

For Howard
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Men of the Heart

The need for a "man of heart" is understood, at least subconsciously, by many peoples and cultures. The continuing popular story of Don Quixote in our Western culture is an example of the man "with a heart of gold". There seems to be the feeling, however, that the man of heart is usually the fool, though sometimes the divine fool.

The man of heart, and what he represents, taps some deep inner source and awakens some of the highest feelings in man. The legend of Robin Hood, the bandit with the heart of gold, is another example of this. But in many cases, literature depicts the man of heart as being a combination of positive and negative qualities. Don Quixote is a man of heart, but also a fool. Robin Hood is a man of heart, but also a bandit.

What I suggest is that the concept of "man of heart" underlies much of what we consider most inspiring and most desirable in our culture. And further, the literary interpretation of the man of heart is, in effect, only a mis-representation of the purer concept that can be truly understood only in spiritual terms.

The man of heart, I feel, can best be symbolized by the Christs and the Buddhas of the world — men of true perfection — rather than literary spin-off's of these great archetypes. Further, I wish to say that very often real life provides better examples of "men of heart" than literature. Only one has to know where to look. If one looks with the eyes of spirituality, it may

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be easier to locate and conceptualize the man of heart than if one looks with the eyes of literature.

If one is seeking out the man of heart today, what more natural place would one expect to find him than at the United Nations. Indeed, the history of UN leadership in recent years has been an eloquent testimonial to the achievements and more important to the spiritual efforts of men of heart. For the remainder of this paper, I would like to elaborate on this theme by drawing on three examples from the United Nations — Secretaries-General Dag Hammarskjold and U Thant and Sri Chinmoy.

These men, Dag Hammarskjold, U Thant and Sri Chinmoy, represent a fusion of spiritual values with political, or action-oriented values, and serve as symbols for the 20th century world of what the man of heart really is, or can aspire to become. They have combined in their lives a deep religious sense with a breadth of vision that has helped guide mankind. Each of these men have shared common goals, but go about achieving them in a different way.

In a talk which Sri Chinmoy gave on leadership, he said, "He who leads in the heart is the real leader....This leadership is not the leadership of the self-styled leader. This leadership is the recognition of one's inseparable oneness with the rest of humanity. This leadership is totally different from the vital and mental leadership. Psychic leadership is founded upon the heart's inner awareness and oneness with reality as a whole."^{1/}

^{1/} Can Meditation Enhance Leadership? - 12 Sept. 1974, Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium, Union Vision: Talks Delivered at the United Nations, Sri Chinmoy

I have been told that Woodrow Wilson once remarked, "I would rather fail in a project that will ultimately succeed, than succeed in a project that will ultimately fail." Only a person in-touch with the core beyond the surface of the waves of time and space can consciously inspire humanity to move forward. The detachment from the immediate results of actions, along with a commitment to continual positive efforts in the face of criticism, I consider very important traits for the leader who is truly spiritual.

I was more than pleased to find the Meditation Group at the United Nations and for more than five years have observed the leadership of Sri Chinmoy, the Group's leader. His is definitely a leadership based on outer silence and inner strength. Through his personal example and the appreciation he shows for the good qualities of dedicated people in the United Nations community, he has been able for nine years to direct a group composed of people from many different countries, religious backgrounds, political and cultural traditions and ages. My experience has been that, in any voluntary association where there was "high energy" and strong personalities, a breaking point is reached where the group dissolves and most often the original reason for forming is drastically changed, or forgotten. However, the credo of the Group, simply stated by Sri Chinmoy many years ago, has even more appeal now due to the number of people who have been inspired by it, and who have affirmed the belief from which it originates:

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"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

In 1977, a delegate to the United Nations asked Sri Chinmoy if he foresaw the possibility of a fully committed spiritual person becoming Secretary-General in this century. I don't think Sri Chinmoy's answer was quite what the delegate expected! The key idea reflected is in the line "I wish to tell you that the twentieth century has already been blessed with two spiritual giants, Dag Hammarskjold and U Thant."^{2/}

These two men were definitely practical people familiar with the problems of the world and yet they were men of the heart, truly spiritual people.

Further evidence of the spirituality of U Thant is present in the memoirs of U Thant — View from the U.N. published last year by Doubleday Publishing Company. In the introduction, he implies that it is important for him to write from the heart, "I would not be writing from my heart, from the depth of my religious faith, and from the unique experience I gained during my tenure, if I confined my account merely to the things that happened. I must attempt to distill as much as I can of the essence of the moral values and humanism that have inspired me in the discharge of my responsibilities

^{2/} Flame Waves, Part 11 Questions Answered at the United Nations, Sri Chinmoy, page 8.

