

# Service for Peace at the United Nations

1988

EXCERPT FROM STADON of 10th 1989

## PEACE MEDITATIONS

The importance of inner peace for those working towards outer peace has been recognised by the United Nations from its earliest days, when it was decided to open and close each session of the General Assembly with a minute of silence. The first Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, had a meditation room built in the Secretariat building, and his successor, Dag Hammarskjöld, designed the room as we know it today. It is in this tradition that Sri Chinmoy has conducted twice-weekly peace meditation sessions for delegates and staff at United Nations headquarters since 1970.

AND LET A MEDITATION

In 1968 Sri Chinmoy lectured at the Church Center for the United Nations in New York. Two years later, having learned of Sri Chinmoy's devoted efforts to spread the peace of meditation, ~~staff members~~ invited him to serve as leader of a meditation group consisting of staff, delegates, representatives of non-governmental organisations and press correspondents accredited to the United Nations. The group is now called "Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations." The late Secretary-General U Thant, himself a lifelong practitioner of meditation, appreciated Sri Chinmoy's efforts to foster the spiritual idealism of the world body as a foundation for its activities in the political, economic and social realms. The two succeeding Secretaries-General, Kurt Waldheim and Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, have also offered their encouragement.

SG - U Thant

The hour-long twice-weekly meditation sessions, held in United Nations conference rooms and in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium, consist of periods of silent meditation interspersed with meditative music, offering participants an opportunity for inner reflection and rededication to United Nations ideals.

"I had not realised that, somewhere tucked away in this very large building of the United Nations, there is a small corner where real peace dwells. Day in and day out we talk of peace, we talk of the efforts to bring about world peace. But here I find an atmosphere totally different from what is just a few floors away. I find myself very fortunate for having been given this opportunity to visit this particular spot of peace, and I shall always cherish it."

—Indian Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao  
(after attending a peace meditation)

"Work for the spirit of man is a great asset to humanity and I want to praise Sri Chinmoy for what he is doing. His work is far more important than all the conferences in the United Nations. It is far more important than all the declarations of the United Nations—to glorify man and the higher ideas and the larger ideals that are so necessary today."

—Ambassador Zenon Rossides of Cyprus

"We see the United Nations through Sri Chinmoy's eyes as a church of mankind, dedicated to worshipping the aspirations of men, women and children of all races, nationalities and political and religious beliefs, for a better life . . . . As such, the United Nations should become a sanctuary of moral and spiritual values as a better foundation of peace."

—Ambassador Jorge Illueca of Panama



"Whoever speaks to me about you is all appreciation and admiration, and I personally feel that you have been doing a most significant task for the United Nations. . . . Please feel my sincere respect and sincere concern for what you are doing for mankind."—U Thant (February 1972)



"You are praying for peace. I know what you and the group are doing for us. I know it. I can feel it."—Kurt Waldheim (July 1976)



## ACTIVITIES AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Along with its regular meditation meetings, the Peace Meditation group has organised an ongoing series of programmes, lectures and special events, including those:

- Observing special commemorative days designated by the United Nations, such as U.N. Day and Human Rights Day
- Addressing crisis situations, such as an emergency prayer session for the United States hostages in Iran, or the service at which delegates eulogised Mrs. Indira Gandhi.
- Recognising individual countries' unique qualities and contributions to the world. Similar functions have recognised particular regional groups at the United Nations.
- Honouring inspirational figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Albert Einstein, Mahatma Gandhi, Simon Bolivar and Eleanor Roosevelt, as well as organisations that have made outstanding contributions to international cooperation, for example, the International Red Cross and WHO.
- Presenting cultural programmes from around the world, in recognition of the power of the arts to inspire and uplift.
- Welcoming delegates to the world body, as when, on the eve of the opening of the 40th General Assembly, over 35 Ambassadors gathered at a gallery exhibiting Sri Chinmoy's paintings to pause for reflection before the busy period ahead.

Sri Chinmoy offers numerous lectures, particularly as part of his Dag Hammarskjold Lecture series, and members of the peace meditation group offer regular instruction in meditation to the U.N. community. All lectures, programmes and activities are free of charge.

## PEACE WALKS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

Peace Walks are organised under the co-sponsorship of Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations and a number of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations on United Nations Charter Day (26 June) and United Nations Day (24 October). During these two-day events, nationals of the United Nations Member States walk around a particular section of the U.N. Garden, each country following the other in relay fashion. They carry a copy of the Preamble to the U.N. Charter, in eloquent testimonial to the universal desire for peace. All participants sign a copy of the Preamble. Also, on the first day of the General Assembly, a contemplative early-morning seven-mile walk for peace begins and ends at U.N. headquarters.



**"In your meditation you see beyond the superficial distinctions of race, sex, language or religion, as the Charter encourages us to do. You concentrate on the truths and ideals which unite all mankind: the longing for peace, the need for compassion, the search for tolerance and understanding among men and women of all nations. . . . In recalling the fundamental goals which inspire our work, you are helping to reaffirm our commitment to the Organisation and its purposes."**—Javier Perez de Cuellar (January 1983)

*At the final ceremony of the Peace Walk on 30 October 1985, Mr. Jean Gazarian, Special Adviser for the Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations, received the signed copy of the Preamble to the Charter on behalf of the Secretary-General. Mr. Gazarian conveyed the Secretary-General's gratitude and stated: "The fortieth anniversary is a period of rededication. It was a unique opportunity for world leaders, more than 60 of them, to come to the United Nations and make a recommitment to the principles of the Charter at the level of Member States. Tomorrow, in the General Assembly Hall, the Secretariat will also make a recommitment to the principles of the Charter. But today you have blended the two elements—delegations and Secretariat—by making jointly your own recommitment to the Charter. Your peace initiative has won the respect of all. It has been for all of us a source of inspiration."*



# The New York Times

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, JUNE 27, 1985

## NEW YORK Day by Day

### Walking for Peace

Some talked. In New York, they walked.

