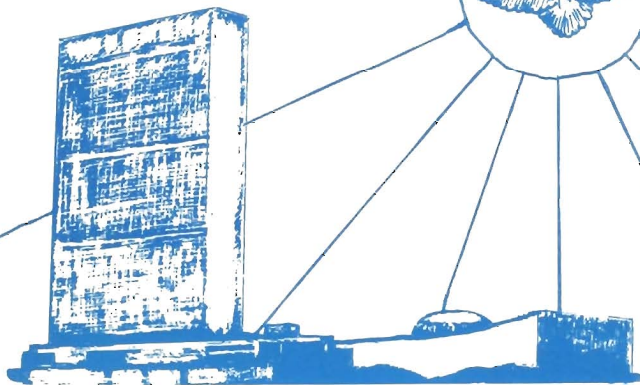


# Meditation at the United Nations

United Nations:



the Heart-Home  
of the World-Body



Monthly Bulletin of the  
United Nations Meditation Group

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MEDITATION  
AT THE  
UNITED NATIONS

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE  
UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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

United Nations:



the Heart-Home  
of the World-Body

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.

## EDITOR'S NOTE

*The United Nations Meditation Group is an association of U.N. delegates, staff, NGO representatives and accredited press correspondents, who believe that inner reflection and meditation can bring us in touch with the founding spirit of the United Nations and inspire renewed dedication to its ideals. The main focus of our activities, both in New York and in Geneva, is our twice-weekly meditations, which provide an opportunity for quiet, spiritual renewal in an atmosphere reflective of the highest purposes of the world organisation. In addition, through an ongoing series of conferences and symposia, we provide forums where ambassadors, Secretariat officials and staff, religious leaders and other world-minded individuals can share and reinforce their spiritual vision for the United Nations.*

*The United Nations Meditation Group was founded in 1970, when interested staff members invited the distinguished spiritual leader Sri Chinmoy to conduct non-denominational meditations at New York Headquarters. Since then, the Group's membership has grown considerably and its expanded activities have been warmly received by the U.N. community.*

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## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Sri Chinmoy answered the following questions on 8 March 1978 during a Wednesday night meeting of the U.N. Meditation Group, held in Conference Room 10.*

*Question:* What does our singing do in terms of our meditation and our offering to the U.N. soul?

*Sri Chinmoy:* Our singing adds inspiration and aspiration to our meditation, and when we have added inspiration and aspiration to our meditation. we feel—and it is absolutely true—that we are offering more of our dedicated, devoted and soulful service to the soul of the United Nations. Each time we sing, we invoke the soul of the United Nations to appear before us, to make us more active, more dynamic and more self-giving to the cause, the supreme cause: the vision of oneness-family that we have envisioned and we are in the process of manifesting.

*Question:* How can we avoid tension when doing a project under pressure?

*Sri Chinmoy:* Before we enter into a project, we must sincerely feel that we have been given the necessary capacity to accomplish it. Then, once we



undertake it, we have to bring to the fore our inner determination and inner faith. Once we feel that our inner determination and inner faith have come to the fore, then in silence we must say to ourselves that the new project which we have undertaken is already done. On the inner plane it is done.

Let us take this inner plane as a higher plane and feel that we have a free access to this higher plane. It is like this. Let us envision a tree right in front of us. The tree has quite a few branches and on the branches there are quite a few fruits. The top branches, where the fruits are, we can call the higher plane. In order to get the fruits we have to climb up the tree to the higher branches. Once we climb up and pluck some fruits, we have accomplished our project on the inner plane. But that particular plane is not the plane of manifestation. The plane of manifestation is at the foot of the tree. Therefore, it is obligatory for us to climb down. As soon as we climb down, we have to feel that we have reached the outer plane.

In the inner plane, if we are sure that something has already been achieved, then it is much easier on the outer plane to manifest it. From the beginning to the end, one thing is of paramount importance and that is confidence. We have to feel that we can do something or we shall do it or that we have already done it. If we say that we can do it, we are not fooling ourselves; if we say that we will

do it eventually, we are not fooling ourselves. And even if we say that we have already done it, we are not deceiving ourselves. For it *is* already done; it is already done on another plane. And it is we who have done it on that plane on the strength of our inner faith and inner determination.

*Question:* Here at the United Nations many decision-makers take positions on controversial issues. What is the most effective way to make sure the position they take is the correct one?

