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# Collaboration

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FALL 1976

Vol. III, No. 1



The Mother

A new world based on Truth and refusing the old slavery to falsehood, wants to take birth. In all countries there are people who know it, at least feel it. To them we call: "Will you collaborate?"

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*Collaboration* does not mean that everyone should do the will of the man who asks for it. True collaboration is a non-egoistic union of all personal efforts to express and realise the *Divine's Will*.

—The Mother



Sri Aurobindo

One of the key principles in Sri Aurobindo's concept of spiritual evolution is collaboration. That is, man, as the present apex of the evolutionary thrust, has reached a stage where he can now consciously and actively collaborate with the evolutionary force and thereby hasten considerably the process in himself (which would inevitably have its effect on his environment natural and human).

The collaboration must be integral, on the various planes of consciousness. The instrumental parts of human nature—the mental, vital and physical—must collaborate by their readiness and responsiveness to the higher will and force that is carrying out the evolution, which is the progressive unveiling and unobstructed manifestation of the Divine in the world.

Collaboration implies harmony and unity, which must be found in the inmost and highest levels of man's consciousness. Outer harmony and unity must be the expression of the true inner harmony and unity.

Sri Aurobindo has iterated that man by himself cannot effect his own transformation. He must actively work in himself to allow the transformation to be carried out by the evolutionary force. The process of this active collaboration by man is called Integral Yoga (which will be dealt with in a future issue).

In this issue we present extracts from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother on the theme of collaboration which reveal the variety of forms it can take.

## SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION AND HUMAN COLLABORATION

Sri Aurobindo

From *The Life Divine*

The first obscure material movement of the evolutionary Force is marked by an aeonic graduality; the movement of life-progress proceeds slowly but still with a quicker step, it is concentrated into the figure of millenniums; mind can still further compress the tardy leisureliness of Time and make long paces of the centuries; but when the conscious Spirit intervenes, a supremely concentrated pace of evolutionary swiftness becomes possible.

The spiritual man is the sign of this new revolution, this new and higher endeavour of Nature. But this evolution

differs from the past process of the evolutionary Energy in two respects: it is conducted by a conscious effort of of the human mind, and it is not confined to a conscious progression of the surface nature, but is accompanied by an attempt to break the walls of the Ignorance and extend ourselves inward into the secret principle of our present being and outward into cosmic being as well as upward towards a higher principle. Up till now what Nature has achieved was an enlarging of the bounds of our surface Knowledge-Ignorance: what it attempted in the spiritual endeavour is to abolish the Ignorance, to go inwards and discover the soul and to become united in consciousness with God and with all existence. This is the final aim of



the mental stage of evolutionary Nature in man; it is the initial step towards a radical transmutation of the Ignorance into the Knowledge. The spiritual change begins by an influence of the inner being and the higher spiritual mind, an action felt and accepted on the surface; but this by itself can lead only to an illumined mental idealism or to the growth of a religious mind, a religious temperament and some devotion in the heart and piety in the conduct; it is a first approach of mind to spirit, but it cannot make a radical change: more has to be done, we have to live deeper within, we have to exceed our present consciousness and surpass our present status of Nature. [pp. 932, 722.]

#### From *The Teaching of Sri Aurobindo*

The teaching of Sri Aurobindo starts from that of the ancient sages of India that behind the appearance of the universe there is the Reality of a Being and consciousness, a Self of all things, one and eternal. All beings are united in that One Self and Spirit but divided by a certain separativity of consciousness, an ignorance of their true Self and Reality in the mind, life and body. It is possible by a certain psychological discipline to remove this veil of separative consciousness and become aware of the true Self, the Divinity within us and all.

Sri Aurobindo's teaching states that this One Being and Consciousness is involved here in Matter. Evolution is the method by which it liberates itself; consciousness appears in what seems to be inconscient and once having appeared is self-impelled to grow higher and higher and at the same time to enlarge and develop towards a greater and greater perfection. Life is the first step of this release of consciousness; mind is the second, but the evolution does not finish with mind, it awaits a release into something greater, a consciousness which is spiritual and supramental. The next step of the evolution must be towards the development of Supermind and Spirit as the dominant power in the conscious being. For only then will the involved Divinity in things release itself entirely and it becomes possible for life to manifest perfection.

But while the former steps in evolution were taken by Nature without a conscious will in the plant and animal life, in man Nature becomes able to evolve by a conscious will in the instrument. It is not, however, by the mental will in man that this can be wholly done, for the mind goes only to a certain point and after that can only move in a circle. A conversion has to be made, a turning of the consciousness by which mind has to change into the higher principle. This method is to be found through the ancient psychological discipline and practice of Yoga. In the past, it has been attempted by a drawing away from the world and a disappearance into the height of the Self or Spirit. Sri Aurobindo teaches that a descent of the higher principle is possible which will not merely release the spiritual Self out of the world, but release it in the world, replace the mind's ignorance or its very limited knowledge by a supramental Truth-Consciousness which will be a sufficient instrument of the inner Self and make it possible for the human being to find himself dynamically as well as inwardly and grow out of his still animal humanity into a diviner race. The psychological discipline of Yoga can be

used to that end by opening all the parts of the being to a conversion or transformation through the descent and working of the higher still concealed supramental principle. [pp. 2-3.]

#### From *The Hour of God*

But unless man plunges himself wholly into God caring not whether he reemerge, unless the human sacrifices himself wholly to the divinity, keeping back no particle of his being, not even the last particle of separateness of the individual ego, the divine purpose in man cannot be utterly accomplished. Therefore Nature or the Will of God—for Nature is nothing but the Will of God in action—has provided that some having indwelt in God, human soul in divine soul, shall be irresistibly called immediately, with brief respite or at long last to the utter immersion. They go inward and throw away the last trace of ego into God. ... Others are...human beings whose centre has already been shifted upwards or from the beginning elevated in the superior planes of conscious existence, was established in God rather than Nature. Such men are already leaning down from God to Nature; they therefore may, in losing themselves in Him yet keep themselves and live in Man-God; they do not depart from their centre but rather go through it; arrived they are able to lean down again to humanity. Those who can thus emerge from their truth of God are the final helpers of humanity and are chosen by God and Nature to prepare the type of supernatural men to which our humanity is rising.

Man cannot by his own effort make himself more than man; the mental being cannot by his own unaided force change himself into a supramental spirit. A descent of the Divine Nature can alone divinise the human receptacle.

Man's greatness is not in what he is, but in what he makes possible. His glory is that he is the closed space and secret workshop of a living labour in which supermanhood is being made ready by a divine Craftsman. But he is admitted too to a yet greater greatness and it is this that, allowed to be unlike the lower creation, he is partly an artisan of this divine change; his conscious assent, his consecrated will and participation are needed that into his body may descend the glory that will replace him. His aspiration is earth's call to the supramental creator. [pp. 26, 40, 45.]

#### From *The Supramental Manifestation*

In all effective and expressive activities here in the material world the cooperation of the two ends of our being is indispensable. If the body is unable whether by fatigue or by natural incapacity or any other cause to second the thought or will or is in any way irresponsible or insufficiently responsive, to that extent the action fails or falls short or becomes in some degree unsatisfying or incomplete. In what seems to be an exploit of the spirit so purely mental as the outpouring of poetic inspiration, there must be a responsive vibration of the brain and its opening as a channel for the power of the thought and vision and the light of the word that is making or breaking its way through or seeking for its perfect expression. If the brain is fatigued or dulled by any clog, either the in-



inspiration cannot come and nothing is written or it fails and something inferior is all that can come out; or else a lower inspiration takes the place of the more luminous formulation that was striving to shape itself or the brain finds it more easy to lend itself to a less radiant stimulus or else it labours and constructs or responds to poetic artifice. Even in the most purely mental activities the fitness, readiness or perfect training of the bodily instrument is a condition indispensable. That readiness, that response too is part of the total perfection of the body. ...

