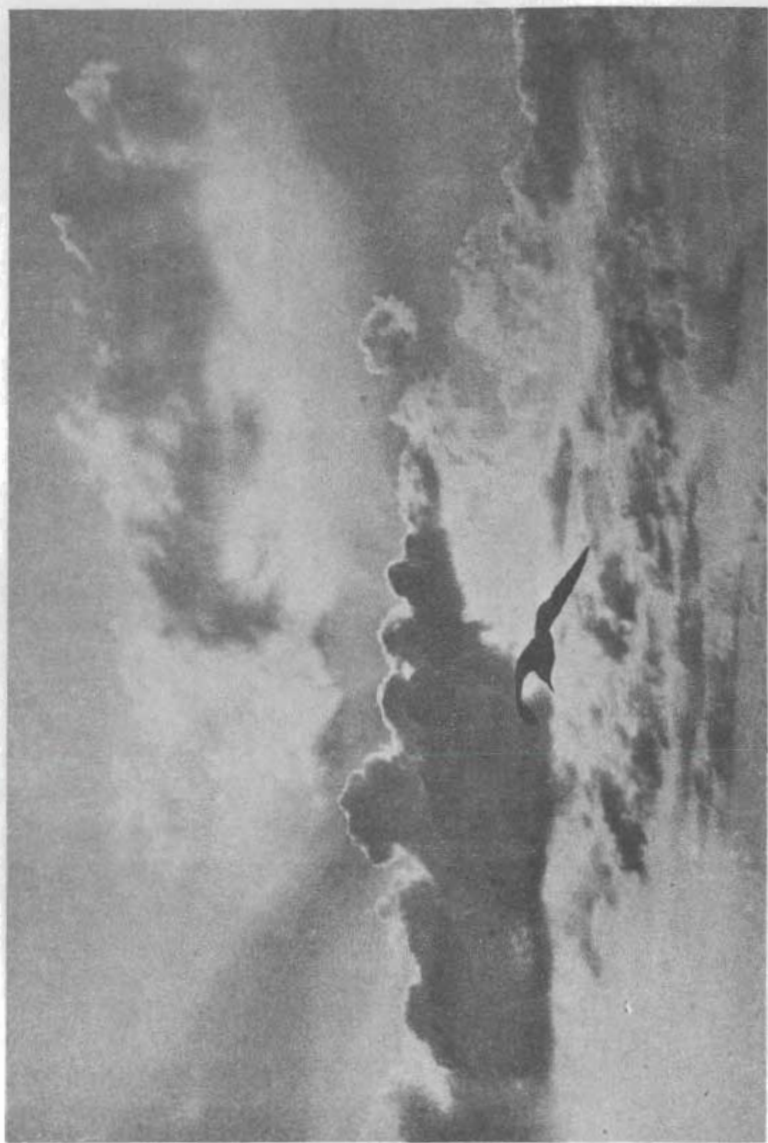


COMMEMORATIVE MEDITATION  
FOR  
U THANT

(43)



*(Photo: Yvette Ripplinger)*

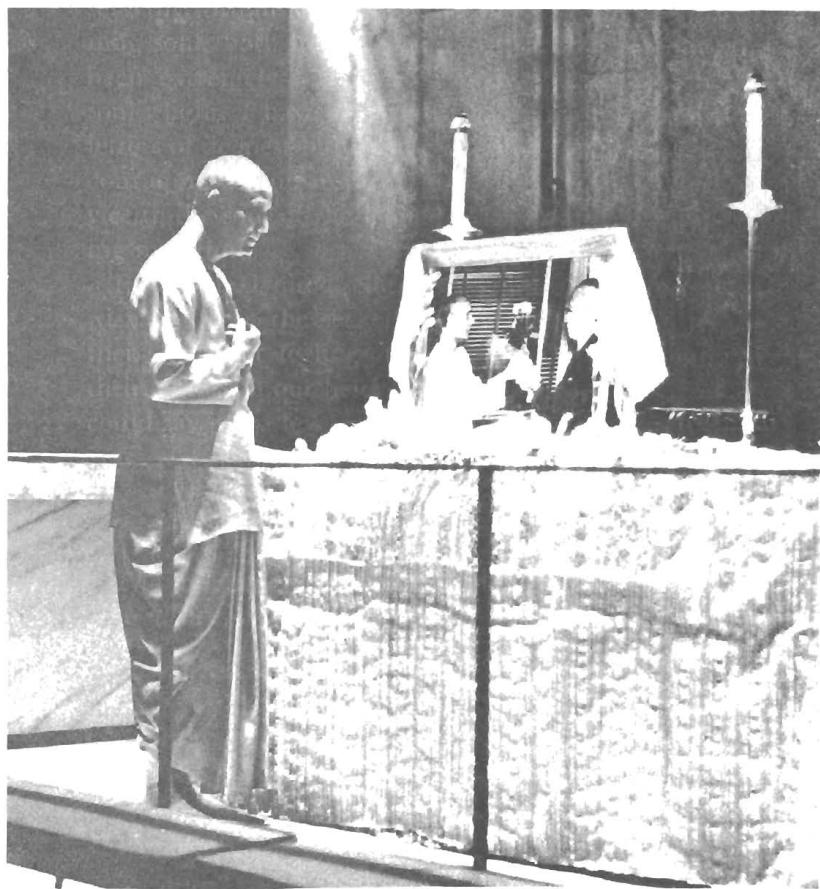
## TO U THANT

It is a weightless world  
In which a free bird flies,  
Rising high, and higher,  
Light-filling wings that curve  
Softly into the sun.  
The clay bird is no more.