*Sri Chinmoy:* When a controversial subject is being discussed, all those who are participating should be seekers. Unfortunately, it may not be that all are aspiring. All may not be trying to have constant and conscious self-giving to a higher ideal, to an uplifting cause, to the Source. Still, one thing we can try to do is to exercise the sympathy of fellowship. We can look around us and see quite a few human beings. If we can claim them to be our friends, and not strangers or adversaries, then the strength of our oneness itself is a divine achievement. When we achieve something divine, already we are on the road to a divine accomplishment. Oneness will never be able to hurt anybody. If I am really one with somebody, then I cannot hurt that person. Every part of our body is one with every other part. Our hands are so powerful, but do we strike our eyes with our hands? No! We know that

our eyes and our hands are trying to reach the same destined goal. The eyes will see something and immediately the legs will go and help the eyes. The eyes are the ones that first see the goal and make the decision to go to the goal. Then the eyes give the message to the legs and the rest of the members, and they all go to the goal together.

So, when many individuals get together to come to a decision, if right from the beginning they feel that they are one, then once the truth is seen by any member, spontaneously the others will also see it and try to achieve it. If oneness is already felt and established on the inner plane, then on the outer plane all will try to aim at the same goal. When an individual offers his suggestion, if the individual is sincere, simple and truth-loving, and if others have any feeling of sympathy, concern and oneness with him, then automatically all will go to the same source, which will be satisfaction, constant satisfaction. No matter who sees something before the rest of the members of the family, it will make no difference. Seeing itself is the decision. And while others are participating in or becoming one with or seeing eye to eye with the decision, they are also expediting it. So, if each member can feel that the others are not going to deceive him, if each member will accept every other member as a real friend, it does not matter that only one has gotten the message. From one it will spread to two, and eventually all will be travelling to the same destined goal.

- If we start on the basis of division, then there can be no proper guidance or divine assurance, and no decision can be taken. But if there is oneness, the oneness itself can go to the source, which is divine satisfaction; and from the source we will get the message as to which decision to take.

DINNER IN HONOUR OF  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

*On 9 March 1978 the United Nations Meditation Group hosted a dinner in honour of International Women's Day for women working in world affairs. The dinner was held in the Church Center for the United Nations. At the end of the evening's programme, which included music on the Indian esraj by Sri Chinmoy and vocal and instrumental performances by Meditation Group members, several guests spoke informally about the significance of International Women's Day. Following are their impromptu remarks.*

*Mr. Donald Keys, President, Planetary Citizens:*  
I know how my good friend Ambassador Rossides got here to the United Nations—as a leader for the struggle for independence of his country. I first arrived at the United Nations in 1954 by a rather different route: by winning a U.N. essay contest. This was very good for my ego until I learned that there were only two other American contestants; and that was probably the best thing for my ego.

There are, I sometimes reflect, perhaps three United Nations. There is the United Nations of the delegations. There is the United Nations of the international Civil Service, the Secretariat. And thinking of International Women's Day, I wish to say that women have not fared very well in all this

time in the United Nations. The first committee is a masculine redoubt, except for one or two brave female souls that have ventured in from time to time. I remember Miss Bihi of Somalia and I remember Doris Muck of Austria and her predecessor. And I remember one fiery-haired Irish lady. And then there's marvelous Emilia de Barish who has always struggled for the good, the true and the beautiful wherever she has found herself in the United Nations' Committees. But generally, the women are herded into the "Women's Committee," the Third Committee, and the rest of the delegations are hopeful that they will stay there. I am hopeful that they won't.

Then there is another United Nations, and that's the United Nations that belongs to all of us. Here this problem doesn't exist. It's the United Nations which is the goal of humanity. It's the United Nations which is the future of humanity. It's the United Nations which represents the synthesis and the Point Omega of human evolution on this very small planet: the United Nations of immanent human oneness. That is the United Nations to which we all belong and the reason, after all, that we are here.

*Sra. Emilia Castro de Barish, Minister Plenipotentiary of Costa Rica:* I was taken by surprise when Mr. Keys said such wonderful things about

me. I feel very humble and I would like to thank him. I really am not prepared to speak—I do not know what to say—but the U.N. has been my life—not my whole life, but a good part of my life. I have been here for twenty years.

I sometimes have great faith in the U.N. Sometimes I feel disappointed that we cannot accomplish so many things that would be good for humanity because there is not the political will. We keep hoping and praying that things can be better in the world. And we have to keep trying to work for peace and for the betterment of mankind.

Thank you.

*Sister Janet Richardson, Attache, the Holy See Mission:* When Archbishop Caseroli was here for the World Peace Day Programme, he had a taped dialogue with Mr. Robert Muller. That dialogue we are going to publish, but I can give you a little advance on it. In that dialogue the Archbishop said that if the United Nations didn't already exist, we would have to bring it into existence. And then he said as long as the United Nations remains the way it was intended, it would always have the Roman Catholic Church for an ally, because they have at least one thing in common: they are both catholic. So I leave you his message.

