

ELEVENTH ANNIVERSARY MARKED

Sri Chinmoy Meditation marked its 11th year of existence at the United Nations in a programme held 14 April 1981 in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations. Ambassador Zenon Rossides of Cyprus spoke about the importance of the spirit as well as the intellect in decision-making at the United Nations and pointed out that in a world which has nuclear capability, the cost of error in decisions could be great. Ambassador Reynaldo Arcilla of the Philippines spoke about his country, and those present were delighted to be able to ask him questions. Following are excerpts from the programme.



Ambassador Reynaldo Arcilla, Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations: Thank you, Sri Chinmoy, Ambassador Rossides,

friends. I was asked to speak on the Philippines and I did prepare a brief description of the country. However, I am sure that most, if not all, of you have a fairly good knowledge of the Philippines. I suggested, therefore, that perhaps it would be better if you asked me questions about the country and I would be very glad to answer them.

After Ambassador Arcilla gave some background on his country, he answered several questions, some of which appear below.

Question: I work with several Philippine nationals at the U.N. and I find them to be a very happy and proud people. Do you think you could comment on what you feel the source of that happiness and pride is?

Ambassador Arcilla: Yes. We are indeed a fun-loving people. We have what has been described, and I think quite aptly, as a "Latin temperament," derived from more than 300 years of Spanish influence. We tend to take things easy and we are great improvisors. We take pride in the fact that we are happy even in the face of the most adverse conditions. There are, of course, times when we do take ourselves seriously, like back in 1972 when we had to decide whether we would go the way of other countries in our area or achieve our national goals on a self-reliant basis. Otherwise, if you meet a Filipino, he's a most happy individual. He's not simple-minded, mind you, but he just loves life, as I do love life.

Question: Another aspect of the Filipino people that I have found to be very important at the United Nations is that you have an excellent reputation as being good workers.

Ambassador Arcilla: Yes, we do make it a point to nominate the most qualified people to work at the United Nations. We make mistakes every now and then, but on the whole I think we are quite successful in seconding good workers to the United Nations.

After the question and answer period, the Ambassador concluded with the following remarks:

I would like to read a quotation to you on what we think of the United Nations:

What is it that brings us all together and ties us all together in the United Nations? We are brought together and held together by the vision of a world in which man neither has to kill or be killed, a world in which man will not be separated from social justice, a world in which he will not be abused, cheapened or humiliated, a world in which man knows there is adequate nourishment for the bodies and minds of his children, a world in which nations themselves submit to law and the process of law, a world, in short, in which the conditions of peace and the conditions of life are understood and upheld. This world of ours is infinitely precious. The human life it sustains must be cherished and nurtured. The United Nations gives us a promise of upholding the human

esteem and of bringing order and dignity and peace to our planet. The first order of business for the human race, therefore, is to develop the United Nations and bring it to full size. For it is through the United Nations that we can justify the great gift of life.

The definition of the United Nations which I just read was made by none other than "Mr. United Nations" himself, General Romulo. General Romulo has been identified with Philippine foreign policy for more years than most of us here could or would ever remember. He has been in public life, particularly in the field of foreign affairs, for more than 50 years. And at the tender age of 82, his obsession remains the strengthening of the United Nations. He has been in the forefront, and is still in the forefront, of efforts to strengthen the United Nations through a restudy of the Charter to make it more responsive to present realities.

Thank you.



Ambassador Zenon Rossides, Permanent Mission of Cyprus to the United Nations: Sri Chinmoy,

Ambassador Arcilla and friends, I'm very happy to be here with you today on this eleventh anniversary of the meditation group at the United Nations. I would like to say a few words about the importance of having a meditation group here at the United Nations. What is meditation? Meditation is the communion of the human mind with the universal mind, with the universal order and with the moral flow of the universe. The human mind can never go wrong when it is in communion with the universal mind. But it can go very wrong when only the intellect comes into play, using cliches of an age that is no longer with us, not able to adjust to the present day demands for peace and security in a world that is in very great danger of nuclear catastrophe.

It so happens that this anniversary comes at the same time as the shuttle of the astronauts, who are now circling the earth thirty-six times. The shuttle is very much in the news. But I was also reading an article yesterday in the *Times* that said we are in great danger of a nuclear confrontation. It is the first time that the *Times* has written so clearly about this possibility. The article spoke about the idea of a limited nuclear war which could bring success to one of the nations fighting in it. The article showed that this would be a catastrophe of unmeasurable, unthinkable dimensions and that it should be avoided.

Now the meditation group at the United Nations, by bringing the spirit of man into play, can help towards avoiding this catastrophe. Meditation is not taken as seriously as it should be in the United Nations. It is not realised that in some ways these meetings are more important than the Security Council's meetings. What, after all, does the Security Council do? It discusses a subject for

weeks and passes a resolution which sometimes, unfortunately, is not worth the paper on which it is written, because there is no provision for the implementation of the resolution. Why is there no provision? The Charter does very effectively provide for a system of international security and peace on the basis of giving effect to the decisions of the Security Council to bring order and security to the world. But chapter seven of the United Nations Charter, which gives effect to the principles and purpose of the Charter, has been laid aside on the highway and forgotten and, up to now, has not been applied. How can we function in the United Nations when we don't comply with the basic requirements of the Charter for international security and peace, for which the United Nations was established?

