

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

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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.

Editor: Gail Gershon

Assistant: Merri Weisbrot

For information please write:

United Nations Meditation Group
GPO 20 — Room 1925
United Nations, New York 10017

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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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NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE

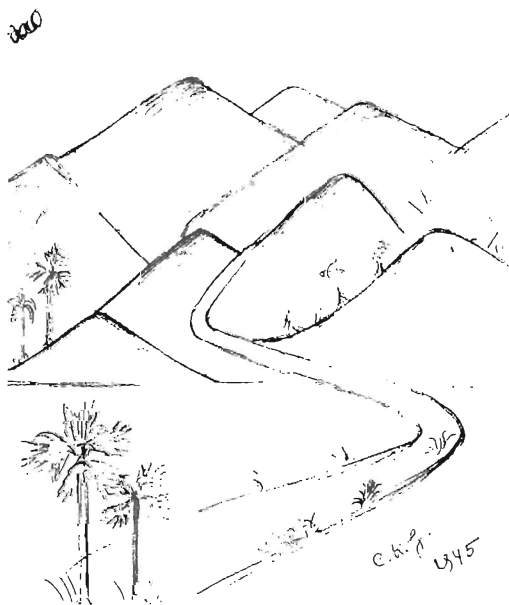
The heart of the year nineteen hundred and seventy-eight belongs to the aspiration-perfection-sky.

The life of the year nineteen hundred and seventy-eight belongs to the dedication-satisfaction-land.

Heart is humanity's changeless oneness with God.
Heart is humanity's changing newness in God.

Life is humanity's crying fullness in God. Life is humanity's smiling fullness for God.

—Sri Chinmoy



SPECIAL CONCERT FOR ACCOUNTS DIVISION STAFF

For her birthday, on 6 January 1978, Ms. Anupadi Sumper invited staff from her department to a concert and luncheon hosted by the United Nations Meditation Group. About one hundred staff members from the Office of Financial Services Accounts Division heard vocal music and instrumental ensembles by members of the Group in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium, before being served a seven-course meal. Meditation Group Director Sri Chinmoy opened with meditation and music on the Indian esraj, and then gave the following comments on serving the United Nations:

Sri Chinmoy: O soul of the United Nations, we wish to serve you more soulfully and more devotedly, and for that what we need is more peace. Do tell us where peace is in abundant measure.

"Where is peace? Peace is in joy."

Where is joy?

"Joy? Joy is in love."

Where is love?

"Love? Love is in oneness."

Where is oneness?

"Oneness? Oneness is in vision."

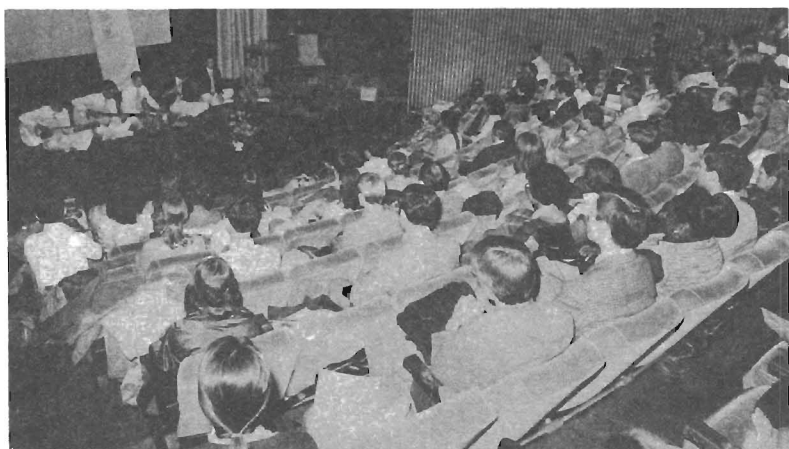
Where is vision?

"Vision? Vision is in aspiration."

Where is aspiration?

"Aspiration? Aspiration is in self-giving; Aspiration is in truth-becoming, in light-becoming, in life-becoming and, finally, in God-becoming."

O soul of the United Nations, from the very dawn of this New Year, we wish to serve you more soulfully, more devotedly and more unconditionally.



About one hundred staff members from the Accounts Division at the concert offered by the Meditation Group (photo by Lloyd Hart).



Sri Chinmoy applauds with members of the audience as Ms. Merri Weisbrot offers a birthday cake to her colleague Ms. Anupadi Sumper (photo by Lloyd Hart).