*Ms. Patricia Murray, The National Council of Black Women and the International Association of Democratic Lawyers:* What I feel today on International Women's Day is that the United Nations remains kind of a dream deferred, a dream not yet realised, a dream still composed of characters who are primarily male. I think it is now time for the thrust of femaleness, that is, for the intuitive and inner methods of realising the inner being. It is now time for that. And I think that is the kind of inspiration that women and men who realise their femaleness will begin to know.

I was somewhat excited to see what was written here on this banner as the U.N. Meditation Group's motto. I think it is by Sri Chinmoy. I don't know if we have all noticed it, but I would like to bring it to everyone's attention. I think that the United Nations will not become a dream realised until each of us begins to realise the God within ourselves. And if you will indulge me:

"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."



The United Nations can only be as enlightened as we are. It is important that the emphasis be on the enlightenment of each individual, for only then will the United Nations become that dream realised.

*Ms. Yvette Ripplinger, UNITAR:* My name is Yvette Ripplinger and I have worked at the Secretariat for a long time. Recently I saw a motion picture in which they depicted slave ships with everybody rowing in the galley and working very hard to make the vessel go. And I realised that the victory in those times depended on how fast the slaves on the ship could pull the oars. Of course, the United Nations is not a galley ship or a slave ship. But it is a ship which has a lot of oars to pull as fast as possible in order to win the victory. Since it is Women's Day, I think women have to realise that if they really want to play their proper role, they have to sit side by side with men and pull the oars just as quickly, so we can finally reach the goal and the victory, which is peace.



## WE BELIEVE

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We-- be-lieve----- and-- we-- hold-----  
 that each man has the po-ten-ti-a--li-ty--- of reach-ing the  
 Ul-ti-mate Truth. We al-so be-lieve-- that man-- can-not  
 and-- will not----- re-main----- im-per-fect---  
 for--e-----ver----. Each man is an in-stru-ment of God.  
 When the hour-- strikes-----, each in-di-vi-du-al  
 soul----- lis-tens to the in-ner dic-tates-- of---  
 God----- When man lis-tens to God, his im-per-fec-tions---  
 are turned-- in-to per-fec-tions, his ig-nor-ance in-to know-ledge,  
 his sear-ching-mand--- in-to re-vea-ling-- light-----  
 and his un-cer-tain re-a-li-ty----- in-to  
 all ful-ful--ling Di-vi-----ni-ty.

## DO WE HAVE THE CAPACITY TO HELP OTHERS?

*Sri Chinmoy gave the following talk at a meeting of the U.N. Meditation Group held in Conference Room 11 on 14 March 1978.*

Do we have the capacity to help others? Yes, we do. Do we have the capacity to help others in words? Yes, we do. Do we have the capacity to help others in deeds? Yes, we do. Then how is it that we do not help others? We do not help others for various reasons. I wish to cite a few deplorable and painful reasons.

The most deplorable reason is a very simple one. We do not want to see happiness in others; we want only our own happiness. By nature, we human beings are cruel to one another. By nature, we do not want to see others happy. When we see that others are happy, we feel that our own little world is totally shattered and destroyed. The animal in us gets happiness from destruction. The human in us gets happiness from division and a sense of separativity. But the divine in us gets satisfaction only from oneness. The divine in us knows nothing else save and except oneness.

So the main reason that we do not help others is because we do not want to see others happy. This is the root cause. This root cause branches into several subsidiary causes. One of the subsidiary causes

is that we want the rest of the world to see how important we are. When others come to us for help, we feel that we are indispensable. But when we come to learn that the same people have gone to others for help, we feel that we were right in not helping them. We feel that since the other party did not feel that we were indispensable, since the party went to others, we did the right thing in not helping. In this way we justify our unwillingness to help.

There is human friendship and divine friendship. Human friendship says, "Give me; I need." Divine friendship says, "Take me, for I am all yours." When we exercise our human friendship, we tell the world, "Give us; we need." When we exercise our divine friendship, we tell the world, "Take us, for we are all yours." The human in us has not only failed us time and again, but it will always fail us. The divine in us has always succeeded and will always succeed. This divine success is nothing short of world harmony and universal harmony, world peace and universal peace, world satisfaction and universal satisfaction.

Divine friendship is founded upon oneness. The source of divine friendship, divine love and divine concern is oneness. For this reason, divine friendship is lasting. On the other hand, human friendship on earth is nothing but a rope of sand. We shall not be an inch from truth if we say that most human beings are fair-weather friends. When we

are desperate and facing inclement weather, our so-called friends desert us in a twinkling. We come out in the street and see an individual and ask him, "Are you my friend?" He says, "Of course, I am your friend, but on one condition: that you never ask me for a favour." Then we see another individual and ask him, "Are you my friend?" He says, "Of course I am, but on one condition: that I shall be at least one inch superior to you. You have to be under me. If you are ready to be at my beck and call, if you are ready to be at my feet, then I will accept you as my friend."

