

EDITORIAL

PIPEDREAM?

Ideals are truths of the Reality seeking to realize themselves. For a long time these ideals live in the realm of the ultimates which man hopes to attain one day. Those who pursue these ideals in the faith that they can be made facts of their lives are dismissed as idealists, which is a euphemism for impractical-ists. Still it is the way of Nature that there will always be idealists in every field and it is their labours that slowly narrow the gulf between the ideals and the actuals. More and more minds begin to think of these truths and idea-forces are generated which express themselves in literature, in movements of life, in an unmistakable manner. It is so that a favourable climate is prepared for the realization of the ideals. One such ideal that has beckoned humanity for centuries is the ideal of human unity. After long ages of distant glow on the horizon of man it has taken a concrete form in the present century and institutions are taking shape in tentative forms to embody this ideal of the unity of the race. Particularly after the Second World War more and more minds are actively engaged in giving practical formulation to this noble truth and every year, in some part of the globe or other, there is some collective effort to add one more brick to the emerging edifice. Each effort at such concretization, however impracticable it may seem to the utilitarian mind, is a step further in the direction of fulfilment. Occultists have looked to 2000 A.D. as the watermark for great changes in the life of this planet. Political prophets and far-seeing statesmen have an almost intuitive feeling and perception that something definite will be achieved in the progress of the ideal of human unity towards its realization on earth by the end of this century. It is not a fixed calendar date, to be sure. No one can be certain of the time element in these matters; it is the direction and the pace of events that are significant. Each thought that is helpful to this end, each collective effort to fix the idea in the earth-consciousness, hastens the advent of this long awaited age of Oneness. It may have been a chimera at one time. But we know by experience that

Earth's winged chimeras are Truth's steeds in heaven

Sri Aurobindo: Savitri

October 1977

1.

THE HUNGRY PLANET

This is the theme of a discussion that took place recently in the United States under the auspices of New Dimensions in San Francisco. The director has been kind enough to send us cassette recordings of the proceedings for circulation among the members of World Union. Our colleague, Barbi Dailey, who has listened to the cassettes, says:

The most basic, and common, question that is asked is: How can the individual help alleviate the problem of hunger and starvation in the world? Of the answers put forth—to educate oneself about the problem and to encourage self-support, to raise one's consciousness and the consciousness of the one in need—the consensus was that each individual must first educate himself about the problem and then become conscious of his own potential within so that he will indeed realize that he can do something worthwhile about it, while at the same time, supporting the utilization of government institutions and private corporations that address themselves to this problem.

What would your answer be?

An incident that took place in the Ashram in the sixties comes to my mind. Owing to an acute food shortage in the country, the then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri appealed to all to economize and conserve as much food as possible and as a gesture announced that he would be fasting on every Monday evening. Zealous officialdom prevailed upon eating houses and catering establishments to close their business doors on Monday evenings much to the inconvenience of those who depended upon public canteens for their food. Someone raised the question in our Ashram where we have a central kitchen (and dining room) where food is prepared for nearly two thousand persons—children, adults, old people—every day. Were we to close the kitchen on that evening every week? If so, what about meeting the urgent needs of the old and the sick members? The Mother was asked and her reply is still fresh in my mind. She said that if only we all took just what we needed and desisted from wasting food, that would save much more than what could possibly be done by such dramatics.

In our country, in India, so much goes to waste in homes, so much more is rendered unusable for want of proper storage facilities, so much is unused due to the faulty distribution system. Each person has a responsibility to the society and he must become conscious of it. It is only in the measure in which each man becomes conscious and raises his effective consciousness that he can contribute to the solution of the general problem. The challenge is to be met both on the individual

and the corporate fronts by intensifying one's consciousness and applying it to the situation with a social conscience.

During my last visit to the United States I was pleasantly surprised to note how in a university the student community was working to extend help to some of the needy sections of the local population. They had worked out detailed figures of the costs of each meal at the community kitchen and what it would mean to the needy if one individual forwent a meal. Names were invited, through the columns of the students' paper, of those who would like to support the scheme. And the response was more than encouraging.

TOTAL EDUCATIONAL IMMERSION

Aaron Stern, a wreck of a survivor of the Gestapo terror during the Second World War, "unemployed and unemployable", started his Edith project the moment his daughter Edith was born. He called a press conference and announced that he would make his daughter a genius. He forbade all baby talk, switched to classical music on the radio, fashioned special picture-cards of letters and animals which were moved before the slowly focussing eye of the infant. He did not allow a single moment to be wasted. As she grew up, every walk became an exercise in visual education. No wonder, by the age of five the girl had read the entire *Encyclopaedia Britannica* and by 15 she was teaching math at the college. Her I. Q. at 24 is 200 whereas 150 is considered that of a genius. Aaron Stern has succeeded in his project.

Narrating this success story, a writer asks if that is the right way to raise children. Is it not better to let them grow naturally and pick up things at their pace instead of involving them in a "total educational immersion" which Stern swears by?

As in all such opposing viewpoints, the solution seems to lie in their reconciliation. There are periods in the growth of the child when the total immersion technique can be used with benefit, especially when the child wants constant attention. At other times a freer regimen would be helpful. All along, however, there has to be an unseen and unfelt application so that the brain muscles and the mind faculties develop in healthy directions. The responsibility of the parents is great in these matters, much more than that of the teachers in the classroom.

FEAR

We all know of the story of Mr. Plague rushing to the city where he had an appointment. He was asked on his way back how many people had died on his mission. His reply was that five thousand had died of plague and ten thousand due to fear.

Fear is a sure killer, whether it acts swiftly or slowly. It demoralizes the mind, agitates the heart and weakens the body. Its role is negative. In fact fear

is an intrusion of the Adversary. In this growing manifestation of the Divine Consciousness fear is an alien. It is born of ignorance, supported by falsehood and it is always

hastening
Towards that of which it has most terror

Sri Aurobindo: *Savitri*

Fear betokens lack of trust in the Divine, want of confidence in one's own self. Fear, says the Upanishad, comes where there is division from Truth. Where there is the *other*, fear arises. To the extent one arrives at unity, unity with one's own truth, with the truth of others, with the truth of the world, one becomes free from fear. Speaks the rishi:

When the spirit that is within us finds the Invisible
Bodiless Undefined and Unhoused Eternal his refuge and
firm foundation, then he has passed beyond the reach of Fear.
But when the spirit that is within us makes for himself even
a little difference in the Eternal, then he has fear.

Taittiriya Upanishad 11.7

BALANCE

Where should one be flexible and where firm and fixed? Firmness can easily turn into rigidity which is the enemy of progress. Progress implies movement and movement calls for a certain mobility of consciousness. The truth of the matter seems to be a judicious combination of both, a happy balance between both the elements. The aim, the goal has to be fixed, its vision unaltered. But the process, the way or ways to achieve the object must be kept flexible, changeable according to changing conditions. Life is a field of possibilities and new factors go on coming into the situation. This necessitates constant vigilance and readiness to modify, if need be, the means according to circumstances.

UNITY

It is a mistaken notion that unity is something to be acquired, to be built. It is not. Unity is a truth that is self-existent, only it is covered by veils of ignorance, egoism and apparent self interest. As one grows in consciousness, as one evolves, one begins to realize that at a deeper level of being unity is spontaneous. There is a flow of unity from the core of the heart. One no more needs to impose the concept of unity on oneself and restrain the atavistic, divisive impulses. One perceives that

unity is substance of the heart
And not a chain that binds.

Sri Aurobindo: *Eric*

REPORT ON THE 1977 WORLD CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

Gregory Alexander

Chairman, Publicity Commission, World Constitution and Parliament Association

Conscious that humanity is One . . . and that the principle of unity in diversity is the basis for a new age . . .

From the Preamble

With a warm letter of welcome from the President of Austria, the World Constituent Assembly began its work at the Kongresshaus in Innsbruck, Austria, on June 16, 1977. Participants from all five continents, with nations Japan and Australia, were in attendance.

The assembly was the culmination of endeavors that began with the founding of the World Constitution and Parliament Association in 1958, and international meetings in Inter-laken, Switzerland, and Wolfach, Germany, of that year. Work was initiated on "A Constitution for the Federation of Earth" which has been intensively rewritten and redrafted since then, with input from over 100 individuals of twenty countries. During the assembly, the constitution was again revised with care and methodical deliberation. Equally important, detailed plans for implementation and ratification of the constitution were made by working sessions on provisional world government, world parliament, the ratification campaign, and proposed legislation on world problems.

While a number of constitutions for world government have been written, there are many features that are unique to this revision of "A Constitution for the Federation of Earth". It is the only world constitution that has received and incorporated input from people of many countries over a sustained period of time. It has thus had an organic growth, with roots in the peoples of the world. It is also the only world constitution which has stages of implementation built directly into the document itself. Therefore, it serves not only as a blueprint for a democratic, federal world government but as a guide for the implementation of that government, beginning with the first and second operative stages and proceeding to a full world government.

At the core of the proposed world government is a three part World Parliament, consisting of a House of Nations (about 300 members), a House of Peoples (about 1,000 members), and a House of Counsellors (200 members). Members of the House of Nations would be appointed or elected according to procedures designated by each national government. The House of Peoples would be directly elected, in proportion to population, from world

electoral and administrative districts. The House of Counsellors, to be nominated by teachers and students at the universities and colleges and elected by members of the other two houses from each region, would have important functions of nomination and tie-breaking powers. It is similar in concept to a "house of wise people", so often discussed as essential to balanced and enlightened government.

The structure and composition of the envisioned world government is unequivocally democratic, with ultimate authority residing in the hands of the world's people. Thus, the World Executive, with a five member rotating presidium, is at all times responsible to the World Parliament. Elaborate and careful safeguards against authoritarian usurpation of power are delineated. In addition to being democratically based, the constitution provides for a federal structure, with a grant of specific powers to the world government, but with all other powers being reserved to the member nations of the federation and to the people of the world. However, the constitution is truly a document for our day in that adequate provision is made for the world government to have the needed powers to address and resolve the multitude of interrelated world problems afflicting the people of the world. For example, a great deal of emphasis is given to the implementation of distributive justice—specific powers and organs of the World Government are designed to achieve the goal of equitable and just use and distribution of the resources of the earth.

Another primary goal of the proposed federation of earth is the total immobilization and dismantling of all military weapons and equipment including, of course, all weapons of mass destruction. A long debated and carefully thought out step was taken when the constituent assembly decided on a first operative stage of world government in which all weapons of mass destruction would be transferred by the ratifying nations to the World Disarmament Agency (WDA), which would dismantle and destroy these weapons. The nations comprising the fledgling world federation would be allowed, however, to retain armed forces equipped with so-called conventional weapons until the second operative stage. At this point, all weapons and military equipment would be transferred to the WDA by the ratifying nations. At each stage of world government, a major portion of funds saved from military expenditures would be used to fund the work and projects of the World Economic Development Organization.

In addition to the above decisions on stages of disarmament within a forming world government, the constituent assembly also strengthened provisions for distributive justice, expanded and elaborated the Bill of Rights for the Citizens of Earth (Article XII), and established procedures for a constitutional convention to review the constitution at least every ten years. It was decided that the constitution will be translated into five languages within the coming year, and that a synopsis of the document and some "federalist papers" explaining its implications would be written as soon as possible.

The constituent assembly further clarified and elaborated plans for ratification of the constitution. The goal is to achieve the first operative stage of world government by 1982, although it was realized that this timeline may be somewhat fluid. A "Call for Ratification", addressed to all people and nations, was written and will be used in an action program for ratification. This program consists of twelve "spearheads", including ratification by

colleges and universities, by mundialized communities, by non-governmental organizations, by referenda, by regional federations and on other fronts. A ratification commission was set up to carry forward the ongoing work. It was also decided to set up a nominating committee to make advance nominations for the provisional World Parliament. Finally, in order to develop a strong, broad-based movement for ratification of the constitution and creation of the provisional World Parliament, a strategy for mutual cooperation and support among the diverse world government groups was agreed upon. This would involve the principle of "complementarianism" of these groups—support for each group's unique contribution to the world government movement while at the same time commencing a major effort to develop a united working coalition and a coordinated strategy. During the meetings at Innsbruck, tangible progress was made in this direction by the involvement of Political World Union (with headquarters in The Hague, Netherlands) and of the World Citizens Assembly, which met in joint sessions with the constituent assembly.

All of the above plans are integral parts of an overall five year plan for ratification and implementation of the constitution which was adopted by the assembly. This is seen not as a fixed schedule but as a convenient frame of reference to accomplish the necessary work and objectives. Additional features of this plan include the following:

- A. Immediate launching of a financial campaign to attract the money needed for this work. The goal was set at 1 million U. S. dollars per year, to be obtained by pledges averaging \$20/year from 50,000 persons.
- B. Concentration of the campaign for ratification in five countries, five world electoral and administrative districts (to be defined by a World Elections Commission), and five universities during 1978.
- C. Convening of the next World Constituent Assembly in Sri Lanka in 1978 to, among other actions, formulate and plan a shadow world cabinet. The shadow world cabinet would develop a comprehensive legislative program to tackle critical world problems.
- D. Extension of the campaign for ratification to more countries, world electoral districts and universities, and organization of regional assemblies in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America and North America.
- E. Convening of the provisional World Parliament by 1980 and the first operative stage of world government by 1982.

