

Remarks by ICF Founder President Bill Porter

The ICF Advisory Council Meeting

Caux Initiatives for Business, July 2002

What of the last year? One in which new leaders of the ICF have been successfully taking over the reins. A year of reporting on what has been achieved, of strengthening our administration, of seeking out more substantial financing for progress and of preparing new initiatives of support and action. Last autumn we had a very worthwhile foray into Scotland as a result of combined Civic University initiatives in Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow. Bernard spent two weeks in the USA - Boston, Washington and New York, restoring old and making new contacts in the media and the institutions. He and Jean-Jacques have visited Beirut and South Africa helping local colleagues to set up events. I had a valuable trip to Hong Kong and Australia and we have been prepared to support two conferences at Caux, the CIB's Globalisation theme and the Renewal Arts programme.

There is no doubt in my mind that The Sarajevo Commitment is the best public expression of what the ICF stands for. Sitting next to me at the recent Congress of the International Press Institute was the editor of the daily newspaper of Kaduna in the Moslem area of Nigeria. I passed him the Commitment. He read it carefully and then signed it immediately - and the same happened with the editor of a leading Uganda newspaper.

I also wish that there could be more dialogue in the media on the issues raised in my essay on the World Association of Newspapers website, The Battle line of Civilisation. It was intended to provoke as well as to inspire.

We have noticed during the last year or two the emergence of a growing number of concerned activities related to the ethics and purpose of the media. These are in addition to the earlier and continuing actions for the freedom of the press, the safety and well being of journalists and the availability of access to and dissemination of information. They include the Committee for Concerned Journalists in the USA; Voices and Images of Hope; the Institute for Global Ethics; and others. We really need a research to identify all such activities. And their existence poses the question as to how they could become more effective if they spoke and acted with a united voice, so much so that owners and governments would have to listen and take heed. Can we help to inspire the setting up of a sort of World Council of Media Renewal activities towards this end? We have with us an international specialist in media research, Professor Ingrid Volkmer. Perhaps she may be able to help research and make proposals to assess the size, nature and potential of this scene.

We should give some thought as to the outreach of music especially to the younger generation and to bring some of its leading players on side. I know that Erik Parsons from Australia will have some ideas to put forward and he has his sights on role models like Bono, who recently toured Africa with the United States Secretary of Trade.

There are three things that most closely affect the lives and interest of most people today. They are the media, sport and the motor car. For a long time I have been nursing the hope that a World Sports Forum might come into being to parallel the work of the ICF. The

great cricketer and West Indian sportsman, Conrad Hunte, had begun to think about this before his unexpected death. I recently met Geoff Thompson, an Olympic Gold Medallist and the only black member of the British Sports Council and he was sparked by the idea. If any of you have sporting contacts or make them during the course of your work, see if you can produce some more sparks and then let me know and I can pass the word on to Geoff.

All that I can say about the motor car is that I think that, in the context of globalisation its mighty industry could be the pacesetter for a sane, serving and viable economy.

In the media let us not only put our own house in order, but let us give vision to a world which is fearful, suffering and disillusioned. Let us demonstrate and encourage the emergence of an honest, selfless and inspiring leadership for our 21st Century.