

MEDITATION AT THE UNITED NATIONS



OUR HOPE FOR MANKIND

MONTHLY BULLETIN OF THE
UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP

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INSIDE FRONT COVER
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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.

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UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP



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.

Sri Chinmoy

EDITOR'S NOTE

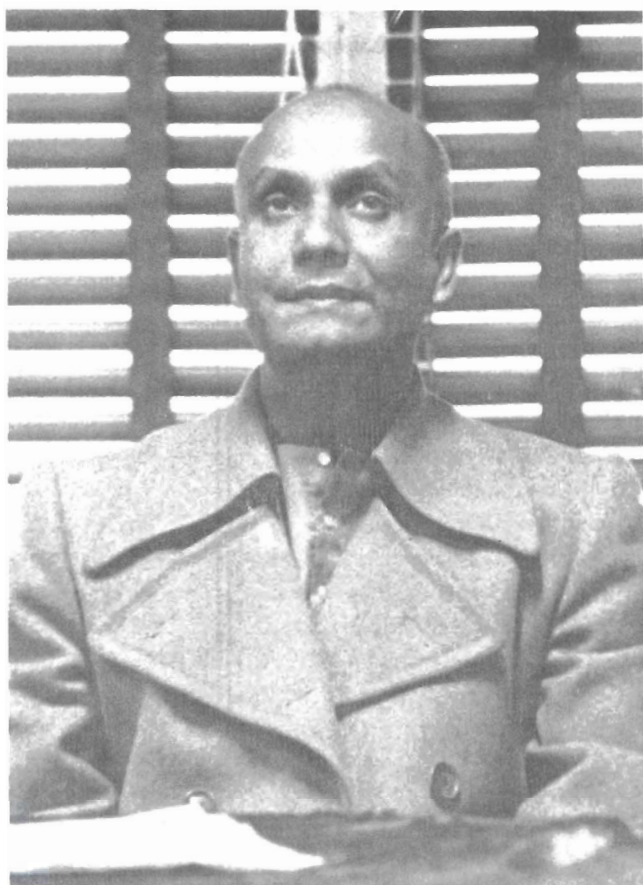
The United Nations Meditation Group consists of U.N. staff members, representatives, delegates and NGO's who believe that a spiritual approach to world peace is inherent in the basic U.N. ideals and can go hand in hand with political striving for U.N. goals. The Meditation Group was inaugurated on April 14, 1970. At that time it invited the well-known mystic and philosopher Sri Chinmoy to lead its meetings in the Peace Room of the Church Center for the United Nations. As its membership increased and the scope of its activities expanded, the Meditation Group began holding additional meetings Tuesdays at 12 noon in the Chapel of the Church Center as well and on Fridays at 12 noon in the Secretariat.

Staff members of the Secretariat, delegates and representatives from Missions, Specialized Agencies and non-governmental organisations accredited to the U.N. are most welcome to join in these meetings, as well as in our other activities.

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Sri Chinmoy conducting meditation at Friday meeting of U.N. Meditation Group in Secretariat Room 550 (photo by Ben Lieberman)

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TUESDAY MEDITATIONS FOR NOVEMBER

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TUESDAY MEDITATIONS

*The Chapel
Church Center for the
United Nations*

At each Tuesday meeting, Sri Chinmoy conducted an hour of silent meditation. Following are the "Meditations for the Day" by Sri Chinmoy for the respective Tuesdays in November.

November 4

Fear gives its owner very little rest.
Doubt gives its owner no rest.
Courage gives its owner much joy.
Faith gives its owner the message of fulfilment.

November 11

When insecurity enters into the mind, joy
departs from the heart.

November 18

Don't blame the world; better it. How? By
bettering yourself at every moment.

November 25

God will give us rest only after we have perfected
ourselves. No, not even a second before.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Following a meditation conducted on October 29, 1975, for staff members at the United Nations Development Programme headquarters in the Alcoa Building, New York, Sri Chinmoy answered the following questions:

Question: How can the knowledge of spirituality help professional people in their effort to help mankind through their work?

Sri Chinmoy: First of all, let us try to know what spirituality means. Spirituality is not something abstract, something that encourages us to leave the world. It is not something that is only for the chosen few. No! Spirituality is certainty itself. And if it is true spirituality, then it always encourages us to accept life.

Each individual has something to do here on earth, so he consciously or unconsciously throws himself into multifarious activities. He wants to get everything done sooner than at once so that he can do something new, so that he can go on to something better, something more illumining, something more fulfilling.