A fully conscious body might even discover and work out the right material method and process of a material transformation. For this, no doubt, the spirit's supreme light and power and creative joy must have manifested on the summit of the individual consciousness and sent down their fiat into the body, but still the body may take in the working out its spontaneous part of self-discovery and achievement. It would be thus a participator and agent in its own transformation and the integral transformation of the whole being; this too would be a part and a sign and evidence of the total perfection of the body....

There can be, on the contrary, an evolution in the light and no longer in the darkness, in which the evolving being is a conscious participant and cooperator, and this is precisely what must take place here. [pp. 20, 22, 63.]

#### *From Thoughts and Glimpses*

Wherefore God hammers so fiercely at his world, tramples and kneads it like dough, casts it so often into the blood-bath and the red hell-heat of the furnace? Because humanity in the mass is still a hard, crude and vile ore which will not otherwise be smelted and shaped; as is his material, so is his method. Let it help to transmute itself into nobler and purer metal, his ways with it will be gentler and sweeter, much loftier and fairer its uses. [p. 24.]

#### *From Letters on Yoga*

The object [of the Integral Yoga] sought after is not an individual achievement of divine realisation for the sake of the individual, but something to be gained for the earth-consciousness here, a cosmic, not solely solely a supra-cosmic achievement. The thing to be gained also is the bringing in of a Power of Consciousness (the supramental) not yet organised or active directly in earth-nature, even in the spiritual life, but yet to be organised and made directly active. [Vol. I, pp. 100-101.]

It is not by "thinking out" the entire reality, but by a change of consciousness that one can pass from the ignorance to the Knowledge—the Knowledge by which we become what we know. To pass from the external to a direct and intimate inner consciousness; to widen consciousness out of the limits of the ego and the body; to heighten it by an inner will and aspiration and opening to the Light till it passes in its ascent beyond Mind; to bring down a descent of the supramental Divine through self-giving and surrender with a consequent transformation of mind, life and body—this is the *integral* way to the Truth. It is this that we call the Truth here and aim at it in our yoga. [Vol. I, pp. 160-1.]

In fact each human being is composed of different personalities that feel and behave in a different way and his action is determined by the one that happens to be prominent at the time. The one that has no feelings against anyone is either the psychic being or the emotional being in the heart, the one that feels anger and is severe is part of the external vital nature on the surface. This anger and severity is a wrong form of something that in itself has a value, a certain strength of will and force of action and control in the vital being, without which work cannot be done. What is necessary is to get rid of the anger and to keep the force and firm will along with a developed judgment as to what is the right thing to do in any circumstance. For instance, people can be allowed to do things in their own way when that does not spoil the work, when it is only their way of doing what is necessary to be done; when their way is opposed to the discipline of the work, then they have to be controlled, but it should be done quietly and kindly, not with anger. Very often, if one has developed a silent power of putting the Mother's force on the work with one's own will as instrument, that by itself may be sufficient without having to say anything as the person changes his way of himself as if by his own initiative. [Vol. II, pp. 709-10.]

A double action is needed to destroy the ill-will of the inferiors and to change the mind of the superiors—an invisible action, for in the visible they seem to be too much under the control of the Forces of the Ignorance. [Vol. II, p. 712.]

Rules are indispensable for the orderly management of work; for without order and arrangement nothing can be properly done, all becomes clash, confusion and disorder.

In all such dealings with others, you should see not only your own side of the question but the other side also. There should be no anger, vehement reproach or menace, for these things only raise anger and retort on the other side. I write this because you are trying to rise above yourself and dominate your vital and when one wants to do that, one cannot be too strict with oneself in these things. It is best even to be severe with one's own mistakes and charitable to the mistakes of others. [Vol. II, pp. 862-3.]

What most want is that things should be done according to their desire without check or reference. The talk of perfection is humbug. Perfection does not consist in everybody being a law to himself. Perfection comes by renunciation of desires and surrender to a higher will. [Vol. II, p. 863.]

The difficulty rises from a certain excess of sensitiveness in the vital nature which feels strongly any want of harmony or opposition in the work or any untoward happening and, when that comes, one is apt to feel as if a personal opposition and on the other side also a similar feeling arises so the difficulty becomes prolonged and leads to conflict. As a matter of fact the difficulty often arises from circumstances, e.g. the B.S. [Building Service] with its much reduced staff and a rush of work using up all its



men may find it more difficult to accommodate you than before. Or it may arise from people acting according to their view of the matter which does not accord with yours. Or again it may come from the person following his own ideas, view of what is convenient and effective and thus coming up against yours. There need be no personal feeling in all that and it is best not to look for any and not to see it from that point of view. What is needed is always to take a calm view of the thing and a clear vision—not only from one's own standpoint which may be eventually right and yet need modification in detail, but with a vision that sees also the standpoint of others; this broad seeing quiet and impersonal is needed in the full yogic consciousness. Having it one can insist on what has to be insisted on with firmness but at the same time with a consideration and understanding of the other that removes any chance of any clash of personal feeling. Naturally if the other is unreasonable, he may still resent, but then it will be his own fault entirely and it will fall back on him only. It is here that we see the necessity of some change. Loyalty, fidelity, capacity, strength of will and other qualities in the work you have in plenty—a full calm and equality not only in the inner being where it can exist already, but in the outer nervous parts is a thing you have to get completely. [pp. 708-9.]

From *The Mother with Letters on the Mother*

Whatever work is done here, one has always to learn to subordinate or put aside one's own ideas and preferences about things concerning it and work for the best under the conditions and decisions laid down by her [the Mother]. This is one of the main difficulties throughout the Ashram, as each worker wants to do according to his

own ideas, on his own lines according to what he thinks to be the right or convenient thing and expects that to be sanctioned. It is one of the principal reasons of difficulty, clash or disorder in the work, creating conflict between the workers themselves, conflict between the workers and the heads of departments, conflict between the idea of the Sadhaks and the will of the Mother. Harmony can only exist if all accept the will of the Mother without grudge and personal reaction.

Independent work does not exist in the Ashram. All is organised and interrelated, neither the heads of departments nor the workers are independent. To learn subordination and co-operation is necessary for all collective work; without it there will be chaos. [pp. 245-6.]

Mistakes come from people bringing in their ego, their personal feeling (likes and dislikes), their sense of prestige or their convenience, pride, sense of possession, etc. into the work. The right way is to feel that the work is the Mother's—not only yours, but the work of others—and to carry it out in such a spirit that there shall be a general harmony. Harmony cannot be brought about by external organisation only, though a more and more perfect external organisation is necessary; inner harmony there must be or else there will always be clash and disorder. [pp. 262-3.]

The Mother has not laid stress on human fellowship of the ordinary kind between the inmates [of the Ashram] (though good feeling, consideration and courtesy should always be there), because that is not the aim; it is a unity in a new consciousness that is the aim, and the first thing is for each to do his Sadhana to arrive at that new consciousness and realise oneness there. [p. 264.]

## LEVELS OF COLLABORATION

### The Mother

“O Nature, material Mother, Thou hast said that thou wilt collaborate, and there is no limit to the splendour of this collaboration.” [The Mother's message of 1 January 1958.]

*Question:* Sweet Mother, will you explain the messages for this year?

*The Mother:* The explanation has already been written. It is already written, ready for the *Bulletin* of February 21.

There is nothing to explain. It is an experience, something that happened, and when it happened I noted it down, and it so turned out that it occurred just at the moment when I remembered that I had to write something for the year (which then was the coming new year, that is, the year which begins today). When I remembered that I had to write something—not because of that, but simultaneously—this experience came, and when I noted it, I realised that it was...it was the message for this year!

[*Following is the explanation given in the Bulletin of 21 February 1958:*]

In the course of one of our classes I spoke of the limitless abundance of Nature, inexhaustible creatrix who takes the entire multitude of forms and mixes them, separates them, destroys them, to move on to ever new combina-

tions. It is a huge cauldron, I said: one turns things inside and brings out something; this does not work, one throws it in again, takes up something else... One form or two forms or a hundred have no importance for her, there are thousands and thousands of forms, and then as for years, a hundred years, a thousand, millions of years, that is of no importance, one has eternity before one! It is quite obvious that all this amuses her and that she is not in a hurry. If one tells her to rush rapidly through and finish this or that part of her work quickly, the reply is always the same: “But why should I do so, why? Doesn't it amuse you?”