The Secretary General and other diplomats marked the 40th anniversary of the United Nations Charter with speeches in San Francisco yesterday. Here, diplomats and staff members at the organization's East River headquarters celebrated in a different way.

On a brilliant, crisp day, representatives from Niger and Bangladesh led about 40 participants in the final part of a symbolic "walk for peace." Unlike so many United Nations ceremonies, this one was marked by silence.

After the walk in the United Nations garden, a small crowd heard Dr. Lamuel A. Stanislaus, chief delegate from Grenada, wish the United Nations many happy returns and proclaim: "In the pursuit of peace, we shall not tire."

Organizers of the two-day event, sponsored by the Sri Chinmoy meditation group, reserved time for citizens from all nations, but only 60 of the United Nations' 159 member

states showed up. Seventeen Americans topped the list, with Belize, Ghana and the Ivory Coast also boasting large turnouts.

More than 140 people ambled through the rose garden, taking in the view of the East River and pausing to admire a statue of a powerful laborer beating a sword into a plowshare.

The statue, donated by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in 1959, was the only symbol of Russia's presence during the event. No Soviet representative joined the walk.



## UN CHRONICLE

Volume XXII Number 6 June 1985



Participants in the "Peace Walk for United Nations Day" walked silently through the United Nations garden on 25 and 26 June to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption and signing of the United Nations Charter in San Francisco in 1945. Representatives of Member States passed a copy of the Charter's preamble relay-style from one country group to another. The event was organized by Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations, and co sponsored by Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Cyprus, Malta, Mauritius, Nepal, Samoa, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

The New York Times reported, at top, on the Peace Walk marking the 40th anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. The picture and caption above appeared in the June 1985 UN Chronicle, a publication of the U.N. Department of Public Information.

## U THANT ISLAND

After obtaining the lease to a small island in the East River, a quarter mile from the U.N. Secretariat building, the Peace Meditation group arranged to have the land re-named U Thant Island in honour of the late Secretary-

General. Beautification of the island has begun in keeping with U Thant's humble manner and love of simplicity. Coverage of the fifth anniversary of the dedication of the island by *The New York Times* and the *New York Daily News* appears below.

# The New York Times

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1982

B4

Life Edition

### East River Island Dedicated to U Thant

It's a very small island in the East River, opposite the United Nations, but it's been drawing more attention lately. People think they see flashing lights there before sunset.

Actually, they are looking at sun-reflecting disks that outline a 30-foot-high arch of silvery steel tubing. It was put up as a memorial to the late U Thant, former Secretary General of the United Nations, and the man-made Belmont Island — a 100-by-200-foot leftover from construction of the Manhattan-Queens subway — is now officially recognized as U Thant Island.

The sponsors are the Sri Chinmoy Meditation Group at the United Nations, which for 12 years has emphasized "the spiritual dimension to the quest for world peace" and was encouraged by U Thant, according to a spokesman, Bernard Curchack.

Yesterday, with state officials present, they dedicated the island and its arch in absentia at the Secretariat building. Also present was Sri Chinmoy, the Indian mystic who has his headquarters in Jamaica, Queens. The arch, first set up there to test its resilience, was taken in sections to the island by a harbor patrol boat for reassembling.

U Thant Island also has a Coast Guard navigation light. Buried on it now are some of the Burmese official's statements about peace and spirituality and a few of his personal effects, including a favorite tie clasp given by his daughter.

Clyde Haberman  
Laurie Johnston

## In the East River, an island just for U

By MARTIN KING

**A** TINY ISLAND in the East River across from the United Nations was formally renamed yesterday after U Thant, the late UN secretary general.

Under a special arrangement with New York State, Belmont Island is now U Thant Island and supports a new memorial arch symbolizing world peace. The arch is visible from the East River Drive.

It was formally dedicated yesterday in ceremonies in the UN's Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium.

Thant, a quiet Burmese school-teacher and diplomat, became secretary general in 1961 and held the difficult post through one crisis after another until his retirement in 1971. He died in 1974 at 65 after a three-year battle with cancer.

His term at the UN covered the Cuban missile crisis, the war in Vietnam, the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War, and the continuing cold war between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The ceremonies yesterday were under the auspices of Sri Chinmoy Meditation at the United Nations, an association of UN staff members and diplomats who seek to emphasize the spiritual dimension of the quest for world peace.

The 12-year-old meditation group sponsors twice-weekly meditation sessions for peace and various conferences and symposiums at the UN.

At yesterday's program, the group presented its first annual U Thant Award to Ambassador Zenon Rossides of Cyprus for his contributions to disarmament and national security issues. ■



U Thant in his days at the UN

N.Y. Daily News, Friday, October 8, 1982



## SPECIAL AWARDS

The Peace Meditation group has for a number of years offered distinguished members of the international community its Human Rights Award and its U Thant Peace Award, which is offered for contributions toward world peace carried out in the spirit, and according to the spiritual ideals, of the late Secretary-General U Thant. Recipients have included Tanzanian Deputy Prime Minister Salim Ahmed Salim, Rudiger von Wechmar, Ambassador to London of the Federal Republic of Germany, and Panamanian President Dr. Jorge Illueca, during their terms as President of the General Assembly, and Ambassador Zenon Rossides of Cyprus. In 1985 the United Nations Development Programme received the U Thant Peace Award, accepted by Mr. Uner Kirdar on behalf of UNDP Administrator Bradford Morse at a ceremony on U Thant Island.

