

A person is rappelling down a rope, suspended in the air. They are wearing a harness, a red bag, and a green cloth. The background consists of large, circular, golden mosaic tiles arranged in a grid pattern. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, serif font.

THE NEW BEING AND THE NEW SOCIETY

A Compilation of the Mother's Words
and Archival Material
During the Formative Years of Auroville



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INTRODUCTION

Between 1986 and 1990 I put together a series of compilations on Auroville during the Mother's years. Financed with grants from the Government of India, as with most of my research and book publication, these were distributed for free to the whole community. The purpose for the initiative was to share the attitude the Mother expected from us, along with the Mother's concept and reasons for the establishment of an ideal town of 50,000 inhabitants.

In the course of that five year research I was handed over precious documents, many of which were never disclosed before, by Roger Anger (the Mother's architect, with whom she also went on discussing all aspects of life in Auroville) and Suresh Hindocha (who informed the Mother, and she accepted, of the possibility of building the town in five years through systems engineering). I also received photographs and drawings, which I displayed in three major pictorial exhibitions, along with relevant texts of that period of Auroville history.

I have already reproduced several entries, which also appear in the present book, on *Auroville Prosperity*. A general compilation of the Mother's messages and archival material, this work revolves around the theme of the 'in-kind' economic system that she instituted in June 1968, three months after founding Auroville; the emphasis was on minimum needs, as one would expect in a truly spiritual society. Sponsored by the Working Committee of the Residents' Assembly, on January 1st, 2000 this compilation was distributed to the entire community as a vision for the new millennium.

In 2005 I published *The Auroville Foundation Act and the Mother's Guidelines*. In this 120-page book, sponsored by the Auroville Foundation, I examined how the Foundation Act, 'fathered' by Kireet Joshi, stood in relationship to the Mother's vision and selected guidelines for Auroville. The book brought back something of the atmosphere of Auroville's early years,

stirring something deep in Aurovilians and newcomers alike. This book was to be followed by a second one presenting the complete set of guidelines as formulated by the Mother or as approved by her, meant to be applied to all aspects of life and activities in Auroville – along with quotations revealing what the Mother means by the Auroville consciousness, as indicated in her many messages and writings. In order to be as comprehensive as possible this research was to include a section on the universal township of human unity and its soul, the Matrimandir.

In the meantime I had other urgent publications to deal with and the project was postponed. Now, given the ever-increasing awareness that we have reached a crossroads calling for a new order of society and a new humanity, I feel that the moment has come to go ahead with this project. In the new version, submitted here, I have removed the part on the Auroville Foundation Act that, as an aspect of an internal debate, is necessarily limited to Aurovilians. The approach I take for *Towards the New Being and the New Society* is that of an historian aiming at providing as exhaustive documentation as possible; this includes little known or never published material from original sources. Focusing on themes such as the “Aspiration Talks” with the Mother and the genesis of the text “To be a True Aurovillian”, work and economic activities, the “Auroville Prosperity” and its ‘in-kind’ economy, relationship with the villagers and their integration, I have strung together documentation regarding the ongoing debate around the early establishment of Auroville during the Mother’s years. I have also introduced a new chapter – inner hierarchy and outer organization –, along with preliminary hints on the group-soul, in preparation for a book to follow, for which the purpose will be to compile the complete set of guidelines as they came into existence during the Mother’s years, along with her many messages which point to what attitude is conducive to the achievement of the Auroville consciousness. In addition, I have enlarged the themes presented in the previous book with new findings that have emerged in the meantime, while adding pre-existent texts that bring depth to the material. Parts of the

introduction are a re-working of texts I wrote for *The Auroville Foundation Act and the Mother's Guidelines*.

The world is undergoing an unprecedented upheaval. Not only is the survival of our planet jeopardized in terms of wildlife habitat and natural resources due to pollution and greed, but the present political, economic and financial structures and functioning are being seriously put into question by an ever-growing population of disaffected individuals, particularly in affluent countries, where more and more people have to struggle to make a living and the youth perceive an uncertain future, ecologically, economically, financially and in terms of equal access to jobs and education.

The question arises whether the age of “the religion of humanity” – with its social legislation and provisions for a more humane face to the socio-economic apparatus, according to Sri Aurobindo a major achievement of the West – is over even before reaching its completion. All ideologies and political organizations seem to be faltering. Behind the volatile realities and grim perspectives of contemporary economies and social orders, where old organizational structures are being seriously challenged but new ones are not yet in place, a new consciousness with a concomitant force appears to be at work, foreshadowing the end of an era, while calling for a new definition and order of society. This, however, is not yet clearly articulated. A radical shift of values and an entirely new paradigm of existence, for both individuals and nations, are essential, where the sole hierarchy is based on the power of consciousness, the lever of human evolution.

At this historical crossroads, are the Mother's comments on what passed into history as “the French May”¹ prophetic, heralding a mutation of consciousness that inevitably brings about momentous changes that deeply impact society?

1 “A sort of general strike by some eight million people, which began with a student revolt and the occupation of the Sorbonne University in Paris.” (Satprem's footnote in the Agenda's conversation on May 22, 1968, from which these excerpts are reproduced.)

“It’s clearly the future which is awakening and trying to drive away the past. ... Naturally, on the mental level there’s a whole mixture of all kinds of ideas, but the Force behind... And they themselves are unaware of it, but they are driven by a force that wants the manifestation of a truer truth. ... It’s the higher Power COMPELLING people to do what they must do. Between now and that (which is a long way ahead), there must be the power of an IMMOBILE number. ... But it was a very clear vision: an occupation by the mass, but a mass all-powerful in its immobility, imposing its will through sheer numbers, with intellectual representatives for negotiations. ... It’s clearly (not in the detail of it, but in the direction of the movement), clearly a will to have done with the past and to open the door to the future. ... It’s like a sort of revulsion with stagnation. That’s it. A thirst for something which is ahead and appears more luminous, better. And indeed there IS something – it’s not just imagination: there IS something. That’s the beauty of it, it’s that there is something. There IS a Response. There IS a Force that wants... to express itself.”

She concludes her remarks as follows:

“And now, the state of the earth would seem to be precisely such that what is at the very least being prepared (if it’s not yet actually like that) is the manifestation of the mass in a kind of silent and immobile will... And that’s an intermediate period to reach the condition in which this mass will be held under the control and directly driven by the Power from above.

That’s where we are heading.”

Three months before the May 1968 events, which have marked a whole generation, the Mother founded Auroville, a universal town of human unity named after Sri Aurobindo. Calling for the advent of a new consciousness where the sole hierarchy is based on spiritual truth, she appeals to people from all over the world to build an international community above race, above creed, above

class, above politics, free from the slavery of money and private property. While acknowledging both the natural order of society and individual soul-types as seen from a spiritual perspective, she planted seeds for in-depth changes to the very ordering and functioning of societal life. This transmutation can only be brought about by evolved individuals who undergo an inner transformation of being in dynamic interaction with others, while simultaneously fostering the emergence of the community's soul.

Forty-three years have elapsed since the founding of Auroville. Have we yet reached the end of the rope as individuals and as a human species, propelled at last to find the strength and relentless determination to have it done with the past – with all the pasts, whatever the 'isms' and beliefs –, ready to plunge boldly into the future? The key is to be found within oneself, where the true revolution commences. At a time when confusion and cultural dissolution make it difficult to discover one's inner voice and find a place to nurture humanity's age long dream of an ideal society, Auroville may be the answer. The Mother's undiluted vision and her pragmatic instructions, which changed according to circumstances, offer important guidelines to living and help to find the answer to the riddle of new life.

In its new format *Towards the New Being and the New Society* is an invitation to people of good-will from all over the world, seeking a higher consciousness involving the transformation of life itself. Not by way of an Ashram or an ascetic life of renunciation or having as goal some remote beyond, but through the gradual, progressive transformation of human nature, to be brought about by attending the chores of one's day-to-day existence in the spirit of service to Auroville's micro-society, in a state of inner awareness and self-scrutiny. This is the sadhana of works, karmayoga – but it also is the sadhana of self-perfection, requiring relentless psychological work upon oneself, including both the superconscient and subconscient levels of being. For Auroville, in principle a microcosmic specimen of the world at large, encompasses the entire gamut of its contradictions and impossibilities for the sake of potentially integrating every

conceivable opposite into new modes of consciousness and creative possibilities.

The themes being explored in this book are work, economic activities, inner and outer organization, 'Auroville Prosperity' and in-kind economy, relationship with the villagers as Auroville's most direct neighbours and, if they wish, their harmonious integration as equal members of the community. The source of individual and societal transformation is the individual soul and psychic being that, when embodied collectively, becomes a manifest expression of the 'group-soul' guiding the community towards its collective realization.

This book wishes to address a new generation of youth with high ideals, along with the eternally young, people for whom the Ideal manifests in life itself and not in some distant utopia, people aware that human evolution goes hand in hand with the metamorphosis and self-perfection of individuals. The purpose of this book, which is inspiringly educational, is to draw inspiration from the practical set-up of Auroville as it began to emerge during the Mother's years under her guidance, as an attempt to achieve on earth a slightly more ideal life. The objective is to highlight the preliminary stages of the ideal society in-the-making, seen as an apprenticeship towards the "cradle of the superman" that, by the Mother's definition, is the true Auroville.

Paulette Hadnagy

Auroville, 21st February 2012

NOTE. When the quotes are reproduced in several publications, the reference used is the one most well known. The parts in italic refer to someone other than the Mother, while retaining the formats of the original sources. MCWCE refers to the Mother's Collected Works, Centenary Edition. When quoting from the Mother's Agenda, I refer to the last edition, while noting the year of the English translation.



APPRENTICESHIP FOR THE IDEAL SOCIETY

The Avatar's Model Town

The Mother had been dreaming of an ideal society since she was a young girl. When she was thirteen years old, she experienced going out of her body every night, for nearly a year, healing suffering human beings with their touching her golden robe, which stretched over the city like an immense roof. In her youth she came across people who wished to consecrate their life to the pursuit of a noble, spiritual existence but were stuck in the dire struggle for material necessities; she had wished since then to create a place where all basic necessities were freely provided so that those spiritual travelers could concentrate full time on the inner quest.

The Mother's words to a group of women in Paris, in 1912, with hints of the supramental society of Gnostic beings heralded by Sri Aurobindo, her talks in 1920 to some Japanese women, all point in the same direction. Not only in terms of Yoga, but also in terms of a new world and society, the Mother was Sri Aurobindo's equal partner, as he repeatedly stressed. How is the pursuit for a new world to manifest? Sri Aurobindo wrote:

“...there has even been the dream or a psychic prevision of a realization exceeding the individual transformation, a new earth and heaven, a city of God, a divine descent upon earth, a reign of the spiritually perfect, a kingdom of God not only within us but outside, in a collective human life. However obscure may have been some of the forms taken by this aspiration, the indication they contain of the urge of the occult spiritual being within to emergence in earth-nature is unmistakable.

If a spiritual unfolding on earth is the hidden truth of our birth in Matter, if it is fundamentally an evolution of

consciousness that has been taking place in Nature, then man as he is cannot be the last term of that evolution: he is too imperfect an expression of the Spirit, Mind itself a too limited form and instrumentation; Mind is only a middle term of consciousness, the mental being can only be a transitional being. If, then, man is incapable of exceeding mentality, he must be surpassed and Supermind and superman must manifest and take the lead of the creation. But if his mind is capable of opening to what exceeds it, then there is no reason why man himself should not arrive at Supermind and supermanhood or at least lend his mentality, life and body to an evolution of that greater term of the Spirit manifesting in Nature.”¹

And the Mother:

“The work of achieving a continuity which permits one to go up and down and bring into the material what is above, is done inside the consciousness. He who is meant to do it, the Avatar, even if he were shut up in a prison and saw nobody and never moved out, still would he do the work, because it is a work in the consciousness, a work of connection between the Supermind and the material being. He does not need to be recognised, he needs no outward power in order to be able to establish this conscious connection. Once, however, the connection is made, it must have its effect in the outward world in the form of a new creation, beginning with a model town and ending with a perfect world.”²

Sri Aurobindo foresaw the big change to be initiated by a spiritual community or *sangha*. The mutational transformation that is the object of Integral Yoga cannot happen through just a few people. It needs a preliminary nucleus of individuals, eventually to be enlarged to the whole of humankind, as this turns progressively more receptive. The transforming Force acts both individually

1 Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, SABCL XIX, pp. 846-847.

2 MCWCE, III, pp. 178-179, 1930-1931.

and collectively by contagion; all individual progress (or regression) reflects automatically on the outer environment. Hence the initial necessity of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, where the disciples followed the path chartered by Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. Significantly, it was none other than the Mother herself, her Shakti power that created its organizational structure, supervising it down to the least detail. Sri Aurobindo followed the work from his room, where he lived in seclusion for the last twenty-four years of material existence.

Since early on the Mother's vision was that of an ideal town. In all traditions the symbol of the Self has often been expressed in the form of a mandala. In the Thirties the Mother consistently envisioned the formation of a town where Sri Aurobindo was to live at the centre surrounded by his disciples. Encircled by walls isolating it from the external world, the town was conceived as being economically self-sufficient. The Mother considered it to be a real potential; having the dimensions of an ideal country, it was to be established on a much larger scale than her conception of Auroville three decades later. Sir Akbar, the Nizam, had offered to the Mother a large land with a river, flowing at the foot of a hillock, in the state of Hyderabad that he ruled at the time. This early vision marks the first conception of Auroville, named after Sri Aurobindo. The town was meant to develop as an ideal settlement reflecting spiritual transformation that includes the material world.

At that time the architect Antonin Raymond was drawing the plans for the construction of the Golconde guest house. On the Mother's request he drew a mandala-like layout for Sri Aurobindo's town, which was the material realization of the Mother's symbol. Significantly, thirty years later, a similar plan resurfaced with the first layout designed by Roger Anger, from whom the Mother had requested a layout plan for Auroville with its spiritual centre.

In the Fifties and early Sixties the Mother had disclosed to a few people the urge for the realization of such a town. On July

18, 1961 she unveiled her vision of an ideal city as preliminary to the advent of the supramental world, foreseeing as well the tremendous challenge that this event implies:³

“Is it possible to find a place where the embryo or seed of the future supramental world might be created?”

What I myself have seen... was a plan that came complete in all details, but that doesn't at all conform in spirit and consciousness with what is possible on earth now (although, in its most material manifestation, the plan was based on existing terrestrial conditions). It was the idea of an ideal city, the nucleus of a small ideal country, having only superficial and extremely limited contacts with the old world. One would already have to conceive (it's possible) of a Power sufficient to be at once a protection against aggression or bad will (this would not be the most difficult protection to provide) and a protection (which can just barely be imagined) against infiltration and admixture... From the social or organizational standpoint, these problems are not difficult, nor from the standpoint of inner life; the problem is the relationship with what is not supramentalized – preventing infiltration or admixture, keeping the nucleus from falling back into an inferior creation during the transitional period.

(silence)

All who have considered the problem have always imagined some place like a Himalayan gorge, unknown to the rest of humanity, but this is no solution. No solution at all.

No, the only solution is occult power. But that... Before anything at all can be done, it already demands a certain number of individuals who have reached a great perfection of realization. Granting this, a place is conceivable (set apart from the outside world – no actual contacts) where each thing is exactly in its place, setting an example. Each thing

3 *Mother's Agenda*, II, 18.7.1961.

exactly in its place, each person exactly in his place, each movement in its place, and all in its place in an ascending, progressive movement without relapse (that is, the very opposite of what goes on in ordinary life). Naturally, this also means a sort of perfection, it means a sort of unity; it means that the different aspects of the Supreme can be manifested; and, necessarily, an exceptional beauty, a total harmony; and a power sufficient to keep the forces of Nature obedient: even if this place were encircled by destructive forces, for example, these forces would be powerless to act – the protection would be sufficient.

It would all require the utmost perfection in the individuals organizing such a thing.”

Concluding with these words, while hitting straight at the core of the problem, the Mother observes:

“But the problem remains: Buddha and all the rest have FIRST realized, then resumed contact with the world. That makes it very simple. But for the total realization of what I envisage, isn't it indispensable to remain in the world?”

No longer an ideal town to be encircled by walls to carry on an extreme experiment in isolation from the external world, but right in the midst of it: was this the answer? This corresponds to a radical shift in the Mother's occult strategy. When she envisioned the early town, where she would have re-located the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the rapid progress of the ashramites demanded isolating the Sri Aurobindo Ashram from the outer world. The number of Ashram inmates had settled at around one hundred twenty; there were no new admissions and the gates were closed to most visitors. The situation changed entirely with the war, by the will of both Sri Aurobindo and the Mother.

Auroville was founded with even further complexities. It was meant to be not an ashram but a town; its citizens could still have a family life and were not necessarily engaged in the yogic pursuit. Simple goodwill, the thirst for progress and the ideal

of human unity were sufficient to gain admittance. On such a broad basis the experiment was launched. The Mother had requested the Sri Aurobindo Society to announce at a conference, on 14 August 1964, her call for a new town and to begin fundraising. Auroville was founded on 28 February 1968, with representatives from fifty-eight nationalities as living expressions of human unity.

The Mother had approved the final concept of the town, popularly known as 'the Galaxy'. Stating that no one was to interfere, herself being the sole authority on both the town and its 'soul' – the future Matrimandir – she delegated the execution to her chief architect, Roger Anger. He submitted her three circular layouts, all of which she approved, the final one being the spiralling Galaxy; after discussing with her, he then returned to his studio in Paris to work out the execution with his outstanding team. Nor was Roger's task confined to working on the town and the Matrimandir alone. The Mother also instructed him on how life in Auroville would be organized. Roger's archive is a gold mine to reconstruct the atmosphere of Auroville under Mother's direct guidance.

She had temporarily delegated management of Auroville to the Administrative Committee of Auroville (CAA), Pondy-based. From 1971 onwards, day-to-day's affairs were carried on through Shyam Sunder Jhunjunwala, a lawyer and a millionaire who had surrendered his belongings to the Mother. He met with her daily, acting as the liaison between her and the Aurovilians to whom he conveyed her instructions. He received over 4,000 letters and messages from the Mother.

Mother's early messages to the residents may appear to have been very general, perhaps in order to attract a large variety of

goodwill and human unity. But as the abyss between vision and reality kept widening, the messages became more and more sharp. In her last years the Mother shifted the focus to the unique purpose of Auroville, heralding the advent of the supramental world and the gnostic society governed by it.

“Humanity is not the last rung of the terrestrial creation. Evolution continues and man will be surpassed. It is for each individual to know whether he wants to participate in the advent of this new species.

For those who are satisfied with the world as it is, Auroville obviously has no reason to exist.”⁴

“We would like to make Auroville the cradle of the Superman.”⁵

This is Auroville – and the consciousness to be achieved. For Auroville, named after Sri Aurobindo, is “the Avatar’s model town”, “the city of God” that has been sought down the ages. But the Avatar cannot fulfill his mission alone; a preliminary nucleus of individuals is needed. To provide this was the function of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, a spiritual community or *sangha*. But Auroville, conceived as a town of 50,000 inhabitants, exceeds the dimensions of a *sangha*. In fact it is meant to be the incubator of the ideal society, the new *satyayuga* or ‘golden age’ that a spiritualised humanity alone can make true. It is this ideal that defines the destiny of Auroville; its realization or failure determining its fate.

***“The Wider is the Consciousness...
the Less the Material Needs”***

Always behind even the Mother’s simplest messages to the Aurovilians, those quoted over again and again, is the Truth-Consciousness or Supramental Gnosis. The guidelines given to us

4 MCWCE, XIII, p. 197, August 1966.

5 MCWCE, XIII, p. 197, 1966.

by the Mother are those of a spiritual society. As she observes, a truly spiritual being has no material needs. The treasure is within; it is a jewel that no outer riches can buy. Thus, commenting on the nature of the true hierarchy in Auroville, the Mother stated:

““Théon⁶ said something in this regard, he said, “Those who are all the way up” (he was referring to the TRUE hierarchy, the hierarchy based precisely on each one’s power of consciousness), “one who is all the way up (one or those) necessarily has the least amount of needs; his material needs decrease as his capacity of material vision increases.” And it’s perfectly true. It’s automatic and spontaneous; it’s not the result of an effort: the vaster the consciousness and the more things and realities it embraces, the smaller the material needs become – automatically so – because they lose all their importance and value. It’s reduced to a minimal need of material necessities, which will itself change with the progressive development of Matter.

And that’s easily recognizable, of course. It’s difficult to feign.”⁷

“There’s something very interesting on a psychological level: it’s that material needs decrease in proportion to the spiritual growth. Not (as Sri Aurobindo said), not through asceticism, but because the focus of attention and concentration of the being moves to a different domain...”⁸

Did not the Mother stress that the first necessity is the inner discovery, and that this should happen *before* coming to Auroville? The way pointed to by the Mother is that of material needs progressively shrinking to basic necessities, for this goes hand in hand with inner progress, both being interdependent and equally

6 A Cabbalist and an occultist, Max Théon was considered by some to be an epitome of Gnosticism. He was the master who taught occultism to the Mother, at the time a young woman by the name of Mirra Alfassa, who had met him in Paris in 1905.

