

Meditation at the United Nations

United Nations:



the Heart-Home
of the World-Body

Monthly Bulletin of
Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations

Vol. IX, No. 4
27 April 1981

INSIDE COVER - BLANK

MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF
SRI CHINMOY MEDITATION
AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Since January, 1973, Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations 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 Silver

Assistant: Merri Weisbrot

For information please write:

Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations
GPO 20 — Room 1931
United Nations, New York 10017

Copyright © 1981 by Sri Chinmoy

Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations is an association of U.N. delegates, staff, NGO representatives and accredited press correspondents.

This information is presented as a service and does not necessarily represent the official views of the United Nations or its Agencies.

SRI CHINMOY MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS

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

Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations 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 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.

27 April 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

“Fun Runs”—One-Mile Races at the United Nations	7
Aphorisms about the United Nations.....	15
Eleventh Anniversary Marked.....	17
Questions and Answers.....	27
Letter.....	32
• <i>from the Holy See</i>	

(6) BLANK

“FUN RUNS”—ONE-MILE RACES AT THE UNITED NATIONS

United Nations staff and delegates participated in a series of five one-mile “fun runs” from 2 to 5 April 1981. This first series of running races at the United Nations was sponsored by the meditation group to mark the beginning of spring and to provide additional means for joy within a common undertaking.

The first race was held for Security and Safety staff on 2 April beginning at 62nd Street and York Avenue, and despite a wet course and the need to dodge a few early morning joggers and dogs, their performance was a fine one. Winner was Nick Pignatelli, age 31, who came in with a time of 6:05 amidst cheers from UN staff and early morning joggers who had stopped in their tracks to watch the race.



Security and Safety Service staff at finish, along with some of the race organisers.

Subsequent races were held for Secretariat and Mission staff, delegates, and families of staff and delegates. All runners received race T-shirts as a souvenir, and special prizes were awarded to the first seven finishers in each category.

All United Nations Secretariat and Mission staff had the opportunity to join a lunchtime race on 3 April, with runners bringing friends and family to cheer them on and enjoy the beautiful spring day. Fastest time in the staff race (and in all the races) belongs to Martin Bentz of OGS who finished in 4:58, followed by Ken Peck (DIESA) in 5:30 and Marc Goldstein of the Population Council (an NGO) in 5:36.



U.N. Secretariat and Mission staff line up for a group shot.

First place for the women was Nancy Fertally of UNICEF with a time of 8:01. Barbara Cooney (UNITAR) placed second with 8:04 and Maria Murphy (UNICEF) placed third with 8:26.

On Sunday morning, 5 April United Nations diplomats and their families tested their speed against each other in one-mile races. Beginning at the U.N. Secretariat Building at 42nd Street and First Avenue, the course was a twice around "out and back" course between 42nd Street and 47th Street.

Winner in the men's "delegate" category was Mr. Raul Ricardes (36 years old) of Argentina with a time of 7:07. Mr. Wirjono Sastrohandoyo (45) of Indonesia was second with a time of 8:13, and Mr. Gerhard Schroter of the German Democratic Republic captured third place with a time of 8:14. Mr. Schroter had originally intended to serve only as inspirer and coach to his young son Gert in the race for children under 18, but moved by the enthusiasm of his fellow delegates, he decided to run in his own right.



Mr. Raul Ricardes of Argentina breaks the tape to capture first place among the delegates.

Winners in the women's category were:

1st - Mrs. Zahra Tadmoury - 10:10 (Lebanon)

2nd - Mrs. Ambika Silwal - 10:22 (Nepal)

3rd - Mrs. Maria Ricardes (Argentina)

Overall winner of the children's races was Claude-Phillippe Lim, the 16-year-old son of Mrs. Helena-Maria Lim of the U.N. Secretariat, with a time of 5:41.

Times of the first seven finishers in each of the races are listed below.

SECURITY AND SAFETY SERVICE RACE

1. Nick Pignatelli (6:09)

2. Art Padula (6:12)

3. Pat Hyland (6:43)

4. Don Detwiler (6:50)

5. Felix Berrios (7:06)

6. Ken Eastman (7:29)

7. Ernie Miller (8:46)



Participants in the races held for children of staff and delegates and for delegates and their wives model their hard-earned race T-shirts.

SECRETARIAT AND MISSION STAFF [MEN]

1. Martin Bentz (4:58)
2. Ken Peck (5:30)
3. Marc Goldstein (5:36)
4. Alan Baker (5:48)
5. John Schwager (5:53)
6. Steve Singer (6:02)
7. Dan Touhy (6:08)

SECRETARIAT AND MISSION STAFF [WOMEN]

1. Nancy Fertally (8:01)
2. Barbara Cooney (8:04)
3. Maria Murphy (8:26)
4. Elodie Lauten (8:44)
5. Susie Alvarez (8:54)
6. Eva Grunspan (8:57)
7. Mary Sheffield (9:05)



Ms. Susie Alvarez of the Accounts Division leading the pack.

