starts with each one of us.

5th-13th July? - East and West - what are their common tasks?  
(6th-7th July? Preservation of Creation dialogue?)  
(12th-14th July? - East-West seminar)  
13th-19th July? - Many rooms in the common European home  
(20th-25th July - Forum on the family)  
(Health seminar?)  
25th-30th July - 'Creators of peace - a women's initiative'  
3rd-9th August - A youth-hosted session  
(9th-10th August - Round Table)  
10th-14th August - Man and Economy  
16th-26th August? - Answering conflict - the deeper approach

Brackets denote a session that will not be announced on the main invitation. Question marks by dates mean these are suggestions only. Question marks by the sessions themselves mean that these are good-seeming ideas that still need fleshing out, and above all need a team of convinced people behind them! There are hopes of fixing a time for consultation on East-West developments, and next year's session, possibly mid-October, somewhere in Europe. And there is hope of a meeting in Holland, 6-8 November, to finalize all dates and the general invitation, and look to the whole summer.

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### MORAL RE-ARMAMENT PRESS OFFICE

Caux, 26th August, 1990

'Freeing the forces of change' has been the theme of the seven weeks of summer conferences at the Moral Re-Armament centre in Caux, Switzerland, which came to a close today.

A highlight of the series of sessions has been the presence of more than 350 participants from eight countries and many more nationalities of Central and Eastern Europe. This year's conferences, which have run from 9 July to 26 August, have been by far the largest in recent years: the total of bed-nights is up 30% on 1989.

At the final seminar session, a Russian teacher from Moscow, and member of the nascent Christian Democratic Party in the Soviet Union, spoke of the need for personal and national repentance. Not all the sufferings of the socialist bloc countries could be laid at the door of the Russians, he said, but much of it could, though the Russians had suffered more and longer from the communist system than anyone else. 'For people like myself,' he said, 'there was silence when words should have been spoken, and inactivity when there should have been action.'

Massive economic aid and investment was not the greatest need now, he continued, since if the Soviet Union remained in its present moral state, such help would produce little or no return. 'Help the moral and cultural re-birth of the Soviet Union. It won't take so much money, and it will produce a better return,' the Russian said. The country was being liberalized, he stated, but few felt much joy at the fact. 'As a nation and as individuals, we are going through a deep moral crisis,' he went on. 'Marxism-Leninism was a gnostic system of absolute knowledge which could explain everything. This is what is now described as "the Lie", with a capital "L". The ideology of communism, the legitimate basis of the political system, has melted into nothing. Even the faith in perestroika is melting into nothing. There is a growing feeling that the country needs a kind of restoration, a coming back to the norm.'

The teacher described his own personal journey, from 'a good communist family, with two generations of Bolsheviks at my back' to the Orthodox faith. His own moral and spiritual crisis had been provoked by 'the spontaneous revulsion' at much of what he saw and experienced. 'The whole atmosphere in my early years built a wall around me,' he concluded. 'God was a prohibited notion, or a notion without any meaning at all. But that inner crisis led me to Christ. I needed Him.'

## NEW HOPE FOR BOUGAINVILLE

"Peace at Last" was the hopeful summing up of the headline of the "Post Courier" of Port Moresby after the signing of the "Endeavour Accord". It was so named after HMNZS Endeavour, the New Zealand supply ship that was made available for the peace talks between representatives of the Central Government of Papua New Guinea and the leaders of the island of Bougainville. Sir Michael Somare, Papua New Guinea's Foreign Minister concluded: "It is a great success. God has in his own way brought us together".

What lay behind both sides' high evaluation of the "accord"? Sean Dorney, the ABC's PNG correspondent spoke over 3LO of the eight days of seeming deadlock which preceded "the very surprising solution". How "all of a sudden the Bougainvillians agreed to defer their unilateral Declaration of Independence." This in turn led to the PNG Government's representatives agreeing to lift the blockade of Bougainville and restore services to the island which had been deprived of power, medical supplies and many items of food.

Some hundred lives had been lost in the fighting and the first days of the talks had been taken up with the Bougainville delegation cataloguing security force atrocities. In the midst of all the acrimony, Dorney spoke of how both sides were really looking to God to help them out of their problem. Both Foreign Minister Somare and Attorney General Narakobi apologized for the excesses of the security forces and made no counter-accusations.

Dorney spoke of the part of the "three Moral Re-Armament people" who had been invited as "spiritual advisers". He said they were Alan Weeks of Australia, Nigel Cooper of New Zealand, and Mohan Bhagwandas formerly of Sri Lanka, who had had contact with both sides "of the ethnic problems they have in Sri Lanka". Dorney spoke of the times of prayer each night and how each morning both delegations started the sessions with prayers.

Alan Weeks, noting the Post Courier headline "Peace at Last" as HMNZS Wellington tied up alongside the wharf at Rabaul on Monday August 6, said in a message from Rabaul to NEWSBRIEFS, "over the previous eight days, Mohan, Nigel and I had been living alongside the PNG delegation led by Sir Michael Somare and Bernard Narakobi, together with their support staff, the Press and the ship's company of 250. Daily we were ferried either by helicopter or motor boat to the talks on board HMNZ Endeavour. From the Government side, the negotiations were Romans Chapter 12 put into practice. Tempers were held in check in spite of considerable provocation. Outside the talks, we three mixed freely with both delegations, devoting much time on the Endeavour to the Bougainvilleans. 'Freedom' in Pidgin, and 'For the Love of Tomorrow' were used with both groups. Paul Lapun, Leo Laita and Amos Rorima are apparently well. After the Endeavour Accord was signed, James Singko, the most hardline Bougainville Revolutionary Army man present said, "This has been a miracle".

Alan Weeks, Nigel Cooper and Archbishop David Hand were interviewed for an hour on Port Moresby radio on 23 August.

Those who wish Papua New Guinea well could add their prayers as the delegations go back and endeavour to carry their people with them in the agreement so far and the negotiations to be continued in a couple of months.

Jim Coulter