We see a third individual and say, "Are you my friend?" He answers, "Of course I am, but on one condition: whenever I am in need, you have to come to my rescue. But if ever you are in need, you must not count on me, for I have many, many things to do on earth other than helping you. So, if you want to be my friend, then let your acceptance of me be unconditional."

So, when we are looking for a friend, we are like a helpless beggar. At that time, God our supreme Source is playing the role of the eternal beggar in and through us. He wants to play the role of a veritable beggar, and we are extremely grateful to Him that He has chosen us for this; in and through us He will fulfil His begging task. Then God goes to some other individuals and asks them to assist others. He wants to play another role in and through them: the role of the eternal giver, the

divine friend. But to His wide surprise he gets no response. But since God is compassionate to the needy, He continues trying to find some individuals who will allow Him to play this role in and through them. He is looking for some individuals in and through whom He can fulfil the aspiration-life and the desire-life of those in whom He is playing the role of a beggar. Finally, He finds some souls that are receptive. They are more than willing to abide by His express request, and they come to the rescue of those who are desperately in need of help.

When the seeker needs help, he can only do one thing. He has to dive deep within and bring to the fore his adamant will. This adamant will he will place at the Feet of the Absolute Supreme. Then the Absolute Supreme grants His all-fulfilling Compassion-Light to the adamant will of the seeker. When the seeker's will and the Supreme's Grace become one and are ready to work together, man's aspiration-world and God's Satisfaction-World make God the Beggar and God the Giver totally fulfilled both in the aspiration-world of earth and the satisfaction-world of Heaven.

## PEACE CORPS CELEBRATES ANNIVERSARY AT THE UNITED NATIONS

### Part I

*The Peace Corps commemorated its seventeenth anniversary 15 March 1978 with an evening programme at the United Nations in Conference Room 4, co-sponsored by the United Nations Meditation Group. Mr. Sam Brown, Director of ACTION, of which the Peace Corps is a part, delivered the keynote address and presented the Hubert H. Humphrey Award for International Service, marking the first time the Peace Corps has publicly commended its own volunteers and staff. Congressman Christopher John Dodd of Connecticut, a former Peace Corps Volunteer in the Dominican Republic, and Ms. Velma Linford, a Peace Corps staff member for fourteen years, received the Award.*

*The U.N. Meditation Group singers opened the anniversary programme. Speakers included U.S. Ambassador Allard Lowenstein, Malaysian Ambassador Zaiton Ibrahim, Ghanian Ambassador Frank E. Boaten, Congressman Dodd and Haskell Ward, N.Y.C. Commissioner of Community Development and former Peace Corps Volunteer in Ethiopia. The full text of the programme will be printed in the magazine in sections.*



PROGRAMME:

A SOULFUL TRIBUTE ON THE OCCASION  
OF THE SEVENTEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE PEACE CORPS

15 March 1978

6:30 p.m.

Conference Room Four  
United Nations, New York

United Nations Meditation Group Singers

*Speakers:*

H.E. Mr. Frank E. Boaten  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Ghana  
to the United Nations

H.E. Tan Sri Zaiton Ibrahim  
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary  
Permanent Representative of Malaysia  
to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. Allard Lowenstein  
United States Alternate Representative for  
Special Political Affairs

United States Congressman Christopher J. Dodd,  
Connecticut  
(Former Peace Corps Volunteer in the  
Dominican Republic)

Mr. Sam Brown, Director of ACTION

Mr. William Angel  
Associate Officer for Planning and Evaluation  
United Nations

Commissioner Haskell Ward  
Community Development Agency, City of New York  
(Former Peace Corps Volunteer in Ethiopia)

Mr. Thomas Drahman  
Executive Director of International Medical and  
Research Foundation  
(Former Peace Corps Volunteer in Thailand)

Dr. Jasperdean Kobes  
Director of Programs  
World Education, Inc.  
(Former Peace Corps Volunteer in Ethiopia)