The constituent assembly also accomplished some fine advance thinking on proposed legislation on world problems. Guidelines on the development of a universal currency, equitable distribution of energy, abatement of pollution, and new educational systems were detailed, in addition to other areas of world concern.

The climax of the endeavors of the World Constituent Assembly came on June 27 at a formal signing ceremony of "A Constitution for the Federation of Earth." Mr. A. B. Patel, newly elected co-president of the World Constitution and Parliament Association, declared

October 1977

7

at that time his conviction that world government is inevitable and will be a reality before the close of the century. The world is changing rapidly, he said, and the forces working today will compel nations to come together and give up their unlimited national sovereignty. He stated that the adoption of this constitution by the assembly was a major step in the evolutionary development of humanity. With these words, 140 persons from twenty-five countries were called from the podium to sign the constitution. At the close of the ceremony, Mr. Prem Chand Malhotra, convenor of the Gandhian Study Group of India, and Mr. Puran Singh Azad, editor-in-chief of *National Solidarity* weekly, awarded the Gandhi Peace Medal to Mr. Philip Isely, secretary general of the World Constitution and Parliament Association, in recognition of his tireless efforts on behalf of world government and world peace.

The World Constitution and Parliament Association (headquarters at 1480 Hoyt Street, Suite 31, Lakewood, Colorado 80215, U.S.A.) was entrusted by the assembly with the responsibility for implementation of the five year plan and all other work decided upon by the assembly. These efforts cannot succeed without the committed energies of thousands of people worldwide who have the vision and courage to labor for the survival and well-being of humanity. Objective events warrant immediate and concentrated action. We invite you to write for copies of the constitution and succeeding "federalist papers", and to join us in consecrating your efforts to achieve this noble and crucial task.

EVOLUTION AND THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY

John White

The human race is quickly coming to one of history's great divides—perhaps the most critical ever. It will be upon us by the end of the century. If we are to survive it, people must see that the situation is not simply political or sociological or cultural. It is biological.

All life on planet earth is threatened with extinction from a number of sources. There is the threat of nuclear and chemical warfare. There is the threat from pollution of the air, land and sea. There is the threat from wasting of nonrenewable resources. There is the threat from drought and famine due to human interference with the terrain and atmosphere. If these are unchecked, even the planet itself could end up as nothing more than another asteroid belt.

All of these threats are manmade. All of them originate in the minds of people. Our behavior is a manifestation of our thinking and emotions, and in turn our thoughts and feelings are dependent upon our state of consciousness. We recognize the threat to life that these forms of behavior contain, yet we persist stubbornly in our ways.

It is not that we lack the knowledge of what is threatening our existence. It is simply that the problem goes deeper than intellectual knowledge. Our present world situation is one in which we exhibit life-threatening irrational behavior. That in turn is due to what we might call "a crisis of consciousness".

If this is so, the solution can be stated

very simply: *change consciousness.*

Survival demands a change of consciousness. Not only survival, but also evolution. As I survey natural and cultural history, I see ever more complex forms of life coming into being in order to express more fully the consciousness behind existence itself. The grand theme of history is evolution, and it is a story of ever more refined forms of consciousness emerging into physical being.

Evolution is always at work. That means now, today. And what I see today, in addition to the threats to life, are signs that the life force is mobilizing its resources to resist physical extinction in this part of the universe. The signs that point in this direction are many. Although the media tend to make them look like confusion, upheaval and strife, I see them otherwise.

The growing restlessness among people as they search for new answers and new understanding is basically taking the form of exploring their own consciousness—and that, to me, is a very healthy sign indeed. Of course, these explorations often take a naive or violent pathway. The strident, angry voices of many so-called liberation groups are to be expected as the disenfranchised come to mature awareness. The mainstream of exploration, however, is an increasing interest in psychic and spiritual development. As I see it, this is an indication of a deep impulse to health working beneath the obvious symptoms of sickness

In the body of humanity. And these approaches are being taken by young and old alike in the interest of expanding their consciousness. They are signs of a great awakening going on around the globe.

That great awakening is the way nature will resist man's irrational behavior. Nature will resist the extinction of life here by evolving lifeforms to replace *Homo sapiens*—lifeforms that are suited to the new conditions on earth, lifeforms that know how to live in harmony with the planet and its creatures. They will know how to live this way because their consciousness will have changed.

I call this survolution. And I see it happening most dramatically at the human level. Many of the events in the news today are, from my perspective, preliminary signs that *a higher form of life is emerging*, just as the Cro-Magnon superceded the Neanderthal race.

What is coming to pass today, as you read about it in the news, is not a generation gap or a communications gap, as some media commentators say. Rather, it is *a species gap*. A new species is making its way onto the planet and asserting its right to life. This inevitably brings it in conflict with the dominant species. And that dominant species is a dying species.

Archeologists tell us that during the age of dinosaurs, little lemming-like creatures lived. They stayed small and under cover because the great lumbering dinosaurs would easily crush them to death otherwise. So in order to survive, they remained small and on the fringe. Then, when the dinosaurs died off, these small creatures emerged from cover into the open and began to grow, to evolve into primates—in fact, into the first manlike creatures.

But evolution didn't end there. And so

when life reached the level of human development, one of the earlier races, the Neanderthal, was surpassed by the Cro-Magnon. The Cro-Magnon spelled doom for the Neanderthal. Cro-Magnon people were apparently a higher form of life. Their cranial capacity was clearly larger than the Neanderthals. Their physique was more massive and taller. They had superior tool-making ability.

I see the world scene in terms that parallel this. The chaos and confusion and social unrest around us are what we might call signs of "moral evolution". Sri Aurobindo described it as the journey toward perfection; Teilhard de Chardin spoke of noogenesis and a movement toward the Omega point. Whatever the name, there is a rising chorus of voices around the globe demanding political reform, educational reform, nutritional reform, medical reform, ecological reform—social reformation in general beyond racial, ethnic, religious and national concerns. These events and the greatly accelerated interest and exploration in psychotechnologies and spiritual disciplines are manifestations of a new, more intelligent species coming into existence, with resistance from the dominant species.

There is a mighty leap forward in survolution occurring, and the result is a vast sorting-out process among people. They are trying to discover what species they belong to. Granted that the larger dimensions of this process are not recognized at present by most evolutionary forerunners, or only dimly intuited. Nevertheless, higher intelligence is working through them, calling them to self-recognition of their role.

Now, this can be terribly painful and anxiety-provoking—to stand with one foot in the old world and one foot in the new. But the marvelous and hopeful thing is that nature, in its infinite wisdom, has given us the

means to take conscious, voluntary control of our own evolution. We can systematically work on ourselves in a safe, reliable manner that can help us to make a quantum leap over the species gap.

That is what meditation and other spiritual exercises are all about. The test of their value is whether they are in tune with the biological imperative to evolve, to advance the entire fabric of life in refinement and intensity of consciousness.

The perennial argument against utopia, against the development of the New Age, against the coming of the kingdom, has been human nature. We are forever flawed, the argument goes. But my reply is this: *human nature is changing*. There is an evolutionary advance taking place in the world today as a new and higher form of humanity takes control of the planet. "Control", of course, means living in respectful recognition of intimate interdependence. It means living harmoniously with the planet—and therefore surviving while the older species dies out from a massive overdose of irrationalism. Outwardly, these mutant humans resemble the earlier form. The difference is inward, in their changed mentality, in their consciousness. Quite simply, the new breed is psychologically adapted to the altered conditions nature is imposing as it restores the balance that *Homo sapiens* ignored for so long.

Homo noeticus is the name I give to the emerging form of humanity. Noetics is a term meaning the study of consciousness, and that activity is a primary characteristic of the new breed. Because of their deepened awareness and self-understanding, the traditionally imposed forms and controls and institutions of society are barriers to their full development. Their changed psychology is based on expression of feeling, not suppression. Their

motivation is cooperative and loving, not competitive and aggressive. Their logic is multilevel/integrated/simultaneous, not linear/sequential/either-or. Their identity is embracing-collective, not isolated-individual. The old ways don't satisfy or fulfil them. The search for new ways of living concerns them.

Homo noeticus, I have said, is the name I give to the new form of humanity, to the offspring of man. But there is another name given to it two millenia ago when Jesus walked the earth.

When Jesus spoke of himself, why did he always use the term "Son of Man"? Others called him the Son of God, but Jesus referred to himself as the Son of Man, the offspring of humanity. Moreover, he told those around him that they would be higher than the angels and that those things which he did, they would do also, and greater.

Can you not see that Jesus was aware of himself as a finished specimen of the new humanity that is to come, that is to inherit the earth, that is to establish the kingdom, the New Age? Can you not see that his mission and his teaching have at their heart the development of a new and higher state of consciousness? Can you not see that his unique place in history is based upon his total realization of the divinity incarnated in him?

Jesus did not say that this higher state of consciousness was his alone for all time. Nor did he call us to worship him. Rather, he called us to *follow* him, to follow his example and learn from him. He called us to share in a new condition, to be one in Christ, to be one in the supramental Christ consciousness which alone can dispel the darkness of our lives and renew our very being.

The kingdom is within us. Divinity is our birthright, our inheritance, nearer to us than

hand and foot, but the eye will not see and the ear will not hear. Jesus called on people to awaken, to change their ways, to repent. But notice that word: repent. Over the centuries it has become mistranslated and debased, so that today people understand it merely as feeling sorry for what they conceive to be their sins. In its original sense, however, as Jesus used it and as it comes to us in the Greek word *metanoia*, it means something far greater than merely feeling sorry for misbehavior. *Metanoia* has two etymological roots. *Meta* means to go beyond, to go higher than. And *noia* comes from *nous*, meaning mind. It is the same root from which Teilhard de Chardin developed his term, *noosphere*, and from which the word *noetic* comes. So the original meaning of *metanoia* is literally "going beyond or higher than the ordinary mental state". It indicates a change of mind and heart—even more, a change of behavior based on fundamental insight into the cause and effect of one's previous actions. *Metanoia* in its best sense, then, means a new state of awareness, a new state of consciousness.

That state of consciousness is the supramental Christ consciousness, the peace that passeth understanding, the direct experience of divinity dwelling in us, now and forever, creating us, preserving us, urging us on to ever higher states of being and ultimately returning to the godhead which evoked us in the first place.

The organized Christian churches tell us that Jesus was the only Son of God, that he incarnated as a human, that his mission was salvation from sin. But that is not the full story. The significance of incarnation and resurrection is not that Jesus was a human like us but rather that *we are gods like him*—or at least have the potential to be.

The significance of Jesus is as a model of

perfection, not a vehicle for salvation. Jesus showed us the way to a higher state of being. He demonstrated in his life and explained in his teaching that we all have the potential—the God-given right—to enter the kingdom, to be healed of our sense of separation and alienation, to become whole and holy. He showed in his life, his death and his resurrection that we are eternal celestial beings whose home is the universe. He showed that the death of the body is not the destruction of our consciousness, that the Christ consciousness which embodied itself in the man Jesus was, is and ever shall be present among us, faithfully calling us to reunion, world without end.

The Son of Man showed us the way to a higher state of being—the same state that other saviors of humanity have showed us at other times and other places. We have been guided by Buddha and Krishna and Lao Tse and many others. We have the teachings, we have the technical instruction, we have information of the most advanced sort—but we have not put it into practice.

This hardness of heart has brought us to what I see as the most critical juncture in our history. The name of the game is *survivolution*, but no one is guaranteed a place in the kingdom. Nature is pitiless with regard to the individual. It is the species that counts. That is the way evolution works. Many trials and tribulations are ahead for us as we learn to play the cosmic game of evolving in consciousness. There will be many casualties among those who are slow to adapt in these accelerated-learning times. It has always been that way. The species that doesn't learn to adapt to new conditions goes the way of the dinosaur. But what comes afterward has always been an evolutionary advance.

If we destroy planet earth, from the cos-

mic perspective it will be only the loss of one planet around a minor star in a remote part of a medium-sized galaxy among billions of galaxies—just an evolutionary experiment that failed. There are billions of other worlds, exobiologists calculate, where the evolution of conscious lifeforms is going on. Many are probably well beyond our state of development. Some people even say that they are visiting our planet in UFOs in order to awaken us to our cosmic destiny and bring us into galactic civilization. The ascended masters of earth, it seems, are getting help from the space brothers.

In a more general sense, however, the source of our being is always calling to us through innumerable forms and channels—through nature and through enlightened teachers—calling us to awaken to our true identity and to carry that knowledge forward in the emergence of a higher form of life. Salva-

tion *as liberation or enlightenment* is possible for us at every moment—and that is the key to avoiding species suicide.

But the choice is always ours. We can listen to nature in its many forms and learn—or we can shut ourselves off from the information and warnings that the universe is always giving us. Nature is pitiless, but not unloving. Like a stern but compassionate parent who wants its children to grow up strong and wise, nature gives us hard lessons. But they are always intended for our benefit.

We live in a benevolent universe that nourishes us far better than most realize. But real learning can only take place in a condition of freedom. School is nearly out for Homo sapiens. If we survive the coming holocausts, it will surely be a better world, a New Age. And we *can* survive. We are free to survive and evolve. Nature wants us to survive and evolve. But the choice is always ours.