Now, there is a short way, which we call the sunlit path, to reach our destination. You are sitting right in front of me. If I walk straight, I will undoubtedly reach you sooner than if I wander around, here making a left turn, there making a right turn, and only then come to you. The short-cut is the way of concentration. We have to concentrate on the thing that we are supposed to do. Each time we concentrate on something, we take away the confusion, pressure, anxiety, worry, unwillingness and stubbornness that is inside the subject itself, inside each undertaking. At the same time we offer our capacity, confidence and assurance to ourselves. We either bring to the fore our inner capacity, confidence and assurance from within or we bring them down from above.

Each time before undertaking anything, if we can concentrate, we simplify the matter and at the same time we expedite the result in a satisfactory way. Concentration immediately clears the road. On either side of the road are doubt-tree, insecurity-tree, hesitation-tree, anxiety-tree, worry-tree. As soon as we concentrate we see the transformation of these trees. Doubt becomes faith, insecurity becomes security; anything that is discouraging becomes encouraging and helpful and lends us a helping hand as we move toward our destination.

So spirituality is the simplification of life, not the rejection or the negation of life. Spirituality is something that shows us the sunlit path so that we can reach our destination as soon as possible. No matter what we want to achieve from life and in life, spirituality is the best friend that can help us. It simplifies, purifies, illumines, fulfils and immortalises the thing that we want to possess or the thing that we want to grow into. Spirituality is not something uncertain, vague, meaningless or fruitless. No. It is something meaningful and fruitful, something that is constantly illumining us and fulfilling us. And inside illumination and fulfilment is the satisfaction that we want.

In our own profession if we want efficiency and perfection, then spirituality is the only answer because it clears the road of confusion; it purifies and illumines our mind. Once purification and illumination take place in our mind, we see that the goal is right in front of us. Then we see that the goal is within us. And finally we see that the goal is not only within us, but we are the goal itself. This moment we are the seeker running after the goal; the next moment we feel that we have become the goal itself. Spirituality is the only thing to make us feel that we need the goal, the only thing to show us how to reach the goal and the only thing to make us clearly see that we are nothing other than the goal itself.

Question: Is it a good idea to use our intuition in our daily tasks?

Sri Chinmoy: As soon as we start using our intuition, we have to know that we are doing the right thing. But just because we are doing the right thing today, we can't say that immediately we are going to get the result. We have to continue doing the right thing for two days, ten days, two months, three months. It is like a seed. The seed does not germinate all at once. It takes some time for the seed to germinate. Then it grows into a tiny plant and a sapling, and finally it becomes a huge banyan tree. Today's intuition-power is also something that grows. Today's intuition-power need not and cannot be all-pervasive; like a muscle it can be developed. It can become stronger and more fulfilling.

He who has intuitive power should feel that this power has dawned on him in order that he can serve those who have less intuitive power, who have less capacity, who have less wisdom-power. If he serves his brothers and sisters on earth, then he is bringing about lasting peace, lasting happiness on earth.

When you have intuitive knowledge you can feel that you are already advanced. You can lead others; you are proceeding and people are behind,

following you. But you have to know that your power of intuition has come either from the inmost recesses of your heart or from a very high plane of consciousness. And you have to feel that this power has come to you not so that you can lord it over others, but so that you can serve others. You have to feel that because this intuition has entered into you, you are the elder brother of the family. You have a few younger brothers and you have to show your younger brothers the way to the destination with love, with concern, with oneness.

When intuitive power comes, you just enter into your task. You have something to do and you get a flash. At that time you have to enter into it. While you are entering into it, please feel that you are entering into the task not to show the world what you have accomplished, but to show the world that you have seen something new, which is of immediate use. To whom? To you yourself and to the rest of the world. When you use intuition, you immediately feel the necessity of dedication. Intuition you have got; and what do you use it for? For dedication. Enter with your intuition-power into the subject or task that you have; and from there come out triumphantly to dedicate your discovery to those who have not yet discovered the light that you have discovered. So the best use for intuition is to constantly dedicate it to the reality that you

discover while using it. Dedication is the best way to use the power of intuition and dedication is the real satisfaction from intuition.

Intuition shows us how to start, how to continue and how to end. The word 'end' is not the right expression to use when we speak about the search for eternal happiness. There is no end. We are always transcending our previous goals. Today's goal is tomorrow's starting point for an ever-higher goal.