Awards Presentation — Mr. Sam Brown

*Sponsored by the Peace Corps  
and the U.N. Meditation Group*

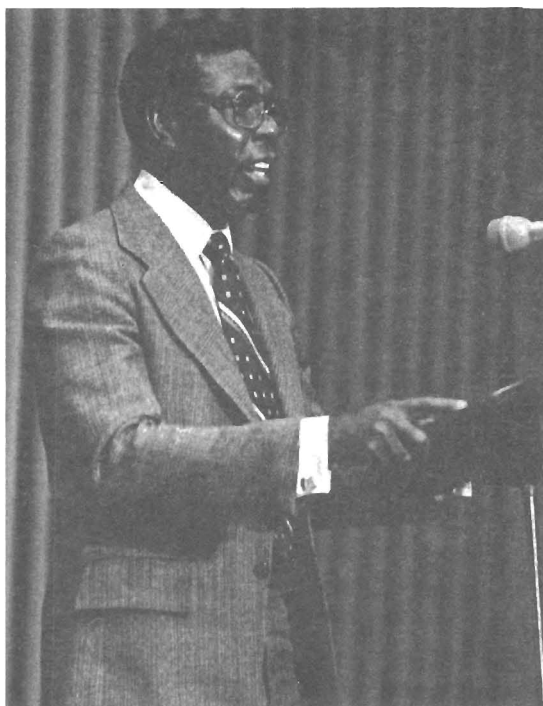


*Mr. Kevin Keefe, U.N. Meditation Group:*  
Ambassadors and honoured guests, friends, we would like to welcome you to our programme tonight in honour of the seventeenth anniversary of the Peace Corps. Peace: a significant part of the name of this Organisation and a concept dear to us in this United Nations Building. There was inspiration and aspiration present when John Kennedy, Hubert Humphrey and others established this Organisation. At that time, through this inspiration and aspiration, they touched the hearts of many of their fellow countrymen and women and called forth a response—a desire to serve selflessly the cause of peace. It was this same desire for peace which helped begin the United Nations thirty-two years ago.

Some of you may know of a small room here, the Meditation Room of the United Nations. It was this same need for peace, and some hard work by our second Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjold, and others that founded this room. There is an inscription on a plaque outside that room that I feel is appropriate to quote, saying that this room is devoted to peace and those that are giving their lives for peace. It is in this spirit that we would like to dedicate this programme to those who are giving their lives for peace all over the world through national and international organisations, as well as to all those who are working for peace through education, business, politics and in other ways.

Again, we are grateful that all of you could be with us here tonight. The Meditation Group would like to begin the programme with three songs that are dedicated to the spirit of peace. Thank you.

*(The U.N. Meditation Group Singers perform.)*



*His Excellency Mr. F.E. Boaten, Permanent Representative of Ghana:* Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen. I am most grateful to you personally and to the United Nations Meditation Group for giving me the opportunity of paying tribute to the Peace Corps Organisation on this happy occasion. Seventeen years in the life of an Organisation is a remarkable achievement. It is even more spectacular if the long years have been devoted to the service of mankind.

The Peace Corps, I believe, has accomplished this role. There can be no doubt that, like all human creations, the Peace Corps had its initial difficulties. But the fact that we are gathered here this evening to commemorate the seventeenth anniversary of its foundation is a testimony, not only to the successful paths which this Organisation has trod over the years, but to the courage and fortitude of its founders, whose leadership continues to be a source of sustenance to this Organisation.

I personally recall the mixed reception which the first group of Peace Corps Volunteers which arrived in my country received. While some people expressed scepticism about the teaching competence of the Volunteers, others feared that their easy-going and often relaxed approach to matters could have a bad influence on the Ghanian youth. Today, seventeen years after the arrival of the first batch of Volunteers, I am happy to say that my country continues to be one of the host countries of the Peace Corps—an indication that the Organisation has come to be accepted as a symbol of good will from the United States of America.

Please permit me, Mr. Chairman, to salute the founders of the Peace Corps and its management. I would like to pay a particular tribute to the Volunteers, including those of them who are not present here this evening but whose dedication and sense of service to mankind have enabled the Peace Corps Organisation to continue to thrive today.

Mr. Chairman, we are celebrating the anniversary of the Peace Corps at a time when the international community is actively searching for a new world order, an aspect of which is to reduce the arms build-up so that the enormous resources now tied to the arms race could be released to areas of social and economic development, which desperately need those resources. We cannot realise this noble objective in the continuing atmosphere of tension and suspicion which now exists among nations. As a representative of a country with a long association with the Peace Corps, I can say, Mr. Chairman, that properly oriented, the Peace Corps could be an effective instrument of promoting understanding among nations.

We in Ghana will ever remember the Peace Corps Volunteers for their invaluable contribution to Ghana's Education Service in the field of teaching, especially in the early sixties. Those were the years when the implementation of Ghana's accelerated educational programme had created a need for more teachers, especially in the fields of science and mathematics, for Ghana's newly established secondary schools. I recall with deep gratitude that it was the young men and women Volunteers of the Peace Corps Organisation who provided this much needed expertise in our schools. The Peace Corps did not only teach, they also participated in a number of self-help projects in our towns and villages.