THE MOTHER AND HER WORK

A Talk *

M. P. Pandit

After our discussion last evening, someone asked me a question about the Mother. Though I have spoken about the Mother at another place in Boston, I agreed that I would speak of her again today in combination with the scheduled theme, "Spiritual Life and Practice: The Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville". To speak of the Mother in this connection is especially relevant because it was she who organized these spiritual communities to practice the gospel of divine life, an idea of which was given yesterday.

She once wrote that there should be on earth a place where people could live without owing allegiance to any particular government or state as free citizens of the world. A place where children could receive an education which would put them in contact with their soul and bring out their inner potentialities, not just receive training in order to secure degrees and diplomas to equip them to earn their bread. It should be a place where people would work for the sheer, creative delight of it, and not to earn a living; for in such a place money would not be the master. It should be a place where extra capacity and power would be exercised not in rivalry to gain dominion over others, but to conquer the difficulties of one's own nature and to meet collective needs. It should be a place where opportunities to participate in the arts would be limited only by capacity, not by factors of wealth or status. It should be a place where men and women would forget their social distinctions and work for a common destiny, for the realization of the ultimate reality.

The Mother observed that she recognized humanity was not yet ready to translate this ideal into practice—that is why she called it a dream. But all dreams have a way of realizing themselves, and with that end in view she organized the Sri Aurobindo Ashram on this model. And behind that is a story.

The Mother was born a hundred years ago in France. Even as a child, she had intimations that she had a spiritual mission in life. She became conscious at the age of five of a guiding light constantly above her head. At ten she was conscious of a number of spiritual teachers coming to her during sleep and shaping an inner life, which her child-brain could not understand. She was favoured by circumstances so that by the time she was twenty she attained a constant awareness of a divine presence within herself, and she organized her

* This is the second of two talks given at Interface in Boston, Massachusetts on 21 and 22 March 1977. The first one appeared in the September issue of *World Union*.

life around that divine centre. A number of seekers were drawn to her, and they told her that they would like to follow her in her quest for the Reality, but they were weighed down by family responsibilities. They had to spend so much energy in earning their livelihood that by the time the day's work was over, they had very little energy left for the more serious quest.

It was at that time that the Mother felt that if an environment could be created in which people who really wanted to find the reality of themselves could be freed of having to devote their energies to earn their creature needs, they could devote themselves exclusively to the pursuit of the Divine. And she looked for an opportunity to do this. When she came to India in the middle of her life and met Sri Aurobindo, she got this opportunity, to organize a spiritual community, an ashram, where seekers from all over the world gathered in order to pursue the development of their consciousness, to realize the divine consciousness and replace by it their human, limited consciousness. She accepted from 1926 onwards those who had this sincere aspiration to devote themselves to the quest for the Divine. A life was organized in the ashram by which each person was assured a decent standard of living, and each undertook to participate in the collective life seeking the ideal of human unity and an optimum development of consciousness, which implies a total change of human nature.

Life was so organized that there was a simultaneous self-discipline, pressuring the energies and the consciousness to convert, to transmute themselves into their higher terms. Thus, for instance, the mind. Methods were communicated—meditation, prayer, and concentration—by which the mind could be quietened, silenced, and brought under control so that instead of restless thought-activity the mind could open to the workings of a larger and higher consciousness that extends above the mind. A systematic attempt was made to open the ranges of the being above the mind, receiving in answer to one's aspiration and effort, the descent of the higher workings of consciousness—more and more true, more and more luminous charges of consciousness.

Similarly an earnest attempt was made to purify the emotions; to examine oneself and to eliminate all elements of calculated kindness, altruism, love, and elements of selfishness and impurity. Encouragement was given for the flow of the higher emotions of love, of the sense of harmony and union with others, towards the Divine in others, so that the true soul-powers within each person increasingly found expression in day to day life.

So, too, attention was given to the working of the life impulses, the desire force, by engaging each person in the work of the collective without personal motive. Each one was given work of about six to eight hours per day and was expected to give his best in a spirit of consecration to the Divine, doing work disinterestedly, without friction with others, since the background of competition and rivalry was absent. It was an environment of cooperation, voluntary collaboration. So this continuous exertion of oneself in a spirit of disinterested service purified the work impulse. Normally people work out of a motive of desire, for the fulfillment of desire. Here that desire motive was eliminated; one worked to express oneself and to offer oneself to a higher ideal.

Similarly, the physical body also was given its due importance. The body was recognized as a temple of the Divine and, as Sri Aurobindo said, "You must keep the temple clean if you wish to instal there the living Presence." So the physical body was disciplined

to become more and more conscious of its movements, more rhythmic in its action, more beautiful and elegant in its form. For, as the Mother explained, the Divine manifests as knowledge in the mind, as power in the life-energies, as love in the soul, and as beauty in the physical.

The entire movement in the ashram was directed toward this fourfold fulfilment of the Divine in man. After fifty years there are today in the ashram about 1700 people from twenty countries or more, each trying to arrive at the realization of this ideal. There are students there from the age of three to ninety-six, since the whole community is looked upon as a spiritual school. No one considers himself or herself to be perfect, and life there is quite actually a continuous school of experience.

The central fact behind all this life activity is a willed development of consciousness, which is arrived at by a triple process of aspiration, rejection and surrender. It is an aspiration to rise above one's present limitations and to grow into a new dimension, into a new stature exceeding the present formulation. This aspiration is accompanied by rejection; rejection of all that is foreign to the ideal, of all that obstructs, of all that prevents the fulfilment of the aspiration. Third, inner surrender to the divine power of consciousness which is invoked and prayed to to help the individual in this difficult endeavour. So aspiration, rejection and surrender are the three terms on which the daily life of the seeker in our ashram is based.

Combining the processes of meditation, concentration, self-observation, disinterested service, and catharsis or self-purification, one enters into oneself more and more till one begins to open and to feel the influence of the soul within. And the influence of the soul is felt through the working of the qualities of love, compassion, and purity. One begins to feel more and more of these elements in one's thoughts, emotions, and life-activity. It is the duty of the seeker to be sincere at this stage and recast life in terms of these soul powers. In the measure in which one does this, the soul may be said to emerge from its inner chamber and govern one's outer life. With the full flowering of the soul, man becomes a saint, he is imbued with a divine love, with an endless compassion, and has an incandescent purity. Whoever approaches such a person feels uplifted, purified, elevated. One with this realization doesn't have to talk or preach, he becomes a centre of the radiance of divine sweetness. That is the first major realization, the psychic realization, leading to a psychicization of nature—casting daily life in the mould of the psychic truth.

The second movement is to recognize that one does not live in isolation but in a collectivity and in the universe. And so begins the second step of enlargement—of one's mind, emotions, life-impulses—a gradual universalization of consciousness which is affected through a growing identity of consciousness. I identify myself with the interests of others, learn to think and to feel at one with them, and to flow with their lives. Thus I arrive at a certain unity with my fellowmen.

Thereafter there is the opening of the higher dimensions of my own being above the mind. And that is done by an ascent of consciousness, through prayer and a willed effort to break through the lid of the restless mind, quietening it, allowing the higher consciousness to settle down in one, and oneself rising above by effort and by aspiration.

This triple movement is the feature of the spiritual life that forms the backbone of life in the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, aiming at the development of a Truth-Consciousness which is to slowly replace our present mental, limited consciousness. The Mother has not only given the opportunity to seekers to practice this integral discipline of transformation of life, but has also started a centre of education in the ashram in order to imbue these values in young minds when they are still fresh. Children are admitted from the early age of three or four and given an education on rather unorthodox lines. The education that is offered is child-centred; it is the child and not the teacher who is important. The teacher has first to be a spiritual seeker as well as one who can become a useful friend to the child in helping it to discover its identity, its capacity, and to develop its intellect. It is an interesting process, though a laborious one, which a teacher will not undertake normally in the usual pattern of education. But in the ashram, it is seekers who have dedicated themselves to a higher cause who give their time to this type of teaching, helping the children to develop their personalities and their consciousness. We have about 150 teachers and 700 students from all parts of the world. The Mother wanted each child to be educated in his mother tongue, but practical limitations have not made it possible. So the main language is English, and it is in English that the general instruction is imparted. There is no religious or moral instruction; the example of a thousand adults pursuing a spiritual life is enough to stamp upon the young mind the necessity of living an elevated life. And there are no student problems of unrest in our centre of education, no disturbances or disorders such as we see elsewhere in educational institutions.

Women have been given absolute equality and freedom. Long before the women's lib movement took shape in the West, the Mother worked for the freedom of women and established a status of equality with men. She said, however, that a woman will be truly free when she fulfils three conditions. First, when she overcomes her admiration for and dependence upon masculine strength. Second, when she is able to get over her sense of need for the security of a home. Third, when she is able to overpass the desire for motherhood. It is not that these three things are wrong, but a woman must not be a slave to them—they may be a part of one's life, but as a result of a free choice. This was the content of the liberation of women as Mother conceived it.

So she worked for the liberation of all men, of women, and of children. After developing the ashram on these lines for nearly half a century, she projected the same principles on a larger canvas in Auroville, the City of Dawn, a few miles from the ashram. To what may be called a planetary city, people have been invited from all over the world who would become members of a collectivity trying to create a new pattern of life. It is not based upon the existing economic systems; in this community, nobody is expected to own private property, to keep personal possessions. Each member is provided for by the community, but each one also contributes his talent, his work for the development of the community in the line in which he is fit. There are to be no monetary transactions among the residents of the city. Money is a factor only in transactions between the city and the outside world. All property is owned by the township. The city as planned has been divided into four zones: residential; industrial; cultural, including educational facilities; and international, where the nations of the world

are invited to open pavilions representing their respective cultures so that the town's citizens will have direct access to the different civilizations that have been developed in history. The four zones will be surrounded by a green belt largely devoted to agriculture, and by a ring of craft villages.

All told, an attempt is being made there to develop a world consciousness, a composite world-culture, with each individual free to develop his talents and his consciousness in the field to which he is drawn. Each one gives about six to eight hours per day in work for the township, and is given freedom to utilize the remainder of the time as chosen without interference by anyone. The citizens of Auroville regard themselves as citizens of the world. Technically, since the international community is not yet ready to recognize this, individuals may keep their respective nationalities, but in their consciousness they belong to the world.

These are the two projects that have been developed by the Mother in translating the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo into practice.

If there are any questions, they are welcome.

Is the city in operation now?

Yes. It was founded in 1968, and there are already about 550 people in twenty or so settlements—some primarily agricultural, others educational or cottage-industrial, and so on.

Is it separate from the ashram?

Yes, it is separate. The ashram may be considered the mother institution, and Auroville as launched by the ashram but developing independently.

You were speaking of rejection of the lower nature as one of the three movements; how does one deal with rejection of certain thoughts, feelings, and specifically negativity?

One has to observe oneself and reject those thoughts, movements and emotions which are limiting, constricting, opposed to truth and the verities of love and harmony. Whatever goes against the chosen ideal is to be rejected firmly and persistently. These are a legacy of the past and they will not be easily negated. A persistent attempt to reject them is part of the personal effort expected of the seeker. One has to refuse to participate, to indulge in those movements. Movements of anger or greed or untruthfulness are unspiritual and they pollute the consciousness.

We speak so much of ecological, environmental pollution, but we rarely think of the psychological pollution that takes place day-in and day-out within ourselves. Spiritual discipline demands that this pollution be stopped. Our consciousness in itself is pure, but there are so many deposits of impurities due to our thoughts and feelings that a film is formed over our soul. That has to be dissolved.

Is the holy name spoken of in Vasanti's introductory hymn of invocation the common bond and guiding force in your community, or is it more of an intellectual ideal that's being created to bring people together?

The concept of the divine consciousness that we want to realize within ourselves, and to embody and express, is the common link, the common ground. The Mother and Sri

Aurobindo are the teachers, the guides, and we are grateful to them for showing us this path, for helping us with their spiritual grace, but as they themselves insisted, our loyalty must be to the Truth, our source of inspiration must be the ideal of an integral consciousness. This vision and the practice to realize it is the common ground on which all meet.

Wouldn't each individual seeker have a different concept of this ideal?

The concept is the same, but the practice varies with the individual according to temperament and nature. And care is taken to see that my practice does not impinge upon your liberty to pursue your practice. You may be an intellectual who believes in study and discrimination, enlarging the content of knowledge in yourself, and thereby arriving at the Reality. I may be an emotional person who believes in and who finds it easier to concentrate upon the heart, to develop the emotions and to purify them of all elements and strains of selfishness and littleness, to reach out to God in humanity and inwardly to God in my own heart. So your way is different from mine, but the ideal is the same. Thus freedom is given to all individuals. Our master said that the goal is the same, the path is the same, but the way each one reaches or treads it is different.

Could you say a few words about joining the community and how people are selected?

Till about four years ago, the Mother—the founder of the ashram and Auroville—was present and she had the spiritual capacity to know whether a person was fit for this particular type of life, and she used to decide. But now that she is not physically there a small board of individuals has been constituted, who have known something of her mind, to screen people who want to come and to admit them. But nobody is admitted straightaway. Each one is given a period of trial in which he can see for himself how far he is suited for this life, and the collectivity can see whether it is right for the person concerned and for the community. This period of trial may extend to a year, during which the individual is expected to meet his own expenses. Thereafter, if he is confirmed and if he chooses to stay, the community takes responsibility for his needs.