The 1986 U Thant Peace Award was presented to Dr. Russell Barber, Emmy Award winner and highly respected religion editor at WNBC-TV, acclaimed for his efforts to promote religious understanding.



Assistant Secretary-General for the Commemoration of the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations, Mr. Robert Muller, presents Sri Chinmoy with the 40th Anniversary Medal, appreciating his work for peace: "I wish to thank you for everything you have done for so many years, but especially during this year of the 40th anniversary, when you have inspired many people around the world. Wherever I go—Germany, France and other countries—I see how hard you work for the United Nations. I read statements you make about the United Nations, which are very important when some people are attacking and want to destroy the United Nations. You have done beautiful things."



Mrs. Estefania Aldaba-Lim, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Representative for the International Year of the Child, accepts a painting by Sri Chinmoy inspired by the Year of the Child, presented by Ambassador Rikhi Jaipal on behalf of the Indian Government.



Mrs. Martin Luther King, Jr., wife of the slain U.S. civil rights leader, joins in a moment of silence before offering some personal insights into her late husband's vision of world unity.



A Peace Concert in the General Assembly Hall Lobby, marking the forthcoming International Year of Peace, was co-sponsored by 14 Permanent Representatives to the United Nations and the Office of the Assistant Secretary-General for the Fortieth Anniversary of the United Nations.



## First Emergency Prayer & Meditation Service At UN



**UNITED NATIONS** -- Representatives of four of the world's largest religious denominations gathered for Iran hostages on short notice at the U.N.'s Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium on what might be best described as an emergency hostage prayer service. (Left to right, Sri Chinmoy, Herbert Rickman, Dr. Julie Loranger, Rabbi Marc Tanenbaum, Dr. Muhammad Abdul Rauf, and Sister Janet Richardson.

The first "emergency prayer and meditation service" ever to be held at the United Nations was convened in an atmosphere of high tension recently, before the first group of hostages was released.

Representatives of four major faiths gathered on short notice in Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium to ask God's grace and guidance to intercede on behalf of a speedy resolution of the peace-threatening hostage situation.

Rabbi Marc Tannenbaum, president of the American Jewish

Committee spoke for the group when he declared, "we must make a stand for the sanctity of individual human life and against the using of human life as a political bargaining chip. Not to do so invites more hostage situations and leads to ultimate human tragedies such as the destruction of the Cambodian people."

Hindu-Yogi Sri Chinmoy, who convened the emergency meditation and prayer service said "The world has long known America's military power; world is now seeing America's heart power as it

proceeds with patience and restraint in this hostage crisis."

Sister Janet Richardson represented the Holy See and Dr. Mohammed Abdul Rauf, director of the Islamic Center in Washington, D.C. also offered a prayer of hope for the hostages.

Mayor Ed Koch sent his special assistant, Herbert Rickman to represent the City of New York, host to the U.N. Rickman declared, "the best thanksgiving present the world could receive this year, is the safe release of all the hostages."

## Diplomats Honor Dr. King



Silent meditation on the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at King Day observance in Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium, January 15. Left to right: Mexican Journalist Luis Olivarieta, Ambassador Tommy Koh of Singapore, Ambassador Donald McHenry of the U.S., Sri Chinmoy who organized event, Ambassador Niaz Naik of Pakistan and Carl B. Stokes, WNBC T.V., former Mayor of Cleveland, Ohio.

Forty-eight hours after the United Nations condemnation of the Soviet blitzkrieg in Afghanistan, three diplomats who figured prominently in the General Assembly's landslide vote against the Russian aggression, joined Sri Chinmoy and his meditation group at the U.N. to celebrate the spirit of non-violence on the 51st anniversary of the birth of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Ambassador Donald McHenry of the U.S. opened the King Day observance declaring, "it is particularly fitting that we should gather on these grounds to commemorate the birth of Dr. King and more importantly the philosophy by which he lived and the message he left to mankind

"He looked upon the American Constitution in the same way we at the United Nations ought to look upon the U.N. Charter: not necessarily something one achieves immediately but rather a series of goals towards which one can work."

"Dr. King never despaired of achieving the American dream outlined in the Constitution and I think we should not despair of achieving the world dream outlined in the Charter."

Ambassador Tommy Koh of Singapore, a young, highly regarded leader of the non-aligned movement, revealed that he had been, "deeply affected by Martin Luther King's teaching, his courage and his charismatic

leadership," and had been so inspired by Dr. King that when he finished his graduate studies at Harvard in 1964, Mr. Koh spent the summer working to help the poor of the Roxbury, Mass. ghetto.

Niaz Naik, Pakistan's Ambassador, an Islamic scholar and veteran diplomat, said of the martyred Nobel peace prize winner, "his message of universal brotherhood and equality of man speaks for the collective conscience of humanity."





In a meeting on 16 May 1984, L. L. Mehrotra, the Ambassador of India to Argentina, greets Sri Chinmoy. Ambassador Mehrotra had told Sri Chinmoy: "I am most thankful that you are still here in the United States performing a magnificent role in the service of Mother India and the whole mankind."