Question: Can meditation help cure physical ailments such as high blood pressure?

Sri Chinmoy: When we meditate, we consciously try to go to the Source, which is all-perfection. Meditation means conscious awareness of our Source. Our Source is God, our Source is Truth, our Source is Light, our Source is Perfection. Meditation takes us to our Source, which is a place where there is no imperfection, no ailment. And where is the Source? The Source is within us.

In the outer life when we meditate, what result do we get? We make our mind calm and quiet. It is almost impossible for most human beings to have peace of mind. And he who does not have peace of mind is a veritable beggar; he is like a monkey in a human body. He has no satisfaction. But if we get peace of mind for one fleeting second, we feel we

have accomplished a lot in life. When we have peace of mind, our vital remains peaceful and our body remains peaceful; and where there is peace there is no dislocation. It is only in the world of anxiety, worry, tension and confusion that there is some ailment. Otherwise, there can be no ailment.

So meditation is the answer. Meditation offers us peace of mind, tranquility in the mind. When there is peace of mind, all sufferings of human life can come to an end. When the mind is tranquil, there is a constant flow of harmony. This harmony is entering into the vital and from the vital it enters into the physical. When there is harmony in the system, there can be no ailment.

High blood pressure, heart failure and all the diseases that we notice in God's creation are attacks from undivine forces. These undivine forces can be overcome, can be counterattacked only when we surrender to the positive force. When we meditate, we try to become a perfect channel for the positive force. The positive force is light and the negative force is darkness-night. The positive force is love, not hatred. The positive force is belief, not disbelief. At each moment in our life the positive force helps us because it takes us consciously to the Source, to our destination, which is perfection.

If our mind is calm and quiet, if our vital is dynamic, if our body is conscious of what it is doing, then we are inside the palace of satisfaction, where there can be no disease, no suffering, no imperfection, no obstruction to our abiding peace, abiding light, abiding satisfaction. Meditation is a means; it is a way; it is a path. If we walk along this path, then we reach our destination, which is all-perfection.

Question: But if we're confused and nervous, how will meditation ever be able to help us?

Sri Chinmoy: In the physical world, when somebody has a headache or a stomach upset, he goes to a doctor and the doctor cures him. If somebody is sick, then how can we say that he will never be well again? If he takes medicine, then there is every possibility that he will be cured. For a sick person, medicine is the answer. If somebody is assailed by anxiety, worry and confusion, meditation is the remedy. Just because he is a victim, we can't say that there will be no saviour. The saviour is there, provided the individual wants to be cured.

Suppose somebody is assailed by confusion and hostile forces that deplete all his energy and take all joy out of his life. He is depressed and has surrendered to frustration owing to countless

problems in his life. Let us take him as a patient: he needs a doctor, he needs treatment. When an individual is suffering from a few ailments in the mental world, he has to go to someone who has some peace of mind, some light, some inner assurance for him. This is a spiritual teacher. The spiritual teacher is like a doctor who will advise the person and throw light on him so that he can free himself from fear, doubt, confusion, tension and all the negative forces that are torturing him. So if somebody is in mental turmoil and suffering tremendously in the mental world, he goes to someone who can be of immediate service to him; and this person cures him.

Question: Is it really necessary to seek help when we are suffering from mental problems? Can't we just meditate by ourselves and find the answer?

Sri Chinmoy: Suppose you find it extremely difficult to go deep within by yourself. You say, "I am suffering from certain mental difficulties, but I know the answer is inside. Now it is all night, but I feel that there is light inside my heart." This is what you feel, but you find it difficult to go deep within and discover the light. Then you have to go to someone who can bring to the fore the light that

you have within you. It is like your own house. You have misplaced the key and you don't know how to open the door. But a friend of yours comes and helps you look for the key. After he finds it he opens the door for you and then he goes away. If you are ready to search for the key that you have lost, then you can try. But if you have a friend, then you can have more confidence in finding the key. So the teacher is a helper, an eternal friend who helps you in your search. When he finds the key, he won't keep it. He will give you the key. He won't say it is his key. No! It is your key, your house, your light. Then you will enter into the house and get everything that you needed and wanted.

Question: You speak of night and light. Do you believe that parts of life are dark and imperfect?

Sri Chinmoy: Life is composed of perfection, only we say that there is lesser perfection and greater perfection. We don't say that this side is black and that side is white; we say that on this side there is comparatively less light. So there is no negative and positive; there is only positive. But the thing that is less positive has less capacity and sometimes we call it negative.