7 *Mother’s Agenda*, IX, 10.4.1968.

8 *Mother’s Agenda*, XI, 25.3.1970.

necessary for the establishment of the spiritual society into which Auroville is meant to grow. Then things make sense, as this statement by the Mother, which translates the full significance of her vision of Auroville into one's mode of life, reveals:

“It's a kind of adaptation of the Communist system, but not in a spirit of leveling: according to everyone's capacity, his position (not a psychological or intellectual one), his INNER position.

In democracies and with the Communists, there's a leveling down: everyone is pulled down to the same level.

Yes, that's just the point.

The true part is that every human being has the material right... (but it's not a “right”...). The organization should be such, arranged in such a way, that everyone's material need should be met, not according to notions of right and equality, but on the basis of the most elementary necessities; then, once that is established, everyone must be free to organize his life, not according to his monetary means, but according to his inner capacities.”⁹

For average human beings there is no ceiling to their ‘needs’, nor is money ever enough. But as one advances on the path a moment comes when there is nothing to renounce. Material cravings collapse, effortlessly, giving way to the real thing: sadhana as service to the Divine, without expecting anything in return, being just content to serve. When the spiritual conversion takes place a few square metres to rest at night, simple food and inexpensive clothing are enough.

The Mother stated that money is in the hands of asuric forces and must be returned to the Divine, and only those in contact with a higher consciousness can administer it. The Mother established Auroville on two essential principles: the first being no private property, as everything belongs to Auroville as a whole. The

9 *Mother's Agenda*, VIII, 30.12.1967.

second principle articulated by the Mother, which penetrates to the very foundation of life in Auroville, regards minimum needs, to be provided by the 'Auroville Prosperity' Service. These two principles differentiate Auroville, according to the Mother's vision, from what is happening elsewhere, where the satisfaction of material desires is a major goal. Everything in Auroville belongs to the community as a whole, while those who work for the common well being are taken in charge on the basis of minimum needs.

What the Mother meant by 'minimum needs' is elucidated by an attentive study of all that she said, wrote or approved on Auroville. The 'Auroville Prosperity' system, like the Mother's guidelines, is but an expression in material terms of the inner revolution a true Aurovilian is called to live. At first, simplicity and frugality may be dictated because of limited means; but the more one evolves, the more this becomes a natural way of life. When concentrated within material cravings become irrelevant and all that is not essential loses value.

Auroville is not an ashram, nor are rigors demanded. Making no distinction between Westerners and foreigners in general, and the native population wanting to join Auroville, the Mother wished that everybody had a decent place to live. A major difference from the Ashram was that, at the very inception of Auroville, living in basic huts was common practice (in some parts of the 'green belt' this still happens). This was the case with the pioneering community of Aspiration, and afterwards with the Matrimandir Camp and mushrooming new communities.

At the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, under the Mother's direct supervision, life was simplified to the utmost thanks to the efficient organization of even the smallest details, allowing the sadhak to fully concentrate on the inner quest, where work as service to the Divine played the major role. But in contrast to life at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, life in Auroville was so tough that even obtaining a drop of water was a conquest. When a choice needed to be made between watering the newly planted

vegetables and trees versus satisfying human needs, it was often the trees and vegetables that won. Most of the year, scorched by the burning sun, the place was a barren desert, only to be flooded by torrential rains during the monsoon season. Due to the primitive conditions of the newly-founded community and, needless to say, the absence of infrastructure and facilities still required to be built, coupled with extreme weather conditions and difficult environment, the pioneers had to undergo considerable hardship, which they faced in a spirit of youthful resilience.

Those who did useful work for the community were taken care of on the basis of minimum needs; this meant free food, toiletries, basic items, simple clothing (shorts and T-shirts were the most popular), day-to-day necessities – plus a little pocket money. The Mother’s message for the recipients of these essential items, distributed to Aurovilians through the ‘Auroville Prosperity’ system, was: “Auroville is not meant for the satisfaction of desires but for the growth of the true consciousness.” Three years later the Mother gave this message to be displayed in the rooms where the Prosperity items were distributed: “One does not live in Auroville to be comfortable but to grow in consciousness and to serve the Divine.”

To someone asking, “How will work be organised and distributed in Auroville?” the Mother replied, speaking in terms of work as a way of expressing oneself and developing one’s capacities and possibilities, but also in terms of people’s so-called ‘subsistence’ needs:

“Money would no longer be the sovereign lord; individual worth would have a far greater importance than that of material wealth and social standing. There, work would not be a way to earn one’s living but a way to express oneself and to develop one’s capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual’s subsistence and sphere of action.”¹⁰

10 MCWCE, XIII, pp. 195-6, 1965.

In the Mother's true Auroville needs drop to "the most elementary necessities", to be met by the community at large in exchange for a minimum of five hours a day work for the community (six hours, if Sunday is taken as a holiday). Work for oneself or one's family is not counted. Farmers and industrialists would contribute in kind, while sales of surplus goods to the outside would bring in cash for the township. Money comes last and is the medium of exchange only if there is nothing else of value to be offered in exchange. To be an Aurovilian truly means to be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness. The way is self-government by the psychic being, individually and collectively, which creates what the Mother calls a "divine anarchy".

In the Mother's vision there are no servants. She commented to Satprem that a new world cannot be built with coolies. As for the workers and skilled technicians, these were to be hired on a temporary basis only, while waiting for an Aurovilian to pick up the job, or the worker's/technician's integration as an Aurovilian. The Mother emphasized the need for manual work as the body's prayer. Thus, the pioneers worked in the fields, built their own huts and, from 1971 on, worked at the Matrimandir construction site. Many offered their services to work there, at least on shifts, or on special occasions like pouring concrete on a full moon or *darshan* day.

The Mother's True Guidelines

In the course of my five year archival research I came across the guidelines formulated during the Mother's time and approved by her. The admission form is a simple document revolving around the Mother's text "To be a true Aurovilian"; some basic information and questions are also included. Auroville's first inhabitants were admitted on the basis of these guidelines.

Life in Auroville was meant to begin with the inner quest, which would have a determining effect on the outer life. This

transformation was to proceed hand in hand with the coming forward of those minimum needs in the name of which the Mother had started the 'Auroville Prosperity' system in March 1968, two weeks after founding Auroville. What, then, were the Mother's true guidelines in their practical aspect (outlining the inward quest would take volumes)? What were they, not only as they were presented in the original application form, but taking into account other essential documents, such as statements by the Mother as well as draft documents by her chief architect Roger Anger, her designated Auroville liaison officer Shyam Sunder and other people, all which she commented upon and finally approved?

1. The inner discovery: the psychic opening.
2. Aspiration to reach Auroville's true consciousness.
3. Goodwill.
4. Nurturing human unity.
5. Working for the community at least five hours a day, including Sundays; this was later changed into a minimum of six hours a day, if Sunday was excluded. One's activity should correspond to the effective needs of the community. Work for oneself or one's family doesn't count. Pregnant women and nursing mothers should work as receptionists at guesthouses, kindergartens etc.
6. Newcomers who have no money but do a useful work are taken in charge by Auroville right away and basic accommodations are allotted to them.
7. Minimum needs. "When Auroville meets the individual's needs and requirements, one is expected to offer to Auroville all that he has and can in terms of material possessions."¹¹
8. The children born in Auroville are naturally Aurovilians and Auroville has the full responsibility to care for them; this ceases if the parents take them away.
9. All is collective property, to be utilized for the wellbeing of all, with the Mother's blessings.

11 Mother's years form. [Comp.]

1. All industries/productive units etc. belong to Auroville as a whole; each case is to be considered separately, but within a context where private property and money circulation have no place.
2. Paid workers and paid technicians are allowed only on a temporary basis, until an Aurovilian picks up the job, and anyhow for not more than one year.
3. No servants.
4. No politics.
5. No drugs, no alcohol and ideally no tobacco.
6. No violence.
7. No police, only battalions of Auroville guards made up of athletes and gymnasts.
8. Integration of the villagers. As long as the workers weren't ready to join Auroville, the Mother instituted for them and their families an in-kind system similar to that of 'Auroville Prosperity', preferably replacing wages. Their children are to attend school together with the Auroville children.
9. No polluting traffic. Collective transport, bicycles, electric cars etc. [now, using solar energy] at a speed of no more than 15 kilometers per hour.
10. No chemical fertilizers and pesticides.
11. A need to abide by the laws of India, the country hosting Auroville, with regard to the whole spectrum of life.
12. During the Mother's years people with a turbulent history were accepted both at the Ashram and Auroville, along with the caveat that this was their past to be worked out. As for those undergoing a period of stress and mental imbalance, the Mother had agreed upon a protected, secluded place for them for purposes of rest and putting themselves together.

Having fulfilled these basic conditions the individual was accepted as an Aurovilian within one year, although this period could be shortened or lengthened according to the peculiarities of the situation.

It should be noted that the Mother did not enforce the practice of Integral Yoga as an absolute necessity for Aurovilians. Auroville, where simple goodwill is sufficient to gain admission, is not the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. In the application form one was simply asked, “*How did you come in contact with the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, Sri Aurobindo Society and/or Auroville?*” and, “*Have you studied any literature of Sri Aurobindo and the Mother? Which books?*” Nothing more was asked. In fact, in connection to Auroville the Mother referred to Sri Aurobindo’s yoga only twice. But she also replied, significantly, when a TV crew wanted to interview the residents of Aspiration on various subjects, “It would perhaps be better to ask people who, by a serious practice of yoga, have had at least a glimpse of the Higher Wisdom.”

***From Aspiration to Auromodel:
Quest for the Group-Soul Identity***

The Aspiration experiment was a preliminary attempt at collective living. Along with other recorded comments in many archival documents, as well in the weekly ‘Aspiration talks’ with the Mother, what follows presents glimpses of how early Aurovilians recall their experiences during the Mother’s years.

The inhabitants lived in graceful huts with electricity, running water and toilets. Boiled water, filters and strict hygienic norms became a necessity after an outburst of gastro-intestinal and other problems. The huts were paid for by an Aurovilian who lived there as well. There was no money exchanged and no servants, the Mother having stated that neither had their place in the true Auroville. There were no paid workers either and gardening was done by the residents. The laundry service was provided by the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The meals were taken collectively in the cafeteria. At the beginning, and as long as financial conditions permitted it, the food was excellent and included meat, fish, various salads, fruits and sometimes dessert. The few powered vehicles at the disposal of the community were meant for work only. People traveling to Madras would do

so by taking the ordinary inter-city bus; the ticket was booked through an Auroville service. Daily transportation to and from Pondy was operated by a community bus service. While in Pondy the Aurovilians had free access to the bicycles kept in the yard of the Sri Aurobindo Society. They could also have free meals there and sleep on mats on the floor of the roof-terrace.

Life was simple and everybody shared in the work. Some worked in productive units, while others attended to the chores of the community's daily life, often until ten in the evening. The more intensely they worked, the happier they professed to be; while those who did not work felt out of place and were made to leave or left on their own. Bicycles were available, but only in limited number; they belonged to the community as a whole and had to be shared because there was an insufficient quantity. On Sundays, after lunch, a group of residents used to walk to the Matrimandir Nursery, a few kilometers away, to attend classes on Savitri. As tape-recorded in one of the Aspiration talks, due to the shortage of huts the Mother proposed night shifts elsewhere, at a four kilometers distance. Given the emergency situation, the Mother also approved the construction of a dormitory, considered indispensable at the time, to house twenty-five people. Roger Anger also made a request to the C.A.A. (Comite' Administratif d'Auroville) for the construction of a dormitory of 50 beds, and this too was granted.

The Aurovilian chosen by the Mother for bookkeeping and management of Aspiration, as well as for liaison with the Pondicherry-based members of the C.A.A. received money for the community once a month. The residents were provided with basic needs, within the limits determined by the possibilities of the moment. The system was similar to that of Sri Aurobindo Ashram 'Prosperity' but with a larger selection of items. When the first productive unit, *Toujours Mieux*, began operating, the Aspiration 'Prosperity' system continued to provide for all members of the community.

Organisational issues, the search for simpler and truer modes of living and the many challenges Aspiration's pioneers had

to face were reported and discussed with the Mother. Her comments were displayed on the community's blackboard. It was eventually envisioned that the whole community was to shift to Auromodel, an evolution out of this first collective experiment, and the huts in Aspiration relocated and given to villagers. This was to mark the beginning of a pilot experiment for model villages that the Mother had foreseen. She had also envisaged co-operatives of villagers farming together with Aurovilians on an equal basis. In fact, the Mother considered the local villagers to be Auroville's first inhabitants. She wrote:

“A relationship that is not only cordial but friendly with the inhabitants of the neighbouring village is absolutely indispensable. For the realization of Auroville the first step is to establish a true human fraternity – any shortcoming in this regard is a grave mistake which can compromise the whole work.”¹²

“... a simple and ignorant peasant here is, in his heart, closer to the Divine than all the intellectuals of Europe.

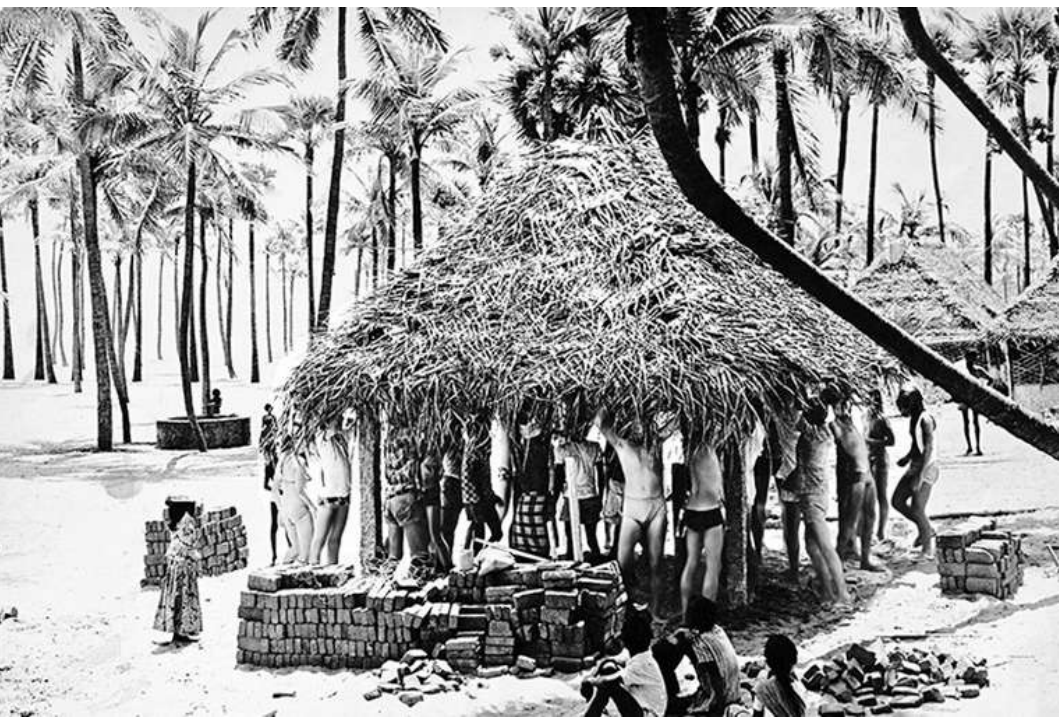
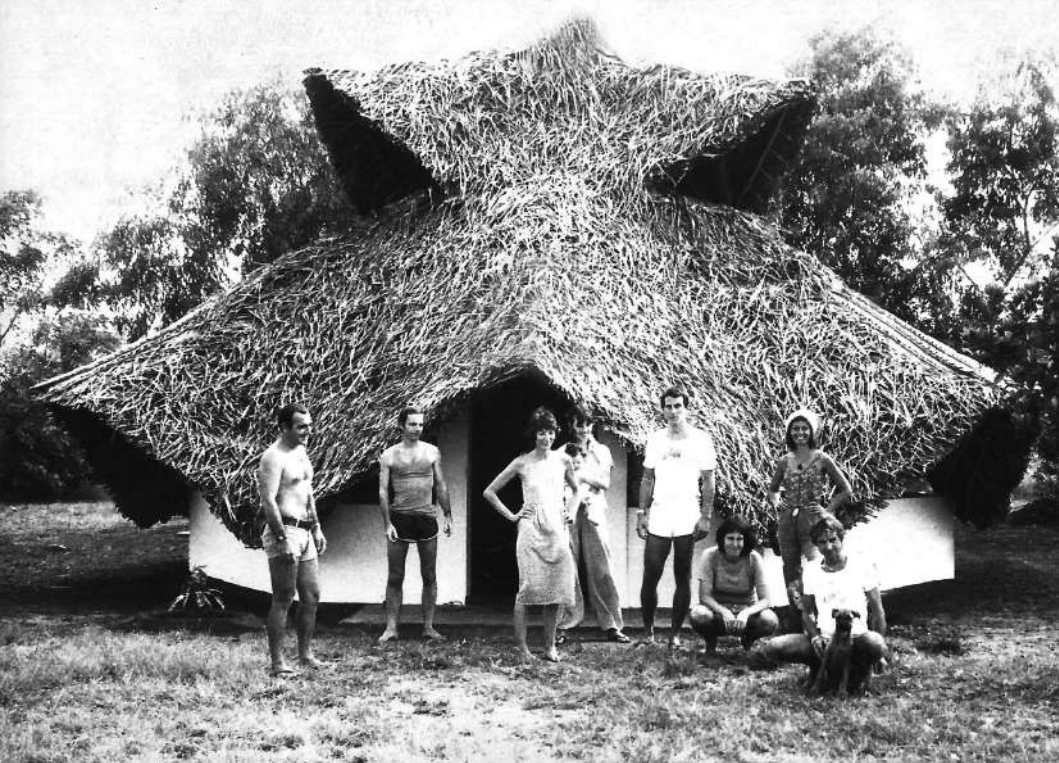
All those who want to become Aurovilians must know this and behave accordingly; otherwise they are unworthy of being Aurovilians.”¹³

Tamilian integrated families were given huts like the rest of the community. Asked whether “*at the beginning of Auroville, the Westerners' houses would be different from those foreseen for the Tamils (experimental hut)*”, the Mother replied, “Those who can't accept to have the same houses are not ready to live in Auroville. Meanness must cease. It is not only houses, but the soul state that must be built in Auroville.”¹⁴ If, at times, the transition seemed too sudden for the adults, it proved to be a more spontaneous process for the children.

12 CWMCE, XIII, p. 249, 23 November 1969.

13 CWMCE, XIII, p. 251, 8 February 1972.

14 Roger Anger's archive, February 1968.



***“The Selflessness of a Tribe...
Tomorrow’s Freedom Depends on Today’s Sacrifice”***

In February 1969 Roger Anger submitted to the Mother a text, which some people attribute to the Aurovilian who had paid for thirty-four huts in Aspiration, and who is remembered for his poignant questions to the Mother and uplifting comments. This document is powerful evidence of the churning in a newly-born community in search of its embryonic group-soul. The Mother wrote, “I am in full agreement and my blessings accompany this realisation.”

“By the nature of its ideal, and the answer it offers to the present needs of our world in evolution, Auroville addresses a large portion of humanity aspiring for a better life.

The people attracted by Auroville are very varied, and varied too [are] their conceptions of what Auroville ought to be. Many will think, of course, that their experiences and inner visions are the only true ones. They are true on a certain level, but no individuals can claim that their own experience is the only valid one. Even if a person has a valid experience, still it must be adapted to the outer situation so that it does not clash with the vision of others, creating disharmony, altogether undesirable in Auroville. A vision or an experience about Auroville may have its own reality, and not merely a poetic one; but many factors may intervene before it is called to be realized. A vision rarely remains free of errors and misinterpretations by the person who receives it. This is unavoidable at humanity’s present level of consciousness. If everybody insists on living out their vision, exactly the way they received it and interpreted it, Auroville will become a second Tower of Babel, where confusion will reign and nobody will be able to communicate with their neighbour.

Auroville is the meeting point between the inner and the outer worlds. In fact the two are but one and Auroville

wants to be a living example of this truth, the concrete proof that spirit and matter are one.

This can happen only if the first Aurovilians are determined to subordinate their personal convictions to the common goal/aim, in total self-abnegation.

Auroville aims at the greatest possible freedom, but to reach there people must make the effort. At the beginning the Aurovilians as a collectivity will need to have the same self-abnegation as have the members of a tribe. As the collective develops according to its own pace and rhythm, evolving from a village to a small town, and then a large city, for each individual it will become progressively easier, to evolve in a less limited way. Tomorrow's freedom depends on today's sacrifice."¹⁵

The Sociology of the Group-Soul

Not unlike Sri Aurobindo's system of Integral Yoga, Auroville begins with average humankind and its unregenerate human nature. Individually as well as collectively the ideal is attained step by step. Auromodel, expected to house some 2,000-3,000 technicians and staff members needed to build the town, was meant to be a prototype to experiment with the day-to-day life, work and evolving modes of organization of an embryo society-in-the-making. The 'ideal town' was to be built on the basis of this collective experience.