DELEGATES [MEN]

1. Raul Ricardes (7:07), Argentina Mission
2. Wirjono Sastrohandoyo (8:13), Indonesian Mission
3. Gerhard Schroter (8:14), German Democratic Republic Mission
4. M.S. El-Banhawi (9:02), Egyptian Mission
5. Ibrahim Izhar (10:37), Indonesian Mission
6. Y.K. Silwal (10:44), Nepal Mission

DELEGATES [WOMEN]

1. Zahra Tadmoury (10:10), Lebanese Mission
2. Ambika Silwal (10:22), Nepal Mission
3. Maria Ricardes (11:30), Argentina Mission

CHILDREN [BOYS]

1. Claude-Phillippe Lim (5:41), aged 16, U.N. (Helena-Maria)
2. Herry Wirasastra (6:51), aged 16 Indonesian Mission
3. Kevin Williams (7:21), aged 10, U.N. (John)
4. Gert Schroter (7:22), aged 9, German Democratic Republic Mission
5. John Williams (8:03), aged 12, U.N. (John)
6. Saroj Silwal (8:21), aged 15, Nepal Mission
7. Wiryawan Wiryo (9:15), aged 12, Indonesian Mission

CHILDREN [GIRLS]

1. Naima Oummih (7:19), aged 14,
Moroccan Mission
2. Mira Burnstan (7:20), aged 12, U.N. Plaza
Hotel (Alex)
3. Amal Oummih (7:45), aged 13,
Moroccan Mission
4. Shiva Gereade (7:58), aged 10,
U.N. (Dr. R.S. Gereade)
5. Sandra Burnstan (8:26), aged 9, U.N. Plaza
Hotel (Alex)
6. Bennu Gereade (9:14), aged 9,
U.N. (Dr. R.S. Gereade)
7. Iman El-Banhawi (9:19), aged 9,
Egyptian Mission



One young runner crosses the finish, after stopping to give her cheering mother a big hug.

OLDER CHILDREN [BOYS]

1. Gabriel Sylla (6:34), aged 15, Senegal Mission
2. Ibrahim Bendahmane (6:50), aged 13,
Algerian Mission
3. Ari Loeis (7:11), aged 19, Indonesian Mission

OLDER CHILDREN [GIRLS]

1. Lena Wirasastra (8:29), aged 19,
Indonesian Mission
2. Fatima Bendahmane (8:32), aged 15,
Algerian Mission
3. Sri Koeslan (9:30), aged 19,
Indonesian Mission
4. Eka Izhar (9:51), aged 17,
Indonesian Mission
5. Ani Poerwanto (9:53), aged 19,
Indonesian Mission
6. Tety Hasan (10:23), aged 22,
Indonesian Mission

APHORISMS ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS

From the writings of Sri Chinmoy

The United Nations has a big heart. Irrespective of human attainment, irrespective of human assessment, it will offer its nectar drink to each human being on earth.

*

Together all nations will walk, together all nations will run, together all nations will fly and dive toward the same goal.

*

A nation can be happy, purposeful and fulfilled if it thinks less and meditates more.

*

A seeker-nation with God-Life sees God's Body, the universe. A seeker-nation with Truth-Love feels God's Heart, the universal reality. A seeker-nation with Light-Delight becomes God's Soul, the universal Goal.

The United Nations is humanity's colossal hope.
The United Nations is Divinity's lofty promise.

*

The body of the United Nations is trying to serve
humanity.

*

The vital of the United Nations is striving to
energise humanity.

*

The mind of the United Nations is longing to
inspire humanity.

*

The heart of the United Nations is crying to love
humanity.

*

The soul of the United Nations is flying to embrace
humanity.

*

The United Nations as a whole wants to offer
peace. Peace and the United Nations are
inseparable.

*

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 clichés 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.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Sri Chinmoy was asked the following questions by members of the meditation group at the 24 April 1981 meeting.

Question: What is the relationship between divine surrender and aspiration?

Sri Chinmoy: Aspiration and surrender go side by side. If I can increase my surrender to the Divine, then without fail I will be able to increase my aspiration. Again, as I make progress in my aspiration and raise my standard of aspiration, I shall without fail make progress in my surrender. If I have intensity in my prayer and meditation, then I will feel the supreme receptivity that the Christ had when he said, "Let Thy Will be done." This is the best prayer and the absolutely most perfect form of surrender. So aspiration and surrender go together; they are like the obverse and reverse of the same coin.

If we are seekers, it is easier for us to aspire and then to achieve divine surrender. Otherwise, surrender to God can be very difficult. We may surrender to lethargy and other forces that are not so good and divine. We may surrender to wrong thoughts and ideas. That kind of surrender will not help us. But if we aspire sincerely, soulfully and devotedly, then the surrender that we have will be

divine surrender. So let us all the time aspire, for our aspiration will help us grow surrender in our heart.

Question: What is spirituality?

Sri Chinmoy: Spirituality is a very simple idea for those who practise it. But for those who do not practise it, spirituality is very complicated. Spirituality is not difficult when we know what to expect from spirituality. If we are expecting from spirituality peace, joy, love, closeness and oneness, then spirituality is bound to give us these qualities or, we can say, realities. But if we expect from spirituality earthly name, earthly fame, earthly prosperity and so forth, then spirituality will disappoint us. Only divine things—peace, light, bliss, joy, happiness and satisfaction in the purest sense of the term—spirituality will give us.