Up to what age are the ashram children educated?

Usually, the higher course is completed by the age of twenty-one. At that time each student chooses whether he or she wants to join the community or to go into the world to find a place for himself.

What sort of changes have you noticed in your unity since you don't have the living presence of the Master with you at this point?

We have not felt the lack of the presence because the pressure of the Truth which is being manifested there is taking care of it. People are learning to live together; people from different countries, cultures, and social strata are all working together. We may have small problems arising out of the rigidity of human nature, but everyone takes it with good humour and understanding. A collective consciousness, or in a small way a group consciousness, is slowly forming itself with its own character.

IN QUEST OF LOVE

M. P. Pandit

23.6.77

She approached with a shy, tentative smile. There was a certain sadness and appeal in that expression.

Could she speak to me for a moment? Are you Mr. Patel? When I said I was not she almost broke down, "Oh!"—a poignant sigh.

I said it did not matter, but she could talk to me and perhaps I could help. She brightened a little and said apologetically, "But it may take a little while".

"You can take your own time", I assured her.

Tears welled up in her eyes and she started sobbing. I helped her to steady herself and then slowly, with a far away look she told me why she had come.

She is an English lady with three children, well settled in life. Always she had felt that there was something she was missing, and at some point she started reading books in the hope of finding it. She did not know what exactly it was, but all the same she hoped the books would help her find it. She read all kinds of books. One day, a few years ago, she was reading an Upanishad. She did not understand it but felt like going on. Suddenly she heard these unexpressed words: Don't think. She put the book down and remained silent. The thoughts slowed down by themselves. She became aware that her breath also had slowed down and very soon it looked as if

breathing would stop and she would die. She did not panic, she remained quiet. All of a sudden waves after waves of LOVE invaded her and engulfed her. It was something totally new: a universal Love. She was bathed in tears and a feeling of newness. Her eyes fell on a plant growing in a pot in the the room and she felt an unmistakable oneness with its life. She does not remember how many hours passed in this state. She could not move. After some time she felt a bit exhausted and wanted to prepare a cup of tea. As she got up and proceeded to the kitchen, she casually looked into a mirror in the passage and was astonished to see her face completely changed: it was radiant, full, joyous.

The experience continued day after day. She was melting with love, love for all, for all life. All her values changed. Her habits disappeared. At times she would see dazzling Light around her, even her little daughter saw it.

One day a young Communist who swore by Mao was talking to her ardently about the Mao way of changing the world. After he had spoken, she quietly told him that there was another way of doing it. What way? he asked. The way of Love, she replied. And on his insistence she explained to him her experience. He asked her to communicate it to him. But she was hesitant. Still, on repeated requests, she said she would try. They sat in

the drawing room opposite each other. She just concentrated and directed the Love towards him. After a while, the young man who had been sitting with his head down till then, lifted it up and lo! he had changed completely. His face was bright, lit up and brimming with joy. "But I cannot allow myself to feel this, you are a married woman", he exclaimed. Obviously he thought he was experiencing love for her individually. She tried to explain to him that it was not so. But he had no patience to listen and he got up abruptly and went out. After a while he came back with a smile and said she was right. It appears that as soon as he stepped out, he was accosted at the door by the postman—a man above 50—and he felt the same flow of love towards him—a man!

This experience continued for about two years. Then it ebbed away. She felt unhappy. She moved from the city (London) to the country and lived there for a year and a half. But it was no use. Then she thought of India, so she sold her mansion, invested the money in securities and came to Delhi. From there someone directed her to Kashmir. She lived there with her two sons—her daughter having chosen to remain in England—for more than a year, hoping to meet someone who could help her to regain the lost experience. None turned up. One day she asked her houseboat driver whether there were any gurus in the neighbourhood. He replied that there was one he knew, but the holy man did not know English. The driver, however, offered to interpret for her. She thought for a moment and told him: Go and tell the guru that I had something which I have lost and I am looking for it.

The good samaritan came back and reported. The guru had replied: Tell her that I too

had something. I have lost it and am looking for it!

"No help from this source", she thought, and left for Ceylon where she went from place to place till she came to a Buddhist monastery. She went there hoping to find somebody who would help her. But she found the atmosphere too hard, and decided to leave. Then on the last day she met a young American monk who told her that she could go to South India where there was an ashram where he had done a course of Hatha Yoga. But he warned her that the man who was conducting the course was difficult. She came to India in January (1977) and went to the institutions. True to reports, the person at the head was hard and she left within two days and moved to another place in the town. She asked person after person whether there was no one from whom she could learn, at whose feet she could sit and receive Divine Love. No one helped. Somebody directed her to Tiruvannamalai where there had been a sage named Ramana. She went there but found it was not her place, though she liked the face of the sage immensely. The people there were all busy. She went up the hill, tasted the waters of the spring and then left to return to Pondicherry. She went inside the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and stood near the Samadhi. She felt there must have been some great Love there. "Yes", (she heard a voice with a French accent), "there was a Great Love". Nothing more happened and she did not feel encouraged to go there again.

"Is there really nobody in this country who can help me recover the Love?" she went on wondering, all the while feeling that her time was being wasted. Someone told her to meet Pandit. She went to his office but the gentleman there told her that Pandit was out

and he would be coming back after some time.

"And, please, who are you?" she asked me.

"I am Pandit."

"Ah", she heaved a sigh of relief, "you are the person I wanted to meet."

"Who brought you here now?" I asked her.

"Nobody, I just walked in" . . .

THE SUPREME DISCOVERY *

One of the earliest works of the Mother which has won an immortal place in the spiritual literature of the world is undoubtedly *The Supreme Discovery*, which is the English title of the original in French, *Decouverte Suprême*. It is addressed mostly to those who are beset with problems, difficulties and see nothing but darkness around them, those who are on the verge of despair. Though primarily meant for such people, it is equally applicable to all because everyone, at some time or the other, is faced with difficulties when he feels let down by circumstances, let down by those on whom he had depended. The Mother calls upon people in such circumstances to accept and even welcome, if they can, such situations as possible openings to a great spiritual lead. These situations which are so common in life can be faced boldly if we have succeeded in erecting some kind of synthesis in our mind which will stand as firm as a rock against all the invasions, psychological and emotional, that overwhelm us. This synthesis of our ideas and our emotions—all grouped around one truth—starts in the mind, for man is essentially a mental being; our fears also start in the mind, our solutions come through the mind, our strength lies in our mind, so it is in the mind that the synthesis is formed; it acts as a constant point of reference when we are faced with any kind of difficulty. Naturally the more superficial the synthesis is, the weaker is the mental idea basing it. The strongest synthesis, we learn from the Mother, is that which is built around the central idea of the unity of myself with the self of the universe, for the individual I and the universal I are one. This has been recognized down the ages in all countries, in all traditions. My life should be organized on the basis of this truth of the unity of my soul with the souls of others. It makes a world of difference when we not only believe in this idea but start acting upon it, organizing our mind, our thoughts around it, and this means that we admit only those thought-movements which strengthen the rule of this idea, reject and eliminate all thought-movements like selfishness, narrowness, bigotry, which go counter to this truth. So also as regards emotions, we must open to movements of harmony, movements of love and goodwill which forge a strong link with all the rest of our fellow beings, and simultaneously keep out movements of hatred, of suspicion, of division which go contrary to the idea of the truth of unity cherished by us. It is a discipline which has to be kept up till the truth of the oneness of the individual I and the universal I becomes a ruling factor in our lives. Whatever inconveniences there may be, whatever sacrifices we may be called upon to undergo in cultivating this ideal, they are all worth it because they promote the growth of the soul truthward, Godward. They enlarge our consciousness, they extend our vision and they expedite our inner evolution.

* A section from the forthcoming book, *Dynamics of Yoga* (Second Series), by M. P. Pandit.

The Mother has pointed out that each experience of suffering gives us a blow inwards, forces us to look for support within ourselves rather than elsewhere and that brings us close to some hidden strength in ourselves which we are happy to discover. There is a great peace when we discover that the source of our strength lies within ourselves, the source of joy lies within ourselves. So this voyage of self-discovery or inner discovery is undertaken voluntarily by anyone who chooses to profit by the visitation of suffering or misfortune. As this idea of unity with the universal Spirit gathers force, we begin to be aware not only of some part in ourselves where we feel one with others, but we recognize the same divinity, the same consciousness, the same spirit in all forms around, not only human but animal and even material. Everywhere there is a spark that greets an awakened consciousness and that should be sought. That is what is meant by the discovery of the Divine in the universe. The discovery of the Divine within ourselves is not complete unless we discover the same Divine elsewhere, and the basic requisite for this recognition of the Divine around us in the universe is humility, humbleness. Unless we have that humility in the mind, there is always a reluctance in us to concede that what is within us is also in others. There is always a tendency in the human mind to claim a certain special prerogative; that is egoism. Even if we happen to have a special gift we must know that it is only a special Grace of God that has given it to us. We have to deserve it by expressing and feeling grateful to the Maker, a sure sign of which is humility. Read Einstein, and other advanced thinkers; with what humility they speak of God, of the many things still to be discovered, of the depths not yet plumbed! The Mother even goes to the extent of saying that the most powerful spring for soaring into higher glory is to touch the bottom. It is when we discover that we are nothing, that by ourselves we can do nothing and we appeal in prayer to the divine source of strength that we are raised up into higher celestial regions in our consciousness. That is why the Mother says, "Truly in humiliation lies the Divine Glory".

A small postscript: Many of us thought that a mistake had been made in the use of the word "humiliation". We felt that somebody had wrongly translated it from the French. So some of us looked it up in the dictionary and found it was correct. We then asked the Mother whether the word was meant to be humility. She replied that it was not so. Humility is different and she had deliberately used the word humiliation, humiliation of the ego. When the ego is convinced that it is nothing, that it has to look elsewhere for support, that is the moment of its deliverance, and that is the substance of *The Supreme Discovery*.

RELIGION AND THE MODERN PREDICAMENT

Pyarelal Shukla

Religion is a term for which it is difficult to give a precise definition. This is because religions have been many, ranging from the primitive religions of nature gods to godless early Buddhism of deep psychological insight. In between these, there are religions which have personal and impersonal concepts of God, prophets and incarnations and also differing concepts about human life and its aims. Therefore, it is difficult to comprehend all or even major religions by one definition. Yet to communicate what the word *religion* generally connotes, it can be said that religion is the inner voice of man about his individual self, its relationship to the world and to the ultimate reality. Religion is the saner element in man which elevates his life. It is a hidden faculty in his self through which he speculates, and experiences the mysteries beyond his knowledge and reason such as soul, God and life before birth and after death.

Religion has given discipline to individual and society. It has evolved a code of social and moral conduct which has brought unity and equanimity in society. In this, religion has been more powerful than law, because people follow religion with devotion whereas with law force is associated. Further, law can prevent the open crimes but not the root of crimes; that is, the sin present in the hearts of man. People have been following religious maxims with the faith that they would be

rewarded for this in this life and also in the life after death. In this mysterious world man has felt himself safe by following religion.

Religion has done some harm also. People never questioned or doubted religious sayings because it was considered to be sinful. Thus religion demanded unquestioned faith and silenced reasoning power. In the name of religion people have believed in many true as well as untrue things. With some religions the feeling of uniqueness is associated. Their followers despise other religions, try to convert the followers of other religions to their own, and sometimes fight with them. There has been much fighting and bloodshed in the name of religion. Religion has also been a means of exploitation of the common man by the religious authorities.

With all its merits and demerits, religion has had its influence over peoples all over the world. Its validity was never doubted in the past. The validity of religion has been doubted and denied only in the modern age.

The modern age has been known as the age of science. Although in the West science has been making progress for several centuries, since the nineteenth century its progress has been stupendous. There science came into direct conflict with some of the religious views. For example, religion believed that the sun moved around the earth whereas science proved the reverse to be the truth. The most revolutionary effect was brought about by

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution which proved that man descended not from Adam and Eve, but from apes. Wherever the religious beliefs came into conflict with scientific theories, science came out victorious because scientific theories are based on proofs. Religion, however, cannot give proof in support of its beliefs, it can only give the evidence of religious books. The scientific attitude is to examine everything by scientific analysis and to believe in what this analysis proves. Consequently, with the progress of science religion began losing its ground. Men with scientific bent of mind began to deny the validity of religion. Much has been written to deny and condemn religion since the eighteenth century. Some modern thinkers made profound logical analyses of religious beliefs and arrived at the conclusion that religious beliefs are inconsistent with intellect. According to them it is not justifiable to have belief in religion. It is better to lead a life of moral values without religious belief. It matters little in human life whether God exists or not.¹ There are thinkers who "confess frankly that the human intellect is unable to find conclusive answers to many questions of profound importance to mankind but they refuse to believe that there is some 'higher' way of knowing by which we can discover truths hidden from science and intellect."²

In contrast to the opponents of religion many thinkers hold that the spirit of science does not contradict the spirit of religion. This becomes evident when we observe that many great scientists have been profoundly religious. Scientists like Sir Arthur Eddington, Sir James Jeans and Albert Einstein have had their religious sentiments. The vastness of the universe they probed into made them conscious of its Creator. The same is true of persons like J. B. S. Haldane and Aldous

Huxley. These scientists feel the limitation of science and are struck by mysticism mainly at two stages—when they try to comprehend the vast universe and when they try to understand what is life. From this it follows that the spirit of science does not necessarily contradict religion and that, with the progress of science, religion need not be eradicated. There may be the counter-argument that for many scientists and thinkers religion is inconsistent. But taking both sides into consideration, it can be said that on this point there is no unanimity. For some, religion is inconsistent with science whereas for others it is not so.