Life is constant progress. While we are progressing we will go from good to better to best. Sometimes we will make mistakes and sometimes we will do the right thing. But even inside our mistakes there is a little truth. So from lesser truth we grow into higher truth, highest truth and ever-transcending truth. While walking on the path of life we are transcending ourselves.

Meditation always helps us to transcend the limitations that we have and the achievements that we have created. Meditation constantly tells us personally to go on, go on. There is no such thing as the ultimate goal. The ultimate goal is only constant progress.

Dèar friends, dear brothers and sisters, I am extremely grateful that you have given me an opportunity to be of service to you, to share with you the little I know about peace of mind and meditation. The life that we are living is far, far from satisfaction. But there is a way to change and transform our life. We can do this through constant and conscious self-giving of what we have and what we are. If we can offer ourselves in this way, then we become conscious of our large, larger, largest reality: the ever-growing, ever-glowing and ever-transcending reality which we have and which we eternally are.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON RELIGION

Sri Chinmoy recently invited members of the Meditation Group to submit questions on religion which he would answer at the Group's Friday meetings. The following questions were answered on October 31, 1975:

Mr. Ben Lieberman: Why is there religion and what role should it play in our lives?

Sri Chinmoy: Religion plays a significant role in the life of the aspiring seeker. Religion is our spiritual home. We start in our spiritual home and then go to the Home of God. Religion is the home we live in until we enter God's Palace and establish our conscious oneness, constant oneness with God.

It is not good to be afraid of God. God is all-loving. But if someone thinks of God only with fear, then I wish to say that it is better to think of God in this way than not to think of Him at all. Most people who are practising religion are afraid of God. If they do something wrong, they feel God

will punish them. That is often why they think of God. First they approach God with fear, and only afterwards they approach God with love, innocence and oneness. This is called religion. In religion, most of the time an unknown or unconscious fear looms large in us; and this fear compels us to think of God and to pray to God. This is the situation most of the time, but not always. People follow a particular religion because they love God and they are afraid of God. But when we practise spirituality, it is never out of fear. Where there is oneness, there is no fear. It is out of sheer necessity that we practise spirituality. Necessity compels us to love God. He loves us unconditionally and it is our bounden duty also to love Him.

Mr. Ben Lieberman: What is the goal of religion?

Sri Chinmoy: The goal of religion is to bring God into one's multifarious activities. God has to be felt as a living God. Otherwise, if we are just believers in God, we cannot and will not accomplish much. The role of religion is to make each person feel that God is somebody living, or that God is infinite Peace, Light and Bliss. That also is living. If an individual wants to feel that his God is a living God, this conviction must be brought to the fore by religious feeling or by following a religious faith.

Mr. Tom Della Rocco: What is the original significance of religion?

Sri Chinmoy: The original significance of religion was to have man see, feel and consciously dedicate himself to the existence of the One in the existence of the many: to see the One in the many. There are many countries, many faiths, many creeds, many sects. Religion has to combine everything. Religion has to make a synthesis; among all countries religion has to establish a sense of oneness. The length and breadth of the world have to sing the song of oneness. This is why religion came into being.

Mr. John Manfredi: The family has always been seen as the centre of both the religious and the social formation of most religions. Can you explain the sacred and divine purpose that the family is supposed to have?

Sri Chinmoy: The sacred and divine purpose of each family lies in the discovery of the real reality of each individual. You may ask why each individual has to discover his real reality. If one does not discover the real reality in himself, then he denies the promise that he made once upon a time in the soul's region. When the individual was in the soul's

region, he chose a particular family out of the millions of families on earth in order to fulfil the promise he made to God, in order to do something special for God. He promised to realise God, to reveal and manifest God. This sacred promise can come to the fore only when the individual becomes conscious of what he is going to become. If he claims God as his very own and feels that one day he shall become one with God, then he is destined to reach his goal. If he claims some higher reality which he will achieve only by transcending himself, then he is doing the right thing. While transcending himself, he comes to realise the sacredness and divine purpose of his own existence and of the family that he belongs to.

Mr. John Manfredi: Can religion help mankind to achieve a world of true brotherhood and love?

Sri Chinmoy: Yes, but one has to know here what religion is. Religion is a code of life that connects one with the rest of humanity. If one feels that his life has a special connection with others' lives, then only can he achieve or try to achieve oneness. First he has to feel an inner connection. If he starts with this connection, then only can he think of establishing his inseparable oneness with others.