The evening I told you about these things, I identified myself totally with Nature, I entered her game. And this movement of identification called forth a response, a sort of new intimacy between Nature and myself, a long movement of drawing closer which found its culminating point in an experience which came on the eighth of November [1957].

Suddenly Nature understood. She understood that this new Consciousness which is just born does not seek to throw her out but wants to embrace her entirely, she understood that this new spirituality does not shirk life, does not recoil in fear before the formidable amplitude of its

movement, but wants on the contrary to integrate all its facets. She understood that the supramental consciousness is not here to diminish but to complete her.

Then from the supreme Reality came this order: "Awake, O Nature, to the joy of collaboration." And suddenly the whole of Nature rushed forward in a great leap of joy, saying: "I accept, I shall collaborate." And at the same time, there was a calm, an absolute tranquillity so that this body's receptacle could receive and contain, without breaking, without losing anything, the mighty flood of this joy of Nature which was flung out as in a movement of gratitude. She accepted, she saw with all eternity before her that this supramental consciousness was going to fulfil her more perfectly, give a still greater strength to her movement, a greater amplitude, more possibilities to her play.

And suddenly I heard, as if coming from all the corners of the earth, those great notes one sometimes hears in the subtle physical, somewhat like those of Beethoven's Concerto in D major, tones which come in times of great progress, as though fifty orchestras has burst forth all at once, without a single false note, to express the joy of this new communion of Nature and the Spirit, the meeting of old friends who come together again after having been separated for so long.

Then these words came: "O Nature, Material Mother, thou hast said that thou wilt collaborate and there is no limit to the splendour of this collaboration."

And the felicity radiating from this splendour was sensed in a perfect peace.

That was how the message for the new year was born. [Here follows the continuation of the talk of 1 January 1958:]

I would like to tell you one thing: you should not mistake the meaning of the experience and imagine that henceforth everything is going to take place without any difficulties and always in a manner favourable to our personal desires. It is not on this plane. It does not mean that when we do not want it to rain, it will not rain! that when we want a certain event to take place in the world, it will immediately come about; that all difficulties will be abolished and everything be as in fairytales. It is not that. It is something much deeper: Nature, in the play of her forces, has accepted the new Force which has manifested and included it in her movements. And as always, the movements of Nature are on a scale which is infinitely beyond all human measures and not visible to an ordinary human consciousness. It is an inner, psychological possibility which has come into the world rather than a spectacular change of earthly events. [From *Questions and Answers 1957-58*, pp. 213-15.]

"In fact, a supermind is already here but it is involved, concealed behind this manifest mind, life and Matter and not yet acting overtly or in its own power: if it acts, it is through these inferior powers and modified by their characters and so not yet recognisable. It is only by the approach and arrival of the descending Supermind that it can be liberated upon earth and reveal itself in the action of our material, vital and mental parts so that these lower powers can become portions of a total divinised activity

of our whole being: it is that that will bring to us a completely realised divinity or the divine life. It is indeed so that life and mind involved in Matter have realised themselves here; for only what is involved can evolve, otherwise there could be no emergence." [From Sri Aurobindo's *The Supramental Manifestation upon Earth*.]

**Question:** Sweet Mother, what is the involved supermind?

**The Mother:** It is the same as the uninvolved one!

It is the same thing when Sri Aurobindo says that if the Divine were not at the centre of everything, He could never manifest in the world; it is the same thing when he says that essentially, in its origin and most profound structure, the creation is divine, the world is divine; and that is why this divinity can be manifested one day, become tangible, be fully expressed and replace all that veils and deforms it at present. Till today, all that has manifested of this divinity is the world as we know it; but the manifestation is unlimited, and after this mental world as we know it, with its crown and prototype, man, there will be another reality which will manifest and which Sri Aurobindo calls the Supermind, for that in fact is the next step after the mind; so, seen from the world as it is, it will naturally be "supramental," that is, something above the mind. And he also says that it will truly be the changing of one world into another, for so far the whole creation belonged to what he calls "the lower hemisphere" as we know it, which is governed by Ignorance and based upon the Inconscient, whilst the other will be a complete reversal, the appearing of something belonging to quite a different world, which instead of being based upon Ignorance will be based upon Truth. That is why it will truly be a new world. But if the *essence*, the principle of this world were not included in the world as we knew it, there would be no hope that the one would be transformed into the other; they would be two worlds so totally different and opposite that there would be no contact between them and necessarily, then, the moment one came out of this [world] and emerged into the world of Truth, Light and Knowledge, one would become, so to speak, imperceptible, inexistent for a world belonging exclusively to the Ignorance and Inconscience.

What is the reason that even when this change will come, there will still be a relation and this new world will be able to act upon the old? It is because in its essence and principle it is already enclosed, involved in the old. So in fact it is there, inside, right in the depths, hidden, invisible, imperceptible, unexpressed, but it is there, in its essence. Still, unless from the upper heights the supramental consciousness and force and light manifest directly in the world, as it happened a year and a half ago, never would this Supermind which *in principle* is at the very bedrock of the material world as it is, have the possibility of manifesting itself. Its awakening and appearance below will be the response to a touch coming from above which will call forth the same element hidden in the depths of matter as it now is.... This, moreover, is what is happening at present. But as I told you two weeks ago, this material world as it visibly is in actual fact, is so powerful, so absolutely real for the ordinary consciousness that so to say, it engulfed



this supramental force and consciousness when it manifested, and a long preparation is necessary for its presence to be just glimpsed, felt, perceived in some way or other. And it is with this work that he is busy at the moment.

The time it will take is hard to foresee. It will depend largely on the good will and receptivity of a certain number of people, for the individual always advances faster than the collectivity and by its very nature humanity is destined to manifest the Supermind before the rest of creation.

At the basis of this collaboration there is necessarily the will to change, to no longer be what one is, that things may no longer be as they are. There are several ways of doing it, and all the methods are good when they succeed! One may feel deeply disgusted with what exists and wish ardently to get out of all this and attain something else; one may—and this is a more positive method—one may feel within oneself the touch, the approach of something positively beautiful and true, and voluntarily allow all the rest to drop off so that nothing may burden the journey to this new beauty and truth.

What is indispensable in every case is the *ardent* will for progress, the voluntary and joyful renunciation of all that hampers the advance: the throwing far away from oneself all that prevents one from going forward, and marching into the unknown with the burning faith that this is the truth of the morrow, *ineluctable*, which must necessarily come, which nothing, nobody, no bad will, even that of Nature, can stop from becoming the reality—perhaps not of a far-off future—a reality which is being worked out at this moment and which those who know how to change, how not to be burdened by old habits, will *surely* have the good fortune not only to see but to realise.

People sleep, forget, take life easily—they forget all the time... But if one could remember...that we are at an exceptional hour, a *unique* period, that we have this great good fortune, this invaluable privilege of being present at the birth of a new world, one might easily get rid of all that impedes and hinders the progress.

So, the most important thing it seems is to remember this fact, even when one doesn't have the tangible experience, to have the certainty and faith, to remember always, recall it constantly, sleep with this idea, wake up with this perception; all that one does, to do it with this great truth in the background, like a constant support, this great truth that we are present at the birth of a new world.

We can participate in it, we can become this new world. And truly, when one has so marvellous an opportunity, one should be ready to give up everything for it. [From *Questions and Answers 1957-58*, pp. 136-38.]

*Question:* Mother, this new [supramental] force which is at work now, will it act through individual effort or independently of it?

