

PROGRAMME IN HONOUR OF
AUSTRALIA'S FOUNDATION DAY

27 January 1978
Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium
United Nations, New York

Remarks:

H.E. Mr. Ralph L. Harry, C.B.E.
Permanent Representative of Australia
to the United Nations

"Salutation to Australia":
Sri Chinmoy, Director
United Nations Meditation Group

"Waltzing Matilda":
Instrumental

Two Australian Folk Songs
and
Readings from Great Australians:
Australian members, U.N. Meditation Group

Colour slides of Australia

"O My Australia":
United Nations Meditation Group Singers

Australian National Anthem

Ms. Meredith Bennett Firstly, I'd like to welcome you all here, particularly Australia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Mr. Ralph Harry, Mrs. Harry and Mr. Geoff Dixon from the Australian Consulate. Today's programme celebrates the founding of Australia on 26 January 1788. At that time, 190 years ago, Captain Arthur Phillip of the British Royal Navy hoisted the British flag in Sydney Cove. The journey from England to Australia had taken him and his little fleet more than eight months and now they were to begin a new life in a land that is unlike any other: immense, implacable, harsh.

Australia did not yield easily to development by Europeans and these early settlers faced enormous problems. Lack of communication between the colonies was reflected in the history of Australian unity. The Commonwealth of Australia didn't come into existence until 1 January 1901. Since that time, it has been growing steadily and producing many outstanding leaders and public servants.

I'd like to introduce to you Ambassador Harry, who will offer you some insights on the history of Australian music.

H.E. Mr. Ralph L. Harry, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations: Ladies and gentlemen, I have been asked today on our 190th birthday to say something about Australian music. In 1976 we presented, on behalf of UNICEF, in the General Assembly Hall, a programme of Australian music. There were Australian singers principally, but also some instrumentalists. On that occasion, Rolf Harris reminded us that long before Captain Cook found the east coast of Australia and long before Europeans came to

Australia, the Australian people had developed a most interesting music for their rituals and for their life in general, and that Australian aboriginal music is still alive today.

I heard a few years ago here in New York the Adelaide University Wind Quintet with two didgeridoo players presenting a wind sextet. And, of course, that tradition has an influence on our contemporary music. But the main stream of musical development in the last 190 years has come from Europe—from England, Scotland and Ireland—and, more recently, as immigration has diversified, from Germany, Italy, Greece, Spain and practically every part of Europe.

Australians like Dame Nelly Melba, John Brownlee, Marjorie Lawrence and Joan Sutherland, whose voice you will be hearing along with the slides, have been trained in classical opera and have become world opera stars, singing in the Monnaie, La Scala, Covent Garden and here at the Met in New York. At the same time, a very vigorous folk music tradition has developed, at first using melodies from other countries—from Europe and the United States—but increasingly with themes and poetry from our own culture. You will be hearing music from our pastoral areas, the scene for our great wool industry, where shearers produce wool to be sent to you here to cope with the wintry conditions.

Along with that, there has been a new stream in our music. Increasingly, in the last thirty years, the young Australian composers, like Dreyfus and Sculthorpe, have been travelling to Asia and to the Pacific and bringing back new musical ideas. Also, they have been receiving in Australia musicians from our neighbouring countries and drafting their

ideas and concepts into Australian compositions, thus forming a bridge between our people and the peoples of Asia and the Pacific.

I'm sorry that today you will be hearing neither the music of our aboriginal people nor contemporary music including the Asian influences. But perhaps the samples that you will hear today will give you an idea of some of the music of Australia. You will remember also that we are also reaching back into the past and reaching out to our friends. We believe that these trends are fully in accordance with the ideals of the United Nations, which we in Australia, as well as your group, are seeking to foster. Thank you very much.



H.E. Mr. Ralph L. Harry, C.B.E., Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations (photo by Richard Howard).

Ms. Bennett: Thank you, Ambassador Harry. I would now like to invite Sri Chinmoy, the Director of the United Nations Meditation Group, to read a tribute that he wrote to the soul of Australia when he visited our country in 1976.

Sri Chinmoy, Director of the United Nations Meditation Group:

SALUTATION TO THE SOUL OF AUSTRALIA

My aspiring heart is saluting you.
My illumining soul is loving you.
In you I see the perfect combination of the body's
service and the vital's dynamism.
Your soul is at once the embodiment of the ancient
sun and revelation of tomorrow's dawn.
Your body's consciousness is the expansion
of vastness.
Your heart's delight is the perfection
of illumination.
Slowly and steadily your body walks.
Pointedly and unerringly your mind runs.
Devotedly and unconditionally your heart dives.
Eternally and supremely your soul flies.
Your life's greatness-dream is humanity's
transcendental pride.
Your life's goodness-reality is humanity's
universal treasure.

Ms. Bennett: We shall now begin the musical section of our programme. Undoubtedly the best known Australian song is *Waltzing Matilda*, and the members of the Meditation Group shall now perform an instrumental version of it.

(Waltzing Matilda is played.)

