

News, 28. Juli 2005

Coelho at the Waldzell Meeting. Interview with the author whose books have helped many people master their life about hope and meaning in life. NEWS will award a scholarship for participation in the meeting!

"We have Strength to Fight"

By Dagmar Kaindl

Paulo Coelho in an exclusive interview with NEWS.

NEWS: *Waldzell advocates spirituality and sensitivity as peaceful weapons against global inhumanity. How are arguments of the mind to overcome the consequences of killer capitalism? Is that not just a dream?*

Coelho: Spirituality is a very abstract concept; I prefer to speak about ethics and morals. And this is a moment in which we have to do everything in our power to increase the individual's sense of ethics. The Waldzell Institute took the first step one year ago, and I am happy that its members did not end, but continue a journey that is not so simple.

NEWS: *Many young people today have a feeling of senselessness and fear of the future. What can you tell them? What strategy can you recommend to them?*

Coelho: I do not share this opinion. On the contrary, I do believe that people today are more conscious than ever that what really concerns us will and must have an effect on the town, the country, the world we live in. The young people for instance use the Internet as a very powerful tool for sharing common ideas and ideals. In this way they no longer feel left alone. They again gain strength to fight for what they believe in.

NEWS: *Do you believe that the hopeless political situation of the world will again take a turn for a kind of justice?*

Coelho: I notice that people become more involved politically, not always in a very conventional way – but for instance, by using SMS to help organize protests, or blogs to express their views. If you recall "Live 8", the gigantic rock concert, which was extremely useful to thwart the decisions taken by the G-8, this means something: namely that the people become more and more aware of the power they have.

NEWS: *But now the attacks on London have again given rise to a general feeling of hopelessness.*

Coelho: According to CNN, Sir Ivor Roberts, Britain's Ambassador to Italy, declared last September that the "best recruiting sergeant for al-Qaeda" was none other than the U.S. President, George W. Bush. According to the same source (CNN), Sir Ivor added, "If anybody is ready to celebrate the eventual re-election of Bush, it is al-Qaeda." By invading Iraq, Bush created the highest-developed training camp for terrorists: For now they can test all options in real situations. I do not believe that only a few people become aware of the development of these events. And, again: thanks to the new media, normal and ordinary people have become more conscious and powerful than ever before. The time will come when we reach the then critical mass. Then the situation will change. When you lose hope, you lose everything.