Free from impositions of external rules and authorities, being a citizen of Auroville was seen as a path to progressively reach the goal by the force of 'inner discovery' that, in fact, the Mother saw as preliminary requirement, even before joining Auroville. The transition from Aspiration as a village,

15 Two pages follow, entitled "Major options and directives for an overall management plan for the territory of Auroville". Source: Auroville Archives, 13.2.1969. The last three paragraphs were reproduced, much later, in the Gazette Aurovilienne VIII, ¾, December 1981. [Comp.]

to Auromodel as a preliminary urban settlement, and finally to Auroville as a futuristic town, was to take place along with the individual and collective evolution into the Auroville consciousness informing the whole of life and society. This is the task of Auroville's group-soul, a term first introduced by Sri Aurobindo. The Mother had approved for publication in the Auroville Gazette the following quotation from *The Human Cycle*, chapter XXIII, along with her comment:

“Therefore if the spiritual change of which we have been speaking is to be effected, it must unite two conditions which have to be simultaneously satisfied but are most difficult to bring together. There must be the individual and the individuals who are able to see, to develop, to re-create themselves in the image of the Spirit and to communicate both their idea and its power to the mass. And there must be at the same time a mass, a society, a communal mind or at least the constituents of a group-body, the possibility of a group-soul which is capable of receiving and effectively assimilating, ready to follow and effectively arrive, not compelled by its own inherent deficiencies, its defect of preparation to stop on the way or fall back before the decisive change is made. Such a simultaneity has never yet happened, although the appearance of it has sometimes been created by the ardour of a moment. That the combination must happen someday is a certainty.

Udar read the preceding quotation to Mother and asked her if the time has come when the conditions of which Sri Aurobindo writes, and of which a simultaneity has never yet happened, will now happen. The first condition has been fulfilled regarding the individual and the individuals, in this case Sri Aurobindo and the Mother. But what about the second condition, that of a mass, society, communal mind or group-body, group-soul capable of receiving and assimilating?

This is exactly what Auroville is for. But Auroville is still far from fulfilling the necessary conditions.”¹⁶

The importance of this text, besides the Mother specifying “This is exactly what Auroville is for”, is that the second condition stressed is the necessity of “a mass, a society, a communal mind or at least the constituents of a group-body, the possibility of a group-soul”. To fulfill the second condition involves individual psychic transformation *per se*, as well as the formation of a group-soul. This, then, is the next transitional step: the psychic emergence, first in individuals, then as a group-soul, as *conditio sine qua non* before the ultimate stage of divine anarchy can even remotely be envisaged. The Mother’s stress on discipline and organisation, versus ‘freedom’ intended as license and the expression of unbridled desires, is part and parcel of the package.

If we apply Sri Aurobindo’s text to Auroville, as we should, given the Mother’s reply, it follows that all efforts have to be made to strive to manifest the Auroville group-soul. But for this there needs first to be individuals deeply engaged in what Sri Aurobindo and the Mother call psychic transformation. Otherwise there will be no conscious group-soul, and no incentive either for individuals to engage in the transformation process. Right now this is nothing more than a postulate; yet it has to become tomorrow’s reality, in its being the necessary preliminary step to the full manifestation of the divine anarchy of the Gnostic being and society into which Auroville is called to evolve.

In its original purity of vision the prototype of Auromodel, ‘the advanced colony’ of the future Auroville, was meant to be much more than the living quarters for the technicians and volunteers called to build the town, as well as an experimentation in housing, futuristic technologies, research on alternative sources of energy and materials etc. Meant as a prototype to experiment

16 Auroville Gazette, I, 5/6, p. 31, 22.12.1971.

with the multiple complexity of Auroville, Auromodel ideally embodied the necessity of learning to function as a group-soul. This implies the emergence of the psychic entity in a certain number of individuals, whom it also guides in the exploration of new modes of collective organization, work methodologies, human exchanges, mutual sharing and interaction. Hand in hand with this, relentless introspection and self-evaluation, and consequent psychological fine-tuning, while striving inwardly to reach new dimensions of consciousness, are the essential ingredients in the long journey towards the evolution of a new being and new society.

Self-governance is an indispensable corollary of the steady evolution towards the ideal society that only the inner change can make happen. The group-soul is the missing link in the chain. Arbitrary authorities or autocratic machinery have no place, in a self-governed community where the sole ruler is the psychic being, which supports from within psychicised thoughts, feelings and actions, until the psychic being itself comes forward in individuals and thoroughly takes the lead. The psychic influence concomitantly acts on society through the psychic emergence in an avant-garde nucleus of people who have fully embraced the path. Whatever concerns organization and civic life in Auroville requires nurturance and support for consciousness of the group-soul. Its full manifestation is a collective necessity, so as to induce societal changes forerunning the advent of the ideal society through the power of the psychic realization.

Auroville's sadhana is the sociology of the group-soul. This is the foremost difference, between the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, any Ashram for that matter, and Auroville. Its specificity is that, in addition to individual aspiration, there is a collective aspiration, and this leads to a collective realization whose crown is the manifestation, in space and time, of the Avatar's model town. The starting point is the psychic emergence in the individuals.

The Mother said:

“What human beings do not know is that we have the support of the Invisible.

When they make projects they are often unsuccessful because it was not the right thing to do.

When at other times their projects are accepted they are realized according to the will.

But when it is the superior will itself that wants, decides, then it has to succeed; it may seem that there are “hesitations”, [but] it is certain to succeed.

I am completely confident.”¹⁷

She also said:

“Even if you don’t believe it, even if all the circumstances seem quite unfavourable, I KNOW THAT AUROVILLE WILL BE. It may take a hundred years, it may take a thousand years, but Auroville will be because it is DECREED.”¹⁸

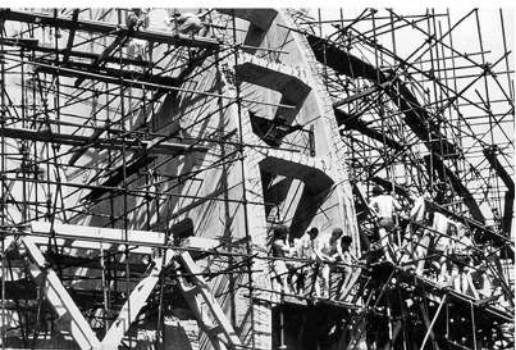
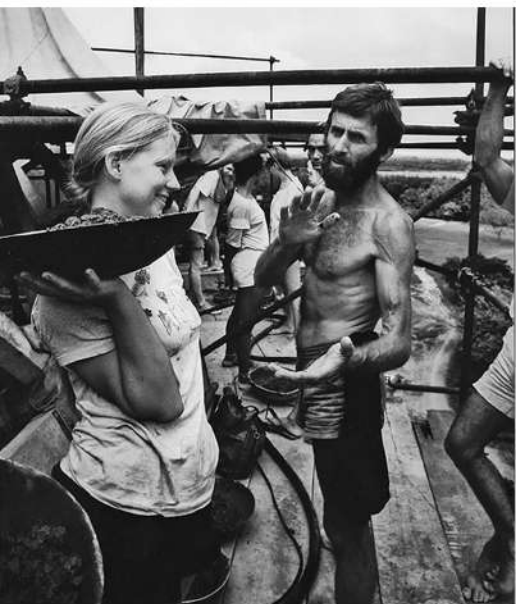
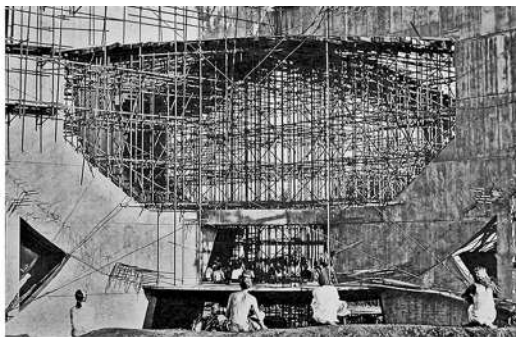
The true hierarchy is essentially spiritual: those at the top have the least material needs. Progress and unending research attain an inner dimension. Beauty, harmony, art, culture become an intrinsic part of one’s daily life, self-education towards the new consciousness of Auroville. Exceeding their tiny selves, humans become universal. Auroville is, in essence -- beyond experiments in community living, beyond achievements and failures. As a long-term Auroville associate stated, “[Auroville’s] true origins are in the future as well as in the past, for it exists eternally in the Consciousness that embraces time and space. To this eternal dimension, to this vast potential for a transforming action ‘in the invisible’ we have as yet no access; we have not found the way.”¹⁹

This is the task awaiting us. Auroville is, forever. A spark in the single Vastness. Ocean Oneness.

17 Roger Anger’s archive, 28.4.1969.

18 *Mother’s Agenda*, VII, 21.9.1966.

19 Sonia Dyne, *The Origins of Auroville*.



“It seems you are a B. A. Is it not a matter of shame for an educated person like you to be sleeping on the floor of an unfurnished room and in a house like this?”

“I am a poor man, and I live like one,” I said.

“Then have you worked up all this mischief with the idea of becoming a rich man?” Cregan replied in a loud voice.

Knowing how impossible it was to explain the love of motherland, sacrifice or the sublimity of a vow of poverty to this thick-skulled Briton I did not make the attempt.

SRI AUROBINDO, Tales of Prison Life



REMINISCENCES 2024

The ideal society is humanity's age-long dream, but only the evolutionary change Sri Aurobindo heralds can make it real. My pilgrimage to India, initiated in 1973, concluded with "the city of dawn" – "the Avatar's model town" the Mother announced, in 1930, in her talk on the supramental manifestation.

When I joined, in 1985 – after a twelve-years apprenticeship at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, in the atmosphere of some early great sadhaks – Auroville was a society of young idealists with minimal material needs. Most people lived in huts, under a keet roof. If the windmill did not turn and we had no water, in the greenbelt we were succoured by a bullock cart from Grace delivering water in barrels, free; if other communities were also in difficulty the rescue could take a few days. I don't remember one single car; bicycles were the current transport. During Mother's years the bicycles in Aspiration, in an insufficient number, were assigned on rotation; adults and students took long walks. The rare motorbikes were used for work only.

In the middle eighties we still got whatever food was available (it was rationed) via the Pour Tous baskets; for us working at the Matrimandir construction site, the free lunch consisted of a plate of rice. There were no air conditioners, and no 'summer holidays'; coping with seemingly eternal blackouts we just stayed in Auroville. Anyhow this made no difference, for us in the green belt: we had no electricity (and hardly had any phone.) When in 1999, after fourteen years in a green belt's hut painted with red and white stripes like a Tamil temple, I moved to Vikas – the first, most central community in the residential zone, along with neighbouring Sailam – there too we had no electricity and no phone, for years.

At that time, the third building in Vikas where I lived (basement plus three floors) was the tallest in Auroville, and so was our windmill; but in the absence of wind, once for six days we had to carry water in buckets from the Water Service's container stationed on the ground.

Most residents lived spontaneously according to Mother's guidelines; out of sheer idealism, this was true even for early Aurovilians hailing from wealthy families. Not even in difficult years, when meeting the material needs dropped far below the minimum, self-giving wavered; living that way was a deliberate choice, a call from within. We boldly went on, unfazed. Sharing harshness and difficulties, we braved them all and lived content; culture and status were eclipsed by the vision of something magnificent we felt called to build, never losing faith and enthusiasm throughout the years. Brotherhood, solidarity arose from living free from material cravings. One for all, all for one. Pure joy. Her "Great Adventure" had just commenced.

In that atmosphere of freedom, the illimitable freedom of yearning souls happy to live with nothing, the presence of the Mother was tremendous. We were her children, offspring of the May 1968 revolution – Auroville had been founded three months earlier – leaving behind a world of ferocious inequality. Revolution would come from within, by the force of the soul: this was our creed. Faith in the Ideal made us one, the Auroville group-soul was born.

Living by the heart, there were no parties or rivalries. No secrets. This is the Auroville I joined. If the issue was urgent, general meetings were called within days. There was no internet yet but there were informative articles in the News and Notes; we debated among ourselves and came to the meetings well prepared. The participants were motivated, our adhesion was sincere. We did not vote; we simply raised our hands; anyone was free to speak and the decisions we took on

the spot were genuinely felt and implemented. If something went wrong, or someone did wrong things, the community was promptly informed; a general meeting was called, in a spirit of transparency and collective self-critic; the healing process commenced to restore justice.

Enduring, creating, during Mother's years was a profession of faith. Evoking when my Auroville adventure commenced, when youth flocked from all over at the quest of brotherhood, equality and freedom, a society governed by the collective soul, seems today a fairytale. But it was a fairytale we lived, day in and day out, year in and year out. We wouldn't exchange our sort for anything else in the world; whatever duress we went through was nothing, compared to the magnificent destiny awaiting us. A survivor? A proud survivor, grateful for the unforgettable years I lived surrounded by unforgettable people.

Evoking how minimally lived those who founded Auroville nurtures the soul. An important source is "Memories of Auroville" by the late Janet Fearn; two pioneers recall:

"As a matter of fact I asked Mother whether I should work here. And she said yes, I can go and work in Kulapalayam, because there was a very great necessity for the Tamil people to know what Auroville is about. Auroville is essentially a project expressing the inner spirit. If you want to concentrate on external things only for its own sake instead of as an expression of inner spirit, the main thrust of Auroville will be lost. The other things are there and they will happen, but as an expression of the spirit." (G. Varadharajan)

"I asked about the work, as that was the most important thing for us, about the work in Aspiration, how to proceed. She immediately felt there was the

tendency to escape a little bit from the work that had to be done. And she said that the inner discovery should have been done before coming to Auroville. This was the very, very striking thing she said, that it would have been much better and much easier. But of course, it was not always the case for us. She stressed the importance of the very, very physical work. She gave us some so wonderful details. I mean you can do anything with this attitude of trying to find the true attitude, just cycling, and just planting a tree, just doing anything, sweeping, cooking. It was so wonderful, this very first talk with her, when she stressed that just with physical work you could have communion with the Divine. It was very important for us, because we had this tendency of thinking that everything can be done by a miracle. I mean we were very young and thought that maybe there was another way of building the city, not just building factories and producing all these things that we were told to do. But she made it clear that we have to find the Divine here on this Earth through physically working and finding the true attitude.” (Christophe)

How we lived, outwardly, reflected who we were within; non-ostentatious lifestyle for some heralded the satwic quest. The admission form to be submitted to the Mother opens with the text “*To be a True Aurovilian*”, worked out together with the early inhabitants of Aspiration: “***At our inmost centre there is a free being, wide and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who ought to become the acting centre of our being and our life in Auroville. ...***”

As Christophe reported, the inner discovery should happen before coming to Auroville, “*it would have been much better and much easier. But of course, it was not always the case for us.*” Ultimately, this is the issue: the ‘goodwill’ the Mother

demands and of which sincerity – foremost quality of the psychic being – is the starting point. Within as without, confusion will not subside as long as the psychic being doesn't take the lead and the group-soul is born anew; then only everything falls harmoniously into place and Mother's guidelines and Prosperity are lived effortlessly as svadharmā. There is no gnostic society unless *satwa* harmonises *rajas* and *tapas*. This should be how we live, and serve, in Auroville.

Journeying through the psychic is the lever – even if the spiritual being is not yet manifest, even if the psychic realisation is far away. The psychic conversion demands the psychicisation of all layers of being: mental, vital and physical. Of the three, conversion of the vital is the most urgent necessity; the heroic vital is a tremendous tool, if the crudeness of the low vital is kept at bay. Behind the resilience and bravery of the pioneers stood the force of a vital turning for help to the psychic being.

In Sri Aurobindo's words:

“The surface vital is narrow, ignorant, limited, full of obscure desires, passions, cravings, revolts, pleasures and pains, transient joys and griefs, exultations and depressions. The true vital being on the contrary is wide, vast, calm, strong, without limitations, firm and immovable, capable of all power, all knowledge, all Ananda. It is moreover without ego, for it knows itself to be a projection and instrument of the Divine; it is the divine Warrior, pure and perfect; in it is an instrumental Force for all divine realisations.”¹

¹ Sri Aurobindo, SABCL, *Letters on Yoga - I*, p.185.

Re-emergence of Auroville's group-soul, taking again the lead of our collective body, is the call. Preliminary to this is the emergence, in the individuals, of the psychic being with all its noble qualities: love and empathy, chivalry and compassion, loyalty and sincerity. Unconditional surrender to the light and grace, unquestionable faith in the advent of a society governed by the collective soul.

When, recovering the simple lifestyle that made our early years a joyful adventure, spiritual living becomes one's daily sustenance, Auroville will manifest. A force in action, decreed by the Supreme.

Paulette Hadnagy

Auroville, 9th July 2024
paulette@auroville.org.in



THE NEW BEING
AND
THE NEW SOCIETY



A Compilation of Mother's words and archival material
during the formative years of Auroville

The task of giving a concrete form to Sri Aurobindo's vision was entrusted to the Mother. The creation of a new world, a new humanity, a new society expressing and embodying the new consciousness is the work she has undertaken. By the very nature of things, it is a collective ideal that calls for a collective effort so that it may be realised in the terms of an integral human perfection.

The Ashram founded and built by the Mother was the first step towards the accomplishment of this goal. The project of Auroville is the next step, more exterior, which seeks to widen the base of this attempt to establish harmony between soul and body, spirit and nature, heaven and earth, in the collective life of mankind.

Written for a UNESCO committee. MCW, 1969, 204



A SELF-SUPPORTING TOWNSHIP

(Mother extracts from a heap of papers, letters and envelopes of all kinds, a note on Auroville, which was based on her words but written from memory.)

(Laughing) All this hangs together in a marvelous balance!

(Satprem reads out the note)

“Auroville will be a self-supporting township.

“All who live there will participate in its life and development.

“This participation may be passive or active.

“There will be no taxes as such but each will contribute to the collective welfare in work, kind or money.

“Sections like Industries which participate actively will contribute part of their income towards the development of the township. Or if they produce something (like foodstuff) useful for the citizens, they will contribute in kind to the township which is responsible for the feeding of the citizens.

“No rules or laws are being framed. Things will get formulated as the underlying Truth of the township emerges and takes shape progressively. We do not anticipate.”

Is that all?

I thought I had said more than that. Because inwardly I said a lot, a whole lot about the organization of food and so on... We are going to try things out.

Some things are really interesting. For instance, I'd like... To begin with, every country will have its pavilion, and in the pavilion, there will be a kitchen from that country, which means

that the Japanese will be able to eat Japanese food if they want to (!), and so on, but in the township itself, there will be food for vegetarians, food for nonvegetarians, and also a sort of attempt to find “tomorrow’s food.” The idea is that all this work of assimilation which makes you so heavy (it takes up so much time and energy from the being) should be done BEFORE, that you should be able to immediately assimilate what you are given, as with things they now make; for instance, they have those vitamins that can be directly assimilated, and also (what do they call it?... [*Mother tries to remember*] I take them every day... Words and I aren’t on very good terms!)... proteins. Nutritive principles that are found in one thing or another and aren’t voluminous – you need to take a tremendous quantity of food to assimilate very little. So now that they are clever enough on the chemical level, that could be simplified. People don’t like it, simply because... they take an intense pleasure in eating (!), but when you no longer take pleasure in eating, you need to be nourished and not to waste your time with that. The amount of time lost is enormous: time for eating, time for digesting, and the rest. So I would like an experimental kitchen to be there, a sort of “culinary laboratory,” for a try. And according to their tastes and tendencies, people would go here or there.

And you don’t pay for your food, but you must give work, or ingredients: for example, those who had fields would give the produce of their fields; those who had factories would give their products; or else your own work in exchange for food.

That alone does away with much of the internal circulation of money.

And in every field things of that sort could be found... Ultimately, it must be a town for studies – studies and research on how to live both in a simplified way and in a way such that the higher qualities have MORE TIME to develop. There.

It’s only a small beginning.

“Auroville will be a self-supporting township.”

I want to insist on the fact that it will be an experiment: it's to make experiments – experiments, research, studies.

An experimental city?

Yes... Auroville will be a city that will attempt to be, or strive or want to be, *self-supporting*, that is...

Autonomous?

“Autonomous” would be understood as a sort of independence that breaks off relations with the outside, and that's not what I mean.

For instance, those who produce food, a factory such as “Aurofood” (naturally, when we are fifty thousand, it will be difficult to meet the needs, but for the moment we'll only be a few thousand at the most), well, a factory always produces far too much... So it will sell outside and receive money. And “Aurofood,” for instance, wants to have a special relationship with workers, not at all the old system – something that would be an improvement on the Communist system, a more balanced organization than Sovietism or Communism, that is, which doesn't too much lean either toward one side or the other.