The source of spirituality, according to Indian tradition, is yoga. Yoga means union with God. From yoga, spirituality has come into existence and, again, from spirituality, religion has come into existence. Religion will ask us not to quarrel, not to fight, to have faith in God, to tell the truth; this is religion. Then, after religion, there is something called philosophy. Philosophy reminds us that this is not the only world. There is another world—a higher world or inner world. Philosophy tells us that this is not the ultimate place; there is a place beyond this, or many places. Philosophy tells us to enter into those worlds.

To come back to your question, spirituality is the science that teaches us how to achieve peace of mind and supreme satisfaction. Right now we are hankering after many, many things, but nothing

we get satisfies us. Spirituality tells us that satisfaction can be found only if we lead a good life, a divine life, a life of simplicity, purity and humility. When we lead a divine life, we try to transform and illumine our bad qualities and expand our good qualities. We are to some extent satisfied with what we have and what we are, but at the same time we try to go beyond what we have and what we are and become more receptive to higher realities. By following the path of spirituality, eventually we achieve the divine love that illumines our entire being and offers us perfection in life. Through divine love and divine perfection, we achieve oneness with God, which is nothing short of supreme satisfaction. So this is what spirituality teaches us.

Question: Once we reach a certain level in our meditation, how then can we go higher and deeper?

Sri Chinmoy: Once we have reached a certain level of consciousness in our meditation, we have to feel that this is not our ultimate goal. The goal is not stationary; all the time we have to go beyond, beyond, beyond. God Himself is transcending His own Infinity, Eternity and Immortality. We can go beyond our present-day realisation by virtue of our inner cry. Because we have an inner cry, already we have attained to a certain height in the spiritual life. But the inner cry that we have right now is not enough to take us beyond the limits we have reached. So the intensity of our inner cry has to be increased, but not by hook or by crook. We increase the intensity of our inner cry by bringing

to the fore more of the capacity that we have deep within. We have unlimited capacity, but we have not brought it to the fore to the fullest extent. We have only brought to the fore a certain amount of our capacity, which has led us to a certain level of consciousness or spiritual height. But now we have to bring to the fore more intensity, which is inside us, waiting to be brought forward.

So if we can bring forward the more intense reality that is deep within us, then easily we shall be able to transcend our present level of consciousness and go far, far beyond it. We have intensity, but it is not enough to carry us farther, higher and deeper. We have to bring forward more intensity. We have to feel that we exist only for God, that we live only for God all of the time — not that we live half for the fulfilment of our own aspiration and God and half for something else. No, we have to feel that we live only for our aspiration, our dedication, our surrender to God. Everything that we have and everything that we are is for God-realisation, God-manifestation and God-satisfaction. If we feel this, then automatically our intensity increases.

Question: Is a knowledge of other languages a help in our spiritual life?

Sri Chinmoy: In order to become an excellent instrument of God, we do not have to learn any language other than our own mother tongue. The great Indian spiritual Masters of the hoary past did not know English or even Sanskrit. They spoke only their native tongue; yet they were Masters of a very, very high order. Sri Ramakrishna was not a great scholar; yet he was a great Master. In the spiritual life one needs only a pure heart.

Language is not needed for spiritual greatness. If you happen to be a scholar, wonderful. But you don't have to become a scholar or a linguist in order to make rapid progress in spirituality, no. On the contrary, it is sometimes a great disadvantage to be loaded with facts. If a seeker has developed his mind disproportionately, then he is subject to teeming doubts. A simple, innocent, sincere person with a powerful heart can go much faster in the spiritual life. What really matters is the heart.

If you have a giant mind in addition to having a good heart, no harm. A good heart is infinitely more powerful than a giant mind. But if you have to make a choice between a brilliant mind—a giant, sophisticated, intellectual mind, let us say—and a genuine, pure heart, when it is a question of spiritual progress, then a simple, pure heart will be infinitely better.

If a seeker wants to learn the fastest and run the fastest, then he will be safest if he follows the way of the heart—the simple, childlike heart. A little child always pleases his parents, no matter what he does or says. Parents are always pleased with their little children. But when the children grow up and go to school and college, they lose their childlike spirituality and become weighed down with their intellectual mind. They know many more things, but their knowledge only causes headaches for their parents. But when they were little children, they depended entirely on their hearts. So a childlike heart—not the ability to converse in many languages—is of paramount importance if one wants to make the fastest progress.



PERMANENT OBSERVER MISSION
OF THE HOLY SEE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

April 10, 1981

Dear Sri Chinmoy:

Thank you for your letter of concern for our Holy Father on the occasion of his visit in the Philippines. Your expression of kind feelings for His Holiness and of appreciation for him are very encouraging. I know your support and that of your associates are important to him.

With my best wishes, dear Sri Chinmoy, and my greeting to all your associates,

Sincerely,

Archbishop Giovanni Cheli
Permanent Observer of the Holy See
to the United Nations
Apostolic Nuncio

Sri Chinmoy
Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations
GPO 20-Room 1931
United Nations,
New York, New York 10017