

Daytona Beach Evening News

"Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all other liberties." — Milton

MONDAY

FEBRUARY 10, 1986

U.N. trio takes chilly dip for peace

By JUDY de TOROK

Motorists and pedestrians on the beach near the Plaza Hotel Sunday afternoon had something besides each other and the ocean to view. A blue banner with the words "1986 Year of International Peace" was planted next to a United Nations flag and another banner proclaiming the doctrines of a man who has devoted his life to peace.

The sight turned more than a few heads. If it made people stop and think — if only for a moment — its purpose was accomplished, said Druva Hein, leader of a group that demonstrates for peace by swimming.

As the three prepared for a one mile swim in the 61 degree water, they stood in the surf and prayed silently for peace. The swimmers, Adhiratha Keefe, 38, Sunil Davidson, 38, and Shradha Howard, 32, say it's their contribution to world peace.

The swimmers said they want to motivate others to do something exceptional for peace.

"It inspires you. It always increases your

potential, and it sets an example of what you thought was impossible to reach," said Howard.

All three work for the U.N. and subscribe to the beliefs of their teacher and spiritual master, Sri Chinmoy. Chinmoy's philosophy, printed on the backs of the swimmers' T-shirts, states: "The determination in your heroic effort will permeate your mind and heart even after your success or failure is long forgotten."

The trio have changed their names to ones given them by Chinmoy. Adhiratha means "divine charioteer," Sunil means the "infinite blue sky of conscience" and Shradha means "faith."

So far, the swimmers have swum for peace in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan, in Fernandina Beach and Jacksonville Beach in Florida, and in Savannah, Ga. Within the next several weeks, they plan trips to Bermuda, Puerto Rico and Panama.

Their experience in Japan was heartbreaking, they said. Children entered the water and greeted them with signs asking for world peace.

Members of a nearby swimming club built a bonfire to warm the swimmers when they returned to shore. The water that day was 55 degrees.

The swimmers train three to four hours a day after work to prepare for their feats. Each in the group pays his own way.

Keefe swam the English Channel last September in celebration of the U.N.'s 40th anniversary. Currently, he's getting ready for a "super ironman triathlon" where he'll swim the 22 mile English Channel, ride his bicycle 150 miles through Europe and finish with a 50 mile run to Germany. Howard and Davidson are training to swim the Channel later this year.

As the group was rolling up its signs and getting ready to go home, Lumina Smith, Greenfield Park, Quebec, Canada, stopped and asked what was going on.

"We need peace," she said upon hearing the news. "Enough people have been killed in wars."

Proclamation



The CITY OF DAYTONA BEACH

"THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS BEACH"

INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF PEACE

WHEREAS, the year 1986 has been officially designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Peace to be observed by all member nations throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, Adhiratha Keefe, Sunil Davidson and Shradha Howard, three members of the Peace Meditation Group which meets at the United Nations under the spiritual leadership of Sri Chinmoy, are travelling to diverse points in the world to swim at least one kilometer to draw attention to the International Year of Peace; and

WHEREAS, the three swimmers draw their inspiration from the world-harmonizing goals of the United Nations, from their longtime participation in the Peace Meditation Group and from their daily personal meditations; and

WHEREAS, we affirm the goal of inspiring others to find personal and collective means to express their support for world peace; and

WHEREAS, we as Floridians, as Americans and as world citizens wish to promote and spread the awareness of the necessity for deeply founded and lasting peace among humankind.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Lawrence J. Kelly, Mayor of the City of Daytona Beach, Florida, do hereby proclaim February 9th, 1986 as:

THE DAY OF THE PEACE SWIM

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my Hand and cause the Seal of
The City of Daytona Beach to be affixed this 9th Day of February,
1986.



Lawrence J. Kelly
LAWRENCE J. KELLY
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

1, Daytona Beach, Florida 32015

904/258-3100

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LAWRENCE J. KELLY



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