The idea of Aurofood is good, and they are trying to make propaganda among industrialists.

And there is one thing I wanted to say. One's participation in the welfare and existence of the whole township isn't something worked out individually: such and such an individual must give so much. It's not like that. It's worked out according to one's means, activity, possibilities of production; it's not the democratic idea, which cuts everything into small equal bits – an absurd machinery. It's worked out according to one's means: one who has much gives much, one who has little gives little; one who is strong works a lot, one who isn't does something else. You understand, it's something truer, deeper. And that's why I am not trying to explain it right away, because people

will start making all kinds of protests. It must come into being AUTOMATICALLY, so to say, with the growth of the township, in the true spirit. That's why this note is quite succinct.

This sentence, for instance:

“All who live there will participate in its life and development...”

... according to their capacities and means, not a mechanical “so much per unit.” That's the point. It must be something living and TRUE, not mechanical. And “according to their capacities,” that is, one who has material means such as those a factory gives will have to provide in proportion to his production – not so much per individual or per head.

“This participation may be passive or active.”

I don't understand what they mean by “passive” (because I spoke in French, then they put it into English). What can they mean by “passive”?... It would rather be on different planes or levels of consciousness.

You meant that those who basically are sages, who work within, won't have to...

Yes, that's right. Those who have a higher knowledge won't have to work with their hands, that's what I mean.

“There will be no taxes as such but each will contribute to the collective welfare in work, kind or money.”

So that's clear: there will be no taxes of any kind, but everyone will have to contribute to the collective welfare through his work, in kind or with money. Those who have nothing other than money will give money. But to tell the truth, the “work” may be an inner work (but that can't be said, because people aren't honest enough). The work may be an occult work, a completely inner work, but of course, for it to be so, it must be absolutely sincere and true, and with the capacity: no pretense. But it's not necessarily a material work.

“Sections like Industries which participate actively will contribute part of their income towards the development of the township. Or if they produce something (like foodstuff) useful for the citizens, they will contribute in kind to the township which is responsible for the feeding of the citizens.”

That’s what we’ve said. The industries will participate actively, they will contribute. If they are industries producing articles that aren’t in constant need – and are therefore in amounts or numbers too great for the township’s own use, so that they will be sold outside – those industries must naturally participate through money. And I take the example of food: those who produce food will give the township what it needs (in proportion to what they produce, of course), and it is the township’s responsibility to feed everyone. That means people won’t have to buy their food with money, but they will have to earn it.

It’s a kind of adaptation of the Communist system, but not in a spirit of levelling: according to everyone’s capacity, his position (not a psychological or intellectual one), his INNER position.

In democracies and with the Communists, there’s a levelling down: everyone is pulled down to the same level.

Yes, that’s just the point.

The true part is that every human being has the material right... (but it’s not a “right”...). The organization should be such, arranged in such a way, that everyone’s material need should be met, not according to notions of right and equality, but on the basis of the most elementary necessities; then, once that is established, everyone must be free to organize his life, not according to his monetary means, but according to his inner capacities.

“No rules or laws are being framed. Things will get formulated as the underlying Truth of the township emerges and takes shape progressively. We do not anticipate.”

What I mean is that usually (always so far, and more and more so), men establish mental rules according to their conceptions and their ideal, then they apply them (*Mother lowers her fist, as if to show the world under the mental grip*). And that's absolutely false, arbitrary, unreal, so the result is that things revolt, or else waste away and disappear.... It's the experience of LIFE ITSELF that must slowly work out rules AS SUPPLE AND VAST as possible, in order that they ever remain progressive. Nothing must be fixed. That's the immense error of governments: they build a framework and say, "Here is what we've established, now we must live under it." So naturally, Life is crushed and prevented from progressing. It is Life itself, developing more and more in a progression towards Light, Knowledge, Power, that must little by little establish rules as general as possible, so as to be extremely supple and capable of changing according to need – of changing AS RAPIDLY as habits and needs do.

(silence)

At bottom, the problem almost boils down to this: to replace the mental government of intelligence by the government of a spiritualized consciousness.

It's an extremely interesting experience: how the same actions, the same work, the same observations, the same relationship with the people around (near or far), how they take place in the mind, through intelligence, and how they take place in the consciousness, through experience. And that's what this body is now learning – to replace the mental government of intelligence by the spiritual government of the consciousness. ...

Mother's Agenda, VIII, 1993, 30.12.1967





**ASPIRATION TALKS
AND GENESIS OF THE TEXT
“TO BE A TRUE AUROVILIAN”¹**

Between March and August of 1970, Mother met weekly in her room a small number of Aurovilians, many from Aspiration community – hence the name “Aspiration Talks”. After an offering of flowers and the introduction of new persons, there was usually a period of conversation, though sometimes only what Mother called a “bath of silence”. The following talks were edited from tape-recording of these twenty-two meetings.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 317

A: We would like to speak to you about work in Aspiration. What we would like to know, what we are looking for, is the right attitude...

What is the trouble?

A: The trouble is...

Each one pulls in his own direction.

A: Each one pulls in his own direction. No one is really in contact with what is true.

We have to bear in mind that we are starting from the present state of humanity. So you must face all the difficulties; you must find the solution.

(Pointing to the tape-recorder) What is that?

B: I am recording for the people of Auromodèle, Sweet Mother.

(Mother laughs) You shouldn't have told me!

¹ As indicated in the references, this section is taken from the Centenary Edition of the Mother's Collected Works, and from the Mother's Agenda. [Comp.]

A: But, Sweet Mother, you know, several solutions are open to us. For instance, on one hand...

Each man has his solution, and that is the great difficulty. To be in the Truth, each one has his solution. And yet we must find a way for all these solutions to work together.

(Silence)

So the framework must be vast, very flexible, and there must be a great goodwill from everyone: that is the first condition – the first individual condition – goodwill. To be flexible enough to do the best thing to be done at each moment.

A: But for example, we are told that we must have factories, that we must produce, and some of us have no feeling for that sort of work. We would prefer a seeking which is more...

More inward?

A: More inward, rather than to launch into factories, work, production for the sake of money, etc. That is not what we feel, that is not what we want to do in Aspiration at the moment. We would like to know what you think about it.

(Mother concentrates and there is a long silence.)

To be practical, you must first have a very clear vision of your goal, of where you are going. From this point of view, take money for example. An ideal which may be several hundred years ahead of its time, we don't know: money should be a power which belongs to nobody and which should be controlled by the most universal wisdom present. Put on the earth someone who has a vision vast enough to be able to know the needs of the earth and precise enough to be able to tell where the money should go – you understand, we are very far from that, aren't we? For the moment, the gentleman still says, "This is mine", and when he is generous, he says, "I give it to you." That's not it.

But there is a long way to go between what we are and what must be. And for that we must be very flexible, never losing sight of the goal, but knowing that we cannot reach it at one

bound and that we must find the way. Well, that is much more difficult, even more difficult than to make the inner discovery. Truly speaking, that should have been made before coming here.

For there is a starting-point: when you have found within yourself the light that never wavers, the presence which can guide you with certitude, then you become aware that constantly, in everything that happens, there is something to be learnt, and that in the present state of matter there is always a progress to be made. That is how one should come, eager to find out at every minute the progress to be made. To have a life that wants to grow and perfect itself, that is what the collective ideal of Auroville should be: “A life that wants to grow and perfect itself”, and above all, not in the same way for everyone – each one in his own way.

Well, now there are thirty of you, it is difficult, isn't it? When there are thirty thousand of you, it will be easier, because, naturally, there will be many more possibilities. You are the pioneers, you have the most difficult task, but I feel it is the most interesting one. Because you must establish in a concrete, durable and growing way the attitude that is needed to truly be an Aurovilian. To learn every day the lesson that is needed to truly be an Aurovilian. To learn every day the lesson of the day... Each sunrise is an opportunity to make a discovery. So, with that state of mind, you find out. Everyone does.

And the body needs activity: if you keep it inactive, it will begin to revolt by becoming sick and so on. It needs an activity, it really needs an activity like planting flowers, building a house, something really material. You must feel it. Some people do exercises, some ride bicycles, there are countless activities, but in your little group you must all come to an agreement so that each one can find the activity which suits his temperament, his nature and his need. But not with ideas. Ideas are not much good, ideas give you preconceptions, for example, “That is a good work, that work is not worthy of me,” and all that sort of nonsense. There is no bad work – there are only bad workers. All work is good when you know how to do it in the right way.

Everything. And it is a kind of communion. If you are fortunate enough to be conscious of an inner light, you will see that in your manual work it is as if you called the Divine down into things; then the communion becomes very concrete, there is a whole world to be discovered, it is marvelous.

You are young, you have plenty of time before you. And to be young, to be really young, we must always, always keep on growing, developing, progressing. Growth is the sign of youthfulness and there is no limit to the growth of consciousness. I know old people of twenty and young people of fifty, sixty, seventy. And if one does manual work, one keeps in good health.

So now you must find the solution.

A: All right.

Everything you can do... there are all sorts of things, all sorts. And you should see among yourselves how it can be arranged. You will come and tell me, all right?

B: Yes, all right.

Then, good-bye. Come again in a week.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 317-20, 10.3.1970

[Excerpts from an "Aspiration talk" with three Aurovilians (the same ones as earlier) and two Ashramites.]

Come in (*Mother laughs*)

(Those who enter offer flowers to Mother. Pointing to the flowers named "Service", she says, laughing:)

Service to Auroville.

(Mother arranges the flowers and distributes them. While giving "Service" and "Transformation" flowers, she remarks:)

It is service which leads to transformation. I mean it seriously.

A: Sweet Mother, may we ask you a question?

Yes.

A: It is on behalf of Aspiration in general.

Oh!

A: In Aspiration some people would like to know whether it would be possible for it to be not always the same people who come to see you on Tuesdays.

You see, I am quite willing, but it is up to you. *(Mother laughs)*

No! I am willing to see four of you.

(Turning to C) I have called him for the first time today, but in his place other people could take turns in coming. In any case I will be seeing him. But with you three, a fourth person can come, taking turns, a different one each time.

A: Very well.

All I ask is that they should be sincere, that they do not come out of mere curiosity. If they are sincere, if they truly want to progress, they may come one at a time, I am quite willing. I do not even need to know their names. You see, that has no importance to me. It is only the quality of the receptivity that counts. If they are open and feel that it does them good, then fine, it is very good....

(To C) So you will come once a week to keep me informed about the garden... You, you people come from Auroville; him, he works here... Is that all right?

A: Quite all right, Sweet Mother.

(Long silence)

How many of you are there out there?

A: About forty.

(Mother laughs) I'm going to ask you an indiscreet question. How many are sincere? You can't know that just by looking at them. There won't be forty coming here! How many asked you if they could come?

B: Five, six.

That's reasonable. Who?

B: There were D, E, F – and many people there feel much love for you, you know.

(Silence)

I am going to set two conditions. To want to progress – that is really a moderate condition. To want to progress, to know that everything is yet to be done, everything is yet to be conquered. The second condition: to do something every day, some activity, some work, anything, something which is not for oneself, and above all something which is an expression of goodwill for all – you are a group, aren't you? – simply to show that you do not live solely for yourselves as if you were at the centre of the universe and the whole universe had to revolve around you. That is how it is for the vast majority of people, and they don't even know it. Each one should become aware that, spontaneously, one puts oneself at the centre of the universe and wants everything to come to oneself, just like that, in one way or another. But one should make an effort to recognize the existence of the whole, that's all. It is to widen one's consciousness, just to become a little less tiny.

So those who adhere to my programme will come once a week, in turn. Is that all right?

(...)

Those who want to progress and who think that the world is vaster than themselves, than their own consciousness.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 321-3, 24.3.1970

[The following extract from an "Aspiration Talk" gives a clear picture of the idealism of the pioneers and their scanty needs, as well as the spirit with which the Mother expected people to be in Auroville:]

A: The second question is about visitors, the people who come to Aspiration. There are two categories: those who stay for the day and have their meals there, and those who want to spend the night and who want to stay. We do not know what attitude we should take towards them in general.

Spending the night is not possible, is it? You have no room?

A: No, we have no room.

But where do they come from? Are they sent by the [Sri Aurobindo] Society or do they come just like that?

A: Some of them are sent by the Society, but not all. We don't always know where they come from.

There ought to be some supervision.

A: Because sometimes it creates misunderstandings, which are not...

You should have an office, that is to say, there ought to be someone there all the time, someone who could receive people coming from outside, interview them, find out who has sent them, where they come from, why they have come. He should be an Indian. That is absolutely indispensable, someone who speaks...

A: Some Indians come, but many Europeans as well – Germans, for instance, and Englishmen, Americans and Frenchmen too; they just happen to be passing by and...

There should be one Indian and one European who can speak at least French and English. If he could speak German too it would be still better. But nowadays, with English... Spending the night – I don't agree, because we know nothing about what they are like or what they want or why they have come. Those who come with a recommendation, someone knows them, they have been sent to us, that is different; but those who come just like that – there must be someone to tell them what it's all about, and that it is not an object of curiosity.

A: But, Sweet Mother, for instance, let us take an example: if someone has already come to Aspiration and has left to go and work somewhere else, and he would like to come back from time to time, what attitude should we... in that case, could he spend the night there?

Is he a nice person?

A: Yes, he is a nice person.

Then it is all right. That is quite different, it is different. I am talking about strangers, people whom we do not know and who come just like that. Who could receive them?

A: Well, in fact I don't really know. We ought to discuss it among ourselves. I don't know.

Yes, perhaps it would not be much fun.

A: Not always.

But it would be rather useful, it would be very useful. It would be enough to have a table and a chair—you invite them in and interview them. If necessary, there could be a stool for them!

A: We could also give them something to drink...

[*Mother laughs*] Oh! That's too much. "What do you expect from us, who told you about us", etc... And then it ought to be someone with a little psychological insight. If he sees that the people are sincere and interesting, then it is all right; but to spend the night – better not.

A: On the other hand, we have decided to ask for money from people who have a meal there.

Yes, ask them to pay.

A: Ask them to pay – is it all right?

Yes, yes, it is all right. You have only to set a fixed price. Who is doing the cooking?

A: We have had a cook for a month, a Tamil man who learned to cook during the fifteen years he spent in France; and there are people helping him in the kitchen. But he is always there.

[*Jokingly*] You could open a little restaurant!

Do you know M?

A: Yes.

He has some sort of shop for selling things.

A: Yes, a store.

Yes, that's it. But there is no one to look after it at night and so there are thefts. And it seems that you have too many people and not enough accommodation. So what I suggested was that each month someone could go there to sleep at night and come back in the morning, if it's not too far.

A: It's three kilometres away.

G: Three or four kilometres, Sweet Mother.

Oh, well that's nothing.

A: By cycle it is nothing.

By cycle – do you have bicycles?

A: Yes, though actually we don't have enough. We must get some more. We don't have enough cycles but we can find some more.

And all you have to do is go there in the evening, at night, and come back in the morning. At night the bicycles won't be needed [at Aspiration]. But if you know M, he could take one of you along and show him and explain it to him.

A: All right.

I think it will be all right... I don't know what it's like, I couldn't say, but I hope that it will be comfortable.

A: And what do you think about making a big hut to house twenty or twenty-five people? It was one of N's ideas.

I think that until there is enough accommodation for everyone it is quite indispensable. I'm not saying that it will be supercomfortable, but it is most indispensable.

CWMCE, XIII, pp.326-30, 31.3.1970

[The Mother commented to Satprem regarding her meeting with the Aurovilians in succession:]

I see people from Auroville in rotation (once a week), in fact to try and work on this material, and it's really interesting (people I don't know: every time I am brought one or two or three new ones; some stay on, and others come in rotation). I said, "Those who want a bath of silence can come in turn," and not a word is spoken. It's really interesting. Well, there are people there who behave like... and despite everything, they feel that what they are here is superior to what they are there. But the others would need to have a lot of patience!...

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 22.4.1970

[Excerpt from the height "Aspiration talk":]

Do you know the small Ashram brooches? Well, there is going to be one for Auroville. Because there are people who come and settle down on Auroville land and they refuse to go and see the Committee, saying, "Auroville is free!" and they settle down there. But all the same, we need to be able to distinguish between those who are recognized Aurovilians and those who are more fanciful. So something is being prepared – of course, it is not ready yet. I only wanted to show you. *(Mother takes a sheet of paper from her table.)*

It will be a small brooch about this size. It is like this. The circle will be made of silver; and here are the four aspects, and Sri Aurobindo's square with the lotus. And "Auroville" will be written all around it. So you will wear that in your buttonhole – the recognized Aurovilians!² *(Mother smiles.)*

CWMCE, XIII, p.337, 28.4.1970

[Regarding the brooch, the following day the Mother told Satprem:]

We're going to have to give Auroville people some identity object. Yes, it has happened that some people came and settled

2 In August 1971 the Mother designed the symbol for Auroville.

on Auroville's lands without asking for anyone's permission, and suddenly we find ourselves faced with a man or a family... So it's beginning to be troublesome. Because it's very scattered.

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 29.4.1970

[She told Satprem again, a few days later:]

But I must say there's literally an invasion there (at different places in Auroville) because it's not watched over, some plots of land are free, and at the center especially, some people have settled there, and there are constantly people who come and settle without asking for permission. So there was a thought to have a "badge" for those who are really Aurovilians (*Mother shows a specimen of badge*). For a few days already they've been thinking of organizing that: during the first year they will have a sort of identity card, and afterwards, if things are fine at the end of the year, you're given the badge.

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 2.5.1970

[The Mother was 'amused' to know from Satprem about his interaction with some Aurovilians:]

Did you see the brochure [on *Auroville and Religions*]? It's nice... I had it distributed in Auroville. People from "Auromodèle" come in turn every Tuesday afternoon (five or six of them), so yesterday I gave them that.

But I too see some of them: one after another they come to see me.

Ah!

Yes, one feels they're beginning to wake up a little.

Yes, yes, it's beginning to stir.

A few are nice....

What do they tell you? It would amuse me to know.

Most of them have problems of action – or rather of lack of action.

Yes.

Also problems of relationship among themselves, and so on. So I try... I tell them what comes to me at the time. I try to make them understand the great thing behind.

Yes, it does them good. They need to be guided.

But one of them even asked me if I could go there!...

(Mother laughs)

So I told them, listen!... No, giving speeches is quite useless. All those who want to come like that, individually I can say something for them, but not collectively.

(Mother approves)

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 20.5.1970

[Twelfth "Aspiration talk" with four Aurovilians and the Mother's granddaughter, Purna Prema, who was usually present. In the Centenary Edition format she is referred to as G. At that time, Purna Prema was married to Roger Anger, the Mother's architect for Auroville.]

Are there any questions?

A: There have been some reactions about the little booklet that you gave us on religions, about the sentence which says: "Our research will not be a search effected by mystic means."³

They don't know what mystic means are?

A: Maybe they don't know, but perhaps what we do not know either is this: why not by mystic means? I have been asked the question.

By "mystic means" I mean the way of those who withdraw from life, like the monks, the people who withdraw into convents, or like the sannyasins here, those who abandon life to find

3 "Our search will not be a search effected by mystic means. It is in life itself that we wish to find the divine. And it is through this discovery that life can really be transformed."

spiritual life, who make a division between the two and say, "It is either one or the other." We say, "That is not true." It is in life and by living life entirely that one can live the spiritual life, that one MUST live the spiritual life. The supreme consciousness has to be brought HERE.

From the purely material and physical point of view, man is not the last race. As man came after the animal, so another being must come after man. And as there is only one Consciousness, it is the same Consciousness which having had the experience of man will have the experience of a superhuman being. And so if we go away, if we leave life, if we reject life, then we will never be ready to do that.

But if you had read Sri Aurobindo, you would have understood, you would not have asked this question. It is because there is a lack of preparation from the intellectual point of view. You want to know everything without having studied.

(To A) Now, what else do you have to say?

A: *That is all. Yes, there is something else, if you don't mind. It is a letter from T. A letter from T who is here and who asked me to read it to you.*

All right.

A: *(Reading:)* "Concerning what you have written about religions, a prayer rises up towards you. We ask for the Divine's Truth, fulfilled in the Truth of our being; we ask that our actions may manifest His Truth, that our minds and hearts may be exclusively moved by His Truth. We implore the full Light of His Truth on all that is still unconscious. With His Truth we want to know, through His Truth we want to act, and in His Truth we want to be. This is the prayer of Auroville to the Supreme. Be the triumphant Mother of our consciousness."

It could be put up on the notice-board. It is very good, very good.

(*R. indicates that he has a question to ask.*) What do you have to say?

R: I have a question, Mother, a practical question.

Practical?

R: It seems very difficult to be able to want to achieve any specific aim and at the same time to love everyone. When we begin to want something and try to act with a particular result in mind, immediately we cut ourselves off from everyone who does not agree with that. In practice, how can we do both at the same time?