WORLD LEADERS

During January Sri Chinmoy gave the following short inspirational talks as part of a series of lectures on world leaders.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Yesterday was the birthday of Swami Vivekananda. Swami Vivekananda was a supreme seeker and supreme lover of mankind. He was also the preserver of the universal vision. I am invoking his presence.

Was Swami Vivekananda a man? Yes, he was. Something else he also was: a lover-hero.

Did Swami Vivekananda really conquer America? Yes, he did. Truth to tell, it was a mutual conquest. Vivekananda conquered America's seeker-heart. America conquered Vivekananda's vision-eye.

What did Swami Vivekananda preach in the West? The Vedantic philosophy. Something he also did. In supreme secrecy, soulfully and lovingly on the vital plane, persistently and unconditionally on the mental plane and compassionately and unreservedly on the physical plane, he distributed Sri Ramakrishna's universal oneness-heart and blessingful joy.

Sri Ramakrishna loved at once Vivekananda's silence-heart and his sound-life. To his Naren what he gave was his own realisation-ocean. In his Naren what he found was his own vision-manifestation. Where? Here, there and all-where.

To the weak, Vivekananda had only one thing to say: "Fear not."

To the strong, he had only one thing to say: "Stop not."

To God, he had only one thing to say: "Delay not."

And to himself, he had only one thing to say: "Ask not."

—13 January 1978
Dag Hammar skjold Auditorium

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT

Yesterday was President Roosevelt's birthday. We wish to observe it today.

President Roosevelt, we, the members of the United Nations, salute you! O man of lofty ideals, O hero-warrior, O prophet of the world-illuminating dawn, we soulfully salute you.

Admiration you received in abundant measure; condemnation too. One more thing your soul rightfully deserved—your dear countrymen should have seen life clearer and should have seen it as a whole, as you so surprisingly did.

The supremacy of your soul's will power over your body's revolt, your physical paralysis, was unparalleled. Your very existence was a stranger to fear. Your indomitable courage was far beyond the flight of our wildest imagination. It was your heart's wisdom-light that so lovingly and convincingly taught the entire world: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Indeed, the vision-light of this loftiest message can illumine the length and breadth of the world.

The embodiment of your vision-height and action-power will always be treasured by the freedom-loving and peace-spreading world. It was your own aspiration-mind and dedication-heart that planned for this organisational conference of the United Nations. Therefore, today's flowering United Nations to you bows with its gratitude-heart.

Peace and faith: these two divine qualities abide in each other, supporting each other and fulfilling each other. Your last message to the American nation can most unmistakably and most profitably be accepted and treasured by the vast world: "To all Americans who dedicate themselves to the making of an abiding peace, I say the only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubt of today. Let us move forward with strength and active faith."

O great, good, illumining, inspiring and fulfilling soul, Franklin Roosevelt, to you we bow.

— 31 January 1978
Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium

A THANK YOU TO MR. ROBERT MULLER

During a meeting of the United Nations Meditation Group on 13 January 1978 Sri Chinmoy thanked Mr. Robert Muller, Director and Deputy to the Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Coordination, for his unique understanding and support of the Meditation Group ideals and activities over the last year. Below are Sri Chinmoy's remarks and Mr. Muller's reply.

Sri Chinmoy: Dear brother and friend Mr. Muller, on behalf of the United Nations Meditation Group I wish to offer to you our gratitude-heart. You have been with us for a little over one year. During this short span you have encouraged us, inspired us, supported us and helped us abundantly in many, many ways. For that, unreservedly we are offering to you our soulful heart.

A few minutes ago I read out a soulful tribute to a supreme lover of mankind, Swami Vivekananda. With your soul's kind permission I am going to say something. Perhaps you do not know, but each soul has connections or affinities with other souls. According to my inner vision, your soul has a very strong inner link with the soul of Swami Vivekananda. He was, he is and he shall ever remain in the earth arena an indomitable hero-warrior who came to elevate the earth-consciousness and kindle the flame of aspiration the length and breadth of the entire world.

Dear Mr. Muller, dear friend and brother, on the strength of your own inner affinity with that mighty soul—according to your own receptivity

and your own capacity, inner and outer—you are doing the same thing. Out of His infinite Bounty and out of His infinite Delight, God the Author of all good, has given you the golden opportunity to serve the United Nations, where the hope, the promise, the illumination and the fulfilment of the entire world abides.