Ms. Bennett: The arts were largely neglected in the early days of Australia. Gradually however, as Ambassador Harry mentioned, signs of Australian consciousness began to emerge in folk songs, ballads and yarns. Some of the Australians present here today would now like to perform a folk song and an aboriginal song. The shearing song in particular has a special significance for Australians. Perhaps I should explain that in Australia at the moment, sheep outnumber people by about 170 million. Until recently, the wool was sheared by hand, using a large kind of electric razor. The shearing season provided work for hundreds of men. These men are pictured leading very simple, nomadic lives, owning nothing more than a swag, or knapsack, and a billy can, which is a pot used for boiling water. It is a romantic image, but one that inspires us still, I think.

(Folk song is sung.)

Ms. Bennett: Our second song is an aboriginal song. The first verse is aboriginal and the second verse is the translation.

(Aboriginal music is sung.)

Ms. Bennett: We will now have a selection of slides of Australia which have been kindly provided by the Australian Information Service and Sri Chinmoy, who visited five capital cities during his tour. The voice you will hear behind the slides is that of Joan Sutherland, the world-renowned opera singer.

(Slides and music follow.)

Ms. Bennett: We would like to include in our programme at this stage a selection of quotations from three great Australians. Before we do so, I would like to mention another Australian who has a unique place not only in Australia's history but in the history of the United Nations. It is Dr. Herbert Evatt who, in 1948, became the first English-speaking President of the General Assembly. In 1945, three years earlier, at the San Francisco Conference, he had proposed more amendments to the Charter than any other delegate and had earned himself the title "Champion of the small nations".

The great Australians we shall mention now are Dame Nelly Melba, Alfred Deakin and Sir Henry Parkes.

Mr. Ray Harrington: This first quotation is from Alfred Deakin, who was a great Australian statesman and political figure around the turn of the century. From his poetry: "My keenest hunger is not that of the body but of the soul, a hunger for the true and beautiful, that these may be the life-blood of my soul."

Ms. Sally Coleman: The quote I would like to read is from Dame Nelly Melba, who is considered

one of the first great Australian singers and probably one of the greatest prima donnas that the world has ever known. "I always instinctively believed in life after death. I cannot believe that God, who painted the rose, hung the stars in the summer night, and breathed eternal music into the sea, is capable of mocking His creatures by denying immortality. . . . I know the best in me will live and the worst die. There may be fires to pass, tempests to face, but there is something that fire cannot burn, nor storm quench. Call it soul . . . what you will. I call it the true, eternal me."

Mr. Ray Harrington: This last quotation is from Sir Henry Parkes, who worked towards establishing the Federation of Australia. He says, "Depend upon it. The rarest of all human attributes is to sustain in contemplation some remote object so as to keep alive sufficient energy to face the gulf of disappointment and despair."

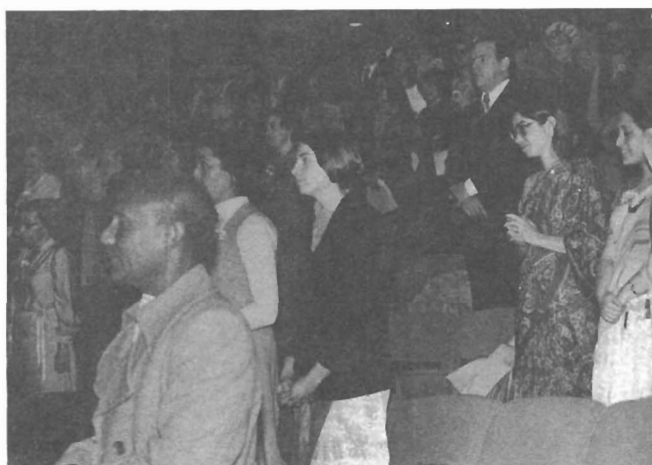
Ms. Bennett: We shall now conclude our programme with two songs. The first, composed by Sri Chinmoy, expresses the deepest aspirations and potentialities of our nation. And the second, which I am sure you are all familiar with, is the new national anthem chosen by the Australian people. And if any of you would like to join us on the stage for the anthem, we would be very happy.

(The singing of "O My Australia" and the Australian National Anthem follow.)

Ms. Bennett: I would like to thank you all for coming and, once again, thank you, Ambassador and Mrs. Harry.



Sri Chinmoy welcomes Ambassador Harry before the concert (photo by Richard Howard).



The audience stands for the singing of the Australian national anthem (photo by Richard Howard).

$\text{♩} = 120$ Moderate

O my Aus-tra-li-a Aus-tra-li-a Aus-----tra-----
 -li-----a I love your beau-ty's vast-----ness
 green----- I love your heart's sweet--- un--seen
 cry----- Your new soul knows--- no-----
 bon-dage screen----- It beck-ons your bo---dy's
 strength----- to----- fly--- O my Aus-tra-li-a
 Aus-tra-li-a Aus-----tra-----li-----a
 No foe have--- you a match-less sur-----prise---
 (slightly faster)
 Your sim-ple soul-ful life of love At God's ex-press
 Hour--- choice-- shall--- rise-- Yours is the
 a tempo
 trum-----pet tri-----umph here--- and---
 a---bove A-B once, then O my Aus-tra-li-a
 Aus-tra-li-a Aus-----tra-----li-----a