*The Mother:* Why this opposition? It acts independently of all individual effort, so to say automatically in the world, but it *creates* individual effort and *makes use* of it. Individual effort is one of its means of action, and perhaps the most powerful. If one thinks that individual effort is due to the individual, it is an illusion, but if the individual under the pretext that there's a universal action independ-

ent of himself, refuses to make individual effort, he refuses to give his collaboration. The Force wants to use, and in fact does use individual effort as one of the most powerful means at its disposal. It is the Force itself, it is this Power which is your individual effort.

And so, don't you see, that first movement of vital self-love when it is told: "You don't exist in yourself"; naturally it says: "Good, I shan't do anything any more! It is not I who work, so I don't work any longer" and "It is good, the Divine can do everything, it is his business, I don't stir any more. If the credit does not go to me (it comes to that), I don't do anything any more." Well, but indeed these things cannot be qualified. This is a thing I hear constantly, it is simply a way of venting one's vexed vanity, that's all. But the real reaction, the pure reaction is an *élan* of collaboration, to play the game with all the energy, the will-power at the disposal of one's consciousness, in the state one is in, with the feeling of being sustained, carried by something infinitely greater than oneself which makes no mistakes, something which protects you and at the same time gives you all the necessary strength and uses you as the best instrument. And one feels that, and one feels one works in security, that one can no longer go wrong, that what one does is done with the maximum result and—in delight. That indeed is the true movement; to feel one's will is intensified to its maximum because it is no longer a tiny little microscopic person in infinity but an infinite universal Power which makes you act: the Force of Truth. That is the only true reaction.

The other—miserable. "Ah! it is not I who am doing things, ah! it is not my will being expressed, ah! it is not my power that works...so I lie down flat, stretch myself out in an inert passivity and don't move any more." "Good, good," one tells the Divine, "do all that you like, I just don't exist any longer." That is poor indeed! *Voilà!* [From *Questions and Answers 1957-58*, pp. 5-6.]

*Question:* Mother, when mind descended into the earth-atmosphere, the monkey had not made any effort to change into man, had it? It was Nature which provided the effort. But here...

*The Mother:* But it is not man who is going to change himself into superman!

*Question:* No?

*The Mother:* Just try a little! [Laughter.] It is That, you know, it is something else which is going to work.

*Question:* So, we are...

*The Mother:* Only—yes, there is an only, I don't want to be so cruel: *Now Man can collaborate*. That is to say, he can lend himself to the process, with good will, with aspiration, and help as best he can. And that is why I said this will go faster. I hope it will go *much* faster.

But after all, even much faster is still going to take a little time. [Silence.]

Listen. If all of you who have heard about this, not once but perhaps hundreds of time, have spoken about it yourselves, thought of it, hoped for it, wanted it—there are people who came here for that, with the intention of receiving the supramental Force and being transformed into supermen, that was their aim, wasn't it?... But how is

it that all of you were so unfamiliar with this Force that when it came you did not even feel it?

Can you solve this problem for me? If you have the answer to this problem, you will have the solution of the difficulty.

I am not speaking of people from outside who have never thought of this, never been busy with it, and who don't even know that there is something like a Supermind to be received, you understand. I am speaking of those who have based their life on this aspiration..., who have worked, some for thirty years, some for thirty-five, some a little less, done everything, saying: "When the Supermind comes... When the Supermind comes...", that was the refrain.... Consequently, they were truly in the best possible condition, one couldn't dream of a better. How is it that the inner preparation was so (let us say simply) so incomplete, that when the Vibration came they did not immediately feel it with the impact of identity?

Individually, the aim of each one was to prepare himself to enter into a more or less close individual relation with this Force, to help; or, if they could not help, at least to be ready when the Force would manifest, to recognise it and open to it. And instead of being a foreign element in a world where what you carry within yourself is not manifested, you become *that* suddenly, you enter straight in, fully, into this very atmosphere; it is this Force that is there, surrounding you, penetrating you.

If you had had a little inner contact, immediately you would have recognised it, don't you think so?

Well, anyway that is what happened to those who had a little inner contact; they recognised it, felt it; they said: "Ah! here it is, it has come." But how is it, then, that so many hundreds of people, not to speak of the handful of those who truly wanted nothing but that, thought of nothing but that, had staked all their life thereupon, how is it that they did not feel anything? What can this mean?

Of course, it is only the similar that knows the similar.

There was a possibility of entering into contact with the Thing individually—that was even what Sri Aurobindo had described as the necessary process: a certain number of people who, through their inner effort and aspiration, enter into contact with this Force. That was what we used to call the ascent to the Supermind. And so, even if it were by an inner ascent (that is to say, by freeing themselves from the material consciousness), if in an inner ascent they had touched the Supermind, they should have *naturally* recognised it the moment it came. But it was indispensable to have a previous contact: if they had not touched it, how could they have recognised it?

That is to say, the universal movement is like that...: certain individuals, who are the pioneers, the vanguard, through inner effort and inner progress enter into communication with the new Forces which is to manifest and receive it into themselves. And then, as there are calls of this kind, the thing is made possible, and the age, the time, the moment of the manifestation comes. That is how this happened, and the [supramental] Manifestation took place [on 29 February 1956].

But then all who were ready must have recognised it.

I hasten to tell you that there are those who did recognise it, but still... But those who ask questions, those who

have come here, taken the train in order to drink this up as one drinks up a glass of syrup, if they have not made any preparation, how could they feel anything at all? And they talk already of benefiting: "We want to profit by it...."

After all, it is quite possible (I am joking a little), it is quite possible that if they are even the least little bit sincere (not too much, for that is tiring! just a little sincere), that will give them a few good knocks to make them go faster. This is possible. In fact, I think, it is this that will happen.

But indeed this attitude...this attitude, which is a little too mercenary, is not generally very profitable. If one aspires sincerely and if one has difficulties, perhaps these difficulties will diminish. Let us hope so. [From *Questions and Answers* 1956, pp. 115-18.]

"To feel and love the God of beauty and good in the ugly and the evil, and still yearn in utter love to heal it of its ugliness and its evil, this is real virtue and morality."

—Sri Aurobindo

*Disciple:* How to cooperate in the cure of the evil and the ugly that one sees everywhere? By love? What is the power of love? How can a phenomenon of individual consciousness act on the rest of mankind?

*The Mother:* How to cooperate in the cure of the evil and the ugly?...It can be said that there is a scale of hierarchy in collaboration or action: a negative cooperation and a positive cooperation.

To begin, there is a way that can be called negative, it is that given in Buddhism and other similar religions: not to see. First of all, to be in a state of purity and beauty sufficiently so as not to have the perception of the ugly and the evil—it is like something that does not touch you, because it does not exist in you.

That is perfection in the negative method. It is quite elementary: never to notice the evil, never to speak of the evil that is in others, not to perpetuate the vibrations by observation, criticism, insistence on the bad fact. That is what Buddha taught: each time you mention an evil, you help in spreading it.

This is on the border of the problem.

Yet it should be a very general rule; but those who criticise have an answer to that; they say, "If you do not see the evil, you can never cure it. If you leave someone to his ugliness, he will never come out of it." (It is not quite correct, but that is how they justify their action.) So then in this aphorism Sri Aurobindo replies in advance to these objections: you do not see the evil, not because of ignorance or unconsciousness or indifference, you are quite capable of seeing it, even feeling it, but you refuse to collaborate in its expansion by giving it the force of your notice and the support of your consciousness. And for that you must yourself be above this perception and feeling; you must be able to see the evil or the ugliness without being pained by it, without being shocked by it, without being troubled by it. You see it from a height where these things do not exist, but you have its conscious perception, you are not affected by it, you are free. This is the first step.

A second step is to be conscious positively of the supreme Good and the supreme Beauty which is behind all things, which supports all things, permits them to exist. When you see That, you are able to perceive it behind this mask and deformation; even this ugliness, even this wickedness, this evil is a disguise of Something which is essentially Beautiful or Good, luminous, pure.

It is then that comes the true collaboration; for, when you have this vision, this perception, when you live in this consciousness, it gives you also the power to bring That down into the manifestation, upon earth, and put it in contact with that which is at present the deformation and the disguise, in such a way that little by little this deformation and disguise will be transformed by the influence of the Truth that is behind.