You will be completing thirty years of your existence with the United Nations shortly. My heart tells me and my soul tells me and my aspiration tells me that the service which you have rendered is most exemplary. In all your speeches, I see and feel many, many, many illumining and fulfilling things. But the paramount message that you offer, which touches the very depth of my heart, is, "Move on, O humanity, look forward. The Goal is nearing. Just believe in the Goal. The Goal is all yours."

Your devoted, dedicated, unreserved and unconditional service to humanity will definitely, definitely bear fruit. This spring your creation unparalleled will be out. I wish to offer my sincere thanks to Doubleday for having been the instrument to bring you to the vast world. The world will see in you and feel in you not only what you have done for the United Nations, but also what you have done for all humanity. This moment the United Nations is a seed-reality, but in days to come, in years to come, it will definitely grow into a huge banyan tree. At that time, among all those whose aspiration helped the seed grow into a banyan tree, among all those who served and nurtured the plant, your name will be written in letters of gold on the gratitude-heart of future generations. The seekers who love the United Nations and the seekers who feel that the United

Nations is the answer to world problems will see in unmistakable terms that you are one of the harbingers of a new dawn for mankind.



Sri Chinmoy presents Mr. Robert Muller with flowers and special "fortune cookies" containing short quotes about the United Nations from Mr. Muller's writings (photo by Richard Howard).

Mr. Robert Muller: May I say a few words to you, Sri Chinmoy, and to my dear friends of the United Nations Meditation Group. I believe that life is both receiving and giving. It is an incessant dual flow. It is by opening oneself entirely to others and by giving oneself entirely to others that one enriches oneself to the full measure of our marvellous human nature. As a member of your group, I have received infinitely more than what I have given. Any human group endowed with a good membership, leadership, heart and soul helps each member to be less lonely and to expand his self through giving, hope, aspiration and the achievement of the purposes of the group. The Meditation Group has done this for me in several respects.

First, it has done it for my beliefs. I have always believed in the unity of mankind, the uniqueness of human nature, the miracle of life, the gratitude we owe for every moment of it, the possibility for each individual to feel life in all its plenitude, while being linked in fate and brotherhood with all other living beings on this planet. I discovered that you among others in the United Nations shared this feeling very strongly and this made me feel less lonely, it gave me additional courage. My belief in the oneness of mankind, in love, in hope, in gratitude, in life affirmation, in the divinity of life, in the riches of introspection and meditation have been strengthened by membership in your group.

I felt also physically less lonely, because all of you have become my friends. I know many of you

personally. We meet. Our hearts beat together. We sometimes travel together. Some of you visit my office. This is also important for the human being. To have friends, physical friends one knows, one learns to appreciate and to like, is a great tonic to life. Friendship is one of those two-way flows that make up and enrich the fabric of life.

Thirdly, you have helped and encouraged me to speak, to write and to convey on an increasing scale the message that had formed itself in me over the years. Many of you have devoted hours of love to type, print, publish and distribute my essays, stories and speeches, most of which lay buried in my mind or dormant in a drawer. This has led over the last twelve months to a growing interest in my thoughts, experiences and beliefs, and it may well have been at the origin of the offer by a major publisher in New York City to publish a collection of these stories. They deal with two subjects which are closest to my heart: happiness, which in my mind is the fulfilment of the miracle of life, our recognition and testimony to the greatness of the gift bestowed upon us in the universe, and the United Nations, this great hope for human unity and peace without which there can be no happiness.

Thus, I have received from you much more than I have given. You have been a beginning for me. No good action is ever lost in the eternal chain of events. Sometimes I feel that I do no longer belong to myself. My thirty years at the United Nations have not been *my* thirty years, they have been the years and the thoughts of others instilled in me. I live constantly with the feelings, thoughts and teachings of U Thant, of Father de Breuver, of

Henry Bloch, and so many other good people who have enriched my life in the United Nations. I am today a completely different person from what I was when I entered the World Organization as a young man.