^{3/} View from the U.N., U Thant, page xvii

U Thant was known for his poise in the most trying of circumstances. The secret of this might be found in his personal practice of meditation. In the middle of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Secretary-General went to Cuba to try to exercise his good offices to bring about a favorable solution. On the day he arrived, he wrote: "I got up at six-thirty the next morning (Oct. 31), and tried to meditate, as usual. I sat up on bed and closed my eyes, but my mind wandered. Scenes of the United States destroyer off the Cuban coast, the Cuban anti-aircraft emplacements, an unsmiling Castro, a nervous Soviet ambassador and a youthful missile General flitted across my mind's eye. It was difficult to shut off my senses, even for a brief moment, and feel inner peace. Perhaps loss of sleep was the reason. Or was I very worried? In any case, I managed to practice "metta" (good will) and "karuna" (compassion) to all."^{4/}

And again, his personal practice and practicality show him as a man of heart who is concerned and involved with the world. By his own account of his actions during the succession of the Katanga province in the Congo, a period when the Secretary-General received criticism from all sides, "As a Buddhist, I abhor all forms of violence; the feeling is embedded in my inner Self. Since that memorable Security Council meeting of November 24, 1961, authorizing me to use a requisite measure of force in the Congo, to evict foreign mercenaries, my conscience has been pricking me. Any news of violent death, whether of a Congolese, a United Nations soldier,

^{4/} View from the U.N., U Thant, page 186

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or a foreign mercenary, saddened me deeply. Every morning I prayed for the sparing of lives. In the course of my meditations, I practiced "metta" (good will) and "karuna" (compassion) to all in the Congo, without distinction as to race, religion or color. I realized, however, that the moral principles of my religion had to be adjusted to the practical responsibilities of my Office. I had to view the United Nations operation in the Congo as a battle for peace, not as a war; to me, war — all war — is folly and insanity. I regarded the UN soldiers as soldiers of peace. In the final phase of the UN operation in the Congo, I thought of one of Lord Buddha's maxims: 'He who guides others by a procedure that is non-violent and equitable, he is said to be a guardian of the law, wise and righteous.'^{5/}

Towards the beginning of View from the U.N., U Thant also quotes both Albert Schweitzer and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, and like those two spiritual leaders, shows that he has the same vision of oneness of humanity.

Examples of the effect of U Thant can be found in the statements offered at programmes sponsored by the Meditation Group for the late Secretary-General U Thant, and also in Sri Chinmoy's book U Thant: Divinity's Smile and Humanity's Cry. On 26 November 1977, the Meditation Group held a special meditation in the Chapel of the Church Centre for the UN for the former Secretary-General U Thant, who had passed away the previous day. As part of the tributes that were offered in the Chapel, I stated:
^{5/} View from the U.N., U Thant, page 144.

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"While working in the Documents Section during the 1973 General Assembly, I came across the speeches given on former Secretary-General U Thant's retirement. I was deeply moved by certain sections of these speeches, which made me aware of the humility he embodied in his personal relationships and of the vastness of his spiritual vision. The first section was by the Chairman of the Staff Committee, Dr. N.G. Rathore: 'You are as much at home with a group of visiting children as you are with the Head of State, and you treat both with equal courtesy and careful attention...I cannot claim to know much about Buddhism, but I hope you will permit me to say, with the greatest sincerity, that your conduct, your example and your personal life are a tribute to that great religion and philosophy.'

U Thant, in reply, said: '...above all, I would attach the greatest importance to spiritual values, spiritual qualities...I have in mind the spiritual virtues, faith in oneself, the purity of one's inner self which to me is the greatest virtue of all. With this approach, with this philosophy, with this concept alone, we will be able to fashion the kind of society we want, the kind of society which was envisaged by the founding fathers twenty-six years ago.'^{6/}

Dag Hammarskjold who preceded U Thant as Secretary-General, was known and admired by many throughout the world. The publishing of his "white book" Markings brought a part of his ^{6/}Meditation at the United Nations Monthly Bulletin, November 1974, Tribute to U Thant, page 52

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inner life into the public view.

In early 1974, during an orientation course I attended, we were addressed by the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Brian Urquhart. He is a senior official who has been with the UN since its inception in 1946. I was much impressed by this man and found his wealth of knowledge and commitment to the highest UN ideals inspiring. He was given complete access to the private papers of Dag Hammarskjold, after the late Secretary-General's untimely and tragic death. The picture he presents of the Secretary-General in his book Hammarskjold shows that Dag Hammarskjold was truly a spiritual leader.