That the Peace Corps Volunteers have been the ambassadors of United States good will may not be universally shared. But I can say that my country's continued association with the Peace Corps has had some positive results, especially in the field of education and in the promotion of understanding between Ghana and the United States of America. On this happy occasion, therefore, I associate myself with my colleagues who are also speaking to wish the Peace Corps Organisation and its management more success in their endeavours.

I thank you.





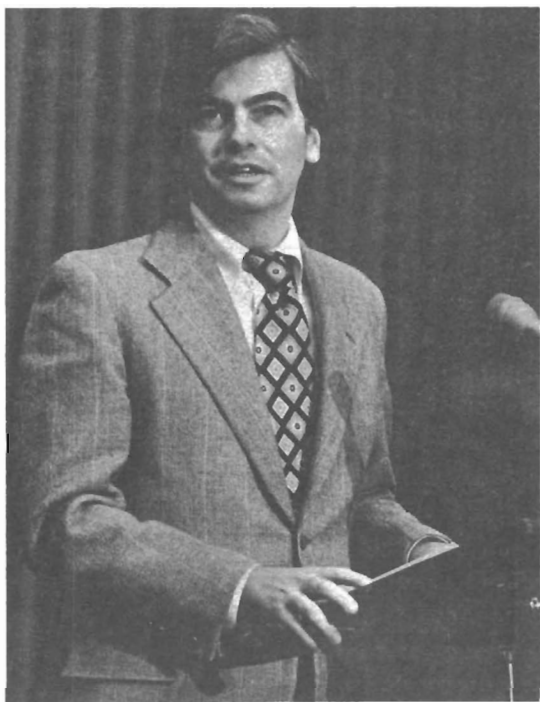
*His Excellency Mr Tan Sri Zaiton Ibrahim, Permanent Representative of Malaysia:* I am happy to be present at this ceremony marking the seventeenth anniversary of the founding of the Peace Corps. Since very early in its inception, the Peace Corps has been very active in Malaysia and January this year marked sixteen years of our association with Peace Corps Volunteers.

Volunteers are found in almost every sector of Malaysian life—in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, education and health, to name a few—and in the towns and cities, in the villages and the countryside. More than 3,000 Volunteers have served in my country and I am happy to say that their dedication and enthusiasm have cemented a bond of friendship between the American and the Malaysian peoples which could never be equalled.

Today in various parts of the United States one can come across many Americans who served in my country and who continue to serve it by spreading the message of Malaysian friendship and good will and speaking about Malaysian affairs to the American people. The reverse can also be said to be true. Hardly in any part of Malaysia can one not come across people who speak glowingly of the Peace Corps Volunteers who lived with them, learned their way of life and assisted them in various projects and programmes and provided a valuable contribution towards improving their way of life and conditions of living. Truly, it can be said that Malaysia owes a debt of gratitude to the Peace Corps Volunteers.

There is no doubt that Malaysia would like to see the Peace Corps activity continue and we look forward to more volunteers coming to Malaysia to assist us in our various development projects, faced as we are with a shortage of qualified people and of money to import skilled and qualified professionals.

On this seventeenth Anniversary of the Peace Corps, I wish to offer my sincere wishes for the further success of the movement.



*Congressman Christopher John Dodd of Connecticut:* Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and distinguished Ambassadors, honoured guests, former Peace Corps Volunteers, ladies and gentlemen, I am delighted today to be able to stand

before you and join with those others here in commemorating seventeen years of Peace Corps service. I hope that my colleagues in Congress will hear the words of the Chairman and that truly we will become an institution seeking peace.

I will not take long; we have a rather lengthy programme here, with a number of speakers. Talking about the Peace Corps experience, it is hard for me today to accept the fact that ten years ago this year I was completing my service as a Peace Corps Volunteer. And I think that if anyone had told me when I arrived back in this country, after spending a couple of months traveling through South America hitchhiking with a rather lengthy beard and a pack on my back, that ten years later I would be completing my second year in Congress, I think I would have laughed hysterically at them. It certainly wasn't my intention then to enter into the world of politics. But what has happened, amazingly so, is that after serving as Peace Corps Volunteers, 17,000 of us have returned to this country to contribute in a variety of different ways to the improvement of the quality of life for people who live in this country.