General Assembly President Jorge Illueca and Sri Chinmoy watch as 3,800 helium-filled balloons are released to celebrate the United Nations 38th anniversary. President Illueca told the crowd of a thousand staff members, delegates and visitors: "Balloons represent joy, delight, spontaneous enthusiasm. Their charm is in their variety and abundance. So too, the beauty of our world depends on bringing together the full variety and abundance of peoples, uniting our capacities and our will for continuous peace and progress. . . . I would like to express my gratitude to Sri Chinmoy and the members of the Peace Meditation at the United Nations for organising this meaningful celebration today, and for reminding us in so many ways, on so many occasions, of the need to pray for peace, to meditate for peace, to work for peace, to make peace a reality in our daily life."



Each year a commemorative run is organised from Lake Success, the site of the early U.N. offices, to its current headquarters in Manhattan—a total distance of 18.5 miles. Runners carry flags of the Member States and the U.N.

DIPLOMATIC WORLD BULLETIN November 10-17, 1986



General Assembly President Choudhury at the piano to sing a few songs during a programme, held in his honor, of the Peace Meditation of the United Nations. Leader of the meditation, a fellow Benaali Sri Chinmoy (seated in front row left), presented Choudhury with a plaque in recognition of his service to the international community and a cake for his upcoming birthday.





The article below was carried by the Associated Press wire service on 1 November 1985 and appeared in numerous newspapers worldwide.

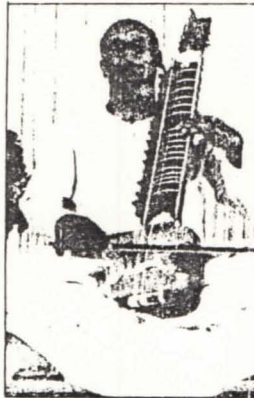
**UNITED NATIONS (AP)** — A small man sits cross-legged on stage, a wooden flute held up to his smooth, round face. Plaintive echoes gently fill the hall, then give way to silence.

The sounds are simple, far from the pomp that marked the United Nations' official 40th anniversary. But they drew 21 U.N. ambassadors and nearly 2,000 New Yorkers to a performance this week.

Sri Chinmoy gave the concert at Lincoln Center as a birthday present to the world organization. For more than a decade, the spiritual master has been working in a quiet way to bring peace to the turbulent halls of the United Nations.

Twice a week, close to 100 delegates and staff gather during their lunch hour in a basement conference room at U.N. headquarters to meditate with the 54-year-old philosopher.

"If the inner world is inundated with peace," Sri Chinmoy tells them, "then the nightmare of world war cannot even come into being."



Sri Chinmoy

AP Laserphoto

Monday's "Peace Concert" at Lincoln Center was an extension of that effort. Sri Chinmoy took up a dozen instruments during the evening, from an Indian sitar to the harmonium.

The Peace Meditation group at the United Nations, founded in 1970, seeks to keep delegates and employees focused on the ideals of the organization: cooperation and peace.

"There may be hurricane on the top of the ocean, but it doesn't mean there is a hurricane in the depths," Susan Brummell, a spokeswoman

for the group, said in an interview. "It is only by tapping the vast wealth of inner peace that we will ever be able to smooth the troubled waters of the United Nations."

"It's not necessarily a fast process," she said.

Last week, as the world watched the organization celebrate its anniversary, politics prevented U.N. delegates from agreeing even on a declaration to mark the occasion. The United States objected to a paragraph referring to Palestinian self-determination, and Arab states refused to leave it out.

"That's the type of thing that discourages me," said Adhiratha Keefe, head of records management for the United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, who is a member of the group. "If it wasn't for (the meditation sessions), I probably would have left the U.N. long ago."

Born Chinmoy Kumar Chose in Chittagong, in what is now Bangladesh, Sri Chinmoy now counts 1,100 disciples around the world. His meditation center in Queens, New York, is one of 60 worldwide.

He is a prolific writer, painter and composer and a dedicated runner and tennis player.

His philosophy, he said recently, is to accept the setbacks as temporary. "We accept society as it is and, at the same time, strive to better society — with its kind cooperation."

The U.N. secretary general, Javier Perez de Cuellar, has applauded the group's work.

"In your meditation you see

beyond the superficial distinctions of race, sex, language or religion as the U.N. Charter encourages us to do," he told the group. "You concentrate on the truths and ideals which unite all mankind: the longing for peace, the need for compassion, the search for tolerance and understanding."

Sri Chinmoy doesn't try to meditate between disputing sides at the United Nations. His meditation is designed to give different sides a sense of their commonality.

In addition to its meditation sessions and lectures, the group touches U.N. life in other ways. The State of New York has given it, under a renewable lease, a man-made island slightly larger than a tugboat.

Once little more than a subway airshaft and a haven for rats, the island lies in the East River in view of half of the U.N. offices. The group has planted a tree and grass, and put up U.N. blue fence defining the boundary between the greenery and its rocky shore. The rats have disappeared of their own accord.

"We see it as kind of symbolic of the transformation of the U.N. and of the world," said Miss Brummell.

## ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS WORLDWIDE

To share their concern for peace and the goals of the United Nations with like-minded individuals around the world, Sri Chinmoy Centres in many countries have organised special events to bring the positive achievements of the Organisation to the attention of the public, particularly on United Nations Day. In appreciation of his work in promoting the observance of U.N. Day, the United Nations Association of the United States awarded Sri Chinmoy its Distinguished Service Award in 1977 and again in 1979.

