



# Meditation at the United Nations

**Monthly Bulletin of  
the United Nations  
Meditation Group**



**Our Hope For Mankind**

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MEDITATION  
AT THE  
UNITED NATIONS

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

(9)

Since January, 1973, the United Nations Meditation Group has published the monthly bulletin, *Meditation at the United Nations*. This publication offers a basic introduction to meditation techniques and spirituality through questions and answers and lectures, and also reviews the group's activities. Profits from the sale of this bulletin are donated to UNICEF.

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## UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP



### WE BELIEVE

. . . and we hold that each man has the potentiality of reaching the Ultimate Truth. We also believe that man cannot and will not remain imperfect forever. Each man is an instrument of God. When the hour strikes, each individual soul listens to the inner dictates of God. When man listens to God, his imperfections are turned into perfections, his ignorance into knowledge, his searching mind into revealing light and his uncertain reality into all-fulfilling Divinity.

—*Sri Chinmoy*

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

*The United Nations Meditation Group consists of U.N. staff members, representatives, delegates and NGO's who believe that a spiritual approach to world peace is inherent in the basic U.N. ideals and can go hand in hand with political striving for U.N. goals. The Meditation Group was inaugurated on April 14, 1970. At that time it invited the well-known mystic and philosopher Sri Chinmoy to lead its meetings in the Peace Room of the Church Center for the United Nations. As its membership increased and the scope of its activities expanded, the Meditation Group began holding meetings Tuesdays and Fridays at 12 noon in the Secretariat.*

*Staff members of the Secretariat, delegates and representatives from Missions, Specialized Agencies and non-governmental organisations accredited to the U.N. are most welcome to join in these meetings, as well as in our other activities.*

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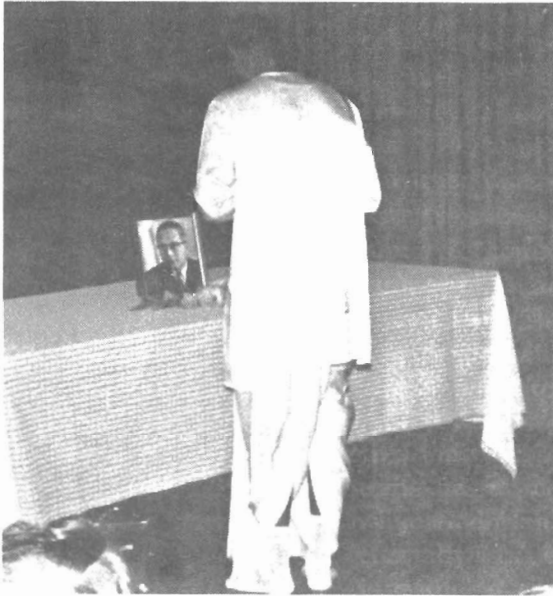
PROGRAMME IN TRIBUTE TO  
FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL  
U THANT

*On 23 November 1976, delegates, United Nations officials and staff members joined together in a memorial salute to U Thant, sponsored by the United Nations Meditation Group. U Thant's daughter, Aye Aye, and her husband were present while Ambassadors Piero Vinci of Italy and Ole Ålgård of Norway told of their experiences with the Secretary-General. Mr. Robert Muller, Director and Deputy Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination, and Mr. Donald Keys of the World Association of World Federalists also spoke. Sri Chinmoy, Director of the United Nations Meditation Group, opened the session with a few remarks and a brief meditation.*

*Mr. Kenneth Peck: Today's programme is dedicated to the memory of Secretary-General U Thant. Though in his inner life U Thant remained ever silent and at peace, outwardly he assumed many different roles in his capacity as Pilot of the United Nations: an untiring friend and conciliator to the member nations; an elder brother and teacher to the Secretariat's higher echelons; a leader and father figure to the large body of the United Nations' staff here at Headquarters and abroad; and lastly, the unconditional servant of*



humanity as a whole. That we have gathered here today from all parts of the United Nations community is proof that we are indeed a world family, united by the common thread of sympathy for one whose ideals we claim as our very own and whose dedication we hold up before us as the standard we must strive to achieve. I'd like to open our programme by inviting Sri Chinmoy, the Director of the United Nations Meditation Group, to offer his silent meditation.



Sri Chinmoy bows to the soul of Secretary-General U Thant.

*Sri Chinmoy (bowing to a photograph of U Thant on a shrine on the stage): We shall eternally treasure your soul inside the very depths of our gratitude-heart for your unparalleled service to the United Nations and the world-body. I am sure that even now from the soul's world you are serving and helping us—the United Nations and the entire humanity—so that one day peace, harmony and oneness will reign supreme here on earth.*



Ambassador Piero Vinci.

*His Excellency Piero Vinci, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations.* Dear friends, I will try to do my best to be in tune with the moving manifestations of affection and admiration for a human being whose friendship and confidence I will cherish always. It was indeed a great fortune for me and my colleagues to be associated for many years with U Thant during his two terms of office. In my case, my association ran from the beginning of 1964 to his last day of service in December, 1971. I saw him privately many times afterwards until I left New York in February, 1973 for Moscow.

