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Monday, 20th July 1998

Dear friends,

A first mug of black coffee starts the none-too-easy task of bringing me into the land of consciousness. There's much to be grateful for in this past week. I have complained to some of conference organisers that I'd like to see some more boring meetings, through which I can doze peacefully. Instead, I've been suffering from that strange adrenaline rush that we journalists suffer, and I've had to rush around writing, checking and translating press releases that have at least left me enthusiastic! (For those of you who have access to the World Wide Web, another innovation of this summer has been getting these same press releases up on the Caux Web pages (www.caux.ch) almost as fast as they go out by e-mail and fax.)

Yesterday we had a highly ecumenical church service in the beloved Protestant chapel up the hill: two women ministers, one an African-American, Southern Baptist, the other a Dutch Mennonite, with the lessons read by a white American and an Irish Catholic, with an Australian on the organ. I, an Anglo-Swiss Calvinist, preached about the angels that dominate the decoration, and what they may have to tell us about God and His ways. The week started with the news of two deaths close to some of us. Louis Guisan, husband of Hélène, father of Catherine Dickinson, was a major political figure in the life of the Canton of Vaud, and our thoughts go to all the family. Then Franz Hunziker, who will be buried today: without knowing it, we ate the last of the many tons of apples that he has given to Caux over the years on the very day that he was leaving us. Franz was one of God's great originals. They join the host of friends who have left this shore.

The week also started with the closing meetings of the Swiss-accented weekend that opened the summer here - it's hard to drag the heart and mind back to what seems already like ages ago, so full and swift and rich has the week been. Two friends commented in the last meeting on the Monday that they'd had the best-ever discussion groups, so I was not alone in feeling that a strong breeze of the spirit was blowing. One of our older Swiss friends said, 'With this process (of re-examining ourselves and our history) we now have something to share with others.' John Williams, just arrived from Australia, gave a fascinating presentation of the moral issues facing his nation today, speaking about racism, and the treatment of the Aborigines. 'What are we to do about the elements of a white society,' he asked, 'who think that power matters more than values?' It was a reminder of the great similarities between many of our countries, forced to face up to ghosts from the past, to historical wrongs, part forgotten. He had asked himself why he felt part-Swiss, and concluded, that like many, he had put down some roots in Caux because he had had 'so many life-changing experiences here'.

Then in the afternoon, the 25th Caux Conference for Business and Industry (CCBI) opened, with the theme of 'Learning to create a values-centred future'. Many of the meetings were in different 'Forum' groups on themes such as business ethics and 'Full employment - myth or reality?' so it was impossible to have an overall view. I joined some thirty journalists and media professionals at an International Communications Forum gathering on the theme of 'The Media and the Community - Building a Creative Relationship'. Geoffrey Lean, one of the world's longest-serving

environmental correspondents, who has been described as the 'dean of environmental journalists' told how he had recently met an American Professor of environmental journalism who had treated him like a last survivor of some pre-historic species. There had been a time when he'd met the entire British national environmental press corps looking in his shaving mirror in the morning, Lean said, whereas now there were over 1,000 members in the US association of environmental correspondents. Speaking to his fellow media professionals on 'Building a creative relationship between the media and the community', Lean said, 'We report events by and large well, but we are not so good on processes. We're also good at reporting conflict, but less good at reporting consensus.'

He noted that the environment had not been an issue when the reigning media values were formed. He told how he himself had only become interested in this area almost by accident. As the most recent arrival of the British regional daily, *The Yorkshire Post*, in 1970, in European Conservation Year - an event understandably forgotten by all but himself - he had been given this beat to cover. 'It changed my life,' he went on. 'The environment for me is not just about protecting snails and butterflies, it's about people and the future.' He had had the privilege of helping to define a new speciality in journalism, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, Lean concluded, giving all present a moving sense of how God can lead and use the individual.