So, if you follow any specific religion, then you will feel that you have something in common with others, that you have an inner connection with others. Then, from this connection you have to go deep within in order to establish your inseparable oneness with others and with the rest of the world. And when you establish your oneness, naturally what you see inside you and around you is brotherhood and love.

Mr. Ken Peck: How can religion overcome a narrow outlook and develop a real acceptance of all other religions as true and necessary?

Sri Chinmoy. Religion as such cannot overcome this narrow outlook. Only when religion takes help from spirituality, its elder brother, does it become possible to overcome this narrow outlook. Religion sees God, but spirituality makes the seeker become God. Religion can go as far as believing in the Light or even seeing the Light. But spirituality goes much higher, much deeper. It helps the seeker or the votary of religion grow into the Light itself and become one with God-Consciousness and God-Light.

Religion stops at seeing the reality; it does not want to grow into reality. Spirituality, like religion, sees what the reality is, but then it goes one step

ahead and wants to grow consciously into the reality itself. So if religion takes help from spirituality, then it is quite possible to overcome all the narrow outlooks found in religion.

Mr. Ken Peck: What does God like best about religions?

Sri Chinmoy: What God likes best in each religion is a big heart. Let each religion tolerate the others. If tolerance is there, then let each religion go one step further. Let it recognise other religions also. Once recognition is given, each religion has to feel sincerely that other religions are as good and as nice as itself. It has to feel that each religion is right in its own way, that all are equal in this way.

Tolerance of others exists as long as there is a sense of separativity. Once a particular religion gives due value to other religions and sees their existence as an expression of truth, then that particular religion can go high, higher, highest and deep, deeper, deepest. Seeing and establishing its conscious oneness with all other religions, it can claim that there is only one religion—not two or three, but only one religion. When a religion once comes to realise that all religions form one religion, one eternal religion, one eternal eye of Truth, an

eternal heart of Truth, then that religion is perfect. This kind of discovery and achievement God likes best in the world religions, not only in one particular religion but in all religions.

Mr. Joe Sidor: What is the difference between religion and spirituality?

Sri Chinmoy: Religion tells the seeker that undoubtedly there is someone known as God. Spirituality tells the seeker, "I cannot only show you where that Person is; I can also help in making you a conscious, constant and inseparable friend of that Person."

Mr. Joe Sidor: Why should one give his time to God in the first place?

Sri Chinmoy: Wonderful question! One gives his time to God in the first place because he sees that, unlike him and unlike others, God is the Alpha, God is the Omega. He is the beginning. He is the end. He is this. He is that. At the same time, He transcends what He eternally is.

God is all-pervading; He is everywhere. Whatever we do, whatever we say, whatever we grow into

is nothing short of His own expansion of His own Reality-Existence. Right at the outset, at the very outset, we have to know that He alone exists. Just because He alone exists, no matter what we do, we know that our action is motivated by Him and also finds its result in Him. Our action fulfils itself, our capacity is increased and our realisation is strengthened just because He exists and He is. Therefore, either consciously or unconsciously, either cheerfully or dolefully, God has to come into the picture.

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THANKSGIVING

In a special lunch-hour programme, co-sponsored by the International Co-operation for Peace Committee and the United Nations Meditation Group, Thanksgiving was celebrated with prayers, music and poetry from around the world, on Tuesday, November 25, in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium.

Sri Chinmoy opened the programme with a silent prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving. This was followed by musical offerings and poetry readings, a selection of which is printed below:

POEM

Let the earth and the water, the air and
the fruits of my country be sweet,
my God.

Let the homes and marts, the forests
and fields of my country be full,
my God.

Let the promises and hopes, the deeds
the words of my country be true,
my God.

Let the lives and hearts of the sons and
daughters of my country be one,
my God.

— *Rabindranath Tagore*

SWEDISH HYMN

God is merciful to us
He lets His clear Face shine
So lovingly and graciously on His children,
That we may know His ways,
Learn His holy Will,
That we on earth may understand
His Bliss and Glory
And give praise to Him.

May all tongues thank
And praise You, O Lord God,
And may the whole world rejoice,
Sing with gaiety and joy
Lord, You are the hope of all
For, who humbly worship You
You comfort, calm, protect, maintain,
You hear all who invoke You with faith.