Future historians will be in a better position to appraise his daily performances and the personal role he played in the many international disputes — from the Cuban missile crisis to the Vietnam conflict — which occurred during the nine years he held these high responsibilities. What I expressly consider more important is the mark he has made on the world stage by his philosophy and political foresight, because this provides the true stature of the man we commemorate today and the place he will occupy in the history of mankind. In his first annual report as Secretary-General of the United Nations fifteen years ago, U Thant stated, I quote, “The present division of the world into rich and poor countries is, in my opinion, much more real and much more explosive than the division on ideological grounds.” The dramatic changes which

have taken place in these fifteen years and the present international situation in the political and economic plane show how right he was in this perception. The current session of the General Assembly bears witness to it.

But this is not all. U Thant was one of the, if not the main inspiring force, in drawing the attention of governments and of the peoples of the world to the ever-present global challenges: outer space, disarmament, environment, law of the sea. At one moment, on May 26, 1970, he came out with one of his most inspiring statements. He stated that living in the shadow of atomic weapons, it is no longer enough for the member states of the United Nations to pay allegiance to their own country. What is required, he added, is a second allegiance: namely, the allegiance to the international community embodied by the United Nations. Speaking personally, I would say that I and many of my compatriots would give priority to our allegiance to the United Nations and to all it stands for. And this is exactly what Signor Fanfani advocated in a statement made one month later in San Francisco, where we celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signature of the Charter.

We all know the unconditional dedication of U Thant to the United Nations, his candor in public statements and in his contacts with representatives of different countries, his integrity, his humility, his compassion. What perhaps is less known is that

all these virtues reflected the mixture, or combination of strong religious convictions and an ideal attachment to Socialism, which co-existed harmoniously in his mind and in his heart, where both were rationally and sentimentally united in their quest for peace and social justice.

In this connection, some memorable events come to mind. One was the visit of the head of the Catholic Church, Pope Paul VI, to the United Nations in 1965, and the unforgettable statement he addressed to the General Assembly. The visit was a personal idea of U Thant. I think I can disclose now, if it was not done before, that U Thant had insisted in having this unique event take place before his mandate turned up for renewal. In other words, he wanted to make sure that no one could construe his initiative as inspired by any personal interests whatsoever.

Another memorable event was the celebration in the United Nations of the Encyclical of Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*. I can still see clearly—as clearly as if it were today—the emotion depicted on U Thant's face when I gave him the news that Peter Romani would attend the meeting and make a speech. He apparently felt that with the participation of this great leader of the Socialist movement, whom he had always admired since he was a young student, it was his own ideal world which was materialising all of a sudden—an ideal world in which he saw the United Nations as the reflec-

tion of the human conscience, the conscience of mankind. But, in reality, it was his own conscience which was speaking.

I could go on and on recalling other significant events, such as the Conference on Human Survival, which gave further proof of the prophetic gift with which U Thant was endowed. But it is time for me to conclude, and I will do so by saying that the best way we can pay tribute to U Thant is by keeping alive his highly spiritual message. What the message calls for is a radical change in our political thinking, which essentially, is not much different, as I have said on other occasions, from the one existing in the Stone Age. What we need and must work for was called to mind for many of us on September 22 at the annual dinner of "U.N. We Believe" by one of the most brilliant and articulate minds of the United States, Senator Fulbright. He said, and I quote, "What is required, in the words of the British poet Stephen Spender, is some kind of mutation of human consciousness. 'Unless the practical become practicable,' he writes, 'the experiment which is human life on this planet will probably fail.'" As we are here gathered to honour this great son of Asia, U Thant, I felt it most fitting to remember the message he has left to our generation and to future generations, in the terms which only a poetic genius could translate.

*Mr. Kenneth Peck:* Thank you very much. I am

now deeply honoured to introduce His Excellency Mr. Ole Algård, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations.

*Mr. Ole Algård:* There is probably no better proof of the strength of the United Nations as an organisation, of its health, than the almost built-in ability of our organisation to select the right man for the right moment—to pick a man for the highest post in the Secretariat at a time when history requires a very special personality. We had that case in the fall of 1961. Those of us who were present at the United Nations in the fall of '61 remember vividly the political atmosphere of that time. The organisation had just lost its dynamic



Ambassador Ole Algård.

Secretary-General, Mr. Hammarskjold, and the organisation was in a deep constitutional crisis. The situation called for an extraordinary man, a man whose strength of personality, whose strengths of character and conviction, could put the United Nations back on its working path again. And such a man was found: U Thant.

U Thant also introduced to the United Nations in his tenure other elements of political activity. In a very short time, he restored the general respect and general admiration for the Office of the United Nations Secretary-General as such. But he went much further. In an organisation like ours, based as it is on open diplomacy where debates take place and differences are aired in the open, there has to be a political corollary which is quiet diplomacy. You have to have both if this organisation is going to survive. And also, in this respect, U Thant was the man to do it, and a great master. Quiet diplomacy never brings those who form it great honour and great tribute, because it takes place quietly. U Thant didn't need that. The mere fact that he performed his duty quietly, settled disputes quietly whenever they surfaced, was gratitude enough for him. It happened that, during his tenure of power as Secretary-General, we saw a great transformation in the world. And we saw another thing to which U Thant greatly contributed, which was the creation of a new consciousness, a consciousness that went much further



than the small, petty political problems we were dealing with in the fifties and sixties. This had to do with a respect for the underdog. Today we are witnessing the results of this new consciousness that Secretary-General U Thant so greatly helped to introduce in his work at the United Nations. We see today a world where the old colonialism is, for all practical purposes, gone, and where the interest and political energy is now geared towards finding a better world where the underdog and the underprivileged will prevail. I think this is the greatest legacy that the great man U Thant has given to the United Nations and to the world at large.