## SEVEN MINUTES OF WORLD PEACE

On United Nations Day (24 October) in 1984, the Peace Meditation group inaugurated "Seven Minutes of World Peace," a simultaneous global observance of seven minutes of peaceful silence. Governments are requested to refrain from hostile action during this period. Since its inception, more than 100 groups in over 40 countries have joined the annual observance, and letters and proclamations have been received from Heads of State and mayors of more than 40 cities. Below are some comments from individuals and organisations involved.

"Seven Minutes of World Peace is an inspiring endeavour to unite the world in peace."

—Dr. Helen Caldicott, President Emeritus  
Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Founder, Women's Action for Nuclear Disarmament

"As a peace-loving nation, Jamaica appreciates all efforts and activities aimed at promoting world peace and recognises the importance of praying for peace. I sincerely hope that the activities you are planning will help to promote the spirit of peace across the world."

—F. A. Glasspole  
Governor-General of Jamaica, West Indies

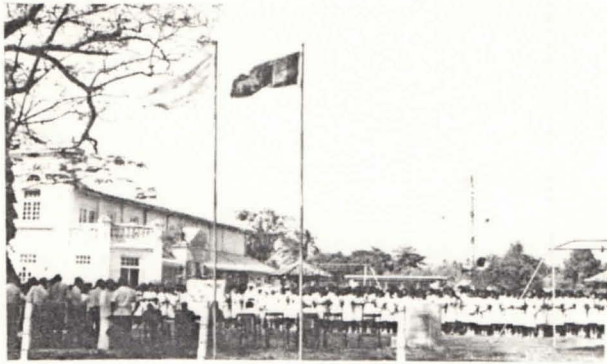
"I hope the Seven Minutes of World Peace will grow into eternal world peace."

—Masahiko Igeda, Director  
Office of the Mayor, Hiroshima, Japan

"More than 1,000 schoolchildren, teachers and members of the public participated. For the first time, the state radio gave wide publicity in the Sinhala news broadcast and as a result the campaign has now received initial island-wide publicity."

—Kumaran Fernando, Secretary-General  
United Nations Association of Sri Lanka





One of Sri Lanka's many gatherings for "Seven Minutes of World Peace." In 1986, the United Nations Association of Sri Lanka sent



15,000 letters to institutions (including all secondary schools) announcing the event and asking for volunteer leaders.

### THE PEACE WALK (FOR THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE)

Each year on the United Nations International Day of Peace (the opening day of the United Nations General Assembly), peace walks are organised in dozens of cities on six continents during the dawn hours, a time of day chosen for its calm, meditative qualities. Participants walk in a contemplative spirit, carrying the flags of their own nations or of the United Nations. In New York, participants walk a seven-mile route, beginning and ending at the United Nations, and afterwards are invited to join U.N. Ambassadors for a prayer breakfast.

### ATHLETIC EVENTS

Many of the activities in support of U.N. Day and other United Nations programmes have been athletic events, particularly involving running and cycling, often in cooperation with local United Nations Associations. Governors, mayors and other local officials have shown their support for these activities with letters to the Secretary-General, and have brought the events to the attention of the public through proclamations. A book of such proclamations and letters was presented to the Secretary-General by Sri Chinmoy during their January 1983 meeting.

Following are descriptions of the most outstanding of these athletic events.

- Annual U.N. Day 10-km run in Geneva. Begun in 1982, the race has grown to over 400 runners, with prizes given by the Director-General of the U.N. Office at Geneva.

- 320-km relay run from Canberra to Sydney, Australia, completed on U.N. Day, 1977 for the U.N.'s 32nd birthday, held in conjunction with a 1,600-km bicycle relay.
- 450-mile relay run from Edinburgh to London, United Kingdom, ending on U.N. Day, 1976
- 230-km relay run between the twin cities of Freiburg, Federal Republic of Germany, and Besancon, France, in 1980 "to symbolise unity among nations on U.N. Day."
- International bicycle relay starting at the Peace Arch on the U.S.-Canada border, in 1980. Cyclists exchanged letters of greeting from the Mayors of Seattle, Vancouver and Victoria, and state and local leaders. They then rode back to present these at their cities' respective U.N. Day ceremonies.
- Swim across the English Channel in tribute to the 40th anniversary of the U.N.
- A 3,000-mile solo run across America, starting in San Francisco and finishing at U.N. headquarters on 24 January 1986, dedicated to the International Year of Peace.
- Peace Runs for the public held worldwide on a regular basis.



## SWIMS FOR PEACE

During 1986, four members of the Peace Meditation—staff members of the U.N. Secretariat and UNICEF—undertook a number of “Swims for Peace” to draw attention to the United Nations International Year of Peace. Their first swim was on 1 January in the frigid waters off Hiroshima, Japan, and five days later they swam in Nagasaki Harbour. Inspired by a note from the Secretary-General commending their “intrepid endeavors” and “admirable commitment, which you and your colleagues in the Meditation Group share for the principles of the United Nations and the International Year of Peace,” the swimmers traveled to a total of 35 sites around the globe—all at their own expense—to swim for peace. The enthusiastic response to their swims inspired them to continue in 1987. A list of these swims and one of the more than 50 newspaper articles which covered them are given below.