May all peoples thank You, God,
And praise You with good works and with peace.
See, the earth now richly bears
Her flowers, fruit and grain.
In all lands
Be Your name extolled,
Near and far:
May all the world praise the Lord!
May all the world love the Lord!

—*Olaus Petri*
(translated from the original Swedish
by Johan Olaf Wallin)

CANTICLE DELLE CREATURE

All-highest, omnipotent, good Lord,
to You be praise, glory and honour
and every blessing.
To You alone they are due,
and no man is worthy to speak Your name.

Be praised, my Lord, in all Your creatures,
especially Brother Sun
who makes daytime,
and through him You give us light.
And he is beautiful, radiant with great splendour,
and he is a sign
that tells, All-Highest, of You.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Moon and the stars:
You formed them in the sky,
bright and precious and beautiful.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Wind,
and for the air and the clouds,
and for fair, and every kind of weather,
by which You give Your creatures food.

Be praised, my Lord, for Sister Water,
who is most useful and humble
and lovely and chaste.

Be praised, my Lord, for Brother Fire,
Through whom You light up the night for us:
and he is beautiful and jolly
and lusty and strong.

Be praised, my Lord, for our sister Mother Earth,
who keeps us, feeds us,
and brings forth fruits of many kinds,
with coloured flowers and plants as well....

—*Saint Francis of Assisi*
(translation from the original Italian)

HARVEST THANKS

All people, let it be told to you:
You have brought home the last cart,
Carried home the last sheaves of wheat.
Now none shall starve throughout the land.

O harvest time, O holy time,
O limitless blessings.
So lift up your arms
 in great joy to heaven.
And let all thank the Lord.

— *German Folk Poem*

AUTUMN

Within me is an autumn season.
There is transparency and coolness,
Sadness, but not desolation,
And I am humble, full of goodness.

And if sometimes I storm aloud
Then I storm to shed my leaves:
And the thought comes, simply, sadly,
That to storm is not what's needed ...

Insight is the child of silence.
No matter if we make no tumult:
We must calmly shed all noise
In the name of the new leaves ...

— *Y. Yevtushenko*
(translated from the original Russian
by J. R. Rowland)

DAMOS GRACIAS A NUESTRA MADRE
TIERRA

We give thanks for the yield of the land.
We give thanks to our fertile Mother,
Who from her bounty feeds all her children.
We give thanks to our Mother Earth.

—*Edgar Gonzales*
(translation from the original Spanish
by the author)

Mr. Peter Stewart, President of the Thanks-Giving Square Foundation of Dallas, Texas, paid homage to the tradition and spirit of thanksgiving:*

Some years ago, one community, just like many others around the world became drawn by a word and started a search for its meaning—the word was Thanksgiving.

They searched ancient wisdom and found Thanksgiving at the core—at the heart of what it means to be alive.

From ancient days—

Earth be not afraid.

Rejoice and be glad.

From modern days—

Thanksgiving is the fabric that unites
[us] with [our] past, with each other
and with all mankind.

Then this community looked in their own hearts and daily lives—and after hundreds of hours of discussion came up with thoughts like these:

The greatest common spirit that we have
is that of thanksgiving.

Gratitude, thanksgiving is a healing, reconciling force amid numerous inner hurts.

Walk with humility and gratitude with an awareness of God and our fellowmen, past and present. Earlier cultures all had that healthy attitude. Only modern man has forgotten to give thanks, or thinks he owes nothing to anyone.

All we can give the eternal Power is joyful response—He has put the world in our hands—He trusts us! What a power He gives us! Always adequate. With each new breath, a new moment—He renews life breath by breath.

A prayer of thanksgiving directs attention away from self—our needs, our problems, our sins, and all the rest that is us—and outward toward God—breaking the shell we build around ourselves—for now we concentrate on the good things that come from a good God who loves us.

Gratitude instinctively shares—like an involuntary word to a stranger on the beauty of a sunset. And is there a mother who hasn't gotten a spontaneous flower gift from her child?

Thanksgiving is becoming acutely aware of life. It is helping each person enjoy what is actually here for us to enjoy—simply the things we already have.

Whenever men can feel themselves supported, unthreatened, cherished, something like a healing miracle takes place. The experience of being affirmed stirs an inner urge to affirm others; the grateful acceptance of even passing moments of beauty and happiness prompts at least spasmodic impulses of generosity toward others. Thanksgiving enjoyed passes into thanksgiving enacted; in acts of giving, sharing, helping, building—God's blessings enjoyed stirs our sense of obligation to be an agent of blessing, an instrument of God's peace.