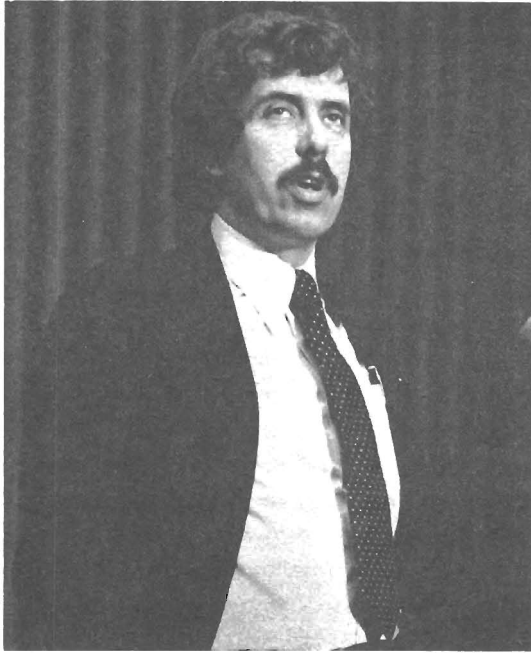
It was a presumptuous idea seventeen years ago when Senator Humphrey and President Kennedy first initiated the idea of a Peace Corps. Certainly the idea was then, as I assume it is today, to make a lasting contribution to those nations and to those peoples of the world who need help, who need help

to help themselves. But what has happened for all of us who have shared in that experience is that we have taken, I think, far more than we have given. I certainly feel as one ex-Peace Corps Volunteer that the Dominican Republic gave me far more than I ever contributed. There are certain projects, I suppose, and people that each one of us who are ex-Peace Corps Volunteers can look back to with fondness and can attribute a certain significance to in terms of our own contribution. The real significance, however, if I may be a bit parochial, lies in the contribution the Peace Corps Volunteers have been making to this nation.

And if there is anything that I would love to see in the next year or two—and I'll make this pitch to my good friend Sam Brown who is sitting here—it is that we begin to take advantage of the returned Peace Corps Volunteers in our own country. These are people who are doing a variety of things in their own communities and states. These are people who have learned a tremendous amount as a result of their international experience. I think if we do this we will be fully recognizing the significance of the Peace Corps, not only its contribution to those nations of the world who have benefited from the Peace Corps, but to our own citizens in this country. That I think will bring the Peace Corps to a full cycle.

It is an agency which is constantly in an evolutionary stage, constantly growing; and under the

fine leadership, I might add, of Sam Brown in the past year, we see a new Peace Corps emerging, a Peace Corps with a great degree of sensitivity and feeling for our host countries where the Peace Corps exists and for the people returning to this nation anxious to continue this contribution. So it is truly a great pleasure for me as a returned Volunteer, and as a member of Congress secondarily, to be able to join with you today under the sponsorship of the United Nations Meditation Group to pay tribute to an Organization that I think has best represented the true ideals of the American public. Thank you all very, very much.



*Mr. Sam Brown, Director of ACTION:* Thank you. I would like to start, not the way I intended to, but by first responding to Congressman Dodd. Approximately a year ago when I came to ACTION, the federal volunteer service agency which includes the Peace Corps, I discovered that the mailing list of former Volunteers had been lost in the course of the years. And I got thinking about how it is that that list of people, who in my judgement constitute one of the nation's most valuable resources, could have

been lost. And then I began to recall the demonstrations against the war when Lyndon Johnson visited Latin America in 1967. And then I recalled that in 1970 Peace Corps Volunteers “liberated” Peace Corps headquarters in opposition to the war in Vietnam. And then it began to occur to me that the political leadership of this country in the last ten years probably had a somewhat different view of the Peace Corps Volunteers than former Peace Corps Volunteers may have had of themselves.

As a consequence, it has really been only the past year that we have attempted to reconstruct not only the mailing list but the kind of networks that make it possible to contact people as distinguished as the former Volunteers that are here tonight—and those who occupy other high positions, and equally important, those who across the country are adding to the growth of their own communities and contributing in a variety of ways, and to try to pull together these resources through a project which has now been started for former Volunteers. So, those of you here who are former Volunteers, apparently we knew how to get in touch with you, since you are here. If you have friends with whom we did not know how to get in touch, let me make a simple plea now to have them get in touch with us, because we would like to continue to work with you, not only in your own communities, but also in the expansion and continued contribution of the Peace Corps to this country.



Seventeen years ago, a little more, in January of 1961, John Kennedy made a statement in his Inaugural Address that we are all familiar with. It hung in college dorms, in churches, in a little bit of every place else in the following years. He said in his Inaugural Address in January 1961, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." Then only six weeks later, in March of 1961, the Peace Corps was born. And the beginning of one answer to what we could do for our country became apparent. It only became apparent over a longer period of time that we could clearly in that way contribute not only to our own country, but to the countries of the world.