### 1986

- 1 January—Miyajima Island, Hiroshima, Japan
- 6 January—Fukuda Beach, Nagasaki, Japan
- 8 February—Fernandina Beach, Fernandina, Florida
- 8 February—Savannah Beach, Savannah, Georgia
- 9 February—Jacksonville Beach, Jacksonville, Florida
- 9 February—Ocean Front, Plaza Hotel, Daytona Beach, Florida
- 15 February—Lake Pontchartrain, New Orleans, Louisiana
- 15 February—Edgewater Mall Beach, Gulfport-Biloxi, Mississippi
- 16 February—Mobile Yacht Club, Mobile, Alabama
- 16 February—Stewart Beach, Galveston, Texas
- 22 February—Horseshoe Bay, Bermuda
- 1 March—Boca Chica Beach, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
- 1 March—Laguna de Candado, San Juan, Puerto Rico
- 2 March—Cruz Bay, St. John to Sapphire Beach, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands
- 8 March—27th St. Ocean Front, Virginia Beach, Virginia
- 8 March—Johnny Mercer Pier, Wrightsville Beach, Wilmington, North Carolina
- 9 March—Pavillion Ocean Front, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
- 9 March—Battery Shore Front, Charleston, South Carolina
- 15 March—Lake Pleasant, Phoenix, Arizona
- 15 March—Tiajuana Beach, Tiajuana, Mexico
- 15 March—La Jolla Cove, San Diego, California
- 16 March—East Beach, Santa Barbara, California
- 16 March—Santa Monica Pier, Santa Monica, California
- 22 March—Danalo Beach, Ponteranas, Costa Rica
- 23 March—Fuerte Amador Beach, Panama City, Panama
- 23 March—Langosta Beach, Colon City, Panama
- 21 December—Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 25 December—Salinas Beach, Viña del Mar, Chile
- 29 December—Laguna Carén, Santiago, Chile
- 31 December—Valdivia River, Valdivia, Chile

### 1987

- 2 January—Los Molinas de Nibla, Valdivia, Chile
- 7 January—Copa Cabaña Beach, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- 9 January—Montevideo, Uruguay
- 11 January—Lake Titicaca, La Paz, Bolivia
- 13 January—La Playa Herradura, Lima, Peru

# The Japan Times

ISSN: 0047-1184  
The Japan Times Ltd. 1986

All the News Without Fear or Favor

Saturday January 4, 1986

## 3 From U.N. Mark Int'l Peace Year With Long Swim

**HIROSHIMA (Kyodo)**  
Three employees of the United Nations marked the inauguration of International Year of Peace in 1986 at this atom-bombed city with a 2-km-long swim in icy waters on New Year's Day.

The three, all from New York, included Adhiratha Keefe, a 38-year-old employee of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), who hit the headlines last year when he swam across the English Channel to commemorate the U.N.'s 40th founding anniversary.

## Channel Swimming Association

Comdr. C. Gerald Forsberg, O.B.E., R.N.  
President

This is to certify that  
.....Adhiratha Keefe.....  
swam the English Channel  
England to France

on 10th September 1985 in 14 hours 51 minutes.

In honour of United Nations 40th Anniversary

The swim was duly entered in the  
Record Book of the Association  
on 28th November 1985

.....Gerald Forsberg..... President

.....Raymond Scott..... Chairman

.....Audrey Scott..... Hon. Secretary



## Building Peace among Religions

At a time when religious differences continue to create turmoil in the world, Sri Chinmoy has strived to promote unity and global awareness among the world's religions. Although he was raised a Hindu, his philosophy is that of a universal truth-seeker and peace-lover. He feels that, just as each person has a home but then goes out to study and work in the larger world, each person, while maintaining the traditions of his own religion, should also foster the universal spirituality upon which world peace must eventually be founded. In this spirit he advises his students not to give up their own religions or to deny others the right to their own beliefs.

To offer this message and to strengthen support for the United Nations and its work, Sri Chinmoy has met with a number of leaders from the world's major faiths. Highlights from the most significant of these meetings appear below.

For his service in this area, Sri Chinmoy has received growing recognition among religious leaders, religion-oriented media and theological institutions. For example, in 1984, the Dean of Westminster hosted a reception in Sri Chinmoy's honour at Westminster Abbey, in connection with his Peace Concert at London's Royal Albert Hall. Sri Chinmoy has also been featured three times on WNBC-TV's "The First Estate" and twice on WCBS-TV's "The Way to Go."



Pope Paul VI: "This meeting of ours has been most essential. The Hindu life and the Christian life shall go together. Your message and my message are the same." (The Vatican, 22 March 1972)



Pope John Paul II: "God bless you and your divine activities." (The Vatican, 14 October 1987) "Special blessings to you. Special greetings to your members. We shall continue together." (The Vatican, 18 June 1980)



Pir Vilayat Khan, Head of the Sufi Order in the West: "You are a true representative of the spirituality of our home, India. Ever since I met you for the first time, the link between us has always grown in strength. . . . I want to say how much I value the meaning of that bond, because it is one of true dedication to the service of God." (World Day of Prayer Commemoration, United Nations, 5 April 1976)



Sri Chinmoy leads the opening meditation at a Spiritual Summit Conference at the United Nations, sponsored by the Temple of Understanding on 24 October 1975, before the Secretary-General delivers the opening remarks. Those seated on stage include Mother Teresa and noted anthropologist Margaret Mead.



The following article about the National Day of Prayer Observance organised by the Peace Meditation at the United Nations on 25 July 1975 appeared in The New York Times.

*THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, JULY 25, 1975*



The New York Times/Robert M. Klein

Representatives of Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Baha'i and Muslim groups at prayer ceremony at the Church Center of the U.N.