Here we are at the top of the scale of collaboration.

In this way it is not necessary to bring the principle of love to intervene in the explanation. But if you want to know or understand the nature of the Force or Power that allows or accomplishes this transformation (particularly in the matter of evil, but also in that of ugliness to a certain extent), you see that evidently love is the strongest and the most integral of all powers—integral in the sense that it is applicable to all cases. It is even stronger than the power of purification that dissolves wrong will and is master, in some way, of adverse forces, but has not the direct power of transformation. The power of purification dissolves first in order to make a better one, whereas Love has no need to destroy in order to transform, it has the direct power of transformation. Love is like a flame that changes what is hard into something malleable and sublimates even this malleable thing into a kind of purified vapour—it does not destroy, it transforms.

In its essence, at its origin love is like a flame, a white flame which overcomes all resistance. You can yourself make an experiment with it: whatever the difficulty in your being, whatever the burden of accumulated errors, incapacities, ignorance and bad will, one second of this Love that is pure, essential, supreme, dissolves as it were in an all-powerful flame; one single moment and the whole past may disappear; one single instant you touch it in its essence and the whole burden is lifted.

It is very easy to explain how a person having this experience can spread it, act upon others, because to have the experience you must touch the one, the supreme Essence of all manifestation, the Origin and the Essence, the Source and the Reality of all that is; and you enter immediately into the domain of the Unity—there is no more separation among the individuals, it is one single vibration that may repeat indefinitely in the external form. [Note: Later the Mother was asked: Is it one single vibration that may repeat indefinitely or repeats indefinitely? The Mother answered: “I meant many things at the same time, This vibration is static everywhere, but when one realises it consciously, one has the power of making it active everywhere, wherever one directs it; that is to say, you don’t displace anything, but the stress of the consciousness makes it active wheresoever the consciousness is directed.”]

If you ascend high enough, you are at the Heart of all things. And what is manifested in this Heart can manifest

itself in all things. That is the great secret, the secret of the divine incarnation in an individual form, because in the normal course of things what manifests at the centre is realised in the external form only with the awakening and the answer of the will in the individual form. Whereas if the central Will is represented constantly and permanently in an individual being, this individual being can serve as an intermediary between this Will and all others and will for them. All that this individual perceives and offers in its consciousness to the supreme Will, is spread out as if the thing came from each individual being. And if the individual elements for some reason or other have a more or less conscious and willed contact with that representative being, their contact would increase the effectivity, the efficiency of the representative individual; and therefore the supreme Action can be active in Matter in a much more concrete and permanent manner. That is the reason of the descent of the consciousness—that may be called “polarised,” because they come upon earth always with a definite end in view and for a special realisation, with a mission—a mission settled, fixed before the incarnation. They are the great steps of the supreme incarnations upon earth.

And when the day will come for the manifestation of the supreme Love, for the crystallised, concentrated descent of the supreme Love, that will indeed be the moment of Transformation. Because nothing will be able to resist That.

But as it is all-powerful, some receptivity must be prepared upon earth so that the effects may not be shattering. Sri Aurobindo has explained it in one of his letters; he was asked, “Why does not the thing come immediately?” He answered something like this: if the divine Love manifested in its essence upon earth, it would be like a bombshell; because the earth is not sufficiently supple or receptive to be able to enlarge itself to the measure of this Love. The Earth must not only open herself, but enlarge herself, make herself plastic—Matter is still too rigid and even the substance of the physical consciousness is so. Not only the most material matter but the substance of the physical consciousness is too rigid. [From *Bulletin of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education*, XIII:1 (February 1961), pp. 85-93.]

We want to render in physical terms, as perfectly as possible, the inspiration sent by the Lord for the accomplishment of His work upon earth.

And for that each individual soul is a helper and a collaborator, but each human ego is a limitation and an obstacle. [From *Champaklal Speaks*, p. 261.]

*Disciple:* If we are not conscious of all that the Divine is doing for us, do we not progress?

*The Mother:* You progress, but you are not conscious of your progress; and so it is not a willed progress. That is, it is a progress that the Divine brings about in you without your collaboration. That takes much more time. It does occur, but it takes much more time. When you are conscious and collaborate and indeed do consciously what you should do, it is done much more quickly. [Questions and Answers 1953 (Vol. 5 of The Mother’s Collected Works), pp. 62-3.]



**Disciple:** When a part of the being steps beyond its sphere, why does it get deformed and perverted?

**The Mother:** I use the word "sphere" in the sense of the place and the role one has to play. Each part of the being has its place in the whole and a definite role to play. If instead of playing that role, it wishes to play another, naturally it loses the qualities necessary for it to play its true role, and it cannot take up any others because they are foreign to it. So necessarily it gets deformed and perverted. For example, we say here that the true role of the mind is a formative role in relation to action. An idea enters the mind, the mind seizes it and gives it a form to realise it, changes it into a motive of action and sends it out towards the material field. The mind organises the idea so that it may be realised in action. This is its true role, and so long as it does that and does it with care, it fulfils its role, it abides in its place and is quite useful. But if the mind imagines that it knows, that it has no need of receiving knowledge and ideas from another part of the being—a higher part—if it imagines that it knows and, by the association of inner movements, believes it has found some knowledge, which can never be but a reflection of something else, and if it wants to impose this knowledge upon the physical life, then it leaves its role and becomes a tyrant—this happens quite often to it, it is then completely perverted and instead of helping the sadhana, it brings it down. You can easily make this observation. Naturally, one must be able to follow the true working, the activities within oneself.

It is the same thing with the vital. The vital is meant to put in the drive, the realising force, the enthusiasm, the energy necessary for the idea formed by the mind to be transmitted to the body and realised in action. Well, so long as the vital limits itself to this activity, that is, sets all energy, enthusiasm, strength to work in order to collaborate with the idea, it is very good. But if instead of that, all of a sudden, it is seized by a desire—and this happens quite often—and it uses all its qualities to realise, not the higher idea which wanted to manifest, but its own desire, then it steps beyond its zone of action, it gets perverted, it deforms everything and succeeds in creating catastrophes. [*Questions and Answers 1953* (Vol. 5 of *The Mother's Collected Works*), pp. 100-101.]

"The world is preparing for a big change. Will you help?" [The Mother's New Year message for 1970.]

**Question:** What is this great change that you speak of? And how are we to be of help to it?

**The Mother:** This great change is the appearance upon earth of a new race that will be for man what man was for the animal. The consciousness of this new race is already at work upon earth to give light to all those who are capable of receiving it and listening to it. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, No. 3, p. 11.]

When we have to work collectively, it is always better to insist, in our thoughts, feelings and actions, on the points of agreement rather than on the points of divergence.

We must give importance to the things that unite and ignore, as much as possible, those that separate.

Even when physically the lines of work differ, the union can remain intact and constant if we keep always in mind the essential points and principles which unite, and the Divine goal, the Realisation which must be the one unchanging object of our aspiration and works. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, IV:3-4, p. 23.]

You see only *your side* of the question but if you want to widen your consciousness it would be better to look from all sides impartially. Later you will discover that this attitude has great advantages. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, IV:3-4, pp. 23.]

We want to show to the world that man can become a true servitor of the Divine. Who will collaborate *in all sincerity*? [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, II:3, p. 27.]

Beyond all preferences and limitations, there is a ground of mutual understanding where all can meet and find their harmony: it is the aspiration for a divine consciousness.

Since long it was the habit to govern through division and opposition. The time has come to govern through union, mutual understanding and collaboration. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, IV:3-4, p. 45; message dated 6/10/69.]

#### Auroville and Collaboration

The true spirit of Auroville is *collaboration* and must be more and more so. True collaboration paves the way to divinity. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, II:3, p. 29.]

To establish at Auroville the harmonious atmosphere which, by definition, ought to reign there, the first step is for each one to watch within himself whatever is the cause of friction and misunderstanding.