We bow our heads in admiration for this great man. Thank you.

*Mr. Kenneth Peck:* Now I'd like to invite Mr. Donald Keys, the representative of the World Association of World Federalists.



Mr. Donald Keys

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*Mr. Donald Keys:* Thank you, Director Sri Chinmoy, members of the U Thant family, Excellencies and friends. U Thant was a person who sought to exemplify certain values and certain qualities in his life, and this effort animated every aspect of his work and his relationships. He did not feel that he had achieved the ultimate in this respect. But that did not prevent him from striving for perfection. I should like to try a little experiment which may not be entirely successful. I would like to have U Thant himself say something about his view of life and his view of man. The words that you will hear were recorded at a farewell luncheon which I helped to arrange on his retirement, and they mark one of his most heartfelt utterances, I believe. We'll see, then, if we can capture a few words. (*Turns on the tape recorder. U Thant's voice.*)

“In my view, there are certain variations of values; in other words, priorities. In my view, an ideal man or an ideal woman is endowed with four virtues, four qualities: physical qualities, mental qualities, moral qualities and, above all, spiritual qualities. Of course, it is very rare to find a human being endowed with all these qualities. In my view, of course, I attach importance to all these qualities, but I would attach greater importance to the mental or intellectual qualities over the physical qualities. I would rate them higher. Still, I would

rate the moral qualities higher than the intellectual qualities. Still more, I would rate the spiritual qualities the highest. It is far from my interest here to downgrade or denigrate the physical and intellectual aspects of life. I have developed this idea from time to time on many previous occasions. Of course, I am in no sense anti-intellectual. But the stress of education, the stress in schools, in highly developed societies, as I stated on many previous occasions, is primarily on the development of the intellect, or in physical excellence, without taking into account the moral and spiritual aspects of life. To me, the moral and spiritual aspects of life are far more important than the physical and intellectual aspects of life."

*Mr. Donald Keys:* U Thant's views of the human being, as he described it, he himself undertook to embody and manifest in all that he did. He himself was a very substantial bridge between East and West at this high qualitative level, and his view was not at all a narrow one—although, as he says later in his remarks, he came from a very conservative Buddhist family. One bit of anecdotal material; and I think new anecdotal material is always of interest. There was an occasion upon which I invited him to become a member of the Advisory Council of the Canadian Institute for Psychosynthesis. He was interested and he accepted, because he found that this one of the newer Western psychologies, like Buddhism, dealt with

the **human** being as a whole, not with the human being in bits and pieces or, as U Thant would have said, the human being in the physical and intellectual parts, but not in the moral and spiritual parts. On occasion he asked me if I wouldn't provide him with more material which would give him a more in-depth picture of this developing Western trend. U Thant said that his greatest interest was in education. But we have to feel, I think, that his sense of education was a very profound one, at a very deep level, and that he himself, as he bridged East and West and North and South, was a supreme exemplar of an educator. Thank you.



Mr. Robert Muller

*Mr. Kenneth Peck:* Before I introduce the next speaker, I'd just like to add an appreciative note. He requested very modestly to speak last this afternoon, so that whatever he said would not overlap what someone else wanted to say. Now, I'd like to introduce the Director and Deputy Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination, Mr. Robert Muller.

*Mr. Robert Muller:* There is only one thing, dear friends, which I did not expect in offering to speak last; it was that it would be U Thant himself who would take the words out of my mouth. I have learned from him, during the two short years I worked with him, three fundamental things. The first one is that he had a simple and very profound philosophy. He has just explained to you what it was. I have noticed in my life that the deepest philosophy and convictions of a man are usually expressed when he speaks to children, or to young people, because then a man wants to leave a message to the next generation. He is not making an intellectual show; he wants to leave what he really feels. I heard U Thant on several occasions speak to schoolchildren, to educators, and to young people. And it struck me that it was always the same simple speech he had. He reminded the audience that man had to give nourishment to his body, to his intellect, to his soul and to his spirit. And he talked as a teacher. He very seldom spoke

like this in official meetings, but then, when he was about to leave the United Nations, in a series of statements, he repeated it. I didn't know that he had made the same speech to the luncheon organised by Donald Keys, but he repeated it to other children he had: namely, his staff members. I believe you all remember that time in the General Assembly Hall when the Staff Council organised a farewell party for him. Suddenly he set aside the written speech which he had and he came back and addressed himself to us and said, "A man, an ideal man or an ideal woman has four qualities, four attributes: the physical quality, mental quality, moral quality and spiritual quality." And he more or less said the same thing as you just heard from him a few moments ago, because this is really what his fundamental philosophy was. And to me, as a Frenchman, this was some kind of a rebirth, because when I was in French school, my whole life had been based on the principles of Descartes. We had to learn four very simple rules of how we were to think, and they have marked my entire life. They were simple rules, Descartes said, in the complexity of logic. There is such an amount of advice you can give for the conduct of the intellectual that he decided to retain four simple rules and I will always abide by them. By doing this, Descartes made a tremendous revolution in modern times.