You cut yourself off from people who do not think as you do?

R: Really... all the time...

But not a single person thinks as you do!

R: Of course.

So how can you love anyone?

R: As long as I don't want anything, it is all right.

Oh!

R: Yes!

(Mother concentrates for two or three minutes)

It is because when you want something, it is the ego that wants. So, the ego... must be ignored. The first thing to do is not to act for yourself but to act in obedience to the Divine, to express the divine Will. For your part, you have no orders to give. As long as it is a personal will, a personal desire, it is not the true thing, and you cannot... not only is it not the true thing, but you cannot know the true thing!

That must be (*gesture of rejecting something forcefully*)... *that must be expelled!*

That is why alone, we are nothing at all. This is life. We do not act for ourselves. We do not act from our personal will and for a personal result. We act only by the divine Will and for the

divine Will. So much so, that effortlessly, spontaneously, we can feel the greatest tenderness for our physical enemy. When you have felt that, you will understand. That is the whole limitation, the whole limitation.

When conflicts arise, and they arise all the time, for all of us – immediately it is as if one were drawing back into one’s own skin. For that is what happens: each one draws back inside himself. But the difficulty is that even when one has relatively little personal will, if the person next to you expresses a personal will, it is exactly... First of all it creates a reaction and then too, if you are more or less in agreement with it, you take this will, you see, and you begin to reflect it all around. So you can see what happens. And that is going on all the time. First one person has a will, and then another, and so on, endlessly. That is happening everywhere; the strongest will prevails. It is worthless, worthless.

When we say, “We are at the service of the Divine”, it is not just words. It is He who should act through us, not we ourselves. The greatest objection is: How can we know the divine Will? But as a matter of fact, I tell you: if you sincerely renounce your personal will, you will know.

A: Yes, that is clear.

Yes, that’s it.

(Mother remains silent, concentrating on each person present, for about fifteen minutes. Then to A:) So, you will explain that to them.

We want to change life “we do not want to run away from it... Until now all those who have tried to know what they called God, to enter into relation with God, have abandoned life. They have said, “Life is an obstacle. We shall abandon life for that.” So, in India you had the sannyasins who renounced everything; in Europe you had the monks and the ascetics. Well, they can escape, even though when they are reborn they will have to begin all over again. But life remains as it is.

CWMCE, XIII, pp.337-41, 26.5.1970

[Thirteenth "Aspiration talk" with several Aurovilians and the Mother's granddaughter:]

I have been asked to formulate the aspiration of Auroville. Because there is a lot of goodwill, but it is... it does not seem to be organized. So, I said: the best thing to do is to formulate what Auroville wants to be. That will provide some coordination. But it is a great task.

Each time, we could formulate one of the aspirations, or else you could bring me a question each time. And there will be many of them, so, one question and then either I will answer right away or I will give you the answer the next time. Or else, we can try to express together the aspiration of Auroville.

A: Do you already have some vision of what this aspiration is?

Of course! Of course! I know what I want, I know what I want Auroville to be. But there is a considerable gap... It is Auroville in a few years' time, many years from now.

A: But you think that we shall achieve this future Auroville?

This is how we will proceed: each time you come, I will give you one of Auroville's aspirations and then we'll put them one after the other, and the next time you can ask me a question on what I have said the time before. There is one drawback; it is not always the same people who come. There are three of you who always come. You must keep up the continuity.

What must one be to be a true Aurovillian? You put the question like that. What must one be to be a true Aurovillian? *(To A)* Do you have any ideas?

A: For me, the first thing, to really be an Aurovillian, is the will to consecrate oneself wholly to the Divine.

That is good, it is good; but there are not many like that. *(To G)* Here, give me a piece of paper. I'm going to write that down as number one.

(Mother writes) "To Be a True Aurovillian". I have written it with only one "I" on purpose.

So, we shall see about number two.

From the point of view of behaviour, of more down-to-earth things, for example: We want to be free from all moral and social conventions. But that is where we have to be very careful! One must not liberate oneself from these things by sinking below them into license and the blind satisfaction of desires; one must liberate oneself from these conventions by rising above them and by eliminating desires, and replace moral rules by obedience to the Divine.

(G offers Mother a notebook in which to write what she has just said.)

It is not in a form which can be written down.

G: Yes, Sweet Mother.

Now we will be silent.

G: There is a question, Sweet Mother.

Eh?

G: There is a question.

A question? What question? Who has a question?

G: It is B here, who teaches Judo at Aspiration. He says, "Sweet Mother, why is it so difficult to carry on a physical activity, sports or any other, in Auroville in general and particularly in Aspiration?"

Difficult? Why is it difficult?

B: It is difficult, Sweet Mother, to be steady, to go on with an activity, sports or any other, which we have started. So I am asking you why.

Don't you have any students?

B: We have started Judo classes. There were eight of us two months ago, but now we are two or three. And for many activities it is like that.

What reason do they give? Is it laziness, indolence, or because they feel superior?

B: I don't know, Sweet Mother.

If it is laziness, you must begin slowly and gradually build up as the body becomes used to it. If it is because of a sense of superiority, that is a SERIOUS disease! (*Mother laughs*) It must be cured!

We have been given a body not to reject it but to make it into something better. And that is precisely one of the goals of Auroville. The human body must be improved, perfected, and it must become a superhuman body capable of expressing a being higher than man. And this certainly cannot happen if we neglect it. It is by an enlightened physical culture and by using physical activities – the activities of the body – not for little personal needs and satisfactions, but to make the body more capable of expressing a higher beauty and consciousness. And for that, physical education has an important place, which should be given to it.

The question “Why are they like that?” – everyone says to me, “They are like this. They are like that. Why are they like that?” And in every domain. And that is precisely why I thought of doing what I spoke of before: formulating the true aspiration of Auroville.

And this cultivation of the body must be done with an enlightened sense, not to do eccentric or marvellous things, but to give the body the possibility of being strong and supple enough to express a higher consciousness.

That will be part of the long list. They need to be told a little... Each has come with an aspiration, the idea that he would find something new, but it is not very clear. And so they must be given a clear picture, comprehensive enough for all the aspirations to be able to find their place and their expression. We will do that. We see each other once a week. We will do it little by little.

(To B) You will have to tell them, but I have just said it. They can be told, you can tell them: physical culture has an

important place in preparing the body for its new functions. There! (*Mother laughs.*)

(There follows a quarter of an hour's meditation. Then Mother takes back the notebook in which she has written "To Be a True Aurovilian" and point number one of the "long list" and says:) There! I have written number two: "The Aurovilian does not want to be a slave to his desires." It is a major resolution.

CWMCE, XIII, pp.341-5, 2.6.1970

[The following is an excerpt from a conversation with Satprem on how the text "A true Aurovilian" came into existence. The final version will be printed as the front page of the admission form to Auroville as well on all official publications.]

Yesterday we started a work for Auroville, that is to say, we're basically trying to give people from "Aspiration" an idea, simply, of what Aurovilians want: why they are here and what they want. Because it appears that... in fact they've no idea about it. Each one of them came expecting something, but all that isn't coordinated, it's not clear. So R. asked me to clearly express important points. I thought it would be better to do it with the people so as to know what they themselves want, and to have them make an effort to find out. Otherwise... So we started yesterday (*Mother takes out a piece of paper*).

Yesterday I asked C. [a resident of Aspiration], "But why does one live in Auroville? So he gave me the first paragraph:

TO BE A TRUE AUROVILIAN

1. The will to consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine.

That's what HE said. I found it fine. After listening inwardly, I added this:

2. The Aurovilian must not be a slave to his desires.

The idea is this: "We come to Auroville to escape social and moral rules that are artificially practiced everywhere, but it is not to live in the licentiousness of the satisfaction of every desire: it is to rise above desires in a truer consciousness." Something

like that... It appears they quite need this! (*Mother laughs*) So we should add it.

We could draw up a whole program, that would be interesting enough.

Yes, but in the practical order, until people go a little behind appearances and stop living on the surface of themselves, nothing will mean anything!

But all that is precisely what they need to be told!

So the first necessity is to go deep down into themselves, a little. Because even if you tell them "the Divine," what does it mean to their surface consciousness?

Yes... For him, this boy, it has a meaning, but for most others...

Yes, it doesn't mean anything.

So we should put: "The first condition is the inner discovery..."

In the ideal order, the first condition is to need something other than the present world and human conditions.

That goes without saying.

Then, to reach there, the first condition is to descend deep down in oneself to find out what one IS behind all these hereditary, social, cultural appearances – what one truly is. Then, at that stage, things take on a meaning, but before that they don't mean anything. Before that, they have the meaning given in morality, religion, philosophy – they mean nothing.

So we'll put (*Mother writes*): First essential condition...

It's more than a condition, it's a necessity.

1. The first necessity is the inner discovery so as to find out what one truly is behind all social, moral, cultural...

Racial?

Oh, yes.

... racial, hereditary appearances.

But then, we should tell them that there IS a discovery to be made, because many don't know it at all! (*Mother laughs*)

In the center, there is a free being, vast and knowing, which awaits our discovery and must become the acting center of our being and our life in Auroville.

Then, after that, shall we put this (*Mother points to the former first point on the consecration to the Divine*), or something else?... It seems to me that this is more an accomplishment, something that comes at the end.

(*long silence*)

We should teach them to free themselves from the idea of personal possession... You see, everything belongs to the Divine, and the Divine gives you not only a center (the center of your individuality), but also the possibility of the personal use of a number of things; but you must take them all like that, as things LENT to you by the Divine. The Divine is eternal, of course, he is *everlasting*, as they say in English, and at the same time as he creates this individual center, a number of things are there to be used for his work, so those things are LENT. That's exactly the point: you hold them in your possession for a time.

It's to uproot the sense of personal possession.

(*silence*)

That would be interesting: "The description of the citizen of tomorrow's city."

There's the second paragraph on desires, and the third would be on personal possession.

The only true way to cure desires is to give oneself to the Divine and accept what He gives you as the only things you need. But that's already very advanced.

At the beginning, you said that Aurovilians have come “to escape moral conventions, etc., but not to give free rein to licentiousness...”

Yes, that’s right (*Mother writes*):

2. One lives in Auroville to be free from moral and social conventions; but that freedom must not be a new slavery to the ego, its desires and ambitions.

Is that all? It’s enough for today!

If you want to connect this to the other paragraph, might we say something like, “Desire is the most powerful distorter of the inner discovery”?

Ah, yes. (*Mother writes*)

The fulfillment of desire bars the road to the inner discovery, which can only take place in the peace of perfect disinterestedness.

One word comes to me, Mother: not only peace, but transparency.

Yes (*Mother writes*):

... in the peace and transparency of perfect disinterestedness.

It’ll become something interesting!

That’s the basis. Then there’s the third paragraph. You said, “The Aurovillian must free himself from the idea of personal possession.”

But it’s not the “idea,” it’s the “sense”! (*Mother writes*)

3. The Aurovillian must free himself from the sense of personal possession. For our transition in the material world, what is indispensable to our life and action is put at our disposal...

You don’t say by whom?

(*Mother laughs*) No!... By the All-Possessing!

... according to the place we are to occupy.

Mother, I'd like to add: The more we are in contact with our inner being, the more the exact means are given to us.

Oh, that's fine (*Mother writes*):

The more we are CONSCIOUSLY in contact with our inner being, the more the exact means are given to us.

It'll become interesting!

It gives them the basis.

Oh, but we'll be able to do something interesting!

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 3.6.1970

Wouldn't it be good to do the rest of the "Program for Auroville" with Aurovilians, since you started it?...

I had them speak to see what they would tell me... Almost all of them are terribly lazy, so I'd like to tell them that manual work...

(Mother writes)

4. Work, even manual work, is indispensable to the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not put one's consciousness into matter, it will never develop. To let consciousness organize some matter through one's body is very good. To put things in order around oneself helps to put things in order in oneself.

Another point:

One should organize one's life not according to external and artificial rules, but according to an organized inner consciousness, because if one leaves life alone without imposing on it the control of a higher consciousness, it becomes hazy and inexpressive. It means wasting one's time, in the sense that matter remains without conscious utilization.

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 6.6.1970

[Fourteenth "Aspiration talk" with several Aurovilians:]

(To A:) I have some work for you. *(Mother asks him to read the text of "To Be a True Aurovilian".)*⁴

Well then, what would you prefer: silence first and that afterwards, or that first and silence after? It is in writing: what an Aurovilian must be. Not easy.

A: Silence afterwards.

(Handing the text to A) Look at it. Is there enough light?

A: Yes. *(A reads the text of "To Be a True Aurovilian".)*

It will be continued. If you want to, make a copy, as many copies as you like, but on the condition that the copies are accurate, that there are no alterations.

A: Regarding copies, P. told me that you had read the first conversation which we had together and that you didn't want it to be published in its present form.

Such things have to be written. As it stands, it is merely talk. When one is speaking like that, it is not in a form which can be preserved. You see, there is the way you speak, the tone of your voice, the force you put into it, and then the expression which completes what is not explicit. Then, when it is printed, all that is missing, and it becomes just talk. It lacks the essential thing: the consciousness one puts into what one says. The words are not enough.

If I had the time I would correct it for you and then you could publish it; but as it stands now, it is not possible. When you read, you are with the words alone, and very few people are capable of drawing on the force while they are reading. The words must be as precise as possible. That is why I have written down this text. When it is finished, I will put it in English, then those who don't know French will be able to understand.

CWMCE, XIII, pp.345-6, 9.6.1970

4 To the end of paragraph number 4. *[Comp.]*

We have to complete our “program” for Auroville... Auroville has come to prepare the coming of the new species.

(Mother writes)

5. The whole earth must prepare for the advent of the new species, and Auroville wants to consciously work to hasten that advent.

6. What this new species is to be will be progressively revealed to us. In the meanwhile, the best way is to consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine.

Enough!... To be continued!...

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 13.6.197

[This is the final text, first published in the Ashram's Bulletin and in the Gazette Aurovilienne:]

TO BE A TRUE AUROVILIAN

1. The first necessity is the inner discovery in order to know what one truly is behind social, moral, cultural, racial and hereditary appearances.

At the centre there is a being free, vast and knowing, who awaits our discovery and who ought to become the active centre of our being and our life in Auroville.

2. One lives in Auroville in order to be free from moral and social conventions; but this freedom must not be a new slavery to the ego, to its desires and ambitions.

The fulfilment of one's desires bars the way to the inner discovery which can only be achieved in the peace and transparency of perfect disinterestedness.

3. The Aurovilian should lose the sense of personal possession. For our passage in the material world, what is indispensable to our life and to our action is put at our disposal according to the place we must occupy. The more we are consciously in contact with our inner being, the more are the exact means given to us.

4. Work, even manual work, is something indispensable for the inner discovery. If one does not work, if one does not put his consciousness into matter, the latter will never develop. To let the consciousness organize a bit of matter by means of one's body is very good. To establish order around oneself helps to bring order within oneself.

One should organize one's life not according to outer and artificial rules, but according to an organized inner consciousness, for if one lets life go on without subjecting it to the control of the higher consciousness, it becomes fickle and inexpressive. It is to waste one's time in the sense that matter remains without any conscious utilization.

5. The whole earth must prepare itself for the advent of the new species, and Auroville wants to work consciously to hasten this advent.
6. Little by little it will be revealed to us what this new species must be, and meanwhile the best course is to consecrate oneself entirely to the Divine.⁵

CWMCE, XIII, pp.213-4, 13.6.1970

[Sixteenth "Aspiration Talk":]

C: There is much illness at Aspiration just now.

Ah!

C: There are stomach troubles like diarrhoea, dysentery, gastro-enteritis.

Oh! Is it because of the food?

C: The doctor says that it is the water. But we have disinfected the water tank.

5 When this was to be published the Mother added: "The only true freedom is the one obtained by union with the Divine. One can unite with the Divine only by mastering one's ego." *[Comp.]*

Is it surface water?

C: It's water which comes from a fairly deep well.

It would be better to have it analysed. You don't have a filter?

C: No.

There should be one. Only for drinking. Or else it should be boiled and cooled. Otherwise, it is troublesome. It is best to boil it first and then filter it.

G: He can speak of it because he was sick last week, Mother.

C: I am still sick.

G: He is still sick. He doesn't say that it's himself, but he is sick.

Enteritis?

C: Yes, gastroenteritis.

G: He's had it for a long time now, some fifteen days.

If the water is bad, it keeps coming back. You should get it analysed. [*Mother advises analysis of the water by André.*] Give him some water and ask him to have a look at it. Then we will do what is needed. The best thing, the safest thing is to boil it and then filter it. And then you must be careful about the vessels; make sure they are clean. If you are careless... Boiling it, that's easy. Filtering it – someone could make a filter. Can you take care of it?

C: Perhaps we could buy one in Madras?

G: In Harpagon [an Ashram workshop], Mother, there is someone who knows how to make filters. If he goes there, they could explain it to him. Only the candles have to be bought in Madras.

And then, don't drink just anywhere! That is the only thing, the only precaution you have to take in this country: the water. You get all kinds of diseases from the water. I thought that this had

already been explained to you. You can build a filter; make it a big one!

CWMCE, XIII, pp.346-8, 23.6.1970

[Eighteenth "Aspiration talk":]

A: This is a letter from X. He would like me to read it to you. May I do that?

Yes.

A: (Reading) "Divine Mother, there is great confusion about Auroville's organization, inner as well as outer. How can we work together towards the realization of a higher consciousness? It seems that Auroville should become a more homogeneous community with a greater sense of unity. In order to realize this, would it be possible for all the inhabitants of Promesse, Hope, Aspiration, Peace, etc. to meet in order to work together one day a week on a communal garden, perhaps the garden of Truth? Or each person could devote one day a week to a communal farm, to produce food for Auroville. That would help us to get to know each other better and make us more capable of organizing ourselves in the right spirit. And perhaps the people engaged in individual projects for Auroville could also work together more closely, so as to form a sort of guiding team in Auroville, so that each one's work could progress more effectively. Would such a concerted effort in Auroville just now help us to do your work?"

"With a prayer of perfection."

The aspiration is good, but... I don't know whether the time has come.

A: He is not the only one. There are several people working in different places in Auroville who feel this need to unite and to do the same work together.

Yes, the idea is good, but this is how I see it. We want to build the Matrimandir; and then, that was the idea: when we begin to build the Matrimandir, everyone who wants to work there

will be able to do so. And that would really be working on the central idea.

And it should be soon. It should have been already. So there, there will be work for everyone. We have been thinking of beginning the Matrimandir for a long time. In fact, everyone should come and work there, except, of course, those who work elsewhere. There will be work for everybody. It is better than... It is the centre of the town.

You could tell him this: in principle the idea is good. But as for the application, for a long time, more than a year, we have wanted to begin the Matrimandir so that everyone could work there. A person would have to say, "No, I do not want to" and have his reasons.

It is like the Force, the central Force of Auroville, the cohesive Force of Auroville.

There will be gardens. There will be everything, all the possibilities: engineers, architects, all kinds of manual work. So you can tell him from me that he has picked up the idea which was in the air, but that we want its application to be truly symbolic. And when we begin to build the Matrimandir, we will put everyone to work on it. Not every day and all the time, but it will be organized.

Is that all you wanted to say?

(silence)

What has been done with what I wrote?

A: It has been put up on the Notice-board. It has been read...

It doesn't seem to have had much effect.

A: It has surely had some effect, but no one has spoken to me about it.

Good. So now, do you want a meditation? Not a meditation: silence. If possible, mental silence. In order to have true knowledge one must achieve mental silence. You are still... who among you can be silent mentally? Does everybody understand French?

A: No, not everybody.

(In English) I was asking, who knows how to be perfectly silent mentally? No? Nobody? *(laughter)* That's what we are trying here.

(To A) Shall we try?

A: Yes! *(laughter)*

Who has succeeded? Not yet. Then, silence.

(long silence)

A noisy silence!

CWMCE, XIII, pp.348-51, 7.7.1970





THE 'AUROVILLE PROSPERITY' SERVICE

Three months after founding Auroville the Mother introduced a collective 'in kind' system she called "Auroville Prosperity", an organization paralleling the one she had established for decades as the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Prosperity Service. To understand the spirit behind it one should be aware of how the equivalent service functions at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, this being the model. Besides free meals at the Dining Room, whose menu had been chosen by none less than Sri Aurobindo, the Ashram provides to the inmates basic items such as clothing, toiletries, kitchen vessels, essential furniture and appliances and whatever other goods, service or repair is necessary for day-to-day living. Lodging is provided as well, consisting in most cases of a single room, with or without bathroom facilities and/or kitchenette, attached or shared.

In the same spirit, after the Mother discarded her body the Ashram Trust has built new guest houses for its inmates, so as to allot to everybody a decent place to live. Executing the Mother's instructions the Trust kept on providing essential facilities, without waste of space or money for fanciful arrangements. The aim was, and remains, to simplify life to the extreme so that sadhaks are free to consecrate their full potential in work for the Divine. The Mother's old dream has come true.