My friend Dr. Romulo, about whom Ambassador Arcilla has spoken, is the Chairman of the group of experts of which I am a member, appointed by the Secretary-General to study the relationship of international security to disarmament. How can we agree to disarm when the arms race goes on unabated? The Disarmament Committee has met every year for the last thirty-three years or so to discuss means of disarmament. But at the same time the arms race goes on escalating and nothing is done to stop it. How can we reduce our arms by agreement and yet at the same time create new and more dangerous weapons of destruction? There is no logic in the way we function at the United Nations. There is no logic because we are so centered on selfish outlooks—individually, behind which is money, and nationally, behind which is ideology or the national interests—forgetting that we are now in an age when we have to consider ourselves, above all, citi-

zens of the world, if we are to survive. But this is too often forgotten completely, and this is why the meditation group is necessary—to bring the spirit of man into play. Unless the spirit comes into play, the intellect will continue to misguide us. Because of the intellect, we have reached a point when the *Times* can report that we are going to have a nuclear war at the same time as the astronauts are circling the earth to see from the shuttle the unity of this little planet, to see the need for cooperation instead of antagonism and war.

This group is trying. What is it doing? We have just heard some songs. What is in a song? In a song there is the rhythm of the universe. The very beat of time in a song—in the music of Beethoven or in the music of an old wild man beating on a drum—is part of the same rhythm, the rhythm of the universe. This is the rhythm in the songs we have heard today. This is the rhythm that is in the mind of Sri Chinmoy and in the minds of all those who meditate with him to bring cooperation, understanding, peace and survival to mankind. That is why it is so important to have a meditation group at the United Nations. If we don't invoke the spirit, we will be lost. The bankruptcy of the human intellect has been clearly shown. Now we are at a time when there is still more intensity in the intellectual, selfish outlooks, when we are forgetting that we are one and that we have one hope: either we survive or we perish all together, no matter what the differences are and who is right and who is wrong. He is wrong who does not understand that we are at an age when we should cooperate and have unity in the world. This is the spirit that meditation is bringing to the world. I hope more importance will therefore be given, for the sake of the world, to the meditation group.

Thank you.

Sri Chinmoy: On behalf of the meditation group at the United Nations, I wish to say a few words. Today we are observing the eleventh anniversary of our group, so in terms of years we are eleven years old. But unfortunately, in terms of strength and maturity, we cannot say that we are eleven years old; we are still like infants. We are supposed to grow into a tree, but right now we are still a tiny plant. Perhaps we shall remain a tiny plant. God alone knows why we remain so.

As ill luck will have it, many prominent members of the United Nations find it difficult to appreciate our devoted service to the United Nations. They ascribe deplorable motives to what we do here. Some of them go to the length of criticising us mercilessly. Some of them deliberately prevent us from making appreciable progress.

But one thing I wish to tell my friends and my students here. At the United Nations we have found someone who will remain eternally invaluable in our body, vital, mind, heart and soul—our dearest Brother Rossides, our most affectionate Brother Rossides. He is, at once, our strongest supporter and our best advisor. He has been helping us in various ways—encouraging us, inspiring us, energising us, correcting us and perfecting us since we have had the opportunity to be in his close company. Ambassador Rossides is one individual who is a supremely chosen instrument of the United Nations, for the United Nations. He knows what we are aiming at and how sincerely we are trying to be of service to the United Nations.

If the meditation group has anything pure in its existence, then it is gratitude, soulful gratitude. Gratitude is our only value, our only treasure. And when it is a matter of gratitude that comes from the inmost recesses of our hearts, there is one

individual to whom we can and we must offer it—Ambassador Rossides. In him we see the vision-reality of the United Nations. In him the soul of the United Nations speaks not only in unmistakable terms but also in prophetic heights and depths—the heights of the Himalayas and the depths of the Pacific Ocean. He not only speaks for us but also is trying to make us good instruments of the United Nations so that we can bring to the fore its world-changing and world-unifying dream, which is founded upon inner poise. These things we are learning from his wisdom-light. He is at once our friend, our brother, our advisor and our father. In many blessingful capacities, he is helping us, shaping us and illumining us so that we can be true torch-bearers of a new dawn—an illumining and fulfilling dawn which the comity of all the nations desperately needs today.

I am asking the singers to come up and sing our “Thank You” song, our gratitude-song, to our dearest brother, friend, father: Ambassador Rossides. Today is a very special occasion for us, and on this special occasion we must offer our gratitude-heart to the one who so deeply deserves it at every moment.

After the meditation group singers sang the “Thank You” song, Sri Chinmoy made the following closing remarks.

Sri Chinmoy: Each member of the meditation group is a petal. These petals some day, somehow will be fully blossomed, and I am sure that we will then be placed on the shrine of the inner temple of the United Nations, where a oneness-heart, a oneness-life and a oneness-home will play and grow together and thus fulfil the supremely important

vision of the United Nations. We are misunderstood; no harm. As long as we can remain faithful to the soul of the United Nations, as long as we can maintain our faith in the vision of the United Nations, we do not have to worry about anything. We shall succeed, for our success is nothing short of humanity's most glorious progress in discovering a oneness-home, a oneness-home, a oneness-home.