But when I listened to U Thant, I discovered how limited Descartes and the Western world was.

Why? Because these rules applied to only one-fourth of man—the mind, the intellect. And I had not been taught in school to have similar simple rules for moral conduct, for spiritual conduct and, perhaps for physical conduct also. So it was a broadening of U Thant's philosophy which has a great weight in modern affairs and in the future of the world.

The second great rule I learned from U Thant is that when you have a philosophy, you must give the good example yourself. How many times do you have people who preach beautiful principles and philosophies and spend the day doing exactly the contrary? For U Thant, this did not exist. He applied his philosophy from morning to evening. He practised himself the tolerance of his philosophy, the love, the patience, the humility, the truthfulness. All that was embodied in his Buddhist philosophy, he practised from morning to evening. For him there was no distinction between religion, spirituality and life. Life was physical, mental, moral and spiritual. This was the great example he has given to all of us; that you cannot make this distinction, that you cannot be a hypocrite, that you cannot preach something on the one side and not give the example yourself.

And the third great lesson I learned from him, and I think this has a political consequence, is that these principles of morality and spirituality have to penetrate the political world. As a matter of fact, it

was in an interview with you, Sri Chinmoy, that he said, "My memoirs will be very different from all other memoirs that have been written, because I will try to show that philosophy and spirituality can lead politics." And this is an example which has many, many ramifications. How many times did I hear him say, "You see those two partners to this conflict? Instead of applying their intelligence, which is complicating matters endlessly, if they applied their heart, their understanding, to the problem, it would be solved so much more rapidly." How many times did he say, "If only nations in their relations with each other could be true to each other!" How many governments have we seen come to this organisation and use the biggest possible lies in order to start from the highest possible point of negotiation! Well, conflicts become almost impossible to solve if you approach them in this way. And he gave this message: "We must have a moral and spiritual attitude in political life. There is no distinction between morality, spirituality and political life. Political life encompasses the lives of all the people." And, by definition, therefore, it must be a moral and spiritual approach. He explained the Charter in religious terms: tolerance, non-recourse to violence, unity in diversity, truthfulness. And he knew that while the religions of former times were a great threat to the individual, because at that time they were small societies, today religion and spirituality



have a much greater scope in view of the fact that today the world is governed by powerful institutions. They can be nations, they can be corporations, they can be institutions of many, many forms. But we need from these institutions also a moral and spiritual comportment. And the Charter was the first great example of such a code of ethics for the behaviour of nations.

Again, when he spoke to the World Youth Conference in 1968, he expressed one of the fundamental thoughts that might perhaps be the key to our future. I will read an excerpt from his speech. "One of the troubles of our times is that scientific and technological progress has been so rapid that moral and spiritual development has not been able to keep up with it. This is one of the tragedies of our time. The scientists are now exploring outer space, they are trying to get to the moon, Mars and the stars. But we really do not know what we are going to do if we conquer outer space and get to the moon and Mars and the stars. Our moral and spiritual progress must be able to cope with the rapidly developing technology. What is necessary in these tense times is to try to develop our moral and spiritual values to catch up with the technological and scientific advances."

I thank you.

*Mr. Kenneth Peck:* Thank you, Mr. Robert Muller. Now, because the tenets of Buddhism formed such a strong pillar in U Thant's life, we would like to present a scene about the life of the Buddha from the play *Siddhartha Becomes the Buddha*, written by the Director of the United Nations Meditation Group, Sri Chinmoy. The scene is entitled, "Who Is the Owner: the Life-Saver or the Life-Taker?" (*Scene is performed.*)

*Mr. Kenneth Peck:* In 1972 U Thant himself attended the premiere of this play in Harrison, New York. What we'll see next is a film taken of his remarks at that event. Thank you. (*Film is shown.*)

# U THANT

U Thant, U Thant,  
 We love your silence-soul,  
 We loved your compassion-heart.  
 Your world harmony role  
 Challenged ignorance-dart.  
 U.N. pilot supreme,  
 You treasured perfection-dream.

$\text{♩} = 63$  U THANT

U--- Thant, U--- Thant, we love your si-lence-  
 soul--- We loved your com-pas-sion heart-----  
 Your world-har-mo-ny role----- chal-lenged  
 ig-no---rance-dart---. U.N. pi-lot su-preme,  
 you trea-sured per---fec---tion dream-----.

Da capo  
 (without repeat)

(25)

## THE WAY AHEAD

*On 9 November 1976 Sri Chinmoy delivered the seventh lecture of the 1976 Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture Series at the United Nations.*

"The way ahead may be difficult, but the future of mankind is bright."

\*

I wish to offer some soulful comments on this divinely illumining and fulfilling utterance made by our dear seeker-friend John from Portugal's Permanent Mission to the United Nations [*Mr. Joao Teixeira da Motta, Second Secretary of Embassy, Permanent Mission of Portugal to the United Nations*], before the Second Committee of the 31st General Assembly on October 14, 1976.

