



**Thérèse Raitière, Paul Roullaud (Guenrouët-France)  
Wladimir Tchertkoff (Origlio-Switzerland)  
from 26th April to 4th May 2007**

**Carole Bouvier (Geneva-Switzerland) with  
Hannelore Schmid (Onex-Switzerland), Patricia  
Lariguet (Prèsilly-France) and Michel Contant  
(Pizançon-France)  
from 7th to 11th May 2007**



**Christophe Mounier (Béganne-France)  
from 14th to 18th May 2007**

Monday 14th May 2007 (with Michel Contant from la Drôme from 11 am until the evening) Yann Forget gives me a lift here early every morning – 7.30 am – with all the necessary equipment. Really torrential rain for most of the day. First day of WHO's General Assembly. Someone – Asian – films us briefly, his camera balanced on the yellow and black electricity box on the corner of the street. I didn't know who he was. In the morning a young woman from WHO comes out of the building opposite to get herself a coffee and asks if I want one. I say "yes". Some sympathetic looks – not many. Have the feeling we are being ignored.

Tuesday 15th May 2007 (with Michel Contant for the whole day)

Beautiful day but chilly = can't complain though after yesterday! A few more people wave to us (6 or 7). Even a really big car. An American and two Japanese take photos of us. A woman came past. She is very interested in what we are doing. She is retired. Wants to understand. Particularly about the children. Says she is going to go to Minsk in June for that purpose. I say she could take part in our action as well, visit our website. She says she "doesn't want to be political". I say something about how being political means taking up a position on specific issues. That's not what this is about; it's about exposing a lie that has real consequences. Apart from that, most people don't seem to be very interested. Michel goes for a coffee at a café in Grand-Saconnex. The owner says that lots of people from WHO eat there at midday. Michel explains our action. He understands. He even offers to put up some of our posters and leaflets in the restaurant.

Wednesday 16th May 2007

A Green Party candidate in the general election in a nearby French constituency stops to speak to us. She works at the ICRC (Red Cross). A jogger, a teacher who had taken his class to visit a nuclear power station also stops. Apart from that, some beeping of horns, a few sympathetic nods (my first wave from a 4x4 driver – encouraging!). Really have the feeling that our action is of no interest to most of the people at WHO. Most don't even seem to look ... avoiding eye-contact, as if doing so would give me some kind of importance?? I don't know. On the other hand the bus-drivers usually acknowledge us and even give us signs of encouragement. Police quite friendly today. A doctor from the People's Health Movement stops to speak to me.

Thursday 17th May 2007

Really nasty weather up until 3 o'clock. 3 people from WHO offer me coffee, a piece of cake and an umbrella – which I am really glad of. The first young woman who also works in the building opposite first of all lends me her umbrella for the day. The second young woman was the same one I'd seen on Monday. She asks me again if I want a coffee. Of course I say "yes". I say to her, "You're taking a risk by bringing me this." She replies, "**What's the risk? Anyway, I'm only there on a temporary contract until July. I really wanted to work for this organisation. It should be a humanitarian organisation, for the health of the whole world. That's not how it is. I don't want to stay here.**" The third woman – about 50 years old – who I hadn't seen before, comes from the big building out of the "little" entrance behind me, which is under surveillance. I only notice her when she gets right up to me and gives me a small WHO bag of coffee and cake. She just says, "**I'm really, really impressed by what you're doing ...**" and walks off again. A Ukrainian man comes to the stand to read the information. Another person asks me some questions and films me to put on his website. Another man takes pictures of me from all angles. Some interest during the rest of the day, but not a great deal...! Women tend to be more interested than men and find it easier (I think) to make eye-contact. The big-shots in their fancy cars, on the whole, do everything they can to ignore us.

Friday 18th May 2007

Apart from the really nice weather, not much to report. The young woman brings me a bag of two apples, a banana and two cartons of multi-vitamin fruit juice. I don't have chance to talk to her. Is she avoiding me?? At any rate she is very kind. For the first time, someone who really wants to learn what this is all about: a young man wants to know exactly why we are taking this action. Judging by his age, he seems more likely to be a student wanting to understand what's going on in the world rather than a WHO employee. There is a young woman with him to translate the conversation. They seem satisfied and appear to understand how important our action is. They come back again a few moments later and take pictures of me. Several young people in a group – probably a school outing – take my picture. No more greetings or thumbs-up signs. In fact, I start to recognize all the same people going by.