For these causes are *always* on both sides and each one's endeavour should be to efface them in himself first before demanding anything from others. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, IV:3-4, p. 23.]

Auroville is meant to hasten the advent of the supramental reality upon earth.

The help of all those who find that the world is not as it ought to be, is welcome.

Each one must know if he wants to associate with an old world ready for death, or to work for a new and better world preparing to be born. [From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, I:7, p. 18.]

The fraternity of collaboration. The aspiration towards Unity in Joy and Light. Blessings. [Message for the beginning of Matrimandir construction. From *Gazette Aurovilienne*, No. 3, p. 17.]

**Question:** Does the construction of Auroville require a working method, organisation and coordination?

**The Mother:** Discipline is necessary for life. To live, the body itself is subjected, in all its functions, to a rigorous discipline. Any relaxing of this discipline produces illness.

**Question:** What should be the nature of this organisation, in the present and in the future?

**The Mother:** Organisation is a discipline of action but for Auroville we aspire to go beyond arbitrary and artificial organisations. We want an organisation which is the expression of a higher consciousness working to manifest the truth of the future.

**Question:** Until such time as a common consciousness appears and until the true and right manner of collective work begins to function, what must one do?

**The Mother:** A hierarchic organisation grouped around the most enlightened centre and submitting to a collective discipline.

**Question:** Must one use organisational methods which have proved efficacious but which are based on human logic and the use of machines?

**The Mother:** This is a makeshift to which one should only submit provisionally.

**Question:** Must one allow individual initiative to manifest freely and inspiration and intuition to be the moving force behind personal action and should one reject all ideas not felt as good by the interested party?

**The Mother:** In order to be workable this requires all workers of Auroville to be yogis conscious of the Divine Truth.

**Question:** Has the time come to wish for, to set up, to try for a general organisation or should one wait for the right attitude and men?

**The Mother:** An organisation is needed for the work to be done—but the organisation must be flexible and progressive.

**Question:** If to wait is the solution, is it nevertheless necessary to define organisational principles and to avoid uncontrollable disorder?

**The Mother:** All those who wish to live and work at Auroville must have: an integral good will, a constant aspiration to know the Truth and to submit to it; enough plasticity to confront the exigencies of work and an endless will to progress so as to move forward towards the Ultimate Truth.

And finally a word of advice: Be more concerned with your own faults than with those of others. If each one worked seriously at his own self-perfection, the perfection of the whole would follow automatically. [From *Gazette Aurovillienne*, IV:2, pp. 19-21.]

### The Best Possible Collaboration

I have said somewhere, or written, that no matter how great your faith and trust in the Divine Grace, no matter how great your capacity to see it at work in all circumstances, at every moment, on every point of life, never will you succeed in understanding the marvellous immensity of Its Action, and the precision, the exactitude with which this Action is accomplished; never will you be able to grasp to what an extent the Grace does everything, is behind everything, organises everything, conducts everything, so that the march forward to the divine realisation may be as prompt, as complete, as total and harmonious as possible, considering the circumstances of the world.

No sooner are you in contact with It than there is not a second in time, not a point in space which does not show

you dazzlingly this perpetual work of the Grace, this constant intervention of the Grace. And once you have seen this, you feel you are never equal to it, for you should never forget it, never be afraid, never have any anguish, regrets, set-backs..., even suffering. If one were in union with this Grace, if one saw it everywhere, one could begin living a life of exultation, all-power, infinite happiness.

And that would be the best possible collaboration in the divine work. [From *Questions and Answers 1956*, p. 220.]

*[In a later class the Mother was asked to comment on the last two sentences of the above talk:]*

The first condition is not very easily realised. It is the result of a conscious growth, a constant observation and experience in life.

I have already told you this several times. When you are in a particular set of circumstances and certain events take place, often these events oppose your desire or what seems to you best, and often you happen to regret this and say to yourself: "Ah! how good it would have been otherwise if it had been like this or like that," for little things and big things.... Then years pass by, events are unfolded; you progress, become more conscious, understand better, and when you look back, you notice—first with astonishment, then later with a smile—that those famous circumstances which seemed to you quite disastrous and unfavourable, were exactly the best things that could have happened to you to make you progress as you had to. And if you are the least bit wise you tell yourself: "Truly the divine Grace is infinite."

So, when this sort of thing has happened to you a number of times, you begin to understand that in spite of the blindness of man and deceptive appearances, it is the Grace that is at work everywhere, so that at every moment it is the best possible that happens in the conditions in which the world is at that moment. It is because our vision is limited or even because we are blinded by our own preferences that we cannot discern that things are like that.

But when one begins to see it, one enters upon one of those marvels which nothing can describe. For behind appearances one perceives this Grace—infinite, wonderful, all-powerful—which knows all, organises all, arranges all, and leads us—whether we like it or not, whether we know it or not—towards the supreme goal, that is, the union with the Divine, the awareness of the Godhead and union with Him.

Then one lives in the Action and Presence of the Grace a life full of joy, of wonder, with the feeling of a marvellous strength, and at the same time with a trust so calm, so complete, that nothing can shake it any longer.

And when one is in this state of perfect receptivity and perfect adherence, one diminishes to that extent the resistance of the world to the divine Action; consequently, that is the best collaboration one can bring to the Action of the Divine. One understands what He wants, and with all one's consciousness adhere to His Will. [From *Questions and Answers 1956*, pp. 225-26.]

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## MATRIMANDIR

With the casting of the "Ring of Union," the summit ring-beam of the inner chamber of the Matrimandir, on a night celebrated in parts of India as the "night of Savitri," and her conquest of the Lord of Death, a new phase of wider and intenser work was initiated. The importance of the Matrimandir was stressed by the Mother with her statement that the Matrimandir is "the soul of Auroville. The sooner the soul is there, the better for everybody."

An opportunity for a wider collaboration of all well-wishers in the construction of the Matrimandir, the Sanctuary of Truth, is now being offered, as the pace increases for the completion of the Matrimandir by the Mother's centenary, 21 February 1978. It is in the form of an art book now being prepared by a team of Aurovilians. To be published on 21 February 1977, the Mother's 99th birthday, each 9" x 7" page, on art paper, will contain generally a picture or photograph with a description or quotation from Sri Aurobindo and the Mother relating to the inner significance and symbolism of this "temple of the Supramental Sun," as the Mother described it. The text will highlight the growth of the Matrimandir, its instrumentation for the New Age, its central role as container of the seed-light and field of the new consciousness from which Auroville's truth may grow and manifest.

The book will carry in silver letters the name of each group, organization and individual which contributes \$125 for a black and white page, \$250 for a color page. On publication a copy will be sent to each donor and the rest of the edition will be distributed for purchase or presentation. All proceeds will go into the construction of the Matrimandir.

*Checks may be made payable to Matrimandir and sent by registered airmail to Shyam Sunder, Unity, Auroville 605101, India.*

Smaller contributions, insufficient for a page in the special book, may be sent to Auroville Association, 212 Farley Drive, Aptos, CA 95003, or Sri Aurobindo Society, 3124 Dupont Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55408 with the indication they are for the Matrimandir. These contributions are tax deductible.

## SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

**November 24, 1976**, the fiftieth anniversary of Sri Aurobindo's Day of Siddhi (the day when the Delight of the Overmind descended into his physical consciousness), is also the fiftieth anniversary of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. From that day in 1926 the Mother actively assumed her role as Sri Aurobindo's collaborator and took up the creation and organization of the Ashram.

## GENERAL NEWS

¶ **Jagannath Vedalankar**, head of the Sanskrit Dept. of the Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education in Pondicherry, India, was in the United States until mid-September. On September 9 he gave a talk at U.C.L.A. He spoke in New York City and Boston before going to Los Angeles (see news of the East-West Cultural Center).