Our John—I cannot pronounce his Portuguese given name, but I have taken his kind permission to call him John—is young in terms of earthly years, but old in terms of heavenly years—young in body, old in soul, ancient in spirit. He is short; that is his physical height. But he is tall, very tall in his spiritual height.

From the strict spiritual point of view, "the way" signifies aspiration-flame. Aspiration is the inner flame which ever ascends and transcends, and while ascending and transcending, it illumines our earthly life. The aspiration-flame shows us how to see the Truth, how to feel the Truth and how to

grow into the Truth. It helps us see, feel and grow into God's transcendental Vision and God's universal Reality.

There are two ways: the human way and the divine way. The human approach is the approach of separativity; the divine approach is the approach of unity in multiplicity and multiplicity in unity. There the Eternal can grow in the fleeting reality and the Infinite can grow in the finite.

The human way leads us to our destination. In this case the way and the destination are two separate realities. But in the divine way, the destination and the way are the same. Here there is no sense of separativity. Two thousand years ago the Saviour, Christ, taught us, "I am the Way, I am the Goal." He also declared, "I and my Father are One." In these two most significant utterances, we can easily see and feel that the way and the destination are inseparably one.

Again, on the strength of his boundless compassion, when he identified himself totally with earth's ignorance, it was he who said, "Father, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

When we speak about "the way ahead," we have to know that the starting point and the journey's goal, or the journey's close, are two different points. When we say that something is ahead, it means that the starting point is here and the reality that we are seeking, the culmination, is elsewhere. This is what our human eyes and our human mind teach us.

But there is another teacher that we can claim as our own, our very own, and that is our inner eye, the third eye, the eye of God-Light. This eye which is in between our eyebrows and a little above—has a different story to tell us. It tells us that God the cosmic Vision and God the cosmic Reality are one and the same, one and inseparable. When we think of God the Vision, we must realise that we are talking about the cosmic Vision, which embodies Reality itself. And when we think of God the cosmic Reality, we must feel that inside the cosmic Reality is nothing but God the cosmic Vision. The cosmic Vision is the Reality within us in seed form. And cosmic Reality is the Vision in its fruit form, which is for us. The cosmic seed is within us and the cosmic fruit is for us.

“The way ahead may be difficult.” Anything that is as yet unachieved may appear difficult. Difficulty is an experience which we go through before the realisation-sun dawns on our devoted and illumined heads and aspiring and surrendering hearts.

“But the future of mankind is bright”—the future is something that grows in the immediacy of today. The past has given us the capacity to become great. The present is giving us the capacity to become good. The future will give us the capacity to become perfect. Greatness, goodness and perfection. When we are great, consciously or unconsciously we want to rule the world and lord it over

the world. When we are good, consciously or unconsciously we love the world according to the power of our willingness and our receptivity. When we are perfect, we try to love and serve God the Creator in His entire creation, in His own way. Two thousand years ago, the Christ said, "Let Thy Will be done." This is the supreme prayer; this is the supreme message that humanity has received from above through the Christ consciousness.

"The future of mankind." — Who is man? Man is God yet unrealised. Who is God? God is man yet unmanifested. When it is a matter of realisation, man has not yet realised who he eternally is. When it is a matter of manifestation, unfortunately God remains unmanifested. Therefore, man and God are two complementary entities. Man manifests God through his self-giving and God helps man realise who he eternally is through His own Self-giving.

"The future of mankind is bright." What is bright in our outer life? Inspiration is the only thing that is bright in our outer life. There is nothing else in our outer life that can claim to be bright. Inspiration is the only thing that has the light, so he who has inspiration is bright and nobody else. The possessor of inspiration is the only bright person in the outer life.

What is bright in our inner life? Aspiration is the only bright thing in our inner life. As inspiration is bright in our outer life, so aspiration is bright in

our inner life. Without inspiration, the outer life is worse than meaningless; without aspiration, the inner life is worse than useless.

When we have inspiration, we feel that there shall come a day when our inspiration will show us God's Face. And when we have aspiration we discover that a day shall dawn, at God's choice Hour, when our aspiration will show us God's Heart. God's Face is Infinity's Beauty and God's Heart is Eternity's Duty.



## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING

*On 22 November 1976, the United Nations Meditation Group sponsored its second programme of Gratitude on an International Day of Thanksgiving.*

*Mr. Waldo Stewart of the Thanksgiving Square Foundation in Dallas, Texas, introduced a film about the Foundation's inter-religious, international place of Gratitude. Haruna Kimura performed a dance of Invocation and Thanksgiving called "Shima no Senzai" in the Kabuki style.*

*Following are Mr. Stewart's remarks prior to the film presentation.*

*Mr. Waldo Stewart:* It's a real privilege to be able to meet together with a number of people who are interested in the concept of gratitude, of giving thanks. It's a basic fundamental part of our individual consciousness. Since the earliest time of which there is any record, man has recognised that outside of himself there is a power which gives to him ability, consciousness and awareness, and he has had the urge to communicate with other men about this power and his relation to it.

This concept has appeared in artifacts from the earliest traces of civilisation. It has appeared in the great architecture and artworks of every age and people. Only now is the need of the individual and the need of the nations to recognise this higher power fulfilling them through the impetus of

gratitude. And perhaps it has come to fruition in our state of Texas, in our town of Dallas, in a place dedicated solely to this urgent idea of thanksgiving within people.