## 6 FAITHS PRESENT AT CHURCH CENTER

Leaders Mark National Day  
of Prayer at the U. N.

By GEORGE DUGAN

Leaders of six of the world's major religious bodies marked this country's National Day of Prayer yesterday at a ceremony attended by 100 people in the chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, at First Avenue and 44th Street.

The Rev. Dr. Dan M. Potter, executive director of the Council of Churches of the City of New York, called it the "most representative gathering of religious leaders ever held in the city."

Sri Chinmoy, a Hindu and director of the United Nations Meditation Group, presided at the hour-long ceremony. He

opened the meeting with silent prayer, standing behind a plain white marble altar.

Then, in brief comments, the leaders representing Christian, Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, Baha'i and Muslim groups—called upon Americans to renew their "dedication to the eternal" in prayer and asked God to lead all the nations in "paths of righteousness."

The speakers, in addition to Dr. Potter, included the following: Rabbi Samuel Geffen of the New York Board of Rabbis, Lozang Jamspal of the Buddhist Monastery of America, The Rev. Robert Kennedy of the Brooklyn Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, The Rev. Stephen Kyriacou of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America, Catherine Mboye of the Baha'i International Community, Muddassir Ali Shamsee of the Muslim Prayer Group, Sheik Shahabu-d-din of the Sufi Order, The Rev. Grant Anderson of the Queens Federation of Churches, The Rev. Kenneth Folkes, president of the Council

of Churches of the City of New York.

Dr. Potter said there was much for which "we can thank God, but, we see so many shortcomings, so many failures, so many examples of injustice, inequality, discrimination, brutality, pain, suffering and interminable degrading violence to human dignity."

"We cannot celebrate this Bicentennial," he added, "without feeling the compelling need to sit in sackcloth and ashes, in penance for our failure to God as well as our disappointment to fellow citizens."

Following the commentaries, excerpts were read from President Ford's statement proclaiming yesterday as a National Day of Prayer, the late President John F. Kennedy's inaugural address and the writings of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Sacred Fire, a 30-member choral group, sang "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "America the Beautiful."



On 27 June 1987, he was a guest speaker at the opening ceremony of the first U.S. National Senior Olympics held in St. Louis, and he was invited to conduct the opening meditation of the Seventh World Veterans' Games, held in Melbourne, Australia, on 29 November 1987.

For his work in sports, Sri Chinmoy has twice been commended by the United States President's Council on Physical Fitness. He has also received a wide variety of awards and proclamations from around the world, including the Spiridon Running Magazine Sports Award "for promotion of sports as a character-building and men-unifying power" (Bonn, Federal Republic of Germany); the Australian Runner Magazine Award "for contributions to running in Australia"; and the Simon Bolivar Medal for contribution to sports, given by the Central American and Caribbean Masters Association.

### SPECIAL ATHLETIC EVENTS

Sri Chinmoy has also inspired a number of special athletic events organised specifically to foster good will and promote idealistic principles at the national, regional and international levels. In addition to those staged in honour of the United Nations, other significant events are highlighted below.

- *Canada-America Oneness-Run.* In 1981 one of Sri Chinmoy's students ran the 700 miles from Toronto to New York in 23 days to promote continuing good relations between the two countries. He was enthusiastically received by local representatives of both nations en route. In 1982 another of Sri Chinmoy's students ran 800 miles from Halifax to New York.

- *Liberty Torch Bicentennial Relay.* In 1976, a team of runners staged this 9,000-mile non-stop relay run, carrying a flaming torch through all 50 United States in the hope of "rekindling the high ideals upon which America was founded." In 1982 one of Sri Chinmoy's students duplicated this 9,000-mile run in a world record-setting solo event.

- *Cross-Canada Solo Run.* In 1983 one of Sri Chinmoy's students became the first woman to run across Canada, covering 4,500 miles in 7 months, the longest solo run by a woman.

- *Australian Bicycle Relay.* In 1980 a 2,300-mile non-stop relay traversed the length of the east coast of Australia.

### PEACE MILES

In 1986 and 1987 a number of measured, permanently marked one-mile running courses or walking trails—called Sri Chinmoy Peace Miles—were established by government authorities in cities around the world, in co-operation with local Sri Chinmoy Centres, the Marathon Team and Running Clubs.

The link between sports and peace that Sri Chinmoy stresses fired the imagination of the Greater London Council, which set up the first Peace Mile along the River Thames in Battersea Park in 1986. Shortly afterwards a second Peace Mile was established in West Berlin, directly in the shadow of the Berlin Wall—a poignant reminder of the need to work for international understanding.

Below is a list of the nearly 50 cities that have established Peace Miles to date.