¶ Professor **Robert McDermott** of the Philosophy Dept. of Baruch College in New York City has announced the formation of a discussion group, "since the opportunity for serious discussion of spiritual topics is all too rare even among close friends." The program, developed in collaboration with Mrs. Marjorie Spalding, calls for a monthly meeting on the second Sunday of each month, beginning in October, to be held at Mrs. Spalding's apartment in New York. A tentative outline of the subjects has been prepared: *October*, Sri Aurobindo's Vision and Discipline; *November*, The Bhagavad Gita; *December*, The Avatar, Bodhisattva and Incarnation; *January*, Evolution, History and Spirituality; *February*, Western Esotericism; *March*, Ancient Geometry as a Metaphysical Language; *April*, Dream Life of Psychological Man; *May*, Spirituality of Physics.

Each topic will have a different discussion leader, and the topics are open to alteration, as the need and interest of the group are clarified.

For further details, please write or call Professor McDermott at Philosophy Dept., Baruch College, 17 Lexington Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10010; telephone 212-725-7157.

¶ In November and December, **Tublu**, a brilliant Indian flutist from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, will tour the United States. He is raising funds for a music and cultural center in Auroville. Help in scheduling concerts throughout the United States will be very much appreciated. Contact Julian Lines, 1668 Third Ave., New York, NY 10028.

¶ **Charles Maloney** holds a study group in *Essays on the Gita* Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. At 8:00 there is a meditation with either readings or tapes of the Mother. Anyone interested in this study group, please write to Mr. Maloney at 417 W. 120 St., Apt. 2D, New York, NY 10027, or call 212-864-3024.

¶ **Dr. June O'Connor**, professor in the Religious Studies Program at the University of California at Riverside, has been offering the life and teachings of Sri Aurobindo in her class.

¶ The College of Oriental Studies (939 S. New Hampshire, Los Angeles, CA 90006) offers "Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy and Yoga," taught by Dr. **Judith Tyberg**.

Dr. Tyberg has also recently spoken on Sri Aurobindo to Father Meeham's class in religion at the University of California at Los Angeles, and on "Flowers and Their Significances" (by the Mother) to a group of yoga students at the Costa Mesa Yoga Center.

¶ **Dr. Vasant Merchant** of the Humanities Dept. of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, spoke at the Costa Mesa Yoga Center in August on "The Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo" and on "Savitri," Sri Aurobindo's epic poem; and at the East-West Cultural Center on the "World-Vision of Sri Aurobindo." On October 7-9, she will participate in the conference of the Western Association of Asian Studies to be held at the Humanities Dept. of Northern Arizona State University. She will chair two

panels: "Relevance of Sri Aurobindo to Contemporary American Culture" (panelists include Dr. Obadiah Harris, Dr. Judith Tyberg, Gail Gray and Tom Nosky); and "Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville: The New International City of the Future" (panelists include Dr. Judith Tyberg, William B. Arnold, and Dr. Philip Staniford).

¶ **Auro-Mira Creations**, a new shop, has opened at 3211 College Ave., Berkeley, CA 94705. Owner Jacqueline Bloomquist reports that it has been very well received. It sells men's, women's and children's clothing from Auro-creation as well as incense, perfume, and essential oils from the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville. It also offers the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother, and meditation benches from Matagiri.

¶ **Udar Pinto** reports that his company, Commerce Under Sri Aurobindo's Guidance Pvt. Ltd., a percentage of whose gross revenue goes to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram and to the Sri Aurobindo Society (for Auroville), has undertaken to build low-cost housing for the government of the state of Orissa. The first units will be for the Orissa Mining Corp., which needs houses for its miners. The technique involves the use of iron-ore fines, a waste material, which tests have shown are excellent in making building blocks. Exploration in the use of ferro cement for roofs is also under way.

Another project in which the government is interested is the use of ferro cement for the manufacture of grain-storage bins, for distribution to farmers, to help cut down the loss of grain by spoilage.

Anyone interested in these projects should write to Udar, Commerce under Sri Aurobindo's Guidance Pvt. Ltd., Plot. No. 22, Unit 3, Bhubaneswar, Orissa 751001, India.

## NEWS OF CENTERS

**Los Angeles, Calif.:** The EAST-WEST CULTURAL CENTER (2865 W. 9th St., Los Angeles, CA 90006; tel., 212-DU 6-0999) observed Sri Aurobindo's birthday, with a variety of activities, including a meditation and tape of the Mother, open house with a tribute by Dr. Vasant Merchant (see under General News), and motion pictures on Sri Aurobindo, his Ashram and Auroville.

The center also arranged for Jagannath Vedalkar of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram to lecture on "Veda and World Integration and Peace" at the University of California in Los Angeles.

The Auroville group plans a garage sale for Auroville in September.

Among other activities held at the center in August was a series of seminars and classes conducted by Swami Yogeshwarand Saraswati Ji on Hatha, Raja and Jnana Yoga, as well as talks on meditation, kundalini, etc., a sarod and tabla concert August 28 by Ashish Khan and Pranesh Khan.

Thursday evenings from 8 to 9:30 Dr. Judith Tyberg, founder of the center, shares the wisdom of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother as applied to daily life. Meditation and mantra close each meeting.

**Long Beach, Calif.:** ATMANIKETAN ASHRAM (6902 Eastondale Ave., N. Long Beach, CA 90805) holds classes Friday evenings on *Essays on the Gita*.

The second issue of their magazine *Purna Yoga* was issued on 15 August. It contains articles by Sri Aurobindo, M.P. Pandit and others, and is available free on request.

Their library of Sri Aurobindo's works and Indian classical texts is available for students and others. Call 213-634-8273 for further details.

One of the foremost members of the German center has come to the Long Beach Ashram and is conducting classes in Sanskrit and German, on an individual and group basis.

**Boulder, Colo.:** Muriel and Joseph Spanier, who have been closely associated with Matagiri for several years, have moved to Boulder and are forming a center. Those interested in knowing more about the Integral Yoga of Sri Aurobindo and about Auroville may come for information, study, and meditation. A library of the works of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother is available also.

In August Dr. V.M. Reddy, a longtime disciple of Sri Aurobindo and formerly head of the Philosophy Dept. of Osmania University in Hyderabad, who taught at the Naropa Summer Institute, gave a series of talks at the new center (on "Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Future," "All Life Is Yoga," and "The Life Divine—on Earth"). Sri Aurobindo's birthday was observed with an evening of readings, meditation, and Ashram music. A slide presentation and talk on Auroville was given at the Free School in Boulder on August 14.

Beginning Wednesday, September 1, at 7:30 p.m. there will be a reading, discussion, and meditation weekly, open to anyone interested.

Inquiries may be addressed to the Spaniers at 2121 Canyon Blvd., Apt. 315, Boulder, CO 80302; telephone 303-447-0982.

**Mt. Tremper, N.Y.:** MATAGIRI observed its eighth birthday 2 August 1976 with a special morning meditation.

Sri Aurobindo's birthday, 15 August, was also observed with a special meditation and tape of the Mother, followed by a luncheon for a large group of visitors.

*Note:* Matagiri observes several Darshan days and occasions with special programs, which are open to the public. The next Darshan observance is 24 November (Sri Aurobindo's Day of Siddhi). People are welcome to attend but are requested to inform us beforehand of their intention to come.

Other activities of the past few months at Matagiri included a reading by the well-known poet Arthur Gregor of his poetry; a visit to the Society of Brothers (Bruderschaft), at nearby Rifton, a large Christian community, who spoke at length about their life and showed their toy-making facility; a visit to Matagiri by M.J. Patel, the founder of the Sri Aurobindo Society in Osaka, Japan, who spoke of Sri Aurobindo activities in Japan; a visit from Savitra, author of *Auroville: The First Six Years*, who spoke about progress and difficulties in Auroville; a visit from Father Francis, who is 91, the well-known



archbishop of the Old Catholic Church of Woodstock; and a visit from Joseph Eger, founder and music director of Symphony for United Nations, a group of musicians of all nationalities, working closely with the U.N., whose purpose is to help create a harmonious climate for better understanding and cooperation among nations through music—Mr. Eger was very much interested in the music of the Mother and Sunil, which was played for him.