About twenty years ago, my brother came to me and spoke to me about the concept of trying to make evident to people in the heart of the city, in the heart of their day's work, a reminder that they owed it all to this Power outside of themselves—which we call God, although throughout the ages He has had many names in many places—a reminder of this awareness of God, this understanding: that good comes from God in the form of power, friendship, ability to exist, ability to communicate. Therefore this place within a city could be held and consecrated by the devoted thought of people and maintained perpetually as a place where gratitude would be recognised and featured. It could become a repository for all of the information there is from every culture and every historical period about what people have felt in the way of gratitude and how they have communicated it to others.

So in these last ten years, there have been a great many people meeting in Dallas for occasional seminars on the concept of gratitude. They have come from every culture. We had historians who have deeply studied every period of history and were finding that even in the remotest form of civilisation there is a trace and record of this animus of awareness of gratitude to God. Recently we found

in the Eskimo culture in Alaska, early traces of dance programmes done with masks where people were expressing gratitude for good hunting. We find parallels in all countries where people have the urge to express in painting, wall drawings, dance, action, jewelry, artifacts and architecture this concept of reaching outside of yourself and recognising this power—works of which there is record that they in some way have been created to express gratitude.

The architect, Philip Johnson, was engaged to design Thanksgiving Square and we must be grateful to him for immense patience in going through idea after idea, concept after concept, scale model after scale model, until finally there was an agreement that we had found a concept that seemed to really express what we're after: a place quiet, serene, that would convey in the midst of the bustling city the sense of aloneness, inspiration and quiet. He achieved this by taking a plot of land right in the middle of the business district of Dallas and dishing the ground so as you enter the garden you move downward toward the centre of it. And as you get out of the sight of autos passing, your ear is taken over by the sound of water moving in a rushing cataract, in waterfalls, trickling streams, so that you can enjoy the trees, the grassy banks, the flower beds and an inspired chapel, which is perhaps similar to an old scroll of parchment.

It means many things to many people as they see in themselves a response to this idea. It's a very small chapel, really. The circumference of it is smaller than this room and it will only hold sixty people, but it's a quiet place. You will see in the film that it has plain white marble aggregate walls and the ceiling, in a spiral form, is stained glass used horizontally. In the chapel there is only a circular platform of granite and a square block of white marble on that as an altar. There is no art work at all that would be either denominational or representational, except an engraving in the glass over the entrance door of a dove—not the usual dove used in religious connotations descending, but this is an idea of a dove ascending, to picture the thoughts of gratitude moving upward from the individual.

The film is mainly concerned with concepts that served in the design and formation of Thanksgiving Square philosophy and project and it is a photograph of models. The Square actually is almost complete. The chapel will be consecrated Thursday of this week and the bell tower will be dedicated on Sunday. And there will be exhibits from time to time in the Hall of Thanksgiving and beneath the Chapel of Thanksgiving; there will be dance programmes, musical programmes, seminars and meetings concerned with the topic of gratitude.

We urge each of you, when you have the opportunity, to come to Dallas to be part of this concept. I think you'll find peace and inspiration. We will have the film now.

*After the film, the Meditation Group presented Mr. Stewart with an engraved plaque expressing the Group's gratitude for the service and inspiration that Thanksgiving Square Foundation is offering to the international community.*

*An International Thanksgiving Dinner, catered by Annam Brahma Restaurant, was given that evening in the Ex-Press Bar of the U.N. At the dinner there was a dramatic dance in celebration of Kwanza-First Fruits Festival by the Olatunji Center for African Culture.*

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*In November, Sri Chinmoy asked members of the Meditation Group to submit spiritual questions for him to answer during the Group's regular meetings. Following are the first in this series, answered on 16 November and 26 November 1976*

*William Davidson:* What is the seeker's responsibility at the United Nations?

*Sri Chinmoy:* The seeker's responsibility at the United Nations is to pray and meditate—to pray for and meditate on those who have served or are still serving the United Nations most devotedly and soulfully. Ex-Secretaries-General Dag Hammarskjöld, U Thant and those who have served or who are serving the United Nations in any capacity should receive soulful prayers and gratitude from the seekers who

are now serving the United Nations. Also, the seeker must pray for all the countries that are singing the unity-song at the United Nations, for each individual member of the United Nations. Again, the seeker at the United Nations should pray for those who will serve the United Nations in the future. That is to say, they should try to connect the past, present and future -- past glory, present promise and future achievements. Glory, promise and achievements must be united together by the seeker, and to do that the seeker has to pray for the departed souls or for the souls who have served the United Nations in the past, and for those who are still serving, and for those who will join the United Nations and sing the unity-song in the future.

*Donald Keys:* Some nations accept the United Nations as their own, other nations would even deny the United Nations. What are the differences in the soul-growth of the nations that have not yet become one with the United Nations?