<b>Australia</b> Adelaide Brisbane Canberra Geelong Melbourne Sydney	<b>Finland</b> Helsinki	<b>United States</b> <i>Connecticut</i> Greenwich New Milford <i>New York</i> Albany Bronx Glens Falls Hempstead Newburgh Nyack Rome Schenectady St. Albans Syracuse Troy Utica
<b>Austria</b> Vienna	<b>New Zealand</b> Auckland Domain Lake Pupuke, Auckland	
<b>Canada</b> Sudbury Victoria Winnipeg	<b>Puerto Rico</b> Arecibo Caguas Cuamo Dorado Guaynabo Mayaguez Naguabo San Juan	
<b>England</b> Ipswich London (Battersea Park) London (Finsbury Park) Manchester Oxford	<b>Scotland</b> Edinburgh Glasgow	
<b>Federal Republic of Germany</b> Augsberg Munich Nuremberg West Berlin	<b>Sweden</b> Uppsala	
	<b>Switzerland</b> Geneva Zurich	





## THE SRI CHINMOY ONENESS-HOME PEACE RUN

In a giant cooperative venture, the "Sri Chinmoy Oneness-Home Peace Run" passed seven flaming peace torches from hand to hand among runners in 49 countries with continuous relays spanning the U.S. (11,000 miles through all 50 states), Canada, Europe, Australia and Japan, and local runs held in South America, Mexico, the Caribbean, Africa, Bhutan and China. It was the longest relay run in history, covering a total of over 25,000 miles. The Prime Ministers of Australia, Canada and Iceland, hundreds of other national and local government officials, celebrities and internationally known athletes, as well as AFS exchange students around the world joined thousands of runners and supporters in passing on the message of the Peace Run: "Peace begins one person at a time."



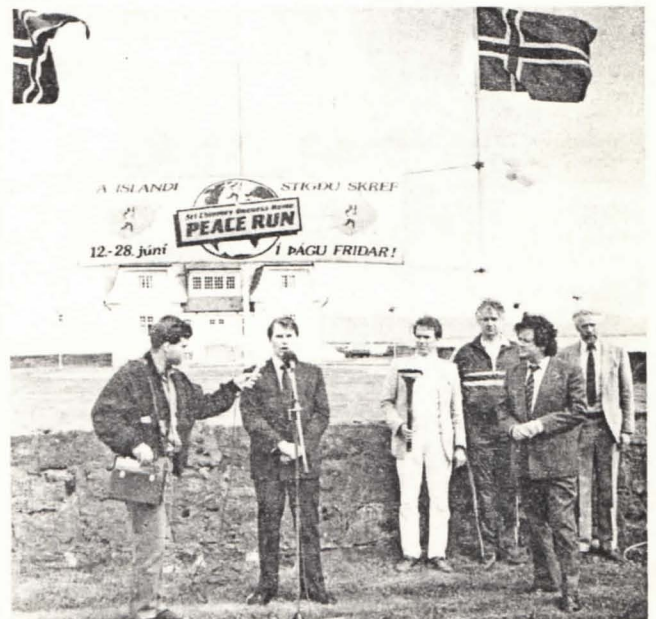
Australian Prime Minister Hawke (right) and Opposition Leader Howard holding peace torch in Canberra.



Prime Minister Brian Mulroney passes on the torch during a celebration of Canada's national day.



Mr. Jan Martenson, Director-General of the United Nations in Geneva, opens the ceremony in Geneva where four teams of runners from all parts of Europe converged at the close of the European segment of the run. Also speaking during the ceremony were Ambassadors to the United Nations from China, Canada, Great Britain, the USSR, the Netherlands and Switzerland, as well as the President of the International Olympic Committee.



The Prime Minister of Iceland, Steingruimur Hermansson, and Reykjavik Mayor David Oddsson and representatives of the country's major sports federations open the Iceland relay at the same location where the Reagan and Gorbachev summit meeting took place a few months earlier. The 2,000-mile relay circled the entire island country.



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## NOTE

Sri Chinmoy has allowed his name to be used in several contexts to denote the high standards that have come to be associated with his work and to show his support for the efforts being undertaken. The most visible organisations are—Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations, the Sri Chinmoy Centre and the Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team. Sri Chinmoy's students and friends support or attend the various activities undertaken under the auspices of these organisations in accordance with their personal interests and abilities.

### **Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations**

Sri Chinmoy: The Peace Meditation at the United Nations is an association of United Nations staff, delegates and non-governmental organisation representative. The group has sponsored twice-weekly meditation sessions and other programmes for world peace at United Nations headquarters since 1970, when Sri Chinmoy was invited to serve as leader. Because of space limitations and the fact that programmes are held in restricted areas, the general public is usually not admitted, although invitations are extended to selected guests for special events.

### **The Sri Chinmoy Centre**

Students of the non-profit Sri Chinmoy Centres, located in some one hundred cities around the world, offer free programmes for the public, including meditation classes, musical performances, athletic events and programmes in support of human development, world peace and other goals of the United Nations. The Sri Chinmoy Centre is

a non-governmental organisation (NGO) recognised by the United Nations Department of Public Information. Many members of the Peace Meditation at the United Nations also participate in the activities of the Sri Chinmoy Centre in New York, although the two are separate entities.

Each year, usually at the year's end, some 150 members of the Sri Chinmoy Centres from various countries, a number of whom are also members of the Peace Meditation at the United Nations, travel together to a different part of the world. This provides an opportunity to become acquainted with different cultures and to offer service in the form of free concerts for peace and athletic events. Many see these year-end travels as a chance to deepen their own inner peace among like-minded friends and to renew their inspiration for service to the broader community throughout the year.

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### **The Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team**

Inspired by their teacher's philosophy and personal example, many of Sri Chinmoy's students have become enthusiastic athletes, and as an outgrowth, the international Sri Chinmoy Marathon Team annually sponsors over 500 running races, from weekly short running races to ultramarathons and triathlons. Team members also participate in and assist at other sports events, such as the annual New York City Marathon. In order to demonstrate Sri Chinmoy's philosophy of personal transcendence and the importance of a healthy body for inner growth and well being, Marathon Team members have completed ultra-distance running, cycling and swimming events.

*For information, please contact*  
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