Later, the entire conference heard from media professionals from Northern Ireland, Bosnia and South Africa who spoke of the role that the media plays in conflict situations. They outlined their sense of personal responsibility and hopes for the future. The media in the Balkans, divided on ethnic lines, did 'more damage than weapons' and had played a pivotal role in 'initiating the processes that led to unbelievable bloodshed', said Senad Kamenica, Head of News and Current Affairs Programs for Bosnia and Herzegovina Radio and Television. 250,000 people had been killed in the war, including 30,000 children, and Bosnia was still burdened with 'the by-products of the factory of evil'. But today Bosnians expected the media to help overcome the nation's problems, by 'building confidence'. Kamenica described his own struggle to maintain news balance and give truthful information. 'The hardest struggle is within ourselves,' he said. His Sarajevo-based station has recently been named by the Paris newspaper *Le Monde* as the most objective TV station in the former Yugoslavia. Recently, the station had successfully campaigned, over eight months, to stop proposed legislation to create ethnically divided primary schools and the legislation was withdrawn.

Jan Pieklo, President of the Polish Journalists Association in Krakow, said he had volunteered to cover the Balkan wars because he wanted to understand what had gone wrong in Yugoslavia, a nation previously considered a success story. There he had experienced his 'first lessons in hatred', as the local media on all sides 'resurrected clichés from the past'. He had seen a 'spiral of hate at work,' with journalists saying openly that they were ready to lie for their side. But it was hard if not impossible to stay neutral in a situation where women and children were being killed. He described his sense of frustration, feeling 'useless and helpless', when no-one outside seemed to want to listen. But he had felt better after volunteering as a driver for humanitarian aid to Sarajevo. 'It is vital to help people to look at the past, if they are to have a future,' he concluded.

The Brits present were moved to hear the accents of Ireland, and to welcome two people from the North, whose journey to Caux had been delayed by the Orange demonstrations there. In Northern Ireland, the future depends on enabling individuals, and the Nationalist and Unionist communities, to 'engage in the difficult art of dialogue', said William Stainsby, Director of the Cedar House Cultural Institute near Derry/Londonderry, on the frontier with the Irish Republic. 'The transmission of truthful and accurate information is a necessary foundation for dialogue,' he said. Dialogue was the only way to break down prejudice, 'the main roadblock on the road to progress'. The iron curtain had come down in Europe, but still stood between the communities in Northern Ireland. 'Many of the problems can be solved if we can only listen to one another,' he said. It was to forward such dialogue that he had created with others a centre on an island in

the Republic, but reachable mainly from the North. He hoped it would promote inter-religious, cross-community and cross-cultural dialogue. 'If we can listen to each other's stories we can make progress. I cannot change others, but I can change myself. I can try to change my own prejudice,' he said.

His sister, Faustina Starrett, who teaches media and communications in the same city, said she needed 'a tough mind and a tender heart' in the face of her compatriots, who were suffering from a rigidity of identity. 'There are reasons, but no excuses, and no-one has clean hands,' she said. The churches, the state, and the media all played their part in reinforcing ethnic and community identities, but after 30 years imprisoned in history, she saw reasons for hope for her country. In recent days, the leaders promoting the Easter peace agreement had been 'tested by fire and had held'. She called on the media to be 'more vigilant about reporting facts rather than reinforcing prejudices'.

William Smook, a Cape Town-based journalist and vice-chairman of the Cape Town Press Club, South Africa, also believed that 'the media is often at the centre of conflict, acting as part of the problem and part of the solution'. Meeting journalists from Bosnia and Northern Ireland had emphasised, for him, the 'factors of commonality in areas of conflict'--xenophobia and a history of conflict 'where everyone has his own version'. He hailed the work now being done in his country by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It was 'helping South Africans to look back so that they could look ahead', he said. The lifting of the Internal Security Act had freed journalists but there were still some 'no-go areas'. 'Many of us fell into the trap of thinking that democracy was a magic wand,' he said. 'But if you walk on our streets, our farms, our land, you will see that it is not so.' The press was now more racially integrated and black and white journalists, increasingly working together, were realising that 'we all love our country and we want to do what's best for it'. 'Personal activism is the best way to bring healing,' he concluded. Informal meetings sketched out plans for a possible International Communications Forum event in South Africa early next year.