*Sri Chinmoy.* In spite of knowing that the United Nations is not all-powerful, in spite of knowing that the United Nations on very rare occasions may do things which may not satisfy the world at large, if the nations accept the United

Nations as their own, very own, it means that they feel their oneness with the body-reality and the soul-reality of the United Nations. It means that they have accepted the United Nations as the United Nations because they have true love for the United Nations, and they would have accepted the United Nations even if were not, let us say, as meaningful or as fruitful. So, I wish to appreciate and admire those nations that feel that the United Nations is an integral part of their own existence-reality. Their souls are undoubtedly fully awakened. The nations that have consciously accepted the United Nations as their own are undoubtedly the nations that are awakened. And the nations that have wholeheartedly accepted the United Nations as their very own, the nations that feel part and parcel of the United Nations existence-reality, are fully awakened

Unfortunately, there are some nations that find it difficult to accept the United Nations, that even go to the length of denying the United Nations. I wish to say, from my own experience and point of view, that these nations are not awakened. Either they are not awakened, or they have consciously and deliberately taken the side of ignorance-reality. Just like an individual human being, each nation has a physical personality or reality, a vital personality, a mental personality and so on. At times it is very difficult to say whether a nation is not accepting the United Nations' existence because its soul is



unawakened, or whether it is because the physical-reality, vital-reality or mental-reality of that particular nation is not sufficiently awakened. If those are not awakened, then the nation as such will not want to help or serve the United Nations or be illumined or guided by the United Nations. In most of the cases, I can see that it is the undisciplined vital, the uncontrolled mind and the unaspiring physical-reality that do not allow the nations to see the reality, the divinity, the sincere willingness of the United Nations to be of service to mankind.

Again, there are some nations which neither deny nor accept the United Nations. They do something else; they try to remain neutral. From the inner point of view, neutrality is not good. Let us say that two persons are at daggers' drawn, two persons have different opinions, and one is right and one is wrong. If we know who is right and who is wrong, and in spite of knowing, if we remain silent, that means that some weakness on our part is preventing us from taking the side of the light. We don't say that one side is all ignorance and the other side is all wisdom-light. No, only there is lesser light and higher light, lesser truth and higher truth. One side can have an iota more of light than the other side. If we remain silent, automatically we weaken the possibilities and potentialities of the side that has more light. The one that embodies more light should be encouraged and inspired so that he reaches the destination-goal. There he will

be flooded with the light of the goal, and then he can come back to the unilluminated who are still struggling, still wallowing in ignorance. So, it is always good to take the side which has greater light, abundant light. It is very easy to deny the sun. At night we can deny it, but in a few hours' time the sun comes out. Even while facing the sun we can deny its existence, but the sun does exist. What in us denies it? It is the ignorance in us that denies. But our inner sun immediately responds to the outer sun. Similarly, we can deny our oneness with the supreme Reality, but it does exist.

I am sure that most of you have read India's Bible, the *Bhagavad Gita*. There was a conflict between darkness and light, or we can say between lesser light and greater light, which eventually ended in the battle of Kurukshetra. Lord Krishna said outwardly, "I am not taking any side," because he represented God, and for God everybody is equal. But in the very depths of his heart, he did take the side of the righteous Pandavas. To the other side, the Kaurava's, he gave his own army, and he was only a charioteer for the Pandava side. But twice there were occasions when he came out of the chariot to fight against the unaspiring forces. Again, there were one or two among the unaspiring forces who were really aspiring. They knew who Sri Krishna was, but they were morality-bound to fight on the Kaurava side. They were brought up by the undivine forces; they were fed and

nourished by the undivine forces, like Vishma. That is why they did not surrender fully to the light of Lord Krishna.

So here also, if some nations are in touch with undivine nations, if they get some help financially or otherwise, then they are caught. They do not want to voice forth their sincere opinions with regard to the United Nations. But we feel that it is always better to take the side of the nation that has more light and that is willing to reach its destination. We should not try to discourage the other nations in any way. But if we feel that the nations that are not aspiring so sincerely or deeply will be sad if we take sides, and if we stop encouraging the one that is promising, illumining and fulfilling, then we are standing in the way of world perfection in general and of our own aspiration. So, being seekers we should always try to take the side of those nations that are trying to unite other nations and that are crying and aspiring for more illumination and perfection here on earth. And we should always try to convince the nations to take the side of the nations that represent or embody more illumining and fulfilling light. All those who deny the truth, all those who do not want to see the truth, should be given a chance to see and realise the truth in their own time. Right now only those who want the truth and need the truth desperately should be given the first and foremost chance to come to the fore and be inundated with Truth and

Light and Delight. Let us not remain neutral; let us be all for those who desperately cry for and need Light, Truth, Beauty and Delight.

It is very difficult to determine the soul-growth of the nations which have not yet become one with the United Nations. In their case, the soul has not come to the fore. Right now the physical part, the vital part, the mental part of these nations are not allowing the soul to come to the fore. When the soul is covered by layer after layer of the vital-reality, the mental-reality or the physical reality, then it is not possible to determine the growth because the soul remains in seed form. Only when the soul comes to the fore, only when the soul germinates like a seed germinating into a tiny plant, a sapling and finally a huge banyan tree, only then does it radiate an iota of light all around. If the soul does not have the capacity or the opportunity to come to the fore and radiate even an infinitesimal amount of light, then it is impossible to determine the soul-growth. But we can safely say that there shall come a time when the soul will be able to come to the fore, for creation is meant for perfection. Nothing on earth, nothing in God's creation, will remain imperfect. Eventually, everything has to see the face of perfection, for that is what God wants from us and that is what God eternally is. Therefore, the soul will come to the fore and at that time it will be quite possible to determine the growth of the nations that are not yet one with the United Nations.