We are of course endowed with a given body, mind and capacities, but there is a constant accretion, a ceaseless enrichment and change in us due to experience, friendship and the teachings of others. This is the basic message I wanted to leave in my book. I have simply recorded in it what I have learned from the circumstances of my life and from people who have taught me to be a happy and confident person, starting with my grandfather and my parents, and many other people who will be surprised to find their names mentioned in that book. Some of them will probably not even remember me. But a word by them or their example had a particular significance for me: it opened my eyes to a basic truth of life. Like a good housewife who has tried many recipes in her life and who wants to keep the best of them, I have recorded my recipes for happiness in the hope that someone may find in one of them the answer to his or her particular problem. I am happy for having written these stories: they enrich me with the impression of having transmitted the wisdom and knowledge I have acquired during my beloved years on planet Earth and in the greatest organisation which has ever been conceived by the heart of men, the United Nations.

I thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you have done for me during this past year.

Following are several selected passages from Mr. Muller's writings about the United Nations:

For me the tall building of the U.N. is an edifice of human hope and dream jutting into the universe and receiving from that universe increasingly clearer messages.

* * *

To me this is an organisation I would not have dared to dream of when I came out of World War II. Mankind should be grateful every day to have the United Nations.

* * *

Year round people from all creeds and cultures assemble here to design a better future for the world. And in my opinion they will succeed.

* * *

The United Nations constitutes one of the greatest and most exciting attempts at total human fulfilment in the entire evolution of the human species.

* * *

The Charter itself is one of the greatest codes of ethics ever drafted for the behaviour of very powerful institutions: armed nations. It is the Ten Commandments of nation-states.

* * *

There are many of us in the United Nations for whom the co-operation of all nations around common goals and values is a new form of religion, a supreme path or way. The United Nations is a place of convergence for the dreams and prayers of all peoples for a better world.

* * *

CONCERTS HIGHLIGHTING NATIONAL MUSIC

As part of a series of programmes highlighting the national music of individual countries, in January the United Nations Meditation Group was pleased to offer two concerts coinciding with the official National Days of India and Australia. Both programmes included guest speakers and were followed by light refreshments. The transcripts follow.

PROGRAMME IN HONOUR OF INDIA'S 28th REPUBLIC DAY

25 January 1978

Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium
United Nations, New York

Opening Meditation
and

Musical Dedication:

Sri Chinmoy, Director

United Nations Meditation Group

"Bande Mataram":

United Nations Meditation Group Singers

Speakers:

Mr. C. V. Narasimhan

Under-Secretary-General

for Inter-Agency Affairs and Coordination

Mr. Salman Haidar

Deputy Permanent Representative of India
to the United Nations

Three Songs Dedicated to the United Nations:
United Nations Meditation Group Singers

Slides of India

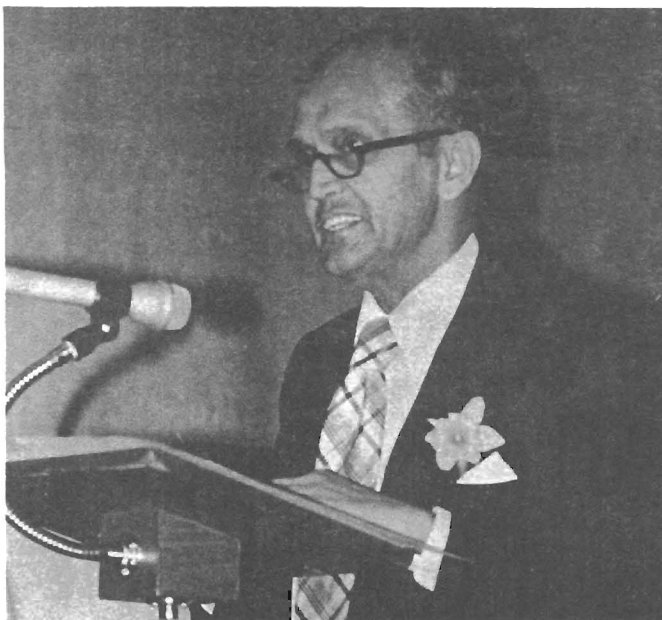
Instrumental Pieces:
Srinvantu

“India and America”:
United Nations Meditation Group Singers

Indian National Anthem



Guests join with Meditation Group members in the singing of India's national anthem (photo by Richard Howard).



Mr. C. V. Narasimhan, Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Coordination: Sri Chinmoyji, dear friends, I am delighted to join you on this occasion when you are celebrating the 28th anniversary of the establishment of the Republic of India, which is due to take place tomorrow. I am also glad that you are dedicating your programme to the music of India. In the course of Mr. Peck's letter to me he said that perhaps I could offer a few brief remarks regarding my perceptions of the nature and beauty of the native music of India. And so, those are my terms of reference.