## NEWS OF FOREIGN CENTERS

**Salmon Arm, Canada:** FUTURE CHILD, Box 1419, Salmon Arm, B.C. VOE 2T0, Canada, has sent the following report: "Our vision, hope, and determination strengthened by a recent visit to Pondicherry and Auroville, we continue in the labor to create a center for the child of the future. A whole new beginning, an entire new basis for education must be built. A spearhead of example is needed, for the bulk of the system will necessarily creep slowly. Much of our attention at present is focused on the small child, from conception to age six. A newsletter (in the making) will be sent to those who wish to keep in touch with details of our work. Write to the address given above.

"A further perception gained while in India was the strong need, opportunity and timeliness of creative co-operation between Auroville and the West in the development and marketing of educational materials. Already work has started on children's puzzles and finger puppets, as the result of joint designing efforts, and the very talented Tamil craftsmen [of Auroville] have begun work. By fall, some of their superb handcrafts may be available, a truly international product of collaboration."

**Hyderabad, India:** SRI AUROBINDO CIRCLE & LIBRARY ("Chintamani," 3-6-524, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad 500029, India) has sent a report on their center: On 15 August 1952 the Sri Aurobindo Library was established in Hyderabad. On the occasion the Mother sent this special message: "To open a center is not sufficient in itself. It must be the pure hearth of a perfect sincerity in a total consecration to the Divine. Let the flame of this sincerity rise high above the falsehoods and the deceptions of the world."

The institution has served as a spiritual center and meeting place for followers of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy and Yoga in Hyderabad and the state of Andhra Pradesh. It is one of the oldest centers outside the Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

The center was established in the house of Dr. A.S. Ramchandran, one of its leading founder-members, who has visited the Pondicherry Ashram since 1940. It was registered as the Sri Aurobindo Circle and Library in 1970 and has developed an extensive collection of the works of Sri Aurobindo, the Mother, their disciples as well as books on comparative religion and philosophy both Eastern and Western. There is a reading and meditation room where members assemble in the evenings. Weekly meetings with the Mother's music and taped readings are also held. Darsan days and other special occasions are celebrated with devotion and dignity.

In June 1975 Dr. Ramchandran and his wife visited the United States. During their 6-month stay Dr. Ramchandran gave weekly talks on Sri Aurobindo's Yoga at the Sri Aurobindo International Center in New York City. The Ramchandrans also visited the Sri Aurobindo Books center in Boston, where, they write, "as you walk along this busy street, photos of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother suddenly greet you from a little window on the sidewalk." They also spent two days at Matagiri, "situated amidst sylvan surroundings, a beautifully organised spiritual center with resident aspirants. They have succeeded in creating a rarefied spiritual atmosphere in this lovely spot."

Their visit helped to establish a link between their center and other centers in America. One important link, they feel, is *Collaboration*, with its news and notes about the activities of sister institutions all over the world. Another link was the visit to their center of two American aspirants, John Walker and Prudence Carlson.

## CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

In our Bicentennial issue there were a few minor errors and omissions which we are correcting here.

The five major prose works of Sri Aurobindo were first published in the United States in 1949 by the Sri Aurobindo Library of New York City.

On p. 8 under Growth of Centers the sentence beginning "Originally starting under that name," should read, "the group soon joined forces with the Sri Aurobindo International Center, which opened a public center under that name...."

Also, Sri Aurobindo's Action was initiated by the Mother.

Some further remarks of Sri Aurobindo on the United States have come to our attention. We thought readers might be interested in them: "The Karma of the British people in India has been of a mixed quality. So far as it has opened the gates of Western knowledge to the people this country it has been good and in return the thought and knowledge of India has poured back upon Europe to return the gift with overmeasure. Had they in addition consciously raised up and educated the whole people, all the fruits of that good Karma would have gone to England. But the education they have given is bad, meagre and restricted to the few, and their sympathy for the people has been formal and efficient. In consequence, the main flood of the new thought and knowledge has been diverted to America, the giant of the future, which alone of the nations has shown an active and practical sympathy and understanding of our nation. [Birth Centenary Library, Vol. 2, "Facts and Opinions," 1909.]

### SPECIAL NOTICE

We wish to thank all who have sent us contributions for the support of *Collaboration*. With the recent increase in postal and other costs, and since *Collaboration* is sent free, we welcome any contributions readers feel able to make. They may be made payable to Matagiri, Mt. Tremper, NY 12457.

If you move, please inform us of your new address, as the cost of returned third-class mail is quite high.

We welcome not only contributions, but any expressions of interest from our readers.

What is the proper way of fruitful reading? The answer depends upon one's object in reading. If it is merely to amuse oneself or pass one's time, the books read yield nothing more than a superficial and fleeting interest in terms of the mind, the emotions or the senses. If one is serious about learning something, scientific, philosophical or literary, from the books one reads, one is intellectually enlightened and benefitted. It is seriousness and concentration that bring the enlightenment. But this kind of reading with a view to intellectual enlightenment is not the only way of reading. There is another, more perceptive and receptive, which puts us into contact with the personality of the authors.

Each book, the Mother says, is a battery of forces. It is not only the knowledge of the writer, but his personality, his character, the very vibrations of his being are reflected and reproduced in his books, and we imbibe something of these without being aware of it.

Similarly in images and photos there is a charge of forces, bright or obscure. In looking at an image or a photo we open ourselves to its vibrations. If it is the photo of a spiritual person, the aspiration with which we approach it receives a response from the person's force, its vibrations enter into us and we feel uplifted or purified. But if it is the photo of a man of low character, in looking at it intently we invariably run the risk of being infected by his vibrations and there is an immediate sinking or soiling of our consciousness. So long as our subconscious has not been purified or we have not acquired the power to repel the vibrations before they enter into us, we should take care to avoid contact with such images or photos. This applies equally to the reading of all vulgar or obnoxious stuff.

The best way to approach books like the Mother's and Sri Aurobindo's is to go deep into them, opening ourselves to the forces they emanate. In proportion to the depth of our concentration and the sincerity of our aspiration, we derive the light and force contained in them. "Sri Aurobindo represented a whole understanding, a whole

knowledge and a whole power, and so every one of his books is at once a symbol and a representation. Each book of his contains symbolically, potentially what is there in him. Therefore if you concentrate on the book, you can through the book go back to the origin. And even going through the book, you may receive much more than what is merely in the book."

If we keep in mind this truth each time we read the Mother's or Sri Aurobindo's books, each reading can be not only a revelation to the mind but an opening up of the deeper layers of our consciousness and an outflowing of knowledge and power.

It is true that there are very few who have not felt exalted or illumined while reading the Mother's or Sri Aurobindo's books. But the approach of which the Mother speaks is the most abidingly effective. It gives us not only an inner joy or flashes of intuition, but a soul-touch, the very vibrations of their divine personalities. For, when they speak of Love, whether it is the Divine's Love or the psychic, the luminous vibrations of Love emanate through their words and can evoke corresponding vibrations in our being. When they speak of Power or Peace, we can have similar experiences in our depths. Take, for instance, the Mother's *Prayers and Meditations* or Sri Aurobindo's *Savitri*. The language of these books is magnificent and marvellously poetic, but through the language opens up vistas of spiritual experience and ranges of vision which transmit their light and power and beauty to us and, if we are concentrated and sensitive enough, something of the experience and visions themselves.

Reading, if done in this way as taught by the Mother, becomes a sure means of spiritual progress and a widening and illumination of consciousness. Words then act as mantrams, dynamos of power and radiating centres of spiritual knowledge. [From *The Advent*, November 1969, pp. 32-3.]

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

*Question:* How should one read the books of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother?

*The Mother:* The true method is to read a little at a time, with concentration, then keep the mind as silent as possible, without trying to understand but turned upward in silence and aspiring to the Light. The understanding will come little by little.

And later, in a year or two, you will reread the same thing and then you will know that the first contact was vague and incomplete and that the true understanding comes later on when you have tried to put it into practice. [From a letter of the Mother dated 16 October 1967.]