Here we are all seekers of the Absolute Truth. We should soulfully pray and meditate for the nations that are still wanting in light so that they can also see the all-loving Beauty and all-fulfilling Duty that the United Nations has. Again, we have to know that the goal that we have been seeing in the United Nations is not the ultimate goal. Right now we are only thinking of union, of a world filled with union-reality. But union is not the ultimate thing. There should come something else: oneness. The United Nations is dealing with unity right now. We are trying to establish unity on the physical plane, vital plane, mental plane and psychic plane. But then we have to go one step ahead to oneness. Oneness-reality we have to achieve by virtue of our sincere prayer and our sincere dedication to the body-reality and the soul-reality of the United Nations.

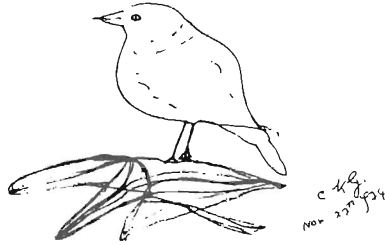
What we are aiming at is something great and good, but that is not the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is oneness-reality which the United Nations will offer to all nations, to all the world, to all aspiring human beings that are here on earth. So the ultimate goal of the United Nations right now we will not be able to place before the comity of nations. But a day will come when we shall have to offer that ultimate goal. Right now, the goal that we have placed before the United Nations and before the world at large is union-song. A day will come when we will have to seek and become the oneness-dance. And for that we shall have to prepare ourselves slowly, steadily and unerringly.

## "MEDITATIONS FOR THE WEEK"

*The following "Meditations for the Week" cards were offered to all who attended the regular weekly meetings of the Meditation Group.*

I see myself as another stupendous failure.  
God sees me as another God.

*2-8 November  
U.N. Meditation Group*



My life is the fruit of my meditation.

*9-15 November  
U.N. Meditation Group*



In the spiritual life, surrender, if you can;  
love if you dare.

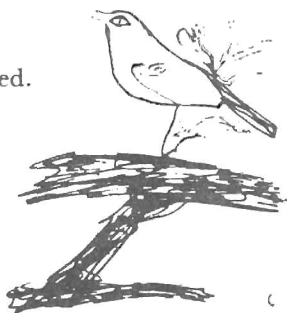
*16-22 November*  
*U.N. Meditation Group*

*C. K. G.*  
*Dec. 8th 1974*

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Try not to change the world. You will fail.  
Try to love the world. Lo, the world is changed.  
Changed forever.

*23-29 November*  
*U.N. Meditation Group*



*C. K. G.*  
*Dec. 10th 1974*

## OCTOBER/NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

*On 29 October 1976, the United Nations Meditation Group, in conjunction with the staff members of UNICEF, invited children of the U.N. community and their parents to a Benefit party for UNICEF in honour of Universal Children's Day and "Trick-or-Treat" for UNICEF. In keeping with traditional celebrations around the world, Jane Pascale opened the evening by leading the children in a short prayer. Puppeteer Bill Baird and Ashrita the Magician then entertained and delighted the children.*

*Mr. Henry Labouisse, Executive Director of UNICEF, sent the Group the following note of appreciation.*





**UNICEF**

**UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND · FONDS DES NATIONS UNIES POUR L'ENFANCE**

UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK

30 November 1976

Dear Ms. Gershon,


Thank you very much for your letter of November 23rd with which you were kind enough to enclose a check to the order of UNICEF in the sum of \$40.00. I note that this represents the proceeds of the party which was given on October 29th by the United Nations Meditation Group and some staff members of UNICEF.

We are most grateful to the Meditation Group and to all of the others who participated in this event. It is not just the money, but the wonderful feeling which your group expresses.

I was sorry that I was unable to attend the party this year. I remember with great pleasure the first party given in 1975.

With kind regards, and again many thanks,

Sincerely yours,

  
Henry R. Labouisse  
Executive Director

Ms. Gail Gershon  
Secretary  
United Nations Meditation Group  
Room 3001  
New York

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*Due to the great interest being shown in meditation presently at United Nations Headquarters, a correspondent of The New York Times recently submitted an article which appeared in the October 20 issue of the Times detailing the activities of the United Nations Meditation Group and the TM group. Since the article frequently mistook one group for the other, a letter was sent seeking clarification and the following response was received.*

**The New York Times**

229 WEST 43 STREET  
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036

November 9, 1976

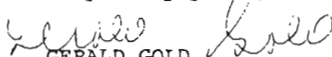
Mr. David Burke  
United Nations Meditation Group  
Room 3001  
United Nations  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Mr. Burke:

We have received a number of letters, including yours, pointing out the differences between "TM" and "Sri Chinmoy" group.

Your point is quite valid; we should have made specific the difference between the two meditation groups functioning at the United Nations. Members of both groups were interviewed in preparation of our article, and it was the juxtaposition of paragraphs drawn from these interviews that gave the erroneous impression. We will be careful in any future references to the work of Sri Chinmoy or the TM organization to make the distinction clear.

Very truly yours,

  
GERALD GOLD  
Deputy Foreign Editor

GG:mm