The right attitude is that the fields of science and religion are different from each other. Science is the study of the outer world whereas religion is the study of the inner life of man. The inner life of man can not be a subject for scientific analysis. Similarly the outer world is the domain of science and can not be understood or explained by religion. The anomaly arises when science or religion encroaches upon the field of the other; for example, when religion makes claims about the movement of the sun and other constellations and when science examines the relationship of man with God. If science and religion work within their respective domains, there need not be any conflict or inconsistency and both can supplement each other in enriching human life.

Apart from the theories of science, its material outcome also has had its effects. Science and technology gave material comforts and time and money to enjoy them. Enjoyment of material comforts became the aim of life. Religion demanded austere and restrained life. It asked a sacrifice of the joys of this world for rewards in the other world. As such religion failed to appeal to modern man.

Consequently religion has been at its lowest ebb these days. The materialistic outlook of life has contributed greatly to the decline of religion. Materialism regards matter as the ultimate reality and what is non-matter is important as far as it contributes to material values. Dialectical materialism is an important philosophy of materialism which sees the whole world as a growth of matter. Dialectical materialism is basically anti-religious. Consequently, in the communist countries religion has faced the greatest setback. Despite the attempts for its total eradication religion still remains in communist countries, although limited to a small number of people. No single philosophy, howsoever important, can give complete answers to the problems of life, and it can be hoped that, in due course of time, dialectical materialism too, will give scope to other points of view. Further, man's aspiration for knowing the realities behind the phenomena of sense perception is too deep to keep him confined to materialism or dialectical materialism.

The question is—what is the relevance of religion in the modern age? This question did not arise in the remote past because those days religion was the guiding force in man's life. But now man's actions and thoughts are much more influenced by science than by anything else. Therefore, this question has become quite pertinent.

In its cradle science has brought material comforts, knowledge of the physical universe and also the conquest over nature. But with all these, modern man is restless and discontented. He does not have inner peace and he is losing faith in human values. Science has conquered physical nature but it has not been able to conquer human nature. Science is essentially the study of matter and the laws governing it. Therefore, with the stupendous

growth of science, wherewith man's physical powers and material comforts have enormously increased, his inner self is yet unharmed and unregulated. Science has enabled man to make atom bombs, but it has not given the wisdom not to make such weapons. In spite of having achieved much through science, modern man finds himself wanting in certain important things. These are inner peace, realization of the self, understanding the forces at work beyond the physical world, and an aim for individual as well as social life. For these objects we have to turn to religion. Therefore, religion has its relevance even in the modern age.

Does religion supply these objects to its believers? Or, in other words, can religion supply these objects to modern man? It is difficult to give any universally acceptable answer to such questions, because religion by its very nature pertains to man's inner self and is not subject to scientific verification. Yet some answer is possible. The joy of the pudding lies in the eating. If a man lives a religious life and experiences its worth, then religious life is certainly worth living. It has been the experience of religious people all over the world that religion has a soothing and healing effect upon the mind. It makes man nobler. Whether religion gives a clearance from sins committed and a passport for heaven may be a subject of controversy, but it does give a pure conscience and inner peace. The explanation which religion offers for the pains and sufferings in the world may or may not be acceptable, but it gives strength to mind and heart to bear patiently with the pain and suffering which is inevitable in the world. In brief, when religion is lived with earnestness and patience, it makes man a saint. If this be so, then religion offers what man is wanting in with all his achievements in science, and

therefore, religion is the utmost need of modern man.

An important problem of the modern age is that man has lost faith in religion. What should be done to bring back the lost faith in religion? When scholars subject religion to scientific analysis they do not favour religion with a good judgement because religion is not a fit subject for this. On the other hand its believers are trying to justify the consistency of religion. It is difficult to convince a man on these matters with arguments. But what reason fails to do experience can do. It is a common experience that people leading a religious life are serene, self-sacrificing and benevolent. On the other hand, men without religion are generally Epicurean. Mental infirmities and crimes are found more in them. Although exceptions may be found, exceptions only prove the general rule. According to C. G. Jung the religious instinct in man is of overwhelming importance, and the unprecedented violence and cruelty which have been released in this deplorable century only reflect a deep psychological illness consequent on the loss of traditional religious values.³ He says, "Among all my patients in the second half of my life, that is to say over thirty-five—there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a religious outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he had lost what the living religions of every age have given to their followers, and none of them has really been healed who did not regain his religious outlook."⁴ Taking these observations into consideration, the contribution of religion to the inner life of man becomes obvious. Therefore, for those who do not have religious belief in them, it would be worthwhile to come into contact with religious man and literature and see if they can acquire

religious experience.

When the question of faith in religion and God arises, two points deserve to be noted. The first point is that there are men whose truthfulness, sincerity and integrity is beyond doubt. I would like to give the example of Mahatma Gandhi. When Mahatma Gandhi speaks on any subject relating to life and the world, we take his words for their face-value. We do not doubt or bypass his statements. But when the same Mahatma Gandhi says that he always feels the presence of God near himself, we do not take his words for their face-value. We simply bypass his statements. My humble submission is, that just as we believe Mahatma Gandhi in all other matters, we must also believe him in matters of religion and God. That is to say we must accept that Gandhi's experience of the presence of God near him is real. The second point is that some people have mystic experiences. Such people are found in different parts of the world and in different religions. The mystic experiences which people have all over the world are strikingly similar.⁵ Therefore, the genuineness of mystic experiences is beyond doubt. Thus the religious experiences of saints like Mahatma Gandhi and these mystic experiences bear testimony to the presence of the transcendental power which is experienced in man's spirit.

The question is—which of the living religions of the present world offers these much-needed objects to the modern man? In the present global perspective the proper answer would be that although different religions have their distinctive virtues, to have the fullest understanding and self improvement, all the religions have to be studied with an unbiased comparative approach. Their similarities and differences have to be taken into account, a synthetic vision of religion has to

be made so as to suit the modern predicament and the essence of religion has to be assimilated in the self of the aspirant. Studying other religions than one's own gives a man not only a better approach to religion, but also a better understanding of one's own religion.

In his book, *An Historian's Approach to Religion*, Arnold Toynbee arrives at the conclusion that the higher religions of the world are based on the same essential truths. The points on which these religions differ from one another are non-essentials. The essential truth behind the higher religions is that "Man's goal is to seek communion with the presence behind the phenomena, and to seek it with the aim of bringing his self into harmony with this absolute spiritual reality. A human self can not be brought into harmony with Absolute Reality unless it can get rid of its innate self-centredness. This is the hardest task that man can set himself; but, if he accomplishes it, his reward will be far more than proportionate to the toil and pain of the spiritual struggle. In giving up self-centredness he will have felt as if he were losing his life; but in achieving this act of self-sacrifice he will find that he has really saved his life, because he will have given his life a new centre, and this new centre will be the Absolute Reality that is the spiritual presence behind the phenomena."⁶ The non-essentials in the religions should be separated carefully. These non-essentials are myths, theology, rituals and taboos.

Like all human endeavour religion also is dynamic. Although the religious texts are treated as sacrosanct and final, yet they have been interpreted and elucidated so as to suit the succeeding ages. These interpretations have brought in revisions in religious ideology and sometimes have revolutionized them.

Such interpretations are necessary to bring religion nearer to contemporary social life. The aim of all human endeavour including religion is human welfare. In the modern predicament we have come upon an age when it has become imperative to make some revisions and changes in religion so as to make it appealing to modern man. To begin with religion should be based on spiritual experience. The aspirant must be able to feel the religious experience through the study of literature and through the company of religious men. Religion founded on spiritual experience can not be irrational even though it may transcend reason. Religion should not ask belief in things which people are unable to believe. Like all branches of knowledge, religion also must provide room for doubts, discussions and enquiry. Nothing should be treated as final and incontestable. Religion must improve the quality of life—individual as well as social. It should bring about unity of conscience and provide the basis for universal morality. It should illumine the individual's life and harmonize universal life. Religion should provide ethical force to social laws and even more so, to international law. Religion should be free from the non-essentials and narrow communal bias which man, in the course of history, has assimilated with it. This purification or purgation of religion is necessary to free it from the superfluities which go under the name of religion and which conceal real religion from perception.

The religions of the world came up in their own times and places. They fulfilled the needs of their respective times and places. With the present growth of knowledge and in the present global perspective there is much in religions that looks outdated. Consequently they fall short of the de-

mands of the modern age. In religion there are eternal values but along with them there are temporal and local elements. The future

of religion lies in carefully sifting the temporal and local elements and in evolving the eternal values.

References

1. Kai Nielson, *Contemporary Critiques of Religion* (London, 1971) page 136.
2. Bertrand Russell, *History of Western Philosophy* (London, 1967) page 789.
3. R. C. Zaehner, *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths* (London, 1959) page 403.
4. C.G. Jung, *The Collected Works*, Vol. XI (London, 1958) page 334.
5. S. Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (London, 1940) page 64.
6. Arnold Toynbee, *An Historian's Approach to Religion* (London, 1957) page 273.

ON THE TOUCHING DOWN OF AUROVILLE—IV

Ronald Jorgensen

Looking toward the difficulties of the subtle beginnings of Auroville brings us to the Matrimandir—the spiritual centre of the city—because only from there is a chance to see any difficulty for what it actually is. That statement casts me back to a fresh vibration of some repetitiously-aged words of the Mother: *Let the Matrimandir be the living symbol of Auroville's aspiration . . . The Matrimandir wants to be the symbol of the Divine's answer . . .* As the becoming soul of the city, the Matrimandir is the only collective contact for the truth of solution to clarify in the turbidity of Auroville's persistent problems of conflict.

People here wonder if this can be true *practically*. For even though they know that spiritually a person's soul is one's only centre which feels and guides truly, and even though they feel that what is true of the soul for the person is true of the group-soul for the collectivity, it's hard in daily life to admit, and to live around, a concrete construction as the living soul of your community. And no one could prove it, only experience it by working there a little or a lot.

Is that the direction toward the solution—the *Divine's answer*, as the Mother says—to Aurovilians' problems with Sri Aurobindo Society and with each other: helping with the work on the Matrimandir? We remember her wanting everyone, in an old tape-recorded session with Aspiration to help with it as the central, the first work; not necessarily full-time, but at regular intervals of whatever time they could come, a rhythm of regularity. I do feel working there together is what she's waiting for, waiting for a greater clarity in consciousness and action of all of Auroville as persons give themselves more completely to the city's becoming soul. For what is love and unity and freedom, what's the result of work in transport, agriculture, and self-government until it collectively begins from there?

But why go on myself—Vikas has been at the Matrimandir for a long time, and it was something in him which Michael Zelnick drew out in a tape recorded interview that, although made far back in late 1974, has a compelling futurity in it. Vikas.

"It's always the most difficult question to answer: what the Matrimandir is, because I really don't know. Physically, it's a sphere, a sort of [slightly flattened] sphere which encloses a space, a chamber, a means of access to that chamber, and inside that chamber there is to be a crystal of some sort which I believe is supposed to work as a receiver for some kind of force, supramental force I suppose—but this is the big mystery for me. I mean, I've worked on the thing for two years now . . .

"Judging from my own involvement with it so far it's like some alchemical crucible, you

come into contact with it, you know, you jump into the crucible and it changes you—whether one needs such a crucible or not is another question, I suppose, because people seem to be changing very rapidly all over the world now—but certainly in this particular place the force working for change is very, very intense. One feels that in Auroville, at least, the Matrimandir is the centre of that force. It's like it's the source, somehow, the place from which it radiates out, almost in the way the force formerly radiated from the Mother's body. That is my own feeling about it: that it is a physical thing—as the Mother's body was a physical thing—which somehow receives and channels the supramental force into the earth's atmosphere. . . .

"All the time I have the feeling with the Matrimandir that when it is there fully completed, it will have the capacity to act—this seems presumptuous to say—but that it will have the capacity to act upon the whole of the earth consciousness with the same intensity that it seems to [have] upon those people who are involved in working on it now—which I might say includes some very hard cases.

"The experience of building this thing, the people who are involved in building this thing live and work together virtually twenty-four hours a day: it is the most intense collective situation I've ever been involved in. But there is like this one thing that everyone is relating to over and above his own little ego, one thing that we can all give ourselves to down to the very concrete level of physical work, and the measure of the perfection it is possible to achieve is the measure of how much you can unplug and give yourself to it. And it—what's 'it'? It's a really intangible thing, 'it' is the building, but it's also this whole process of giving, it's like a symbol of surrender. For example, the commonest problem which I face every day is the difficulty of seeing everything that happens as the action of a force—you can call it the Divine, you can call it the Truth, whatever you like—a force that works through many people, many things, and shapes itself. Now when one can see that, when one sees it, it's fine, the work is fine. But one can look at things on the level of: 'I'm having difficulty with so-and-so', this interpersonal problem level, where you have to work out your difficulties in this personal, psychological way. When you get stuck at that level the work simply bogs down with you; when you get out of it, the work starts to flow again—so that one has this constant, absolutely objective reminder, like a message that keeps coming, reminding you that the whole thing is under the direct guidance of the Divine.