Stringing together the Mother's messages to Aurovilians it becomes evident that the path to be trod is that of a simple, happy life spent in integral consecration to the Divine through service to the community. In exchange for this service all essential needs in terms of housing, food, clothing, transport, medical assistance etc. are assured and, in addition, leisure time and entertainment. Here are the Mother's texts.

***The Spirit of 'Prosperity': Minimum Needs,
In-Kind Economy***

Auroville will be an ideal town with all the comforts and facilities needed for each one to freely develop the higher consciousness and aspire for the divine life. But isn't there a danger that people will get involved in material things and in competition to enhance their pleasure and material progress, thus forgetting that Auroville should only be the background for clinging to the Truth and realising human unity in order to achieve the goal of divine life?

This will depend on the sincerity of each one and cannot be enforced by exterior means.

Auroville Gazette, VIII ¾, 27.10.1965

[Excerpt from notes written by Shri Aravind Shankar Baan, ICS, after an interview with the Mother on 24.2.1967:]

In Auroville, there will be no domestic servants. All the modern amenities will be there so that people can do all their own work. Mother said that she approves of the old joint family system in India, where some used to attend to the material side of life, some were free to pursue the spiritual life, and some, the intellectual life. But Mother said that however much a person is occupied with spiritual matters it is necessary for him to do some material work of his own too. Unless people do some work for themselves their bodies lose fitness and strength.

Shyam Sunders' Archives, 24.2.1967?

Auroville will provide a model for those who aspire for a better and higher collective life everywhere.

Auroville Archives, 1967

Requests for admission to Auroville have been pouring in at a frightful pace these last few days – every day a stack big as this – so naturally, everyone must send his photo along with his request and say why he wants to be in Auroville, what his skills are, and which category he belongs to: there is the category of those who want to work to build Auroville, and the category of

those who want to come and sit peacefully in it once it's ready. And what a humanity, mon petit!... In fact, all those who come are generally dissatisfied people. Now and then, one of them has a light in his eyes and a need for something he hasn't found (then it's very good). There are those that weren't successful in anything and are completely disgusted, so they wonder if they might not be successful here. Then there are the old ones who worked hard and want to rest. There are very few young people – the few young people are all people of worth (the ordinary youth aren't interested). And the few I have seen are those who want to work: they don't want to come and take advantage from others' work, they want to work. So we'll soon have a rather interesting team. But (*laughing*) with the satiated old ones, I... *postpone decision, put under observation (Mother laughs)*. Yesterday, there were a number of them. We'll see: if they want to be useful, that is, give money or things, or propose to do something, then we'll see; but as such, the satiated fat fellow with his leaden-seated fat missis who want to come and spend the rest of their lives in peace, to them we say, "Wait a bit, we'll see!"

The workers aren't asked anything, that is, they don't have to pay: they can come and work, on condition that they prove they are useful. But those who want a piece of land or a house to live in have to pay. And then, some have limited confidence (*laughing*) and say, "I'll give you a little money right now and will pay the rest little by little, in installments" – those I generally turn down. Some are so eager to come that they send money in advance, and when there's some life or something in them, I accept them. But to nearly all, except two or three, I say, "Under observation" – we'll see how they react!

Mother's Agenda, VIII, 1993, 14.10.1967

[Extract from an early conversation on Auroville:]

"It's a kind of adaptation of the Communist system, but not in a spirit of leveling: according to everyone's capacity, his position (not a psychological or intellectual one), his INNER position.

In democracies and with the Communists, there's a leveling down: everyone is pulled down to the same level.

Yes, that's just the point.

The true part is that every human being has the material right... (but it's not a "right"...). The organization should be such, arranged in such a way, that everyone's material need should be met, not according to notions of right and equality, but on the basis of the most elementary necessities; then, once that is established, everyone must be free to organize his life, not according to his monetary means, but according to his inner capacities."

Mother's Agenda, VIII, 1993, 30.12.1967

[Probably approved by the Mother for publication, but not necessarily her words:]

Auroville does not offer a ready-made solution for the ills of humanity. It offers only an opportunity for those who wish to attempt a better way of doing things. The very freedom which Auroville extends is likely to present problems which have not been solved elsewhere. Auroville is a laboratory in which there is no guarantee against explosions. Working conditions will at first be difficult both because the region and the experimental nature of the work. Auroville will be built on the efforts of its pioneers. It will require of them all that they can contribute in effort, endurance, wealth and forbearance.

An Auroville brochure, February 1968

The push towards the future is to be ready to give up all gains, moral and material, in order to acquire what the future can give us.

Very few are like that, there are many who would like to have what the Future is bringing, but they are not ready to give up what they have in order to acquire the new wealth.

CWMCE, XIII, p.203, 5.8.1968. Gazette Aurovilienne, II, 2 p.9

(Message for the recipients of the essential material items distributed by Auroville Prosperity)

Auroville is not meant for the satisfaction of desires but for the growth of the true consciousness.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 202, 16.6.1968

It is not for comfort and satisfaction of desires that one comes to Auroville; it is for the growth of consciousness and consecration to the Truth that has to be realised.

Unselfishness is the first need to participate in the creation of Auroville.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 203, 5.11.1968

The difficulty is the appreciation of the value of things. You understand, that requires a very wide vision. Money's convenience was that it became mechanical... But this new system cannot become quite mechanical, so... For instance, the idea is that those who will live in Auroville will have no money – there is no circulation of money – but to eat, for instance, everyone has the right to eat, naturally, but... On quite a practical level, we had conceived the possibility of all types of food according to everyone's tastes or needs (for example, vegetarian cooking, non-vegetarian cooking, diet cooking, etc.), and those who want to get food from there must do something in exchange – work, or... It's hard to organize in practice, on a quite practical level... You see, we had planned a lot of lands around the city for large-scale agriculture for the city's consumption. But to cultivate those lands, for the moment we need money, or else materials. So... Now I have to face the whole problem in every detail, and it's not easy!

There are some who understand.

You see, the idea is that there will be no customs in Auroville and no taxes, and Aurovilians will have no personal property. Like that on paper, it's very fine, but when it comes to doing it in practice...

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 25.3.1970

At Auroville nothing belongs to anyone in particular. All is collective property. To be utilised with my blessings for the welfare of all.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 213, 14.5.1970

What is the purpose of life in Auroville in general and Auromodèle in particular? Is it to serve the community or to be a true servitor of the Divine Consciousness?

The purpose of life in Auromodèle is to learn to live in Auroville, to make all the experiments necessary for learning to live in Auroville.

We want to find a way for the community to live for the Divine.

Each individual has his own way but the group community should find a way to suit everyone.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 238, 22.5.1970

[The following text gives an ideal picture of life in Aspiration, set up on the basis of the "Auroville Prosperity" (in kind) system similar to that of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. Approved and signed by the Mother; it was drafted by Roger Anger, the chief architect who used to meet her daily and also had the function of ideologue.]

Aspiration is the embryo of Auromodel, therefore of Auroville, and should represent both inwardly as outwardly the ideal of Auroville.

Inwardly, everyone should seek an inner progress and the higher consciousness; the first necessity is a rigorous inner discipline.

Outwardly, Aspiration should be a model of cleanliness, ideal living and order freely chosen and self-imposed, and of productive activities.

The time has come for Aspiration to prove its existence and capacity to organize itself. The chores to be performed in the day-to-day life should be defined and assigned. The inventory of everything at Aspiration should be made and maintained up to date.

All vehicles should be under the charge of one competent person having the responsibility for their maintenance and use.

All those who participate in the productive activities should keep in mind that they form part of a group; the results will

depend on the steady work and efficiency of each member.

The liaison between Aspiration and the Auroville Administrative Committee will be carried out by a person deputed by common consent.

The allocation of Rs. 3.00 per head, per day, will be made weekly to the person responsible for the use of the funds and the maintenance of the persons involved. The needs other than food will be provided by the Auroville Prosperity to the extent of its capacity.

The use of the vehicles will be limited to one or two journeys to Pondy per day; petrol will be allocated accordingly.

Those who do not want to participate in the activities of Aspiration will inform the Auroville Administrative Committee that will decide their future status.

Roger Anger's archive, 1970

To be an Aurovilian one must at least belong to the enlightened portion of humanity and aspire for the higher consciousness which will govern the species of tomorrow.

Always higher and always better, – beyond egoistic limitations.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 216-7, February 1971

[Drafted by Shyam Sunder and approved by the Mother:]

The residents of Auroville can lodge their friends if they contribute towards their expenses. The stay should be temporary, for a few days.

Not more than a week.

MCWCE, XIII, p.245, 27.2.1971

(Message for the third anniversary of Auroville)

To all Aurovilians

My blessings for the progress and the growth of the collective and individual consciousness.

MCWCE, XIII, p.216, 28.2.1971

[On 16.6.1968 the Mother had delivered the first message defining the true spirit of the “Auroville Prosperity” that, paralleling the Ashram Prosperity Service, supplied to accepted Aurovilians clothing, toiletries and other basic necessities. This second message was to be displayed in the rooms where the items were distributed:]

One does not live in Auroville to be comfortable but to grow in consciousness and to serve the Divine.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 217, 1.3.1971

Is it to satisfy little personal needs that you have come to Auroville?

That was really not necessary. The ordinary world is there for that.

One comes to Auroville to realise a divine life which wants to manifest on earth.

Each one should make an effort in this direction and not remain hypnotised by the so-called “needs” which are nothing but personal fancies.

Look upward and forward, strive to surmount the animal human nature. Make the resolution and you will see that you are helped on the way.

MCWCE, XIII, p.217, 3.3.1971

Spirituality is supreme simplicity.

Auroville in Mother’s Words, p. 375, 6.3.1971

A rich woman, residing at the Ashram and working for Auroville, wanted to know about bringing down her standard of living to “the present Auroville minimum”.

Mother answered orally,

“You should grow in consciousness.

You should feel that you are working for the Divine, living for the Divine.

You should want the Divine alone.

You should not be affected by the opinion of others. You should try to know and do only what the Lord wants you to do.

Don't think of pleasing others. If you try to please others, some others will be displeased. I also do not try to please.

You have made your life simpler. If you decide to make it still simpler, my help will be there.

All the circumstances are there as opportunities so that you can grow in consciousness, sincerity and consecration. You can always have my help for it.

This is the only solution.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 111-2, early March 1971

Notice Auroville Transport

The vehicles in “Auroville Transport” are to be used for the work of the Auroville community and Auroville projects.

Those wanting transport for personal purpose can make use of the available space in the regular bus services of Auroville or the public buses.

Trips to Madras are discouraged unless sufficient material is to be brought or the work demands such movement in Madras. Persons wanting to go for personal purposes can make reservation in the public bus. “Auroville Transport” can help in getting the reservation if 24 hours notice is given.

Blessings.

THE MOTHER

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 114-5, 27.4.1971

[Drafted in French by Roger Anger and signed by the Mother:]

There is a need for a transitional period so as to implement in practice the principles spelled out several times by the Mother, and which are one of the basis of community life in Auroville: no paid labour and no servants in Auroville¹. During this transitional period, which should not last longer than necessary,

1 “Pas de main d'oeuvre payée, pas de domestiques a Auroville.”

there is a need to gather a quorum of people sufficiently qualified to replace those who are or will be hired. Auroville will provide the following collective services:

- A Maintenance Service
- A Laundry Service

These services will be available to all Aurovilians who fulfill the following conditions:

1. They do a job that is useful to the community, which keeps them busy more than the minimum time of 5 hours a day, including Sundays, demanded by the Mother.
2. Their health does not permit them to work.

These services will ensure, the cleaning of common facilities and individual huts, as well as, within reasonable limits, washing and ironing of all personal clothing. Those who do not work will not benefit from these services and will have to take care of themselves. It goes without saying that these new measures are taken to improve the living conditions of Aurovilians who work. They are also meant to ensure that, from now on into the future, individuals will not have to hire servants on their own account, whatever their personal reasons or residences in Auroville may be.

(Text read to the Mother and approved)

[Signed: Mother]

Roger Anger's archive, 19.10.1971

The ideal of the Aurovilians must be to become egoless – not at all to satisfy their ego.

If they follow the old human way of selfish claim, how can they hope the world to change?

MCWCE, XIII, p. 220, 23.10.1971

“Mother, the people in Auroville want to know what she has said about the fire accident. I have prepared a note.”

When I came to the words, 'There was no harmony', Mother said, "Not only harmony, there is no unity, no sincerity, no consecration to the Divine, no faith, no confidence in the Divine. It was not the Divine's fault."

She asked me to continue to read. At the end she said, "It is alright."

Then I added the words, 'no sincerity, no faith and no confidence in the Divine' and when I read the whole sentence again, she nodded.

The whole statement then read as follows:

In connection with the fire in the Workshop at Aspiration Mother has said that Her protection was not effective because the atmosphere there was very bad. There was no harmony, no sincerity, no faith and no confidence in the Divine. Each one worked for his own proper satisfaction and not with an aspiration to the Divine.

The blow was big, but it is a lesson to learn.

We should start again, start again with the right attitude of working for the transformation.

(Note corrected and approved by Mother.)

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 135, 12.3.1972

[Claire had sent to the Mother, via Shyamsunder; this letter:

"Mother – Since one day Auroville must function fluently for need and demand without the internal exchange of money, perhaps the time has come to create that proper channel. We could begin this process in a temporary building. If this is the work to do, and money comes for this work, what should be the name of the Bank Account?" Shyamsunder told her that he had never seen the Mother so happy; he wrote in his notes:]

Mother approved of the so-called 'Shop-project' of Claire and in response to her request for a name, she first uttered 'Aurofraternity', then 'Auroutility', but remarked. "These are not the right words." Then came 'Pour Tous', 'For All' and she

wrote the name with blessings. She dated it as March 1972 after enquiring today's date.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 136, 14.3.1972

Regarding Robert's wish to go to France with Anata and to bring a car to be used by him and Anata, Mother said that the car would not be acceptable on these conditions, and it would be better that they do not come back.²

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.143, 29.3.1972

The State Bank wishes to open a Branch in Auroville. Roger [Anger] had spoken to Mother about it and then to the Bank that in their branch at Auroville there should be employees in the office, but people who have accepted the Auroville way. The Bank says that the ideal is good, but it is not possible to do so at present. The matter had gone to the Chairman, Talwar; he also finds it difficult. It is a Governmental organisation and legal difficulties are there. Mother said,

In Auroville we should not have the old way, otherwise it will always be there. The Bank can have its branch outside Auroville.

Yes, Mother.

What is your proposal?

Either outside or perhaps in Aspiration.

Yes, it can be in Aspiration.

As a transition. The right type of people willing to work this way might come.

Yes.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.145, 31.3.1972

2 *A few days later, on April 5, Shyam Sunder noted down that the Mother further stressed, "If they go together to France, they need not come back. She may go and not return." On April 19 Shyam Sunder added, "'Robert and Anata are going in the first week of next month. Robert's wife and children are here.' The Mother commented, "This is a mess.'" [Comp.]*

“Mother, the situation is quite grave. We haven’t money, we haven’t the right people. Often there is no joy in the work.”

(Silence. Long silence.)

Mother said, “Il faut avoir la foi. (One must have faith).”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 167, 19.4.1972

Two requests for Prosperity were approved. The third one to wait.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.169, 23.4.1972

A technician candidate for Auroville who wanted Auroville to bear his expenses from the beginning although he has money, was asked to wait until he understands and accepts Auroville’s ideal and way of life.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 170-1, 27.4.1972

An old man from Bengal wants to come to Auroville to spend the last days of his life. Mother said, “Auroville is not for the last days of life.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 172, 1.5.1972

A family in Auroville wants pocket money.

Mother said, “No, no. They can make arrangement for pocket expenses as they have done for other family obligations.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 181, 25.5.1972

Requests for joining Auroville were disposed of. Most of them were not approved.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 189, 13.6.1972

J, a Frenchman, had promised to be at his expense for a year. Now it is six months and his money has run out as he went on a trip to Bombay with his friends on their persuasion.

Mother said, “No. A man of no character and will.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 203, 23.7.1972

For one who reported progress in sadhana and asked about going to Madras for some days, Mother said, “If the thing is to progress, he should not go.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 213, 21.8.1972

About people in Auroville, Mother remarked,

“They have no conscience, no consciousness, no aspiration. They are for a comfortable life.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 215, 26.8.1972

There was a question from Navoditte,

“Two years ago you told Aspiration to meditate each evening at 7:45. Now you suggest ‘once a week’ for the Centre.

Could you comment?”

Mother said, “It is a compliment. Are they taking it as a punishment?”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 218, 2.9.1972

For a person working satisfactorily since a year, who now asks for maintenance by the Auroville Prosperity, Mother said neither yes nor no, but asked after a while, “How to know that they have no money?”

“It is very difficult to know. In some cases where they demanded Prosperity and were asked to wait, they managed to continue some more months with their money.”

“Yes, how to know? What to do? What can I say?”

“To this man I can say clearly that Prosperity is for those who have no money left with them, and if he says that he has nothing, we give him the Prosperity and leave him to his conscience.”

“Yes, yes, it is a very good idea. Speak to him.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 221-2, 11.9.1972

Shanti and Shraddhavan find Far Beach³ good for the older children’s educational activity. They go on cycle.

They can continue. Cycling is good for health.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 233, 7.10.1972

3 Now known as Sri Ma, some ten kilometers from the Matrimandir.
[Comp.]

For those going out and wishing to see her, Mother said, "I tell you once for all, I do not wish to see people going out except those who are sent by you or me. But don't tell it."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 239, 23.10.1972

One person who has gone abroad, wishes his Rs 100/= food prosperity to go to his wife here to meet her needs.

Mother does not like these things.

When asked I said, "Her special needs may be considered sympathetically."

She remarked that these are too small things.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 246, 17.11.1972

Nowadays many requests are coming for joining Auroville. But most of them are not acceptable to us. Is each case to be referred to Mother?

Mother said, "No."

"We will refer cases where we have doubt or where we accept."

"Yes."

"And before accepting, I am now giving them a chance of two to three weeks to see Auroville and choose their work and settle their financial position, otherwise they say something but forget it when Mother's approval comes."

"Have I not said that the first condition to live in Auroville is not to tell a lie?"

"Yes, and Mother has on several occasions recently written on truth and explained about it."

"Show it to them."

"Yes, Mother, but they call me a policeman when I do so."

"You can tell them", Mother said laughing, "that you are Mother's policeman."

After a pause Mother said,

“There is no need to build another ordinary city in Auroville; already there are so many. If people are like that, it will become an ordinary city and our money and efforts will be wasted. You have to be strict. If they say, well, they will say so easily, that they wish to change, they can be there if they are sincere.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 263-4, 8.1.1973

A request for Prosperity was answered in the negative.

Mother remarked, “The first condition is not to tell a lie and this person started with a big lie.”

First Mother wanted to write, “No liars in Auroville” or “No lies in Auroville,” but then she wrote,

“Auroville will become what it must be, only if and when the people living there will stop lying.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 281, 18.3.1973



Excerpt from the admission form to be submitted to the Mother:

5) When Auroville meets the individual's needs and requirements, one is expected to offer to Auroville all that he has and can in terms of material possessions.

AUROVILLE PROSPERITY

- (1) Chits should be submitted before 24th.
- (2) Prosperity articles should be collected on 1st of every month between 9-30 A. M. and 11-30 A. M. and in afternoon between 3 P. M. to 4 P. M. From 2nd to 5th it is open only in the afternoon. In case the chit is given late please collect the items on the 5th afternoon instead of 1st.
- (3) Anybody leaving Pondicherry during the month should intimate Auroville Prosperity.

General	Period	Toilet	Period
1 Umbrella	4 Years	Toothpast or Tooth Powder	1 Month
1 Pair L. Sandles	1 Year	Hair oil	1 Month
1 Pair R. Sandles	1 Year	Shaving stick	6 Months
1 Mat	4 Years	Shaving Brush	1 Year
1 Pillow	3 Years	4 Washing Soaps or 1/2 Kg. S. Powder ...	1 Month
1 Mattress	6 Years	1 Toilet Soap	1 Month
		3 Blades	1 Month
		1 Tooth Brush	6 Months
		1 Tongue Cleaner	6 Months
		1 Comb	1 Year

CLOTHING			
1 Towel	1 Year	4 Sarees or	} 1 Year
1 Gamcha	1 Year	4 Dhoties or	
1 Bedsheet	1 Year	4 Pyjamas or	
1 Pillow Cover	1 Year	4 Shorts or	
2 Bags (cotton)	1 Year	2 Pants full	
1 Mosquito Net	6 Years	4 Ganjees or	
		4 Brassieres	
		4 Hand Kerchiefs	
		4 Kurtas or	
		4 Shirts or	
		4 -Bush Shirts or	} 1 Year
		4 Blouses	
		4 Under wears or	
		4 Langots-or	
		4 Janghias or	
		4 Petticoats	





THE YOGA OF WORK

To be an Aurovilian is to be a “willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness”. Work is not “a way to earn one’s living but a way to express oneself and to develop one’s capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual’s subsistence and sphere of action”, the Mother wrote. Karmayoga! This is what the Mother wrote in her last known message to the Aurovilians. In the spirit of service to the collective well-being, she expected that everybody engage in a useful activity, working a minimum of five hours a day, including Sundays; six hours, if Sunday was excluded. The texts that follow present the whole gamut of possibilities.