Here is a summary of what I would like to say about “my experience“ of doing the vigil outside WHO for five days from Monday 14th May to Friday 18th May. These thoughts, which are obviously not set in stone, naturally need to be taken together with the experiences and opinions of others. We know that, in the big picture, we have to maintain our determination to keep up this action in Geneva because, obviously, it must continue. But also, on an individual level, doing the vigil requires determination (especially when you are intending to stay for 3, 4 or 5 consecutive days, in the same spot, for ten hours at a time). Personal determination comes from believing that the cause is just and that our demand that WHO (the official body set up for this purpose) should pay serious attention to the problems and the health of those living in the areas contaminated by nuclear radiation following a disaster, is a legitimate one. Determination comes from believing in the power of this action! It is the strength of your personal determination that will help you to develop the quality that anyone doing the vigil really needs; and that is, PATIENCE. Also, I would add, to remain CALM in all circumstances. To help the time pass more quickly (though, in the end, I found that time passed more quickly than I thought it would, even without resorting to diversions) you could (as Paul has suggested) count the number of French cars compared to other nationalities, or as I once did for an hour (playing this game for a whole day.. that becomes just as tiring ...!) count the number of cars arriving at WHO with only a single occupant: actually there wasn't much car-sharing; only 1 in 10. Apart from that, people do come to see us: people who are involved in the action and others, some from WHO and some not, who come along to find out more (while I was there, it averaged about 8 or 9 a day). It's actually really busy here all the time: cars, buses, people walking past ... there's always something going on! And what I also found encouraging was, there are two types of people. There are the ones, about ten each day, who wave from their cars or give some sort of sign, thumbs-up, to say “I like what you're doing – I'm with you ...” The other type of person, funnily enough, I also found encouraging. These are the ones, either in cars, or more often walking past, who refused to look at me – even though it is almost impossible for someone, under normal circumstances, not to see you, or not to look at you when you are so obviously there, which means that it must be a deliberate choice on their part. So we are already getting through to them, even if their attitude is not ... as yet ... very positive!

**Christophe Mounier**

**Roland Ksouri (Donazac-France)**  
from 21st to 24th May 2007



**Carole Bouvier (Geneva-Switzerland)**  
**Paul Boyer (Chandon-France)**  
25th and 26th Mai 2007

**Yann Forget (Annemasse-France)**  
29th Mai 2007





**André Larivière (Champagnac le Vieux-France)  
from 30th May to 1st June 2007**

In front of WHO....all the cars keep rolling past us including the imposing vehicles of the CD (Diplomatic Corps or Cadavarus Diplodocus, in disguise) who drive by in ostentatious privilege in their Mercedes, BMW, Volvo, Alfa Romeo or 4 by 4's; these being eminently suitable for the drive from their leafy suburban residences to the international institutions where they work. Some people wave and some give us a thumbs up sign of approval. Most don't seem to notice us. It's true that we look a bit like the trees surrounding us (especially the ecologists amongst us). The shade of the trees tempts me to do a bit of pruning given that I am a creature that likes to be warm and dry. A maintenance man from WHO meticulously "sews" his little granules of chemical fertilizer over the lawns surrounding the venerable institution. The magpies hop around and a couple of ducks waddle quietly along the pavement in front of us. There is a broken bird's egg on the ground in front of us. Must have dropped from a nest in the branches above our heads. Its blossom time. I've got my iPod that I listen to through earphones: Desert Experience, songs from Africa. I've got two mobile phones in my pocket: my own and the one belonging to the vigil. A more modern sentry; you die. I've got some cherries which I'm nibbling (also in season) and like a child, I'm resisting the temptation to throw the stones at the gleaming 4 by 4's that brush past me; give them a taste of outdoor life...in the end I spit one out at a particularly large and hideous specimen. Didn't feel a thing; built like tanks these things. A thousand and one insignificant events but inside things are blossoming. Blossom time. Like a long journey within your own four walls.

**"Thoughts that come on doves' feet guide the world"** Nietzsche

In front of WHO...(Day 2 and 3)

After the first morning when you keep asking yourself what you're doing there, it's good! We are like little drops of water, pricking peoples' conscience until the bath overflows. We're like an vigilant eye, watching and gently questioning. The cosmopolitan nature of the place is a joy.: people of all colours and styles. Yesterday I didn't give a single pamphlet but today I've given two, to some English speaking people. One of them, a man from Scotland, repeated twice that he found it a very powerful

image to see a man standing alone between these placards. Phew!! I had begun to have doubts and to wonder whether I was frightening people away with my slightly prehistoric appearance. I had actually tied my hair back so that I looked at least medieval. Some friends (Philippe, Hannelore, Alison and Carole) joined mesome for a short time and others for a few hours. That cheered me up, especially as it was raining. Towards the end of the afternoon I fulfilled my media duties with a journalist from one of the free papers in Geneva. What will come of it? As the action progresses, we can maybe guess at the various stages in the perception that people have of us (in particular on the part of the employees that come and go): After an initial moment of surprise and curiosity, we seem now to have entered a phase of indifference, both assumed and real; we have become a part of their everyday life. A slightly unusual and unfamiliar part of the scenery. Our presence is quite neutral and non-aggressive. But in the coming weeks and months, a new phase might begin where they begin to get tired of us and may even experience our presence as harassment: “Are they still here, those mosquitoes!?” After that, I don’t really know...perhaps some sort of compassion, especially when winter sets in?

At the end of the day, a bus driver shows his support discreetly. And even one of the Diplomatic Corps flashes his lights to get my attention and then quite clearly gives a supportive and friendly gesture.

Who’d have thought?

Let’s keep at it.

**André Larivière**