"But I think this whole thing is rather more complicated than it might appear at first. For example, at times during the construction of the Matrimandir there has been a really beautiful harmony between the workers. During the excavation of the crater and when we were doing the pillars, it was a beautiful experience, a real feeling of brotherhood stronger, much stronger, than anything I've ever experienced before. And then, suddenly this incredibly beautiful thing, this warmth in which everyone knew they were working for the same thing, everyone knew they were children of the one Mother, suddenly this thing broke up: the spirit was gone, just like that, and all kinds of rivalries, conflicts, really the most petty things developed and lasted for a long time, until quite recently as a matter of fact. But I don't feel that this means we can't make it on this level, or rather, perhaps we can't make it on this level because we're not supposed to. It may be, I don't know, but it may be that this type of harmony, as beautiful as it is, and it is very beautiful, is still something of an

essentially vital character and that's why it had to break up. It had to break up because we're moving towards something higher and, one after the other we have to let go of everything that we come to on the way; no matter how nice it is, that isn't That. But of course we always forget and when something that seems really fine comes along we'd like to hold on to it. Then it just gets taken away from us—because Mother is not going to let us stop half-way—and it feels like a crisis. And I suppose it *is* a crisis, because disharmony is disharmony regardless of these periods' necessity in the larger movement. But let me say that I, at least, and I suspect most of us feel this, have never been so happy as I have been since I've been in Auroville. It is a hard experience but the hardness brings out things in one, if one can stand just a bit of it, things that are very beautiful. So the experience is both hard and beautiful at the same time.

"I read of other people's experience climbing Everest or living in a commune, something that requires a common endeavour, even I can think back to my schooldays which were something like that—I went to a boarding school—and obviously, they're all intense experiences; but I feel that this is something different. There's something here that penetrates so fully into your whole being, physically, you can just feel this incredible thing coursing through you when you work and even when you just sit and watch one of the big operations, like when they are concreting—it's like a heavenly shower . . . it's so intense . . . everyone is just moving around in this exquisite dance, going to exactly the right place entirely at the direction of this Force which is doing the whole thing. Really, if you just stand back and get into any type of meditative viewpoint, you *have* to see this, this *intense* Force working through many people, moving them around, moving all the materials, putting everything in the right place at the right time; and even when mistakes occur, again and again one sees in retrospect that they were inevitable in terms of the total thing that's unfolding, they were a very necessary experience to bash someone on the head and say, 'Here is imperfection, here is lack of care', or else that the 'mistake' was simply . . . a change of plans by the Force that's building the Matrimandir, or rather, a change forced on our plans to bring them into closer harmony with its plan."

Then Vikas begins to talk more intimately about what it is like for a harmony to be brought through such a differently tempered group of people, each one carrying not only his own, but his nation's ego too.

"In no place that I've seen has there been such a collection of people of different ages, different backgrounds, different . . . I don't know, just totally different, all brought together to work on a single project like this. To the extent that they stay in the consciousness of how different they are, there can be a lot of conflict. For example, a man who's been predominantly logical, rational in his work method, who has to work on a project with another man who's been more or less completely intuitive, impulsive, instinctive—they can look at one another and say, 'This man is an absolute fool!' But the truth is that for the thing to manifest, both of them are essential. This in fact is the very situation we have here at the Matrimandir: Piero [Italian], the executive engineer, is extremely functional, logical, rational in his

approach to things. Roger [French], the chief architect, is like impulsive, beyond belief, and both of them are so essential to the working . . . When they stand on their differences the work just stops . . . When they come together and realize their interdependence and see that they're just two points through which a thing has to come, a thing that for its own momentum, its own way of being . . . so long as they unplug from their egoisms and realize that both are essential, that it's their very difference that is the essential thing for the thing to manifest, then it does come and it flows so easily . . . the result is something that . . . it shakes you, it's so beautiful . . .

"I have the feeling that in essence one can have the type of experience I'm talking about anywhere, that what is unique here is the intensity of the experience; but I don't know, even that may not be true. So the egoism about 'We are the Matrimandir workers' is so ludicrous . . . it comes from a great narrowness. What I will say is this: to do this work a great discipline is needed; and to live together in such a tight situation where you're obliged every day, whether you like it or not, to go out there, however you feel, and work on this thing, and work on yourself—then there is a tremendous pressure generated. One is almost forced to move beyond the differences and conflicts and find and live in that part of oneself where there is love and understanding and feeling for one another, because if you don't do that the situation is intolerable. I mean, sometimes it's such a tremendous effort to go out there and do this work rather than just sort of withdraw and stay quiet within yourself . . . so that I feel that everyone who stays and does it for the next five years or however long it takes to complete the Matrimandir, is necessarily going to be deeply changed by the experience. Sometimes I feel *we're* the Matrimandir, that the Matrimandir *is the change* that's being made in us, that this whole outer construction project is just sort of something to keep us busy while the real work is being done . . .

"Auroville and the Matrimandir are for me somehow just a concentration of something that's happening everywhere: it's a microcosm, an intensive microcosm of something that's happening everywhere. And the people here are like very ordinary people, there's no one that's like a great enlightened being at all. They're perfectly ordinary human beings, except they have this one thing which is a will to be different, a willingness to undergo the process of being changed, however difficult it may be.

Then, musing, Vikas talks about what kind of Auroville is destined to come out of this process of building the Matrimandir.

"I had a very interesting experience not long ago; I went, just for a holiday, up to the north for two weeks. And it was most interesting because I saw that it was possible. One has to make a certain adjustment, a sort of shift of one's rhythm, or else you freak out and are back within twenty-four hours—but I made the adjustment and saw that it was quite possible for me to live someplace other than Auroville, quite happily. And this comes as a shock somehow, one realizes that one doesn't *have* to stay in Auroville. For me, at least, Auroville isn't a place; it's a state of consciousness, an attitude towards your life and towards the future and therefore also towards the present. It seems that there is a physical place

where this state of consciousness is centred, most strongly concentrated, where the greatest number of people are settled living, or trying to live according to that attitude; a place where you can live this attitude 'full time' rather than partially or as a background thing to a lot of other things which don't have anything to do with it—but still this consciousness is not like absolutely tied to that spot. I suppose when one is finally a 'true Aurovilian', wherever one goes one carries Auroville with him.

'What is this attitude? I think it's not simply to become conscious of the Divine, but to try to serve the Divine and to surrender to the Divine and to do it in every situation of life. Also to express the Divine. Like, one can have spiritual experiences and get into states of consciousness that are very beautiful and fine: but I feel that the Auroville consciousness includes a drive towards expression and this is why Auroville is not only an attitude but also a physical place, it's a place that wants to be the site of an incredible *manifestation*, not only in the buildings and gardens and cultural activities, but in the contact between people in the course of its ordinary daily life. It's this idea, this possibility of every contact of daily life being a direct, living expression of the highest spiritual truth, that is the magnet for me. There have only been moments of it, glimpses, but they seem like glimpses of the future, glimpses of what the future will be like. That state—it feels like something absolutely miraculous, that beauty, that splendour; and yet, it's in the everyday process of living—making your bed, taking your food. It's that idea, to make the ordinary business of living a sustained expression of . . . the Truth—that, for me, is the promise of what the future will eventually bring. And one has these glimpses now to show one that it's being prepared and that that's the real thing, that everything else, all the difficulties, are simply the means of getting to that. But it's that that's the real thing.'

I'm feeling I'll be going to help at the Matrimandir.

The world has three kinds of revolution. The material has strong results, the moral and intellectual are infinitely larger in their scope and richer in their fruits, but the spiritual are the great sowings.

Sri Aurobindo
Thoughts and Glimpses

REVIEW

Seeing and Sharing

The Tao of Physics, by *Fritjof Capra*. Berkeley: Shambala, 1975. 307 pages, illustrated, \$5.95.

'Nothing can be more remarkable and suggestive than the extent to which modern Science confirms in the domain of matter the conceptions and even the very formulae of language which were arrived at, by a very different method, in the Vedanta . . . And these in turn often reveal their full significance, their richer contents only when they are viewed in the new light shed by the discoveries of modern Science.'

Sri Aurobindo
The Life Divine

Most of Sri Aurobindo's biographers and those who attempt to describe to others his work and his mission call him a seer, a prophet, a visionary. These words could be interpreted to mean that there is an unbridgeable gulf between ourselves and him—on one side Sri Aurobindo, the seer; on the other side us, ordinary men. But his vision was not the kind that separated him—his seeing and his sharing were two parts of the same movement. What he wrote was written so that others could see what he saw. There is joy in knowing that the promise of his teaching is being fulfilled in the work of those who have come afterwards.

Sri Aurobindo then was not the last seer; the Force that enabled him to see has been opening our eyes. We are coming of age; there is confirmation of this, for example, in the work of a nuclear physicist named Fritjof Capra who studies and teaches in America. In a book called *The Tao of Physics* he describes how his work has unfolded, expanding his knowledge based on words, graphs and formula, to a higher form of knowledge, a "seeing":

I was sitting by the ocean one late summer afternoon, watching the waves rolling and feeling the rhythm of my breathing when I suddenly became aware of my whole environment as being engaged in a gigantic

cosmic dance... As I sat on that beach my former experiences in theoretical physics came to life; I "saw" cascades of energy coming down from outer space in which particles were created and destroyed in rhythmic pulses. I "saw" the atoms of the elements and those of my body participating in the cosmic dance of energy; I felt its rhythm and I "heard" its sound and at that moment I *knew* that this was the Dance of Shiva, the Lord of Dancers.

At the same time Fritjof Capra began to discover that his own scientific research and the work of many others confirmed his mystical experience. He noticed how similar were the concepts of modern physics to the basic ideas of Eastern philosophical and religious traditions. In a chapter entitled "The Unity of All Things" he shows how atomic physics and Eastern mystics have described their experiences in words which are almost identical. First he quotes two philosophers:

The material object becomes . . . something different from what we now see, not a separate object on the background or in the environment of the rest of nature but an indivisible part and even in a subtle way an expression of the unity of all that we see. [Sri Aurobindo, *The Synthesis of Yoga*.]

Things derive their being and nature by mutual dependence and are nothing in themselves. [Nagarjuna quoted by T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*, page 138.]

Then he juxtaposes two quotes by scientists:

An elementary particle is not an independently existing unanalyzable entity. It is, in essence, a set of relationships that reach outward to other things. [H. P. Stapp, "S-Matrix Interpretation of Quantum Theory" *Physical Review D3* (March, 1971).]

The world thus appears as a complicated tissue of events, in which connections of different kinds alternate or overlap and thereby determine the texture of the whole. [Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy*, page 107.]

Fritjof Capra writes that one of his aims in writing *The Tao of Physics* is to improve the image of science by showing that there is an essential harmony between Eastern wisdom and Western science. In his very complete and clear presentation he well exemplifies the qualities of precision and exactness so essential to scientific study. In one place he half apologizes to his readers for the fact that his discussion of modern physics, though consid-

erably simplified, may seem too technical or difficult to follow. But he is convinced of the value of scientific enquiry as a discipline and he is even aware that it can be taken as a yogic exercise, a path, leading to deeper awareness.

The "lower" knowledge *is* leading to higher knowledge; the scientist looking without and the mystic looking within are beginning to realize that they are exploring the same reality, one through technical apparatus and highly sophisticated machinery, the other with the machinery of his own consciousness and self-observation. Fritjof Capra asks if modern physics can be a "path with a heart". His work leaves no doubt that it can. *The Tao of Physics* is a book "with a heart"; it points beyond itself.

Judy Ferris

FOCUS

A Constitution for the Federation of Earth

The unification of the human race will have to come in a deeper and truer way from the inner truth to the outer forms. Until such time all approaches towards such unification and the formation of a world government will have to be encouraged and accepted, even mechanical means such as political and administrative arrangements will have to be used until the truth of the Spirit may step in and lead humanity towards the goal.

Sri Samar Basu, a Vice-Chairman and the Coordinator of World Union in the Eastern Region of India who attended the World Constituent Assembly held at Innsbruck, Austria, 16-29 June 1977, to draft the Constitution for the Federation of Earth, has sent us an appraisal of the event for inclusion in the "Focus":

World Constituent Assembly at Innsbruck An Appraisal by Samar Basu

When the people of India were busy in electing their representatives for forming governments in some States of India during mid-June of this year, delegates from thirty countries of the world assembled at Innsbruck, as a Constituent Assembly, to draft a Constitution for the Federation of Earth. Several organizations and persons, among them political leaders, economists, social workers, erudite thinkers, educationists, philosophers and scientists, who have been thinking seriously for a long time for finding ways and means to save humanity, that is to say the succeeding generations, from utter destruction on account of difficult world problems which have come into existence, participated. World Constitution and Parliament Association, a non-governmental organization, believed that owing to very rapid development in science and technology this planet earth has become much smaller than what it was in the beginning of the present century. And, therefore,

humanity is facing at present many problems which cannot be merely called national because they have become global in nature and character. These global problems cannot be solved by any single nation however affluent or powerful. If humanity is to survive, these problems have to be solved which makes the need for world government essential. No smaller machinery has the capability of getting these problems radically solved. Consequently, World Constitution and Parliament Association commenced thinking in terms of drafting a Constitution for the Federation of Earth.