[Extract from an early conversation on Auroville:]

“The participation may be passive or active.”

I do not understand what “passive” means; I said it in French and it has been put into English. What could that mean, “passive”?... It would be something more like planes or different levels of consciousness.

You meant that those who are wise, who work within, do not need to...

Yes, that’s it. Those who have a higher knowledge do not need to work with their hands, that is what I meant.

“There will be no taxes as such, but each one will contribute to the collective welfare in work, kind or money.”

So that is clear: there will be no taxes, but each one will have to contribute to the collective welfare by his work, in kind or in money. Those who have nothing but money will give money. But to tell the truth, “work” can be inner work – but one cannot say that, because people are not honest enough. The work can be an occult, completely inner work; but for that, it must be

absolutely sincere and true, and with the capacity for it: no pretension. But not necessarily a physical work.

MCWCE, XIII, pp.271-2, 30.12.1967

In answer to the question, "As I am already involved to a certain extent in Auroville information (collection of Mother's messages, internal distribution of messages, notes and print-outs of general interest, the office notice-board, information in French, English and German for people interested in the idea of Auroville), the inquiry service proposed by Mother would seem to be a natural addition to it. So I am going to give a more concrete and organized shape to this service. What do you think?"

According to my experience, it was unwise from the beginning to distribute application forms for employment, for only less capable people use them. Men who are capable and have experience have no need at all to ask for work, they always have more than they can handle.

It would be more interesting to have an information office where those who are interested in the idea of Auroville could come to find out what work is to be done and what personnel is needed.

Auroville in Mother's Words, p.130, March 1968

Divine Mother,

How dependent is the building of Auroville upon man's acceptance of spirituality?

The opposition between spirituality and material life, the division between the two, has no sense for me as, in truth, life and the spirit are one and it is in and by the physical work that the highest Spirit must be manifested.

CWMCE, XIII, p.203, 19.4.1968

(About the organization of work)

The important thing is the execution which is to be carried out without ever losing sight of the ideal we want to realize.

Blessings

MCWCE, XIII, p. 204, December 1968

For the newcomers:

They have to be given work. One gets bored doing nothing.

Most of those who have come here are either disappointed by life, or have a thirst for absolute vital freedom. Pressure is strong here and [those who need to change] feel it very strongly. Either they will transform themselves, or they will leave. It's as simple as that.

Roger Anger's archives, 28.4.1969

How can people having different values live and work together in harmony?

The solution is to go deep within oneself and find the place where all the differences combine to constitute the essential and eternal Unity.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 207, 4.5.1969

To all those who want to live for the future:

A physical work is as indispensable to the balance of the body as food.

To eat without working causes a serious imbalance.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 211, February 1970

A system of "coupons for hours of work," and a scale of the quality or degree of the work done.

Where is that practiced?

I don't know, in my imagination!

Oh, that's you. Yes, of course, that's very good!

Something based on the work.

Yes.

Coupons for hours of work. Then if a coolie's coupon is worth one, an engineer's may be said to be worth five, for instance.

That's all.

That would be a whole organization to be worked out. We'll need... we'll need something like that in Auroville.

Based on the work.

Yes, an activity. That work could be defined as an activity with a collective usefulness, not a selfish one.

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 25.3.1970

Someone living in Auroville asked, "What are the steps to follow for 1. Sadhana and 2. Silence of the mind?"

1. Do work as *sadhana*. You offer to the Divine the work you do as the best of your capacities and you leave the result to the Divine.
2. Try to become conscious first above your head keeping the brain as silent as possible.

If you succeed and the work is done in that condition, then it will become perfect.

Auroville in Mother's words, p. 305, 2.4.1970

They have no self-respect... these people. They should feel humiliated by doing nothing. I have begun their education but it will take time.

Roger's archives, 7.6.1970

I want people to need Auroville and not Auroville to need people. Working for Auroville must become an act of grace.

Roger's archives, probably June 1970

An Ashramite wrote, "Mother, I was taken to Auroville a few weeks back. I was very happy to see the people working there. Here were the people against whom we hear all sorts of bad reports. They were busy with hard labour. Not many of us can do so much. You know that it is not easy to satisfy me with work, but I was truly happy."

I am very happy with what you write and fully agree. So all is well.

With love and blessings.

Auroville in Mother's Words, p.341, 23.6.1970

An Aurovilian asked, "I have always considered the Ashram and Auroville to be parts of an integral whole. I cannot see them as different entities. How then was a difference made by you, Mother?"

The Ashram is the central consciousness, Auroville is one of the outward expressions. In both places equally the work is done for the Divine.

The people who live in the Ashram have their own work and most of them are too busy to give time to Auroville.

Each one must be busy with his own work; this is essential for a proper organization.

Auroville in Mother's Words, p.359, 1970

An Aurovilian asked, "Should I spend some time in solitude?"

It is the old methods of yoga which demand silence and solitude.

The yoga of tomorrow is to find the divine in work and in relation with the world.

Look within yourself, reflect upon it and tell me what your choice is.

Auroville in Mother's words, p. 365, 24.1.1971

True spirituality lies in the service of the divine work.

To refuse to work for all is only a demonstration of selfishness, and has no spiritual value.

The first thing to do to be able to live in Auroville is to consent to free oneself from one's ego.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 216, 24.1.1971

Auroville is not a work of charity.

A night spent in Aspiration is equivalent to a day's work.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 217, February 1971

[Excerpt from a general notice drafted by Shyam Sunder, and which the Mother signed with blessings:]

Everyone should work at least five hours every day including Sundays. Working for oneself is not working for the community. Each member of the community should have an activity that corresponds to the needs of Auroville.

Auroville in Mother's Words, pp.369-70, 20.2.1971

This text was drafted by the architect [Roger Anger] and approved by Mother.

Auroville is in full construction phase and disciplined workers are necessary.

Those who do not want to submit to a discipline should not be here for the moment. Goodwill, sincerity and discipline are indispensable qualities for those who want to be Aurovilians.

Auroville in Mother's Words, p. 382, 23.4.1971

True spirituality lies in the service of the divine work.

To refuse to work for all is only a demonstration of selfishness, and has no spiritual value.

The first thing to do to be able to live in Auroville is to consent to free oneself from one's ego.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 216, 24.2.1971

To work for Auroville is to hasten the advent of a more harmonious Future.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 217, 27.3.1971

It is in work done as an offering to the Divine that the consciousness develops best.

Indolence and inaction result in *tamas* which is a fall into inconscience and the very opposite of progress and light.

To surmount one's ego and to live only in the service of the Divine, that is the ideal and the shortest way to acquire the true consciousness.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 218, 27.4.1971

They're terribly angry with me because I told them discipline is indispensable.

But of course!

That's old hat, you see.

But Mother, I told R. that the basic mistake is that when those people came here, everything was handed to them: he gave them ready-made houses, they were given all they needed to eat – they got everything on a silver platter. While these people should have been made to build their own houses and to plant their own potatoes if they wanted to eat; they should have done everything by themselves.

Yes, exactly.

And I told them, "How can you possibly build a new world with coolies? One doesn't make a new world with hired labour!"

I think a whole group of those people should go.

Yes, that's my feeling.

(silence)

To one of them I said, "If I went over there, I'd go with a whip!"

(Mother laughs) There's really a subhuman group over there.

Yes, certainly... But how can you eliminate that?

(silence)

Another example: they even have a hired cook to do their cooking, those people!

Oh!...

There's a fundamental flaw in all that, you know.

But how can that be?

That's the way it is, you see. They have a hired cook.

Heavens!

(long silence)

What do you propose then?

Nothing, I don't know, Mother.

(silence)

I feel R. should organize things in such a way that people are compelled to work.

Yes... Yes, we'll have to do something.

That way, the sorting out would be done right away.

Yes... But I need to know the number of people in the group, both those who work and those who do nothing. And then...

(silence)

Of course, we could take very "drastic" steps.

Yes.

For instance, so many hours of work per day are required in order to be fed, or else you eat only if you pay for it.

Yes, Mother, it should be done. Because, you see, they are so crafty that they all say they work: they putter around here and there, they go to work on the Matrimandir for half an hour or so... So, to them, they've "worked." You see, they just putter around.

(after a silence)

I suddenly felt I had lost my influence over those people. I tell them things – they couldn't care less.

You could speak to R. and see.

Yes, Mother... But R. says, "Mother doesn't want to interfere. Mother doesn't want to make any decisions." But I think perhaps it's up to him to make a decision.

But no one will listen to him. You see, I can't make decisions anymore because they don't listen to me. As long as they listened to me, it was easy – it was easy, there was an influence.

Now, something has happened, I don't have any authority at all anymore, so what can we do?¹

Well, if you tell R., he will see that it's done.

(Mother goes within for a long time)

We'll have to find some way...

Mother, it seems to me you could call together those who are responsible and take some decisions.

Yes, good idea.

(silence)

The trouble is that when several of them are here together, they talk among themselves, I don't hear. So...

If it would help, I can be there.

I think it would.

(Long silence. Mother goes within)

I really feel it is necessary to start again on a new basis and the entire place must be swept clean of all those people. We have to start afresh in a new location and make them work.

Yes, but how about the accommodations?

In the meantime they could live in huts, which they would build themselves.

But they're in huts.

I mean with thatched roofs.

(silence)

I'll see.

I'll try to arrange something. I'll tell you Saturday.

Mother's Agenda, XII, 1982, 28.4.1971

1 Nor do we know what kind of report Mother was getting from the trio of intriguers who were already quarreling over the direction and funds of Auroville. Certainly there was a lazy group in Auroville, but that group quickly disappeared on its own. Is it a "lack of authority" over the Aurovilians or over the trio, whose rivalries were beginning to arouse the mistrust of the Aurovilians?

Gene does not want to resume responsible work at the Matrimandir Centre unless it is Mother's wish.

Mother's reply:

Until the building of Auroville is over, those who want to live on the spot must help in this building. So it is natural that you should take up some useful work there. Do with good will what is asked from you.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 115, 6.5.1971

Mother said that in Auroville she did not want number but quality. Twelve good men would be better than hundreds of stupid persons. Auroville is not for comfort but for the servants of the Divine. People in Auroville should not shirk hard work. They should not think of escaping from the outer control until the divine control is there.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 117, 9.6.1971

Mother had this quotation from Sri Aurobindo sent out to all Aurovilians.

“As for the principle that everyone should be allowed to do according to his nature, that can apply only where people do independent work by themselves; where many have to work together, it cannot always be done – regularity and discipline are there the first rule. She [*the Mother*] refuses to yield to complaints and clamour born of desire and ego.”

7. 1.1937

Auroville in Mother's Words, p. 392, 10.3.1971

This notice was drafted by the architect [Roger Anger] and submitted to Mother.

“Aspiration is a centre of work for Auroville. Those who do not work should leave their place for needed workers.”

Mother added:

Yes, it is good.

Blessings

Auroville in Mother's Words, p. 392, 22.7.1971

For those in Auroville who want to be true servitors, is Sunday a holiday?

In the beginning the organisation of the week was conceived in this way: six days of work for the collectivity to which the individual belonged; the seventh day of the week was reserved for the inner quest for the Divine and the offering of one's being to the divine will. This is the only meaning and the only true reason for the so-called Sunday rest.

Needless to say, sincerity is the essential condition for realisation; all insincerity is a degradation.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 220, 25.10.1971

Each one has good reasons to support his own opinion, and I am no expert to judge between them.

But from the spiritual point of view I know that with true goodwill all opinions can be harmonised in a more comprehensive and truer solution. This is what I expect from the workers of Auroville. Not that some give way to others, but that on the contrary all should combine their efforts to achieve a more comprehensive and perfect result.

The ideal of Auroville demands this progress – don't you want to make it?

Blessings.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 220-1, 14.11.1971

(To one who asked Mother about stopping his activities because his mind is not pure.)

If men had to stop work when they are not perfect, everybody would stop working. It is in the work that we must progress and purify ourselves.

Continue to do the work you are doing but never forget that it can and must be better.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 120, 23.12.1971

Work

Do not live to be happy, live to serve the Divine and the joy that you will experience will be beyond all expectations.

Auroville Archives, March 1972

Requests for birthday pranams were disposed of.

One person got a reply that Mother will see him after he has worked one year.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.177, 12.5.1972

To do one's work in all sincerity and as perfectly as one can, is certainly one of the best ways of serving the Divine.

Auroville Archives, 18.5.1972

[The original of this message was posted in the Matrimandir Worker's Camp. A similar message is reported two days later in Shyam Sunder's notes.]

Matrimandir Workers' Camp is meant for those who

1. Work whole time at the Matrimandir or in the Matrimandir Garden Nursery.
2. Do not take alcohol or drugs, and live cleanly.
3. There should be no smoking or sex-indulgence in the Matrimandir area.

With blessings

Auroville in Mother's words, p. 437, 6.6.1972

Many in Auroville say that an organised working is not desirable in Auroville; they are for spontaneous working.

Spontaneous work can be done only by a man of genius.

Is there anyone claiming to be a genius?...

Blessings.

MCW03, XIII, pp. 221-2, 3.7.1972

Veronika feels lonely and like a stranger.

Mother's reply,

“Your feeling comes from the fact that you are doing nothing useful for the community.

Take up some work that you can do regularly and it will be alright.”

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 207, 3.8.1972

Ajit Rao wants to build a house in Auroville. Roger has told him that unless he works for a specific project, he should not have a house; but if Mother says that he can have it even without such a work, he will make the design. Ajit insists that only his wish to build a house in Auroville be placed before Mother, and he is prepared to work if she wants him to do so. He drinks and smokes.

Mother said, “To build a house in Auroville, one should not drink or smoke.”

She asked laughing, “Is he prepared to exchange smoking and drinking for a house in Auroville?”

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 213, 20.8.1972

Those who
do not stop telling lies,
do not stop drinking or
do not work regularly for the community,
are a burden on Auroville
and Auroville has no place for them.

Blessings.

The Mother

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 231, 3.10.1972

One person writes that he has two beings in him. One that is sympathetic and works best, the other, vitalistic and egoistic, that comments on and criticises others. When he notices the second one, he thinks more of Mother, but after a time it returns.

Mother dictated a reply:

You have to ignore it, if you can. If you find it difficult, you should continue your effort until it is transformed or eliminated.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 232, 5.10.1972

A student wishes to see Mother before going to America to see his parents during school vacation.

Mother said, "I do not see those who go out."

One German is staying at far Beach since ten days, feels that he is learning and wishes to stay longer. He has not decided to be in Auroville.

Mother asked, "What is your idea?"

"He can be there a month or two."

"You ask him what he is capable of doing."

"Should he involve himself in some work?"

Mother nodded.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 235-6, 16.10.1972

The Aspiration community should devote two days now to the cleaning work and then every Sunday.

Mother wrote 'Benedictions' on this proposal of Vincenzo.²

(...)

Raoul Mercier's letter. He speaks of the attitudes he is facing in the work, like "At Auroville one is free", "One has eternity before oneself", etc.

Mother said, "Haven't I already said that the Aurovilians have to work according to the supramental discipline?"

2 This is Vincenzo's original text, "*Sweet Mother, The cyclone has damaged and destroyed the camp and the gardens. For everything to be clean, it would be good if everybody at Aspiration, school included, could devote two days to put everything back in order. This action could then continue every Sunday.*" [Comp.]

“Yes, Mother; but they say that regular work is not the supramental way.”

“Do they know the supramental?”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 253-4, 17.12.1972

*Laura has not kept her word about work.
She has to leave.³*

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 269, 25.1.1973

It is not what you do but the spirit in which you do it that makes the Karmayoga.⁴

MCWCE, XIII, p. 226, 5.2.1973

Hedi, who manages the Hope kitchen, left suddenly for a few days saying that she will not be here for some days.

When she comes, she is to be told, “Sorry, there is no work for you.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 274, 15.2.1973

There are people in Auroville who say that it is against the spirit of Auroville when I ask people there to work or when I allot work to them.

Mother wrote a message,

Auroville is still in the state of elaboration, and those who want to remain there have to collaborate to its erection according to the plans made and to be made, approved by me and signed by Shyam Sunder.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 278, 4.3.1973

A request for joining Auroville was not approved.

3 Later, on January 30, Shyam Sunder noted, *“Laura gets a final chance to stay in Auroville.”* [Comp.]

4 As indicated in the CWMCE, *“...comments by the Mother were noted down from memory by sadhaks and later approved by her for publication. These are identified by the symbol §.”* [Comp.]

One person in Aspiration gave up a work, for which he had taken a name from Mother, without asking anyone and closed it.

I asked him, "When you got a work from Mother, was it proper for you to give it up without referring it to her?"

"Yes," he replied.

"Was it correct according to the spiritual discipline of Mother?"

"Yes."

And now he has written me a four page letter in criticism of mental morality, of people in Pondicherry, of Auroville architecture, stating that he has acted from inner guidance.

Mother made a remark and asked me to tell it to him, "The guidance can come also from the ego-devil".

She concentrated, made some remarks, and then wrote,

"When you say I want to serve the Divine, do you believe the All-Knowing does not know that it is a lie?"

and asked me to show it to him.

"There is no way" was one of her remarks.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 281-2, 18.3.1973

Louise Forjette is not working.

"Perhaps she does not know how to work."

"She may be left as she is and I forget about it, or she may be told that if she does not work she is a burden on Auroville as she is at Auroville's expense and she may go."

"Tell her and let us see."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 283, 22.3.1973

Mother disposed of a letter and wrote a message:

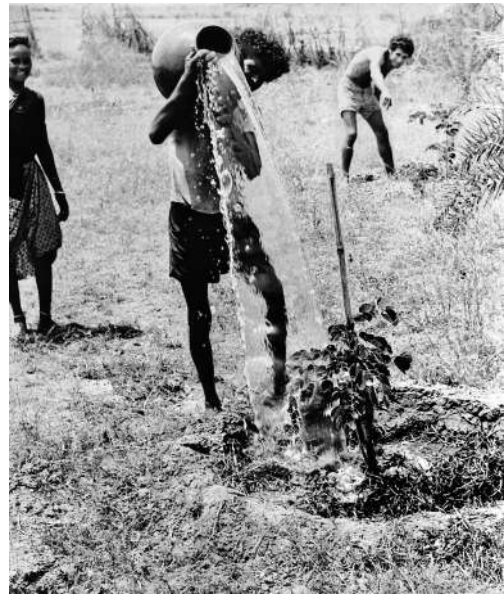
Auroville is created to realize the ideal of Sri Aurobindo who taught us the Karma Yoga. Auroville is for those who want to do the Yoga of work.

To live in Auroville means to do the Yoga of work. So all Aurovilians must take up a work and do it as Yoga.

She also mentioned a letter from Sri Aurobindo read yesterday about the importance of work.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 284, 27.3.1973





INDUSTRIES, AGRICULTURE AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Attended by over four hundred delegates from all over India and other countries, the First World Conference of the Sri Aurobindo Society was held in Pondicherry from the 10th to the 15th of August, 1964. The Mother approved and blessed the entire program. The main focus was on human unity; the agenda for a seminar on this topic was set by the Mother, who noted down a series of questions and answers. At the conference it was announced that a new township, for those wishing to prepare for a new life, was to be founded at the outskirts of Pondicherry. A major resolution passed during the Conference was to set up industries that ought to find a true solution to labour and industrial problems. Some months later the Mother named this new town Auroville.

The Mother had boldly stressed the need for industries already in the Thirties, when she first conceived of a town where Sri Aurobindo would have lived at the centre. To understand the magnitude of the Mother's vision it is essential to introduce her statements about the key role to be played by industries, both in terms of an economically self-sufficient town of 50,000 inhabitants, and as the crucible of the ideal society Auroville is meant to manifest. But first of all, as a preliminary necessity, it was considered essential to raise the capital needed to build the town.

The talk given by Suresh Hindocha¹ at the Town Hall, Auroville, on

1 Suresh Hindocha, an ex-Ashram student who graduated in engineering at Aberdeen Scotland's prestigious university, and his father Laljibhai, a successful industrialist, became members of the Administrative Committee of Auroville, which the Mother constituted on March 15, 1970. The father and his son were then put in charge, respectively, of the sections 'Promotion of Industries', and 'Technical Management'. This is the same family that purchased most of the land needed for the Matrimandir. In a typed transcript of the Mother's comments Kireet Joshi, at that time

24 February 2009, broadcast by Auroville Radio and recorded on CD, was a due reminder of the Mother's practical approach. The excerpt below from the transcript of "Planning of Auroville using Systems Engineering" concerns the discussion, with the Mother's blessings, that Hindocha, Roger Anger and a few others had with Sidney Firstman in Paris, in November or December 1968. The subject of their discussion was "Planning Research Corporation: Promoting Urban Planning using the Latest Systems Engineering Techniques". In order to raise the necessary capital, the "Auroville Industrial Corporation" was established as a preliminary move towards the founding of the town of 50,000 inhabitants, which was meant to materialize in five years by adopting systems engineering.