I would like to begin by saying that music means different things to different people. For some, listening to music is just a source of aesthetic pleasure; nothing wrong with that. For some, music can be exciting, like the beat of the pop music or rock music. You can use music to croon, to serenade, to conquer the heart of your beloved.

You can use music as an instrument for a variety of purposes. But today I intend to talk of the classical music of India, especially of the southern Indian system with which I am most familiar, and the way in which this music could be an instrument for achieving communion with the Lord.

I think it was perhaps a year ago that I was invited by the U.N. Meditation Group to give a brief exposition of the *Bhagavad-Gita* and it gave me great pleasure to do that. At that time, I pointed out that in the *Gita*, the Lord says that there are several *Yogas*, several systems of *Yoga*, and all of them are, of course, a means of reaching God. *Yoga* itself means the uniting, the joining, of the individual *atman* to the supreme *Param Atman*. Specifically, the Lord in the *Gita* has identified the way of knowledge, or *Jnana Yoga*, the way of devotion, or *Bhakti Yoga*, and the way of serving mankind, *Karma Yoga*.

Now, *Bhakti Yoga* means many things, it does not mean just devotion to the Lord. *Bhakti* is a very complex concept. It involves the idea of renunciation; it involves the idea of acceptance of the Will of the Lord; it involves the complete surrender of your ego to the Lord. It involves many other things and to understand *Bhakti* in its fullest form, I would have to talk for quite some time. I do not intend to do that today. But what I do want to say is that *Bhakti Yoga* is one of the best ways of reaching the Lord. And one of the easiest ways, and at the same time one of the sweetest ways of reaching the Lord through *Bhakti Yoga* is by music.

In the Western system, classical music is mainly secular. You have some great music, some of the music of Bach or Handel for example, which falls

in the category of religious music, But by and large, the music is secular. And to a large extent, in the North Indian classical system you can distinguish between the secular music, the *Khyal*, and the religious music, the *Bhajan*. Of course, in the Northern system there were composers who were great devotees, people of great spirit, people who had surrendered their spirit to the Lord in the spirit of *Bhakti*. Names like Tulsidas, Kabir Das, Sur Das and Mira—the incomparable Mira—all come to one's mind. In the Southern system, practically all our classical music is religious and devotional in character. The object of this music is not exclusively to give listening pleasure, although there is nothing wrong with giving listening pleasure. The object is to move you, to move you along a current to the supreme moment when you can feel this identity of the *atman* and *Param Atman*, when you can feel the establishment of this communion with the Lord.

We have had great composers, the greatest being Tyagaraja, who composed mostly in Telegu and to whom Rama was a personal deity. Syama Sastri regarded Kanchi Kamakshi as the Divine Mother and addressed all his songs to Her. Muthuswami Dikshitar has composed songs, mostly in Sanskrit, on so many different religious and pilgrim centres in India: he had visited them all. For all practical purposes, his compositions are not only a kind of gazeteer of these holy places but they are also a description of the Lord in each of these places, because the Lord manifests Himself in so many ways.

In Tamil, we have had the *Nayanars* singing in praise of Lord Shiva and the *Alwars* singing the

praise of Lord Vishnu. We have a great composer in the Kannada language, Purandara Dasa, who is called the Grandfather of our system of music because he laid down the pattern of our Carnatic system of music.

All these great composers and poets had one thing in common: the complete surrender of the individual ego to the Lord. And unless you have that kind of surrender, you cannot produce that kind of music. It is all very well for you to just shut yourself up and say you are going to write a composition. In fact, I composed a piece myself once, just to show that I can do it. But you cannot be inspired unless you are absolutely in a spirit of surrender to the Lord, in the spirit of *Bhakti*. And this is what these great people have done.

I will just mention to you two or three instances in Tyagaraja's life to illustrate this point. Tyagaraja was not only a great composer, he was also a great musician himself. And he was receiving so many offers for giving concerts, for fat fees by the standards of those days. And he said, "No, thank you," because he was quite happy to be sitting in his home and singing to the little figure of Rama that he had, and which he worshipped at his little shrine. And one day the Rajah of Tanjavur sent him a message saying, "I would like you to become my court musician. I have heard so much about you." On receiving this invitation, Tyagaraja asked himself the rhetorical question, "*Nidhi tsala sukhama?*" meaning "Is a lot of wealth going to give me pleasure or satisfaction?" or "*Ramuni sannidhi seva sukhama?*" meaning "Or is the immediate proximity and presence of the Lord Rama going to give me satisfaction?" And he said, "No, thank you," to the King of Tanjavur also.