World Citizenship

It is very interesting to trace how the movement of world citizenship has evolved after the Second World War. Several organizations came into existence for spreading the ideal of one world with an ultimate aim of world government.

On 25 April 1948, Mr. Garry Davis (author of *My Country Is the World*) abandoned his American nationality and placed himself under the protection of the United Nations. He declared himself a "World Citizen" and with a few of his companions printed the first World Citizen Identity Cards.

On 19 November 1948, during a meeting of the United Nations General Assembly, Garry Davis and R. Sarrazac interrupted the proceedings with a plea to the delegates to call a "Peoples' Constituent Assembly" to raise the banner of a government for the whole world. This memorable appeal of Garry Davis laid the foundation stone of a "New Era" which the seers and sages of the past chanted in their hymns, and poets and philosophers of ages have been longing for.

It was an important and historical event and therefore an extract of what Garry Davis declared in the General Assembly on 19 November 1948 is reproduced :

"Mr. Chairman and Delegates :

"I interrupt you in the name of the people of the world not represented here. Though my words may be unheeded our common need for world law and order can no longer be disregarded.

"We, the people, want the peace which only a world government can give. The sovereign states you represent divide us and lead us to the abyss of total war.

"I call upon you no longer to deceive us by this illusion of political authority.

"I call upon you to convene forthwith a World Constituent Assembly to raise the standard around which all man can gather, the standard of true peace, of one government for one world.

"And if you fail us in this . . . stand aside, for a Peoples' World Assembly will arise from our own ranks to create such a government.

"We can be served by nothing less."

In July 1949 the International Registry of World Citizens was established in Paris for the purpose of registration of World Citizens. Thousands and thousands of persons around

the world have recognized their responsibilities as members of the world community and registered themselves as World Citizens.

On 27 July 1949 the statutes of an association called International Secretariat of World Citizens for a world sovereignty were registered at Paris. One of the main statements of the Statutes in article number. 2 reads as follows:

“The aim of this Association is to make possible the organization of world peace, and to this purpose:

- (i) To gather all the men in all countries as World Citizens.
- (ii) To bring to life as soon as possible world citizenship, sovereignty and institutions.
- (iii) To prepare world elections to a Peoples’ Constituent Assembly on the basis of a direct and proportional ballot in terms of one delegate for one million inhabitants.”

Among the means of actions for materializing the above purposes, the important ones were:

- “(a) The registration of World Citizens.
- (b) The issuing of the World Citizen Identity Card.”

Thereafter, organized effort has continued to realize the ideal of one world by enrolling persons of different walks of life belonging to several countries of the world, as World Citizens, whereby they became aware of the new level of consciousness and learned to think and feel in terms of the whole world and began to accept their new assignments as citizens of the whole earth.

It is worth mentioning a few of the important events as a consequence:

- (a) Setting up of the People’s Congress in 1963.
- (b) Acceptance of World Citizenship by Pope Paul VI after his address to the General Assembly of the United Nations in October 1965.
- (c) An Appeal made on 3 March 1966 by thirteen eminent personalities of the world (after their becoming World Citizens), to all the peoples of this planet to register as World Citizens. Among the thirteen were:
 1. Lord Boyd Orr of Great Britain, Nobel Peace Prize winner in 1949.
 2. Josue de Castro of Brazil.
 3. Professor Alfred Kastler of France, Nobel Prize winner for physics in 1966.

4. Professor Linus Pauling of U. S. A., Nobel prize winner for chemistry in 1954 and for Peace in 1962.
5. Lord Bertrand Russell of Great Britain, Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1949.
6. Professor Ivan Supek of Yugoslavia.

This appeal got wide publicity and became popularly known as "Appeal by the 13".
(d) Holding of the first transnational election of the People's Congress in June 1969.

During the last thirty years of such world-wide movements, several questions have arisen for the appraisal of the future of the World Citizens and other organizations working for maintaining world peace when United Nations is functioning through its different agencies in more and more wider areas.

In answer to such questions the World Association of World Federalists, a world organization formed in 1947, stated in 1970 that though certain specialized agencies, notably the FAO and WHO, are helping efficiently the developing countries to break out of their deplorable situation—and though the Secretary General of the United Nations has more than once drawn the attention of the world to grave dangers and thus encouraged the action of member states, or the competent bodies, to act against these dangers, yet it cannot be gainsaid that twenty-five years after the Conference of San Francisco there are many who believe that the United Nations no longer carries out the task fixed for it in the charter—namely the maintenance of peace and international security, the development of friendly relations between the nations, the achievement of international cooperation to solve international problems for economic, social, intellectual or human development, the respect of human rights and fundamental liberties.

Besides this it further stated that the United Nations had not been able to prevent the out-break and continuance of numerous wars (either local or of subversion). It was not for any action of the United Nations that a third world war did not break out, but for the impact created by the balance of terror of nuclear weapons which Soviet Russia and the U.S.A. were in possession of.

The World Citizens Assembly, a non-governmental organization formed in 1974 at San Francisco, which held its first meeting in June 1975 and the second in Innsbruck and Paris in June and July 1977, states without any ambiguity that the United Nations in its present shape is nothing but the instrument of national governments which, by definition, are unable to rise above their own interests and attain the level of world interests. Moreover, within the United Nations there is a division of the world into groups that only think of crippling each other and doom the United Nations to powerlessness. So the World Citizens Assembly calls upon the peoples of this earth to become World Citizens with the following inspiring words:

“Beyond the movements and ideologies of our time,—above any frontiers of race, religion, of politics or of ideology, world citizenship must be able to welcome all women and men, enabling them to solve their common problems on the only effective level today—that of their country: ‘The World’.

It has also been asserted that the powerlessness of the United Nations is so obvious that one scarcely needs to emphasize it. The armed conflicts since the Second World War can be counted in hundreds. Famine appears in many countries and malnutrition seems to be the lot of a good third of the human race. This misery is accompanied by an excessive growth in population of the countries in question. This population cannot be fed, clothed, housed or educated conveniently because the economic and political systems of many countries are based upon the privileges of small cliques belonging to the neo-colonial monopolists or to an all-powerful bureaucracy.

Then what is to be done?

All those who aspire for a more just and prosperous future for humanity are agreed on one thing—the solution can no longer be found within the limits of national sovereignties. Hence the necessity of world government.

But how to constitute it?

World Constitution and Parliament Association, a non-governmental organization, which was constituted in 1958 and met for the first time in Switzerland and West Germany in 1968, undertook the task of drafting a World Constitution. Mr. Philip Isely, the Secretary General of this organization, explained very clearly the powerlessness of the member states of the United Nations Organization and justified the necessity for a world government. Unequivocally he stated: “We are living these days in an epoch of great international anarchy on our planet earth. We call this ‘national sovereignty’ and the nations mean by this, that they have the right to do as they please within their territorial limits.

“This might have been a valid thesis at other times of development in human history, but certainly not at the end of the 20th century, when most of human activities of any consequence are *world-wide* and make the nations of the world a family of interdependent human beings who have to live together on our Spaceship Earth and solve the problems common to all, especially those related to overpopulation, pollution, depletion of resources and most of all, those related to armament, war and armies.”

In appraising the scope of the United Nations in solving these global problems, Mr. Isely comments that although many of the specialized agencies of the United Nations are devoting their time and money to successfully solve some of humanity’s troubles, the main political forum has been standing in dismay before the evermore threatening destruction of the human race—be it by hydrogen bombs which are lurking from every corner of our planet, be it by over population and slow starvation, or just by disease which overcomes humanity in an evermore polluted and degenerated biosphere.

He exclaims: “When we have municipal governments to solve our village problems,

state governments to solve problems of our provinces, and national governments for doing away with the problems of the country; why then are we reluctant to establish world government to solve global problems?"

So the World Constitution and Parliament Association undertakes the arduous task of constituting a world government to be established long before the end of this century, to save this planet from destruction, because it knows very well:

1. that the national governments cannot initiate any move for a democratic world government, although some members of national legislatures are ready to assist;
2. that the world government—particularly a democratic one devoted to the cause of universal human welfare and social justice—cannot be achieved by the amendment of the United Nations Charter, because the United Nations as it stands, is only the extension of foreign policies of sovereign national governments and each permanent member of the Security Council holds veto power over any amendments proposed;
3. that no progress in the area of solving global problems can be ensured by fragmented transfer of sovereignty to specialized international agencies;
4. that no one can depend on initial support by a widely based popular mass movements although this needs to be developed in due course;
5. and that the long-range educational programme cannot produce any tangible result in a foreseeable period, because most of the nations are still interested in educating their people for becoming nationalistic.

The first requirement of establishing a world government is the drafting of a constitution and the World Constitution and Parliament Association after its work for ten years appointed in 1968 twenty-two persons from eleven countries as a commission to undertake the task of producing a suitable constitution. Sri G. Murahari, the then Deputy Speaker of the Rajya Sabha of India and the present Deputy Speaker of Lok Sabha, was one of the members of the commission. The commission met as part of the first session of the Peoples' World Parliament and World Constitutional Convention at Interlaken, Switzerland, and Walfch, Germany. After that the drafting commission held long working sessions in 1972 and the first draft was completed in November 1974, called a Constitution for the Federation of Earth. The draft constitution was circulated to a large number of individuals and organizations for comments, and in the light of the comments received, a new draft was produced. Thereafter, the World Constitution and Parliament Association, with members in more than 30 countries, published "A Call for a World Constituent Assembly", and along with it circulated a draft copy of the revised constitution as widely as possible.

The World Constituent Assembly convened by the World Constitution and Parliament Association met at Innsbruck from the 16th to the 29th of June 1977 and considered the second draft constitution and adopted a revised Constitution on the 23rd and 25th June 1977, and the signing ceremony took place on 27 June.

Some of the salient features of the constitution are:

- (a) Provision is made for adequate power and means to cope with the multitude of inter-related world problems that must be solved to serve the needs of humanity today and for years to come, not merely to “maintain the peace of a status quo”.
- (b) The World Government is empowered and equipped to deal with all problems and affairs which transcend national boundaries, leaving to national governments jurisdiction over their internal affairs of the respective nations.
- (c) The World Parliament consists of a House of Peoples, a House of Nations, and a House of Counsellors which has particular functions to represent the highest good and best interests of humanity as a whole.
- (d) *The Federation of Earth is non-military.*
- (e) The World Constitution is designed so that it can be implemented in stages beginning with a provisional world government and proceeding according to built-in constitutional provisions, from stage to stage to full government.

Now it is no more a utopian ideal: it has become as realistic as any affair of national governments.

Representatives from thirty countries of the world attended the World Constituent Assembly at Innsbruck, from 16 to 29 June 1977, actively took part in the deliberations, and finally adopted the constitution after necessary amendments and changes. On 27 June 1977 the signing ceremony of the constitution by the representatives took place in a very solemn and befitting function, which started after a recitation from the Upanishads and after a group meditation for five minutes.

It was a memorable day—the “Day of the New Age”.

The meeting for the signing was presided over by Sri A. B. Patel, General Secretary and Treasurer of World Union International Centre, Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Pondicherry 605002, who in his address informed the people of the world that Sri Aurobindo elucidated long ago the inevitability of a world state in one of his famous books. *The Ideal of Human Unity*.

The assembly then drew up a five year plan for getting the constitution ratified by national governments and others so that at the end of five years a provisional world government might commence with a provisional world parliament by 1982. For carrying on this noble work in India an ad hoc committee of five members was set up, in a meeting held at Innsbruck on 28 June 1977 under the chairmanship of Sri A. B. Patel. Sri Puran Singh Azad of New Delhi was appointed the convener of the ad hoc committee. It is intended that the ad hoc committee along with others will meet in October 1977 at New Delhi with the intention to form an All India National Committee and Regional

Committees for World Government and to draw up a programme for obtaining the ratification of the constitution by the government and people of India. All interested in this unique work are advised to contact Sri Puran Singh Azad, Editor-in-Chief, National Solidarity (a weekly), 39 Northend Complex, Rama Krishna Ashram Marg, New Delhi 110001.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITY

World Union Centres

Bombay Sri A. B. Patel, who attended the World Constituent Assembly at Innsbruck from 16 to 29 June 1977 for drafting a Constitution for the Federation of Earth, returned to Bombay on 9 August morning. He attended a press conference the same day, circulated a press statement on the work done at Innsbruck and answered questions which received press coverage the next day. He addressed a meeting held on 10 August at Sahakar Building, Bombay, and during the course of his speech gave details of the work done by the constituent assembly at Innsbruck. He also gave information of the meeting of the World Federal Authority held in Paris on the 8th, 9th and 10th of July 1977.

On 15 August an exhibition on "Sri Aurobindo, His Life and Works" and on "Auroville" was organized at Sri Chinai College of Commerce, Seth L. U. College of Arts, and Sir M. V. College of Science, as part of the Mother's centenary celebration. The exhibition was inaugurated by Sri N. S. Rao, Vice-Chairman of World Union who spoke to the students on the occasion. Sri N. S. Amin also participated in the proceedings.