Devotion and love are generally seen as qualities that come from the heart. These Dag Hammarskjold had. He also had a great commitment to progress and a feeling that service to others was a necessity. The two other qualities which I consider essential for a spiritual leader are humility and surrender to the Will of God. The following quotes, I believe, illustrate these qualities: "...I inherited a belief that no life was more satisfactory than one of selfless service to your country — or humanity. This service required a sacrifice of all personal interests, but likewise the courage to stand up unflinchingly for your convictions concerning what was right and good for the community, whatever were the views in fashion...But the explanation of how man should live a life of active social service in full harmony with himself as a member of the community of the spirit, I have found in the

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writings of those great medieval mystics for whom "self-surrender" had been the way to self-realization, and who in "singleness of mind" and "inwardness" had found strength to say yes to every demand, which the needs of their neighbors made them face, and to say yes also to every fate life had in store for them when they followed the call of duty, as they understood it. "Love" — that much misused and misinterpreted word — for them meant simply an overflowing of the strength which they felt themselves filled with when living in true self-oblivion. And this love found natural expressions in an unhesitant fulfillment of duty and in an unreserved acceptance of life, whatever it brought them personally of toil, suffering — or happiness."^{7/}

This quote from Mr. Urquhart's book is revealing as to the spirituality of the Secretary-General: "Religion for him was a dialogue of his own with God, and faith was the foundation for duty, dedication and service, qualities that he considered most essential in himself and most admirable in others."^{8/}

Of simplicity, Hammarskjold wrote: "Simplicity is to experience reality not in relation to ourselves, but in its sacred independence. Simplicity is to see, judge and act from the point of rest in ourselves. Then, how much disappears! And how everything else falls into place!

In the point of rest at the corner of our being, we encounter a world where all things are at rest in the same way. Then a tree becomes a mystery, a cloud a revelation, each man a cosmos of whose

7/ Hammarskjold, Brian Urquhart, page 24

8/ Hammarskjold, Brian Urquhart, page 24

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riches we can only catch glimpses. For the simple, life is simple, but it opens a book in which we never get beyond the first syllable."^{9/}

Mr. Hammarskjold spoke of the inner life of a person such: "There is no formula to teach us how to arrive at maturity and there is no grammar for the language of the inner life....The rest is silence because the rest is something that has to be resolved between a man and himself."^{10/}

In giving a summary of the nature of Dag Hammarskjold's duty, Mr. Urquhart describes him thus, "The springs of Hammarskjold's sense of vocation ran deep. They were traditional, intellectual and religious. His identification with Christian thought was not messianic, but rather in the old tradition of the imitation of Christ in sacrifice and in service to others. He was a member of that small and lonely band who throughout history have engaged at the same time in trying to deal with the hard world of political and social reality and in searching endlessly for a spiritual meaning which transcends the world."^{11/}

It was through Dag Hammarskjold's efforts that the Meditation Room at the United Nations was remodeled to as we now know it, and opened to the public in 1958.

The only time I personally saw Secretary-General U Thant was when he came to the premiere performance of Sri Chinmoy's play "Siddhartha Becomes the Buddha". The admiration for the

^{9/} Hammarskjold, Brian Urquhart, page 25.

^{10/} Hammarskjold, Brian Urquhart, page 7.

^{11/} Hammarskjold, Brian Urquhart, page 23-24.

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Buddha was shared by these two men of varying religious backgrounds. The Secretary-General was mostly involved in the political life of the United Nations, and yet supported the spiritual development of the Organization and its individuals. Sri Chinmoy's main activity is leading the meditations at the United Nations twice weekly, and he has shown such concern and respect for the political leaders such as U Thant and Hammarskjold and for the on-going programs of the Meditation Group such as the Human Rights and International Year of the Child programs.

- This appreciation of the good qualities of others is shared by the three men — Hammarskjold, U Thant and Sri Chinmoy.
- U Thant was a devout Buddhist and his calmness and personal warmth was noted by many of his colleagues.
 - Dag Hammarskjold came from a Christian background, but considered his relationship with God to be a very private matter. He is remembered for his high ideals and his work to establish a true feeling of "service" and excellence in the UN Secretariat.
 - Sri Chinmoy was raised in the Hindu tradition, and spent twenty years in a spiritual community practicing meditation before coming to the West. He has written books on the Buddha, Christ and other spiritual Avatars, and encourages people to go deep into their own spiritual nature to discover Truth. By his meditations at the UN, and through the programs sponsored by the Meditation Group, Sri Chinmoy reminds the delegates and staff that it is a blessing to be able to serve the United Nations, and encourages support for the highest goals of the UN in the staff member's daily work.

the criteria that should be applied. His last speech was a legacy to the United Nations.

Leone Muller

While working in the Documents Section during the 1973 General Assembly, I came across the speeches given on former Secretary-General U Thant's retirement. I was deeply moved by certain sections of these speeches, which made me aware of the humility he embodied in his personal relationships and of the vastness of his spiritual vision.

The first section was by the Chairman of the Staff Committee, Dr. N.G. Rathore:

"You are as much at home with a group of visiting children as you are with a Head of State, and you treat both with equal courtesy and careful attention ... I cannot claim to know much about Buddhism, but I hope you will permit me to say, with the greatest sincerity, that your conduct, your example and your personal life are a tribute to that great religion and philosophy."

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Kevin Keefe

**The complete text appears in Staff Committee Bulletin 281.*