Tyagaraja had a brother who was more worldly minded than he was, and he got very disturbed with his brother's other-worldliness because he was hoping very much that his brother would become the court musician and there would be some benefits for him also. And he thought to himself, "I know what the problem is. It is the figure of this Lord Rama that Tyagaraja is worshipping every day." So he took the idol to the River Kaveri, which was flowing just outside their home, and approaching the deepest part of the river he threw it into the waters. And of course the idol sank. Tyagaraja composed some of his most poignant and most moving pieces during this period when he did not have the figure of the Lord Rama in front of him.

They say in English, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of the saddest thought." I think you can say that equally of the music of Tyagaraja. Some of his greatest music was composed in this spirit of sadness.

And then one year it happened that there was a drought. The water in the river ran low and finally the figure of Lord Rama could be seen. Tyagaraja was, of course, so elated to be able to recapture the figure of his Beloved Rama. He took it back and put it on his shrine. And he composed a song asking the Lord, "*Nannu palimpa nadichi vachithivo?*" meaning, "Did you come on foot in order to save me?"

I could talk for hours on this subject, and so I should not get started on it. But I just wanted to say that the important thing about music is that it can be a source of pleasure in a variety of ways and can be used for a variety of purposes. In the Southern Indian classical system, however, music

is used mainly as a means of achieving communion with the Lord. When the music reaches a supreme moment, when you are on the same wavelength, so to speak, with the Lord, then you are in absolute communion with Him. I have had this experience myself so many times. And one of these days perhaps I will have a chance to share that experience with you.

Thank you.

* * *

Mr. Salman Haidar, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations: Sri Chinmoyji, friends, I am privileged to be here today, on behalf of my Ambassador who was not able to be present, to take part in this function that has been organised here. May I say that this is a most apt way of marking what is an extremely important day in the life of our country. Therefore, the Meditation Group should be commended.

Like Mr. Narasimhan, our Mission also got a mandate to speak on Indian music. Fortunately, Mr. Narasimhan has already done that and I am sure you all enjoyed hearing what he said, which really does not require any further elaboration, least of all from me. Mr. Narasimhan, as you all know, is uniquely qualified not only as a connoisseur but also as a performer. If I remember correctly, he performed a couple of years ago in India and was received with great enthusiasm.

Another useful point in my favour—I will put it in those terms—is that Indian music perhaps needs very little introduction these days to an audience like we have here today. Indian art and culture have broken the barriers. There is a wide response to it

not only in India itself, but throughout the world. In fact, I am told that several of our leading artists actually prefer performing outside India in the Western countries, where they frequently find a more responsive and even more knowledgeable audience than they would find at home. This is a testimony to the power of our culture and our music to communicate across continents and to speak to the souls of people, and to elicit deep and unforced responses from them. There was a time when Indian music, in certain parts of this country and in Europe, emerged as a sort of cult for the young. But that time is over and we have a much happier situation in which there is a genuine and highly knowledgeable response to it.

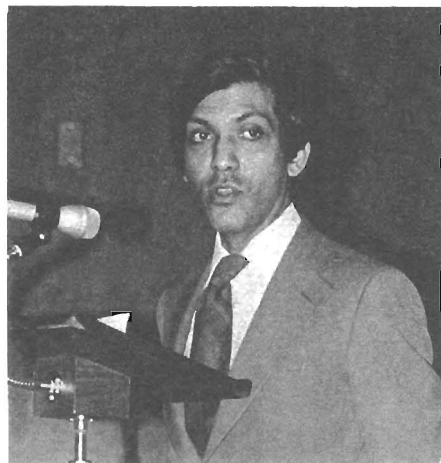
Tomorrow is the twenty-eighth anniversary of our Republic Day. Those, like myself, who have come to consciousness during this period of Independence and development at home, recognise it as a time of renaissance and effervescence in diverse fields. I will not speak about the political field because this is not an appropriate occasion. But one cannot have lived through this period in India without feeling a sense of economic, social and cultural advance, of new patterns and new horizons opening for all of us who have been growing up with independent India.