World Union Day was celebrated on 20 August at Sahakar Building, when the tape recorded talk of Sri Kireet Joshi, a member of the executive committee of World Union, on "Sri Aurobindo and His Yoga of Supramental Manifestation" was played. This talk was given by Sri Kireet Joshi on the 11th and 12th of July 1977 at the University of Bombay under Sri Aurobindo Endowment Lectures of the University. It is stated in the talk that the descent of the supramental, according to Sri Aurobindo, would have immense influence on mankind as a whole. It could bring about an uplifting and transforming change in the mind itself and, as an inevitable consequence, in the consciousness of man.

After the tape was played a symposium was held on "The Next Future", in which the members of World Union participated. Among the participants were: Sri N.S. Amin, Sri Jawahar Mehta, Sri Rajesh Vaishaiv, Sri M. N. Vepari, and Sri Shenoy. After the symposium the members of World Union decided to hold monthly meetings on the first Friday of every month for the purpose of further discussing the subject at the same place.

Tamil Nadu Sri A. B. Patel was in Madras on 11 August and addressed a meeting at Minerva Tutorial College, Egmore, held under the presidentship of its Principal, Prof. A. N. Parasuram. Sri Patel explained in detail the work done at Innsbruck and referred to the movements which had culminated in the drafting of the Constitution for the Federation of Earth. He explained the need and prospects for world government. He pointed out that the world was very rapidly changing and affirmed that such conditions and circumstances would develop as will compel national states to join together into a world union or world government for solving world problems, for prevention of war, for enforcing disarmament and developing the earth and ocean resources for the common good of humanity. Sri S. Sivakumar thanked the president of the meeting and congratulated Sri Patel on his being elected as the Co-President of the World Constitution and Parliament Association.

Zambia Sri Arvind Devalia, a member of the World Council of World Union, writes from Zambia that on 11 August he gave a talk to students of journalism at Evelyn Hone College, Lusaka, on Sri Aurobindo's yoga and philosophy, the ashram and Auroville. On 12 August he had a radio interview lasting for about twenty-five minutes which was broadcast twice. The subjects he touched upon were: the ashram, auroville, human unity, problems of human suffering and the practical approach in solving them. On 14 August he attended a meeting of Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre. On 17 August he gave a television interview at Lusaka which lasted seven minutes.

Butwal During August 1977 the centre held regular weekly meetings on every Saturday. On 6 August the subject was The "Necessity of Meditation and How to Do It" when Sri S. N. Bhende explained the subject and Sri N. D. Gupta, M. C. Barali and Ramprakash spoke on the subject. The meeting unanimously resolved that in the beginning of every meeting there should be 15 minutes meditation instead of 2 minutes silence. On 13 August after 15 minutes meditation the meeting took up the subject of "How to Get Peace in Life" and there was a general discussion

On 15 August Sri Aurobindo's birthday was celebrated in a simple manner and Sri S. N. Bhende spoke on the life of Sri Aurobindo. On 20 August the meeting was held at the residence of Sri Rajendram and the subject was "Faculties of the Soul". Many questions were put by Sri Mohd Kumar and the same were answered. On 27 August the subject was "Meditation and Difficulties and Resistances in Doing It". Sri S. N. Bhende spoke on the occasion and explained the subject elaborately. Sri Ramprakash, Sri N. D. Gupta and Sri M. C. Barali spoke on the subject.

Chandernagore The first monthly meeting was held on 22 May 1977 at the residence of Sri S. S. De Sarkar when Sri Samar Basu spoke on World Union and its past, present and future activities. The second monthly meeting was held on 7 August at the

French Institute, Chandernagore under the presidentship of Sri P. Laha. Dr. B. N. Baral reminded the meeting that it was the place where the relics of Sri Aurobindo were kept during its journey through the district of Hooghly in Sri Aurobindo's centenary year. Sri Samar Basu spoke on the subject of "Formation of World Government through World Unity". He mentioned the Conference at Innsbruck, Austria. He mentioned that delegates from 30 countries joined the conference with a positive determination of forming a World Government. The idea of a world state is, of course, mentioned by Sri Aurobindo in his postscript chapter to *The Ideal of Human Unity*. He gave information about the further work to be done in connection with the Constitution for the Federation of Earth. Smt. Esha Majumdar recited a poem of Tagore on Sri Aurobindo and the closing song was sung by Sri Barun Kundu.

Uttarpara A three day programme was conducted for celebrating the 106th birthday of Sri Aurobindo which was inaugurated on the 13th and concluded on the 15th of August. On the opening day, students—both boys and girls of different schools of the locality—read their self composed essays on India's struggle for freedom and on Sri Aurobindo. Sri Paritosh Mukherjee, Rector of Amarendra Vidyapith inaugurated the programme, Sri S. K. Gupta presiding. On 14 August, the subject for discussion was "World Union Day". Sri Samar Basu explained the significance of the three subjects selected this year for discussion in the historical day of 20 August 1977 by the members of World Union. He stated: "The Realization of oneness is something spiritual and hence Yoga is necessary to realize that truth". The first subject, "Yoga Is a Cementing Factor" etc., deals with that aspect of this movement. Sri Pradeep Panja and Sri S. N. Roy Choudhury, Konnagar, participated in the discussion.

On the third day, the day of India's independence as well as the 106th birthday of Sri Aurobindo, Sri Samar Basu spoke on the World Constituent Assembly held at Innsbruck and explained the necessity for playing a very important role in this noble venture by the members of World Union. The meeting opened with the song of "Vande Mataram" by Sanat Bodok and concluded with a tape recorded talk of Nolinida on *Savitri*.

The 49th monthly seminar of the centre was held on 10 September 1977 at the library hall of Amarendra Vidyapith, Sri S. K. Gupta presiding. As the 102nd birthday of Sarat Chandra Chatterjee—one of the most popular novelists in West Bengal—fell on 17 September 1977, Prof. Buddhadev Chakravarty was requested to speak on "Sarat Chandra—a Lover of Humanity". He spoke after Samar Basu's introductory speech on Sarat Chandra and Sri Aurobindo. Prof. Chakravarty elucidated, with quotations from his writings, the fact that Sarat Chandra felt deeply the tragic predicament resulting from social injustice to the helpless people of the land, especially the women-folk whose sufferings knew no bounds. His pen stood as a protest against oppression. His love towards suffering humanity was unique and has universal appeal. Sri Samar Basu read out self-composed

poems of the students, Sri Somnath Banerjee and Shyamlal Chatterjee, who could not attend the seminar.

Burdwan The fifth monthly general meeting of the centre was held on 16 August in Sri Aurobindo Bhavan Hall, Burdwan, Sri Samar Basu presiding. The meeting started with the recital of Vedic hymns. Sri Samar Basu took part in the discussion on the role of spirituality and feeling of oneness in our social sphere. He said that the sole objective of our community living should be the manifestation of the existing fact of human unity. He also spoke on "Sri Aurobindo and Present India", which was the subject of the day. He said that we should take the integral education of Sri Aurobindo for the entire mental and vital progress of the students.

Baranagar Sri Aurobindo Jayanti was organized by the centre from the 13th to 15 August and held on the second floor of Aesby Training Centre. There was a competition of the student members of West Bengal in (i) oration on community living as a factor of World Union, (ii) drawing of three successive stages of the evolution of continents out of an integrated land, an (iii) essay on "World Is a Family", (iv) recitation of two sonnets of Sri Aurobindo. In the oration, Sumit Goswami, Mantra Bhattacharya and Sankha Bhattacharya of Baranagar Centre stood first, second and third respectively. In drawing the break up of the integrated land, Dipankar Banerji, Abhijit Dutta and Swapan Kumar Das stood first, second and third respectively. In the essay competition Sankha Bhattacharya, Arijit Kumar Sarkar, Sumit Goswami and Arun Chandra Dey stood first, second, third and fourth respectively. In recitation Saibal Bose, Arijit Kumar Sarkar, Anindya Sarkar and Panchu Gopal Roy stood first, second, third and fourth respectively. The judges were Smt. Minu Roy, Sri D. K. Bhattacharya, Sri L. N. Dutta, Sri Saroj Kumar Dutta, Sri Parimal Chakraborty and Sri Radhu Goswami.

After the competitions on the 13th and the 14th of August a literary fair was held on 14 August. After meditation and Mother's blessing with good wishes received from Sri Nolini Kanta Gupta and Sri M. P. Pandit were communicated, student members Anindya Sarkar, Sumit Goswami and Panchu Gopal Roy and senior members Purnendu Prasad Bhattacharya, Smt. Krishna Mitra, Panchu Gopal Roy Sardar, Parimal Chakraborty, Radhu Goswami, Ram Krishna Goswami and Sudhindra Nath Bose read their poems.

The Sri Aurobindo Jayanti meeting was held on 15 August. Sri Arun Sil presided and distributed fourteen prizes to the competitors. Sri Purnendu Prasad Bhattacharya spoke on yoga for World Union. Recitation by Smt. Mandira Goswami and Smt. Chhandita Chanda, a dance by Smt. Keya Goswami and Sukomal Das, a vocal song by Sumita Goswami, Smt. Jolly Roy, Smt. Susama, a concert by the student Concert Group of Baranagar Centre and international songs by the East Bengal Choir Scout Group made the celebrations charming. Sri Chuni Lal Goswami proposed a vote of thanks.

Chakraberia High School Centre On 15 August this centre observed the birthday of Sri Aurobindo, the president of the management of the school presiding. After the devotional song by Sri Kalyan Das Gupta and meditation, the president garlanded the portrait of Sri Aurobindo. Sri Tripti Sinha spoke on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and Sri Tushar Kanti Bose emphasized the need for inculcating the ideals of Sri Aurobindo and Swami Vivekananda among the Indian youth. Sri R. C. Chatterji spoke on Sri Aurobindo's philosophy on education and was happy to find the present headmaster taking keen interest in the activities of this centre.

Delhi In a meeting of the centre held on 15 August 1977, Sri S. K. Bhattacharya gave a well studied talk on "Nagarjuna". He stated the difference between Asvaghosha's approach to metaphysics which accepted two aspects of the soul and that of Nagarjuna who worked out a theory of pure phenomenalism or nihilism. Then the four gradations presented *The Pancakrama* of Nagarjuna were explained in detail in terms of technical terms. The talk was well received.

Pondicherry World Union Pondicherry Centre and the Government Law College, Pondicherry, celebrated World Union Day on Saturday, the 20th at August of the premises of the Government Law College, Pondicherry, when an elocution competition for school students on "Poverty Anywhere Is a Threat to Prosperity Everywhere" and a debate for college students on "The Future of Man Depends not So Much on Science and Technology, but on his Consciousness and Shared values", were held. There was also a seminar from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on "The Constitution for the Federation of Earth" which was adopted at Innsbruck, Austria, in June 1977. Mr. S. Sankarnarayanan acted as the moderator. There was a lively debate on the constitution and its provisions were examined from all aspects. Mr. Ralph Matthews proposed a vote of thanks.

Nanjangud The centre celebrated the World Union Day on 22 August at the Government Hospital premises when Prof. K.S. Vishwanathan gave a talk on "The World As a Family". He spoke on the philosophy of the World Union movement and paid tribute to World Union International for its role in fostering a world outlook. He referred to the fifth triennial World Union conference held at Pondicherry last January and said that it was a great success. He informed the meeting of the participation of Sri A. B. Patel in the World Constituent Assembly at Innsbruck and of the lecture tour of the U.S.A. by Sri M.P. Pandit, the Chairman of World Union. He spoke at some length on the message of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. He mentioned the work of the United Nations and paid a glowing tribute to the work of its specialized agencies.

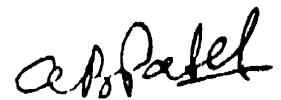
Dr. M. C. Krishna Murthy, Chief Medical Officer of the Government Hospital, Nanjangud, presided and spoke about international cooperation and collaboration in many

fields of life, especially in the field of medicine. WHO has been and is rendering valuable services to humanity. Many dreadful diseases have become things of the past. He said that all these medical miracles, which he described, were possible because of international collaboration.

Earlier, Dr. R. N. Keshavamurthy had welcomed the gathering and Sri G. P. Subbadi proposed a vote of thanks.

Bangalore World Union Bangalore Centre celebrated The World Union Day on Saturday, the 20th August 1977 and held a symposium on "World As a Family".

The Bangalore centre held its meeting on 4 September and decided to hold a one day national seminar at Bangalore during January, 1978 on the subject of "World Union – Converging Paths". A committee of eleven members with Sri Srithandaveswara as President and Dr. T. Prasannasimha Row as Organizing Secretary and Sri H. S. Narayan Setty as Treasurer, has been appointed for the purpose. They expect full cooperation from all World Union members. Further details will be given later on but all communications regarding the national seminar should be addressed to: Dr. T. Prasannasimha Row, Organizing Secretary, National Seminar 1978, World Union Bangalore Centre, 50 12th Main, 4th Block East, Jayanagar, Bangalore 560011, phone no. 66731, or to: Dr. H. S. Lakshminarayana, Secretary, World Union Bangalore Centre, 197 7th Main Road, 4th Block, Jayanagar, Bangalore 560011, phone no. 41721.



General Secretary
19th September 1977