Then at the closing session, an Australian entrepreneur stirred us all deeply by telling how the non-profit organisation he co-founded had created 151,000 jobs last year in 27 developing countries. David Bussau, of Opportunity International, in Sydney, Australia, explained how they raised finance in 7 developed countries, to make loans to start-up small job-creating projects in Latin America, Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. Their vision was 'a job for every family.' Opportunity International's loans averaged \$400, and over the 27 years of activity, the repayment rate on loans averaged 95%. 'Credit is a vital factor in development,' he said. 'The bigger the loan, the more the risk,' he went on, 'and the poor are a better risk than the rich. They have more integrity.' Last year, his organisation had created a job every three and a half minutes.

An orphan, who left the orphanage at 15 and who started work in a hot-dog stand and then a circus Bussau said, 'God can use those from humble beginnings just as much as those with a Ph.D.' At 35, after working his way through 15 industries, he had 'reached the economics of enough', and felt that he had a calling to help others. Talents that God had given should be used for the benefit of society, he said. He and his wife and two small children had spent three years living very simply in the Indonesian jungle, 'where my cheque-book was of no use at all'. They had worked on developing infrastructure, but had seen that the poor remained poor, since many were in debt, in the hands of loan-sharks who demanded up to 20% interest per day. He'd seen children, even unborn children, used as collateral for loans. His organisation had mobilised successful Christian businessmen around the world in this 'charity that gives nothing away', and aimed always to employ first class managers.

Bussau gave a typical example of a small loan in the Philippines that had led to the creation of 128 jobs in a small business. Studies had shown that for each job created, six people were taken out of absolute poverty. \$1 a day, the cost of a daily newspaper, over a year, could create such jobs. 85% of their clients were women. 'The women are more responsible than the men,' Bussau

said bluntly, 'they want to feed their children and families.' Many families fragmented for partly economic reasons, he went on, and 'if we don't build strong families, we won't have strong societies'. 'Employment creation needs government to establish the appropriate environment, but it's vibrant commerce that will create the jobs,' he concluded.

There have been some really first class evening entertainments. A thirty-strong Swiss brass band of excellent amateurs trekked to Caux after their work in the Canton of Fribourg to raise the roof of the theatre. They drew a good number of local people from the village and Montreux; a 16-year-old soloist and the alpenhorn finale bringing special applause. African-American professionals, Lisa Edwards-Burrs, a soprano, accompanied by Dr. Marvin Curtis, offered the first of several evenings of classical music they will share with us. From Henry Purcell through Mozart and Schubert to Gershwin, they brought a complete change of mood, balm for the soul after the busy days so full of words. Then Janine and Imani Bell led us into a 'slave narrative', a reminder of the sufferings of their people - and of our (my) white forgetfulness, before we ended the evening with the triumphant power of some spirituals. Our friends of the Marelle theatre company, including Michel Orphelin, at the end of their tour of French-speaking Switzerland and France, gave us the 139th and last performance of their play 'The Legend of the Fourth King', a moving Eastern European legend about a fourth king, from Russia, following a star to Christ's birthplace, but constantly delayed by the needs of people met along the way, so that he only arrives in Palestine in time for the crucifixion on Golgotha.

The numbers have so far never gone over three hundred, but if the crowds have been modest, the quality has been exceptional. As I commented to a friend, it's better this was round than the contrary: a crowded house and a poor level of conference! But an evaluation is under way, the question of the future of these business and industry conferences has been posed. Is the formula meant to change? Is there meant to be some change of direction and of the team carrying them? Any ideas or inspiration to Chris Evans, please.

As the last of the CCBI participants were leaving, the house was filling again, with very rapid turn-around times on the beds, and successful appeals for help in the housekeeping department. The different departments of the house are stretched to the full. The Caux Round Table started last night, in summer heat, at last, followed by a splendid storm. The coming days will be busy with meetings of a less public nature, on MRA publications and media, including co-ordination of the different Web sites, and meetings of the representatives of official MRA bodies. Then I've not yet worked out what should happen over the next few weeks with these letters - I will be away from Caux for two weeks, climbing with my brother in the Alps. But rest assured, I will try to find another scribe ready to keep you informed about the life of the place, about the special days of 'Life, Faith and Fellowship', and then the 'Dialogue of Discovery' session.

Warm regards, Andrew Stallybrass