Especially striking is the tremendous popularization of art. As Mr. Narasimhan mentioned, music and dance and various other cultural activities and cultural manifestations were more narrowly focused in other ages. Whether it was to a religious audience or to a courtly situation, the artistic expression or the highest form of artistic expression did not reach out to mass audiences. But with the change of the pattern of patronage, I think we can

say it is no longer true in India. The role of the radio has been particularly significant in bringing high quality music to millions of homes. We are yet marginally in the television age in India, which may be a blessing, and the radio continues to play an important role as a disseminator of music. The traditional art form that has continued to flourish has been able to make the transition from a system of restricted patronage to a system of much greater audience participation. As a result, artists today are recognized and honoured in a way which may not have been the case earlier, owing to the fact that their work was not so well known.

Well, I shouldn't prolong this speech because that is not the purpose of our meeting today. So I will end by repeating once again that I am very glad to be here and delighted that this occasion has been organized to mark our India Day.

Thank you.



Mr. Salman Haidar, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations (photo by Richard Howard).



Sri Chinmoy thanks Mr. Narasimhan and Mr. Haidar (photos by Richard Howard).



MY INDIA AND MY AMERICA

words and music by Sri Chinmoy

$\text{♩} = 76$ Moderate-slow

fine

I dear-ly love my In-di-a--- and--- its

age--old-- si---lence-----peace I----

dear-ly love my A-me-----ri---ca and its child-heart

beau-ty----- in-----crease D.C.

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."

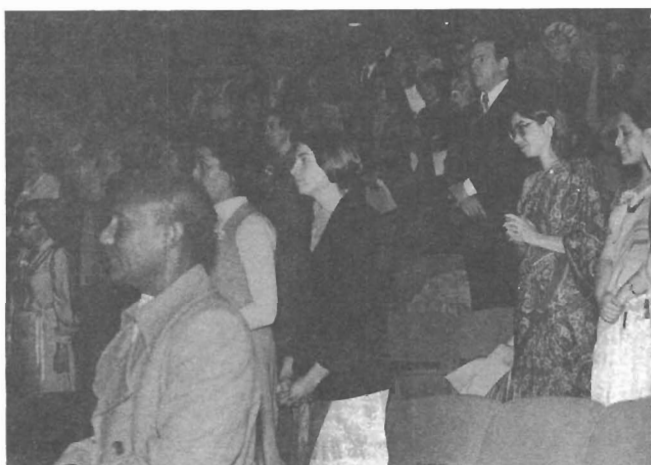
Ms. Bennett: We shall now conclude our programme with two songs. The first, composed by Sri Chinmoy, expresses the deepest aspirations and potentialities of our nation. And the second, which I am sure you are all familiar with, is the new national anthem chosen by the Australian people. And if any of 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
 a tempo
 Hour---- choice-- shall--- rise-- Yours is the
 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

WORLD DAY OF PEACE 1978

Members of the Meditation Group were invited to participate in this year's World Day of Peace Ceremony, a celebration held each year for the U.N. community by the Office of the Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations in honour of Pope Paul VI's World Day of Peace message. For the ceremony, held on 23 January 1978 at the Holy Family Church, the Permanent Observer, Monsignor Giovanni Cheli, asked that the Meditation Group reprint the transcript of the September 1977 programme held at U.N. headquarters in honour of the Pope's 80th birthday, subsequently published in Meditation at the United Nations. The reprint, which contained speeches by Monsignor Cheli and Father John Donohue of the Holy Family Church, as well as excerpts from Sri Chinmoy's book about the Holy Father, was offered to each guest along with the official programme for the evening. Reproduced here is a letter received from Monsignor Cheli:



PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION
OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS


January 25, 1978

United Nations Meditation Group
Attention: Ms. Gail Gershon
Room 1925
United Nations,
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Friends:

We are writing to thank you for participating in the World Day of Peace and for the contribution of your presence among us as well as the pamphlet. It was so perfectly appropriate to have the picture of the Pope in everyone's hands as we reflected on his message and prayed with him for peace. Thank you for responding to the inspiration to share your beautiful hand-work and the inspiring thoughts of Sri Chinmoy and the other contributors.

With our warmest good wishes and our most sincere prayers that God will continue to bless you.

Sincerely,

Monsignor Giovanni Cheli

sjr

LETTERS FROM THE U.N. PLAZA HOTEL

In September 1977 Mr. Harry Austin, a member of the Meditation Group, was selected as U.N. Plaza Hotel Employee of the Month. As a result, he corresponded with the President of Hyatt International Hotels. Reprints of the correspondence follow.