By these and many more thoughts, this community found that there is a covenant of humility and gratitude, of thanks and giving that brings communion among people. They found thanksgiving to be:

Universal to human experience
Happy, harmonious and uniting

Sacred to the heritage of any man
An illumination at any moment in the
life of any individual

The movement of thanksgiving might be briefly stated: God loves, we accept His Love, and we are empowered to love others. It might be more fully stated:

1. God lovingly acts in pouring out creation, blessing, beauty, providence and mercy, which we can see by faith ...
2. We accept His gifts by the spirit of thanks—giving with awe and gladness, communion and commitment which transforms us in hope ...
3. We are moved by the power of God's presence to share, heal, unite, serve—joyfully loving as He loves—completing the circle of blessing started by God.

We are drawn up in the spirit of gratitude and are opened to an appreciation and reverence for life and its creator that turns us from isolation to joy and sharing. Here is world understanding on a deep level—what binds men together is the need to give thanks.

Let us hold hands around the earth in a circle of gratitude—returning His flow of life to us, in a flow of praise to Him and service to His children.

** The Thanks-Giving Square is a non-profit foundation which is building and will maintain and operate an inter-religious, international place of gratitude for all men in the centre of Dallas, Texas.*

Following this, the Yueh Lung Ying Hsi Dramatic Group presented a traditional Chinese shadow theater, depicting one of their classical legends.

The United Nations Meditation Group Singers then sang the traditional American thanksgiving hymn, "We Gather Together," and the programme closed with a silent offering of prayerful gratitude.

WE GATHER TOGETHER

We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing,
Sing praises to His Name: He forgets not His own.

Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning:
Thou, Lord, wast at our side, all glory be Thine!

We all do extol Thee, Thou Leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our Defender wilt be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation:
Thy Name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!

—*Netherlands Folk Song*
Arr. by Edward Kremser, 1838-1914

THANKSGIVING AROUND THE WORLD

Harvest Festival or Thanksgiving is celebrated in many ways around the world, and the following excerpts from the printed programme of the International Day of Thanksgiving function illustrate some of these practices in various countries:

JAPAN

November 23, LABOR-THANKSGIVING DAY

November 23 is the *Kinro-kansha-no-hi*, or Labor-Thanksgiving Day. It is a day for people to express gratitude for success and abundance, to reflect on the dignity of labour, and to congratulate one another upon successes of the past year.

INDONESIA

HARVEST FEAST (Pelabuhan Ratu, West Java)

For three consecutive nights during the last week of May, the peasants of Sirnaresmi, near Pelabuhan Ratu, hold a feast as a token of gratitude to the Goddess of Agriculture, Dewi Sri, for the past year's harvest. Offerings are presented and shows are held to mark the occasion.

SWITZERLAND

JEUNE FEDERAL

Jeune Federal is Fasting Day, celebrated this year on September 21. Many people fast, or eat fruit pies and no meat, depending on the harvest in each particular part of the country. It has been celebrated for hundreds of years throughout Switzerland as a sign of atonement for the rest of the year and in thanksgiving for the harvest.

AFRICA

December 26—January 1, KWANZA

Kwanza is a word meaning "first" or in this case it signifies the *first fruits*. Celebration of harvesting the first crops or first fruits is traditional in Africa. At this time of year the people come together to make joyful noises, give thanks and enjoy the blessing of living, and acting together for the community. Everyone brings what they grew or made to contribute to the Karuma (feast) in the celebration.

In some parts of Africa, the harvest festival is observed by bringing field and garden crops to a sacred tree where the harvest is blessed by the incantations of the medicine man.

We warmly invite everyone at the United Nations and those officially associated with it to join us in our regular weekly meetings and other activities.

SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER, 1975

Regular Weekly Schedule

*Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m.
December 2, 9, 16, 23, 30*

Every Tuesday at noon, Sri Chinmoy conducts an hour of silent meditation in the Chapel of the Church Center for the United Nations, corner 44th Street and 1st Avenue (side entrance).

*Fridays, 12-1 p.m.
December 5, 12, 19, 26*

Every Friday at noon in Room 550 of the Secretariat, Sri Chinmoy conducts a meditation and, if time permits, invites questions on the spiritual life from those present.

Other Activities

Thursday, December 4, 1:15-2 p.m.