That was a glorious time. Senator Humphrey had introduced the first bill in 1958 to create what later became the Peace Corps. Camelot was alive and well in the United States. The world was marked by new, independent nations, many of them struggling themselves to find their sense of the most appropriate form of government, the most appropriate form of development, the best ways to relate to the rest of the world. And the Peace Corps was clearly one idea which made it possible for us to relate, as Americans, to the aspirations of those newly emerging countries.

During the last seventeen years, none of us could have, I think, anticipated that the hope which marked that era of the 1960's both here and abroad would be so dreadfully shattered, at home

by assassination and abroad by a war not largely supported by the American people and certainly opposed by the majority of people in the world; that those dreams of a cordial and loving relationship between the United States and the rest of the world would be tainted by a history which, I think, many of us would change if we could, including many of those who were forming it at the time. But during that period of time, and during that sort of loss, I suppose, of our innocence, we began to learn a number of things concerning ourselves, and at the same time, the rest of the world gained a greater understanding of its own self and its relationship to us.

President Nyerere of Tanzania was in this country about eight months ago now. He spoke at Howard University, and the title of his speech was "The Plea of the Poor Nations". He spoke not of a charitable relationship to the rest of the world, and particularly to the so-called developed world, but rather of a relationship which permitted the third world, the developing world, to gain its own sense of self-sufficiency—not to find charity but to find the capacity and the opportunity for self-sufficiency.

The debates over the nature of that relationship have, in many ways, intensified. Debates not only about the new international economic order, but between the North and the South, have marked the last ten years or so of history, saying, "What is appropriately our relationship? How is it

that the United States can contribute to that self-sufficiency in the remainder of the world? What is it that we can do to either get out of the way or contribute to that development?" And I would like to suggest tonight that a substantial part of the answer is not a resolution of the new international economic order, not a termination of ideological struggles, but rather a capacity for a kind of relationship which permits us to genuinely contribute, as has been suggested, to the self-sufficiency of the rest of the world and not the increased dependency of the world.

The Peace Corps has, over a period of seventeen years, helped to build that self-sufficiency. The core of the relationship has been the notion that when there was a need, the way to resolve that need was not simply to provide material and manpower in an endless way, but to work with counterparts, to train manpower to deal with the capacity of other nations to build their own economic base, their own educational system, their own capacity for self-sufficiency. And in that way, as Congressman Dodd suggested, I think we have ourselves, as Americans, gained immeasurably in an understanding of the aspirations of the world, in an understanding of the peoples of the world, in an understanding of our own opportunity and of our own limitations in the world. And I think every Volunteer that returned, at least whom I have ever talked to, came back more impressed not with their own

capacity to contribute, but with the severe limitations of what could be done by those of us who live here in a developing country abroad.

If that is true, we have the opportunities in the future for growth domestically which comes from the continued involvement of the American people, not only as Volunteers but also in support of the Peace Corps in general. And there is every indication that the American people broadly support the Peace Corps, support it probably, in fact, more strongly than any other part of our foreign presence, including our foreign military presence—if the polls can be believed. And I would like to believe that this is, in fact, an accurate reflection of our people, the American people, and their view of the world. And we have a chance now to contribute through the United Nations Volunteers and through other multi-national volunteer programmes that permit us to work with volunteers from other countries. We have the capacity, I hope, and I think we would all hope, to understand better the nature of what our contribution can be, to understand that it must be toward that self-sufficiency, not toward providing that which we may have an abundance of—technical skill or some other kind of skill which is not necessarily appropriate—but to give those things of ourselves, of our character, of our understanding; and in return for that giving, to receive a kind of abundance for our own country that comes from genuine giving.

There is a quote in the lobby of the Peace Corps building in Washington, D.C. which was from John Kennedy originally and remains in the lobby there. It says simply, "If they mean to have peace, let it begin here." I would like to suggest, on the seventeenth anniversary of the Peace Corps, that if we mean to have peace, we need for it to continue from here. We have a beginning; we need to look to the future and what we can do. I think we all do want peace, and if more of the future is marked by the kind of spirit which marks the Peace Corps and the relationship of the host countries to the Peace Corps Volunteers, then we can truly begin to have that peace. Thank you.

*(to be continued in next issue)*



*At the 21 March 1978 meeting of the Meditation Group, Sri Chinmoy surprised Ms. Lottie Robbins of OPI with a trophy of appreciation: On behalf of our Meditation Group, I wish to present this to you with our deepest appreciation and admiration. You have got a promotion. Promotion means progress, and our whole philosophy is based on progress. It is our progress that makes God happy. You have made us happy and our happiness is expressed by this humble token of our appreciation.*