6 December 1977

Dear Mr. di Tullio,

I must say I was really delighted to receive your note of congratulations the other day. As if being chosen Employee of the Month wasn't enough, your surprise letter made the honor all the more joyfull!

Every so often a guest asks, "What keeps you smiling?" or they say, "It's nice for a change to see someone who really enjoys his work." And it's these comments that remind me that it's so easy to smile here because we all like each other.

On many occasions, upon welcoming our regular guests, one can hear their familiar sighs of relief, and, from our first-timers, praise of our warm reception and our fantastic architecture.

Here the very air exudes an almost overwhelming dynamism and peace: the dynamism of design and the peace of our genuine friendliness. This same message of inner peace and outer dynamism we get from the United Nations Meditation Group. In this group, comprised of delegates and U.N. staff, directed by Indian spiritual Master Sri Chinmoy, people from all over the world meet to combine the spiritual height of the East with the world mastery

of the West in a unique effort to inspire peace through world oneness. With more and more of our hotel staff joining the United Nations Meditation Group, a greater inner depth is added to the overall Hotel spirit!

I've often seen Mr. Horn, Mr. Gaumert and their selected assistants retaining unbelievable charm and poise during our most frazzling times, and we all pick up on these things, from their courteous manner to the type of clothes they wear. Departmental frictions tend to hold back many hotels, but here preventive resolutions are given primary concern before any possible problem can arise.

Recently we founded our first Runners Club. Staff runs are held bi-weekly and we hope to represent the UN Plaza at the next New York marathon.

To increase our neighborhood rapport, we formed a Block Association. Our first project, which was to sweep our front street, turned into an incredible fun festival with our entire staff waving brooms and signs to the many photographers and passers-by. As tough as it was, we did manage (between laughs) to do a good job!

And, above and beyond this, we went so far as to hold what turned out to be a standing room only public concert in which many of the performers were members of our very own staff. It was quite a success!

Mr. di Tullio, if we could just manage to change our weather, we're sure we would stand a better chance to hear you call us your "favorite Hotel"! Thanks again!

Sincerely yours,

Harry Austin



HYATT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

A. PETER DI TULLIO
PRESIDENT

December 7, 1977

Mr. Harry Austin
United Nations Plaza Hotel
One United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017

Dear Harry:


Thank you for your letter of December 6, 1977.

Harry quite frankly, I was very touched with the beauty and sincerity of your letter that I must ask your permission to circulate your letter among our various hotels. I would like the General Managers and their staff to share with your positive spirit.

Again, thank you for such a lovely letter. I hope it will serve as an inspiration to all employees of Hyatt International.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!!

Warmest personal regards,


A. P. di Tullio

APD/ml

cc: Helmut Horn
Ken Mullins



HYATT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

A. PETER DI TULLIO
PRESIDENT

January 3, 1978

To: Harry Austin
From: A. P. di Tullio

Dear Harry,

I am enclosing a copy of my letter to all the General Managers along with a copy of your letter.

Harry, I have said this before, but I am going to say it again. We are very proud to have you as part of the Hyatt Team, and I hope you will continue your good work at the United Nations Plaza Hotel, and also, will continue to be an inspiration to your fellow employees.

Keep smiling!!

cc: Helmut Horn



HYATT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

A. PETER DI TULLIO
PRESIDENT

January 3, 1978

To: SEE DISTRIBUTION
From: A. P. di Tullio
Subject: Attached Letter

Gentlemen:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter written to me by Mr. Harry Austin, who was chosen as the Employee of the Month of September at the United Nations Plaza Hotel in New York.

I would like to share this beautiful letter with you and your staff with the hope that it will serve as both an inspiration and an incentive to you and members of your staff. It is not that difficult to turn out "Harry Austins" for Hyatt International.

This spirit of dynamism is all in conjunction with your "Friendliest Hotel Campaign" and "Sell Strawberries Campaign". In order for you to be the most friendly hotel or to turn your staff into very successful salespeople, the basics of it all, is a happy, contented individual, who really enjoys his work.

So let's all take a cue from Harry Austin for the year 1978 and let us make this a trademark of the Hyatt Team.

Happy New Year to you all!!!

Encl.



Mr. Harry Austin

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