Dag Hammarskjold Lecture Series:

Sri Chinmoy will speak on

“Progress and Success through Meditation”

Dag Hammarskjold Auditorium

Friday, December 5, 12 noon-1 p.m.

Series on Great Men and Women

Sri Chinmoy will speak on Thomas Carlyle

Room 550, Secretariat

Tuesday, December 9, 5:30-7 p.m.

Programme honouring Non-Governmental
Organisations

Church Center for the United Nations

(See invitation and programme reproduced on
pages 46 and 47)

Friday, December 12, 12 noon-1 p.m.
Series on Great Men and Women:
Sri Chinmoy will speak on Emily Dickinson
Room 550, Secretariat

Wednesday, December 17, 1-2 p.m.
Christmas Carol Singing
Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

FOR ALL TO JOIN AND SING!



*Everyone is invited to come and join in the joy of singing
Christmas Carols together*



*Homemade Christmas fruitcake and cookies
Christmas Eggnog*



*Bring your friends and share
the glorious spirit of Christmas!*

Wednesday, 17 December 1975
Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium
1:00 P.M.

Admission Free

Sponsored by the United Nations Mediation Group



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In rededication to the
ideals and aims of the United Nations
Sri Chinmoy
will offer a Presentation to
Mr. Leon Marion,
Chairman of the OPI Executive Committee,
who will accept on behalf of the
Non-Governmental Organisations

•

The Programme will be followed by
a Reception
to which all are cordially invited
(Catered by Annam Brahma Restaurant)

"We the peoples. . ."
The United Nations Meditation Group
Honours
The Dedicated Service of
The Non-Governmental Organisations

• • •

Tuesday, December 9, 1975
United Nations Church Center
5:30 p.m.

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.

—Credo of the U.N. Meditation Group

"We the people of the United Nations..."

THE UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION GROUP
cordially invites you or your representative
to attend a programme of classical music followed by an address by
Dr. Louis Longarzo of Caritas Internationalis and a presentation by
Sri Chinmoy, Spiritual Director of the United Nations Meditation Group
HONOURING THE SERVICE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS
Date: December 9, 1975; Place: UN Church Center, 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY
Time: 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Husbands and Wives are most welcome. Reception Following.
R.S.V.P. (Confirmations) Kevin O'Brien, 490-2766.

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PROGRAMME

Introduction

•

Silent Meditation
conducted by Sri Chinmoy,
Spiritual Director, U.N. Meditation Group

•

Duet for Flute and Violin – Telemann
Mary-Ellen Shepley, *flute*
Carol Shive, *violin*

Trio Sonata – Vivaldi
Jack Nowinski, *tenor trombone*
Lewis Kahn, *tenor trombone*
David Taylor, *bass trombone*

•

Guest Speaker on the topic:
"Tribute to Non-Governmental Organizations -
A 30 Year Perspective",
Dr. Louis Longarzo of Caritas Internationalis

•

Duet for Violin and Cello – Haydn
Carol Shive, *violin*
Phil Hirschi, *cello*

•

"Gallery" for unaccompanied cello – Muczynski
Phil Hirschi, *cello*

Trio – Mozart
Carol Shive, *violin*
Mary-Ellen Shepley, *flute*
Phil Hirschi, *cello*

"We the peoples ..."

The United Nations Meditation Group aspires to serve both God and man. We feel the Non-Governmental Organisations reflect the same commitment to dedicated action. In this programme we salute the Non-Governmental Organisations for their tireless service to the vision of the United Nations and the needs of humanity.

HEAVEN-HELPER, EARTH-LOVER

Yours is the soul
That helps Heaven.
Yours is the heart
That loves earth

O helper of Heaven,
You are divinely great.
O lover of earth,
You are supremely good.

— Sri Chinmoy

TELEVISION

DECEMBER SCHEDULE OF MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS BY SRI CHINMOY ON CHANNEL 5 (WNEW-TV)

December 5	Friday	6:12 a.m.
December 6	Saturday	2-4 a.m.*
December 11	Thursday	6:12 a.m.
December 12	Friday	2-4 a.m.*
December 18	Thursday	6:12 a.m.
December 19	Friday	2-4 a.m.*
December 23	Tuesday	6:12 a.m.
December 24	Wednesday	2-4 a.m.*
December 31	Wednesday	6:12 a.m.
January 1	Thursday	2-4 a.m.*

* Denotes that prayer follows last movie, ending either at 2:00 a.m. or 4:00 a.m.