Earth is heavy,  
Pain fills mind and body,  
Intrudes on inner space,  
Preys on serenity.  
In earth's garden  
Amidst the birds of clay  
Rise twittering and cries  
More quarrelsome than gay,  
Peace songs, only  
A fleeting moment's grace,  
Not fulfilled destiny.

Beyond, reachable peace  
In the compassionate  
Silence of earth's soul,  
Open to the new dove,  
Now lone, yet not lonely,  
Rising to the true sun,  
Home-light, welcoming love  
For a quest completed.

*Yvette Ripplinger*



*Sri Chinmoy meditates on a photograph of U Thant during the commemorative service held by the U.N. Meditation Group in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, November 26, 1974. (Photo: Lelihan)*

COMMEMORATIVE MEDITATION  
FOR  
U THANT  
*Chapel of the Church Center for the U.N.*  
*November 26, 1974*

*On November 26, 1974, the United Nations Meditation Group held a special meditation in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations in tribute to U Thant, who had passed away the previous day.*

*In silence the Group meditated on a photograph of U Thant which stood surrounded by flowers on the altar of the Chapel.*

*Sri Chinmoy offered his prayerful tribute:*

"Beloved Brother, man of silence, man of peace, may the Supreme grant your soul Eternity's Silence, Infinity's Peace."

*The Master then quietly addressed the Group:*

"The passing of our beloved Brother U Thant marks the real death of a colossal hope for the twentieth century. Divinely great he was; supreme-

ly good he is. The greatness of his earth-height his body-consciousness is carrying. The goodness of his Heaven-Delight his soul has left for us, for Mother Earth to claim as her very own and treasure forever and ever.

"We, the members of the United Nations Meditation Group, have a special place for him, for our beloved Brother U Thant, in the inmost recesses of our gratitude-heart, for he has helped us unreservedly with his aspiring heart and with his illuminating soul, both inwardly and outwardly. We have been extremely fortunate in being blessed by his soul's light. I have received from him quite a few letters of deepest light and profoundest wisdom encouraging us and inspiring us to be of greater service to the soul of the United Nations and to aspiring mankind.

"From the United Nations Meditation Group I wish to invite the seekers who would like to offer their heartfelt feelings to honour and perpetuate the memory of our beloved spiritual Brother. If you could say just a few words I would be very grateful."

*The following were among the tributes that were offered in the Chapel:*

U Thant was one with the soul of the United Nations, which is the soul of mankind. He lived and worked for the enlightenment, freedom and unification of mankind in all that he did. Out of his own divinity he created a bridge between humanity and the Supreme—the Father of us all. His service to man is not ended with his passing, because it will persist forever, proceeding out of his own spiritual stature. It is only universalised, transformed to a greater and more powerful dimension. The touch of sadness in his going comes from his own sadness that he was unable to serve more, do more, to be received more fully by mankind. We will all endeavour to take up more effectively the little part that we may play in realising his dream of human enlightenment and liberation.

*Donald Keys  
United Nations Representative  
World Association of World Federalists*

The United Nations Meditation Group owes its beginnings and its growth to the blessings of U Thant, who has now attained Nirvana, the supreme state in Buddhism. Let us pay our homage



to that great personality, who has now gone beyond name and form and has, perhaps, merged with the Universal Consciousness.

Everyone knows that U Thant was a living embodiment of Buddhism. To him religion was the realization of its ideals. He believed and practised the ideals of perfection. He advocated universal compassion and unbounded love towards all living beings, the practice of truth and non-violence for the survival of the human race. He believed in the oneness of all beings, so much so that to hurt another was to hurt himself. His strength sprang from his devout religious faith in Buddhism and its high ideals. As Secretary-General of the United Nations he brought the application of these high ideals, which conformed with the main principles of the United Nations Charter, to the successful working of that world-body. He worked for peace and the well-being of humanity at large and the unity of nations.

May his soul rest in peace is our prayer.

*Krishna Ganesan*

A few months before U Thant's term was up at the United Nations I was privileged to meet him in



his office. We had a very short interview and then, as I stood up, for a brief moment I looked into his eyes. I felt I was in front of a man who was spiritually accomplished, like being close to a Buddha, someone very high...

*Yvette Ripplinger*

During the last two years of U Thant's service I was able to see a feeling of holiness surrounding him, so even though I was unaware of all his achievements, still I was able to know he was a great soul. And to his great soul, on behalf of all of us—the United Nations staff and the U.N. Meditation Group—I offer my deepest gratitude.

*France Vacher*

I remember U Thant's last speech to the staff. For a Secretary-General of a world organisation, he did say a few very important things. He said perhaps too much emphasis was given to the intellectual achievements and that in a gradation of achievement, the highest level is the spiritual, ethical value of a person. In judging people that was

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."

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."\*

*Kevin Keefe*

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