"A lot of discussions took place with a very positive reaction from Dr. Firstman. He felt that it could be possible to complete the whole project within a time frame of about 5 years. He said that it was quite a privilege to be involved in this unique project of Auroville, for his company and himself.

He had a few suggestions for Auroville. It was quite clear that, as soon as a project like Auroville was started, land speculators would move in with a view to make a quick profit. Since an organisation like UNESCO was involved, the Government of India could be approached to declare the land, in and around Auroville, as a special development zone. Land could not be bought except by Auroville, at a fair price, fixed by the Government. This would also protect the local land owners from selling out to land speculators at an unfair lower price.

the registrar of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram schools, reports that she said about Suresh: "Oh, he is nice, very nice. He is very intelligent, a very good musician, in fact, an artist. He is an occultist also. He is helping Sunil with his music." Then Kireet asked, "Is it then alright to take him [as a teacher]?" And the Mother replied, "Oh yes, he is alive." [Comp.]

To finance the project, he proposed setting up Auroville Industrial Corporation, an international entity, perhaps with headquarters at Paris. This corporation would sell bonds, which could be bought by financial institutions or governments. The funds generated by these bonds were to be used to promote profitable high tech industries and to buy land. The profits generated by these industries would initially be used to promote more industries and to buy more land.

There was already a plan, by Auroville planners, for two industrial zones. One would be an external zone for polluting industries and those industries which would donate only a minor part of their profits to Auroville. The internal industrial zone would be for non-polluting industries, which would donate 100% profits to Auroville. The external zone was to be built on land already owned by Auroville on the road towards Vanur/Mailam. An example of such an industry was Aurofoods near that zone.

Of course water would be needed in great quantities for industry. When the Mother was asked about this she asked me to bring a map of the land. She pinpointed a spot on the map with a red marker pen. A test bore-well was drilled at the exact point marked by the Mother. It was a real bonanza as it yielded almost 14,000 gallons per hour.

Once surplus funds were generated, the corporation would redeem or buy back the bonds in stages. Once all the bonds were bought back, the corporation would be dissolved. Then the Mother's vision of money-less Auroville could be eventually achieved. It was meant to be a temporary tool to get Auroville going.

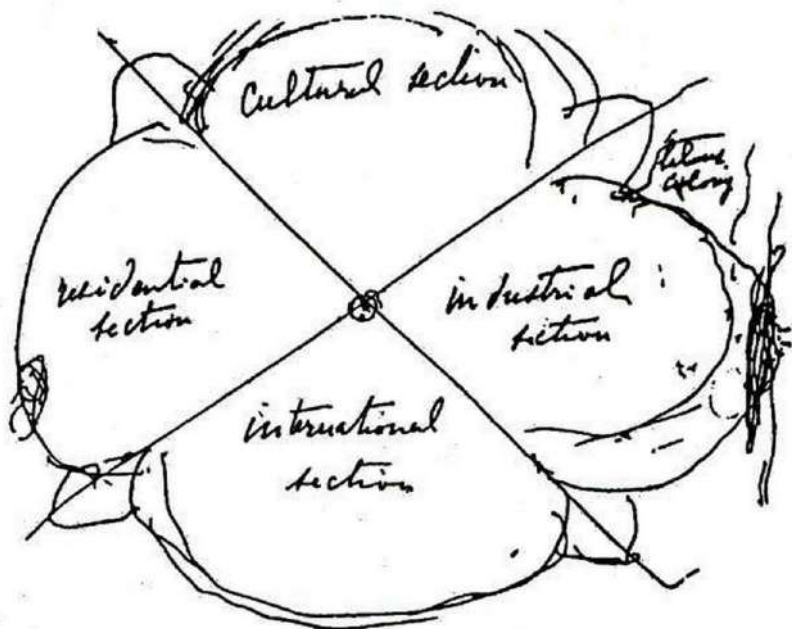
In fact, Dr. Firstman managed to talk to a financial institution in Paris. They became interested enough and were quite willing to underwrite these bonds. The underwriting was on condition that systems engineering techniques were to be used for planning at Auroville. The bonus for them, I suppose,

was the prestige that would be generated by being involved in such a unique international project.”

The Mother’s economic directives and their direct counterpart, minimum needs, to be assured by the Auroville Prosperity ‘in kind’ service, are the *conditio sine qua non* to even begin evolving in the direction the Mother indicated for life in Auroville. The Mother stressed that all the economic activities (industrial, agricultural, services, crafts etc.) were to be carried out by Aurovilians, without any monetary emolument or profit of any sort. The material needs being provided by the Auroville Prosperity Service, ‘in kind’, established on the principle of minimum needs, “*the question of salary does not arise*”. Aware that the optimum goal could not be reached all at once, during this transitional period the Mother allowed that specialists and technicians were hired for a wage under an annually renewable contract, as long as they were also made aware of the ideals of Auroville. She also stressed, at the same time, that Aurovilians had to be trained as quickly as possible to do the job.

Ideally, from the beginning, all industries belonged to Auroville and, as long as Auroville did not acquire international status, they were subject to the Indian laws. According to the guidelines approved and signed by the Mother as early as 1969, when Auromodel was being established, “*all surplus profit will go to the Central Fund*” set up to provide assistance to all developing economic activities. To dispel any doubt about the meaning of this statement, the guidelines stipulated that “*those who wish to donate only a part of their profits to the Central Fund, could start their industries anywhere in the world*”.

This section gathers the Mother’s statements on industries and other economic activities to be established in Auroville. Documents drafted by others that she approved and conversations on these and other relatable subjects are presented as well. Listed in chronological order, they complement the Mother’s guidelines, where the absence of all private property and/or private profit, along with the absence of monetary transactions, is an essential tenet.



Under the Mother's Direct Guidance

[The excerpts below are taken from a long conversation where the Mother gives for the first time an exhaustive picture of what her ideal town is meant to be. It is relevant to note that already in the first 'formation', in the thirties, where Sri Aurobindo would have lived at the centre of the town, on top of a hill, the Mother had foreseen "a housing estate for workers... perhaps an extension along the edge of the industrial section." She also mentions, "Outside the walls, in my first formation, on one side there was an industrial town, and on the other, fields, farms, etc., to supply the town." Regarding the role of industries in her new project, the Mother told Satprem:]

But the interesting thing is that around this central point², there are four large sections, like four large petals (*Mother draws*), but the corners of the petals are rounded and there are small intermediate zones: four large sections and four zones... Of course, this is only in the air: on the ground it will be an approximation.

We have four large sections: the cultural section in the north, that is, in the direction of Madras; in the east, the industrial section; in the south, the international section; and in the west, that is, towards the Lake, the residential section.

(...)

Then the industrial section... Already many people, including the Madras government (the Madras government is lending money) want to set up industries, which will be on a special basis. This industrial section is in the east, and it's very large: there is plenty of space; and it must slope down to the sea. North of Pondicherry, there is indeed a rather large expanse which is totally uninhabited and uncultivated; it's by the sea, going northward along the coast. So this industrial section would slope down to the sea, and, if possible, there would be a sort of wharf

2 The Pavilion of Love, which afterwards became the Matrimandir.
[Comp.]

(not exactly a harbor, but a place where boats can berth), and all those industries with the necessary internal means of transport would have a direct possibility of export. And here, there would be a big hotel, the plan of which R. has already done (we wanted to build the hotel here, in the place of the “Shipping Company,” but the owner, after saying yes, said no – that’s very good, it will be better there), a big hotel to receive visitors from outside. Quite a few industries have already signed up for this section; I don’t know if there will be enough space, but we’ll manage.

(...)

So, Auroville is meant more for the outside.

Oh, yes! It’s a town, so it is the whole contact with the outside. And an attempt to achieve on earth a slightly more ideal life.

In the old formation³ I had made, there had to be a hill and a river. A hill was necessary because Sri Aurobindo’s house was on top of the hill. But Sri Aurobindo was there, in the center. It was arranged according to the plan of my symbol, that is to say, a central point with Sri Aurobindo and all that concerns Sri Aurobindo’s life, then four large petals (which weren’t the same as in this drawing, they were something different), then twelve petals around (the city proper), then around that, there were the disciples’ residential quarters (you know my symbol: instead of [partition] lines, there are strips; well, the last circular strip formed the residential place of the disciples), and everyone had his house and his garden: a little house and a garden for everyone. And there were means of communication; I wasn’t sure if it was individual transportation or collective transportation (like those small open trams in the mountains, you know) that crossed the city in all directions to bring the disciples back to the center of the city. And around all that, there was a wall with entrance gates and guards at each gate, so people entered only with permission. And there was no money: within the walls, no money; at the various entrance gates, people found banks

3 In the Thirties. [Comp.]

and counters where they deposited their money and received in exchange tickets with which they could have lodging, food, this and that. But no money. And inside, absolutely nothing, no one had any money – the tickets were only for visitors, who entered only with a permit. It was a fantastic organization... No money, I didn't want money!

Oh, I've forgotten one thing in my plan: I wanted to build a workers' housing estate. But it should be part of the industrial section (perhaps an extension on the edge of the industrial section).

Outside the walls, in my first formation there was on one side the industrial estate, and on the other the fields, farms, etc., that were to supply the city. But that really meant a country – not a large one, but a country. Now it's much more limited; it's not my symbol anymore, there are only four zones, and no walls. And there will be money. The other formation, you know, was really an ideal attempt... But I reckoned it would take many years before we began: at the time, I expected to begin only after twenty-four years. But now, it's much more modest, it's a transitional experiment, and it's much more realizable – the other plan was...

(...)

It fell through. But the other project, which is just a small intermediate attempt, we can try.

I am under no illusion that it will retain its purity, but... we will try something.

Much will depend on those you will entrust with the financial organization of the project.

The financial organization, for the moment, is looked after by N., because he is the one who receives the money through that "Sri Aurobindo Society" and who has bought the lands – there is already a good amount of land bought. That's going well. Naturally the difficulty is to find enough money, but for example, for the pavilions, it's each country that will meet the expenses for its pavilion; for the industries, it's each industry

that puts its money into the business; for the residents, each will give the money necessary for his land. And the government (Madras has already promised it to us) gives between 60% and 80% (partly a *grant*, which means it's given, and partly a *loan*, free of interest and repayable over ten years, twenty years, forty years – a long-term repayment).

(...)

The biggest difficulty is water, because there is no nearby river up there; but they are already trying to harness rivers. There is even a project to divert water from the Himalayas and bring it across the whole of India (L. had made a plan and discussed it in Delhi; of course, they objected that it would be a little costly!). But anyway, without going into such grandiose things, something has to be done to bring water; that will be the biggest difficulty, that's what will take the longest time. As for the rest – light, power – it will be made on the spot in the industrial section – but you can't manufacture water! The Americans have given serious thought to a way of using sea water, because the earth no longer has enough drinking water for people (the water they call "fresh"⁴... it's ironical); the amount of water is insufficient for people's use, so they have already started chemical experiments on a big scale to transform sea water and make it usable – obviously that would be the solution to the problem.

But it already exists.

It exists, but not in a sufficient proportion.

Yes, in Israel.

They do it in Israel? They use sea water? Obviously, that would be the solution – the sea is there.

It has to be studied.

4 "Fresh water" is *eau douce* in French, *douce* meaning "gentle" or "sweet."

Then the water would have to be sent uphill.

A yacht club wouldn't be bad, too! [laughter]

Ah, certainly: with the industrial section.

Near your harbor, here.

It won't be a "harbor," but anyway. Yes, the hotel for visitors with a yacht club next to it, that's an idea. I'll add it (*Mother makes a note*).

It would surely be a great success (!)

Oh, you know, there's a flood of letters, mon petit! From everywhere, every country, people write to me, "At last the project I have been waiting for!" and so on. It's a flood.

There is also a *gliding club*. We have already been promised an instructor and a glider – that's promised. It will be in the cultural section, on top of the hill. Naturally the yacht club will be by the sea, not on the lake; but I thought (because there is a lot of talk of deepening the lake, it has almost silted up), I thought of a seaplane station there.

There could also be sailing on the lake.

Not if there are seaplanes. It's not quite large enough for sailing. But it would be very nice for a seaplane station. But it will depend: if we have an airfield, it won't be necessary; if we don't have an airfield... But in the *Lake estate* project, there was already an airfield. S., who has become a *Squadron Leader*, also sent me a plan for an airfield, but for small planes, while we want an airfield that can provide a Madras service regularly: an airfield for passengers. There has already been a lot of talk about this, there have been talks between Air India and another company, but then they didn't agree – all sorts of silly little difficulties. But all that will fall off naturally with Auroville's growth – people will be only too glad to have an airfield.

No, there are two difficulties. The small sums of money, we have them (as I said, what the government can lend, what people

give to have a *plot* – all that is coming), but the problem is the massive sums: because it takes billions to build a city!...

Mother's Agenda, VI, 1980, passim, 23.6.1965

[Two days later the Mother told Huta about Auroville:]

“The town will be divided into four parts: 1) pavilion of all the countries; 2) cultural pavilion; 3) residential area; 4) small scale industries.

On the seaside there will be many big industries. And further towards Madras the land will be extended – covering some 50 miles or so.”

Huta, Matrimandir – the Mother's Truth and Love, 25.6.1965

[In September 1965 Roger Anger returned to Pondicherry, having accepted the Mother's invitation to be the architect of her 'ideal town'. He submitted to the Mother an eight page report entitled "Considerations and General Data to Locate Auroville on the Proposed Lands". The Mother wrote comments on the margins and added a few more on a small note-pad. The entry on industries is reproduced below.]

B – Industrial Section

Instead of distancing themselves systematically from a concern for beauty as in the past, and without forgetting their essential functions, workplaces such as factories and industrial organizations have to find their own expressions of beauty, as do the residential areas. Forms, colours, simplicity of lines, sense of order and gardens have to be an intrinsic part of Auroville's industrial complex. The Industrial Section will have to participate in its own way in successfully shaping the image of the new city.

[The Mother wrote on the margin:]

Very good.

In practice its actual location in relationship to the centre of the city is determined by:

- I) *The most favourable access to the roads' network, the railway and the airport [to be built].*
- II) *The potential for considerable expansion and restructuring.*
- III) *The choice of lands that, regarding the site, are the least interesting in terms of salubriousness.⁵*

Questions to be asked: Should some of these industries participate in the construction of Auroville, at least partially? If yes, shouldn't we build them as a priority and define how many there should be? Shouldn't we relocate some of the industries that presently gravitate around the Ashram? This would free space there, while providing the beginning of Auroville's Industrial Sector. Haven't certain industries to be set up simultaneously with the relocation of villages, in order to provide immediate work for villagers, as well as partly solving the difficult problem of providing new homes for the relocated villagers?

[The Mother commented on a small note-pad:]

1. Ferbatco (André)
2. Stainless Steel? (Kishorilal)
3. Handloom (Sybil)

Only primary schools, especially in Tamil, and probably one in Hindi for the families of the industrial and agricultural workers of Auroville.

*Given by Roger Anger to an Aurovilian
and kept in the Auroville Archives, 7.9.1965*

[Questions submitted by Gilbert Gauché:]

5 This seems to suggest that in Auroville the land allocated for industrial activities was to be chosen among plots of land generally considered unsuitable for agricultural and residential or other related purposes. With the spreading of an ecological consciousness, the recycling of reclaimed wasteland, in this case, for industries, will become an essential consideration. *[Comp.]*

Would it be possible for people or business organisations (Indians or others), not connected with Sri Aurobindo's ideas, to establish businesses in Auroville, just for financial or commercial reasons?

In general, would it be possible to establish Private or Public Limited Companies in Auroville?

Each case is a special one and must be considered separately.

No categories.

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, 11.4.1966

[The following is an excerpt from notes written by Shri Aravind Shankar Baan, ICS, after an interview he and his family had with the Mother on 24.2.1967:]

When asked what would happen to undesirable people who tried to get into Auroville, the Mother replied that they would not be able to stay in Auroville, but would automatically leave by themselves without being forced out. The reason they would not stay would be that there would be no profit making in Auroville, and these undesirables merely intent on profiteering, finding no gain, would leave.

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, 24.2.1967?

[Answer to Vijay – Huta's nephew – who, before he started working in the Auroville Office, had enquired about agriculture and commerce:]

Both agriculture and commerce will have their place in Auroville. So you choose the one you like best.

My blessings are always with you to prepare yourself for the Divine's work.

With love and blessings.

Huta, The Spirit of Auroville, p. 57, 17.8.1966

[On November 11, 1967 Navajata, the Sri Aurobindo Society's Secretary, delivered a speech to All India Radio, first read out to the Mother and approved by her. Among others Navajata stated:]

“Provision is made for 50,000 residents in the main town, 20,000 in the model villages in its green belt, and 30,000 in its subsidiary projects like World Trade Centre, etc.

(...)

A physical education department covering all games and sports, model agricultural villages revolutionizing agricultural life by synthesizing aptitudes of workers, suitability of land and technical assistance, for a better life and optimum production, a handloom village for the handloom weavers in the area, a model fisherman’s village, a film studio with an artists’ colony, a World Trade and Information Centre, industries, all with a changed outlook and consciousness, are some of the other highlights of the project which will help usher in a new era in every aspect of life.

Here is the dream city of which you and I have dreams as little children and hoped that someone someday will fulfill it.”

<http://www.sriaurobidosociety.org.in/subnav/aurovil.htm>, 11.11. 1967

*(Message for the laying of the foundation-stone of
Aurofood Private Limited)*

We shall work for a better tomorrow.

MCWCE, XIII, p.236, 1.11.1968

*[This extract is part of the documents that Suresh Hindocha⁶
handed over to an Aurovilian:]*

AUROVILLE – INTERNATIONAL TOWNSHIP
PROGRESS REPORT – NOVEMBER 1, 1968 –
REPORT ON INDUSTRY

The town plan of Auroville provides for a specific area reserved for industry. The idea is to locate such industries in the town itself which do not cause dirt, noise, or unhealthy fumes. The

6 Two months later the Mother appointed Suresh’s father Laljibhai as “director of the organisation of the Industrial Zone of Auroville”.
[Comp.]

other factor to be considered in location preference will be the amount of dedication and profit percentage offered to Auroville. There are two types of arrangements for industries accepted at Auroville. One will be those who are either fully owned by the township or who offer it their entire profits. Another will be those who offer certain percentage of their profits to Auroville. Entrepreneurs in the latter category will be offered all the facilities required by them, such as developed land on easy lease terms and reasonable development costs, help in securing licenses, quotas and so on from any government, official involved, and arrangements with local banks. Of particular importance will be the good labor management relations which will result from the lack of pressures in a non-political, non-competitive atmosphere. At present all the existing labour laws apply to industries in Auroville. As the experimental nature of Auroville develops, these laws may be relaxed.

THE PROPOSALS

1. As per the Policy discussions in the Industries Committee of Auroville, it has been decided to encourage the first set of industrialists who offered to do so.
2. The proposals for starting an industrial estate in the Pondy state area of Alancoupoum are being drawn out and placed for discussion
3. A letter is already sent out to the Secretary Ministry of Govt. of Pondicherry on the 17th Nov. in this ref. and the present proposal are concrete proposals for decisions.
4. We have selected the Eastern side of the village Alancoupoum any land on [...] the water tank as the first place where the developments could surf. The reason is the proximity of the Madras State region of the industrial area of Auroville and our [...] to operate all industrial activities from one common centre. This development is styled as PHASE I.
5. There are industries that are already under our planning

and for which we are eager to establish a PRIVATE industrial estate with financial assistance from the Bank or other financing agencies, as, we believe that this could be done immediately. We call this as PART A of Phase I. The industries and the requirements are summarised in Appendix 1.

6. Once the beginning is made in PART A PHASE 1, there will be more residences and demands for coming here and establish and so we should simultaneously plan PART B of PHASE I as the next stage of the development.
7. Whereas PART A is being established as a private estate we request that the Government of Pondicherry assist us in various ways for the project. These are stated in Appendix 2.
8. Further we request that the Government of Pondicherry may include the development of PART B of the PHASE I program in their immediate programmers and undertake to finance this programmer and further parts so that the entire area east of the village and tank become one single developed industrial zone.
9. Details as stated are mentioned in the Appendix.

Suresh Hindocha archive, 1.11.1968

[In the file handed over by Suresh Hindocha, this undated document follows the previous one. The handwritten note states: "English translation of Roger's paper":]

ADVANTAGES AND CONDITIONS OFFERED
TO INDUSTRIALISTS WHO WANT TO START
AN INDUSTRY IN AUROVILLE

A. Advantages offered:

- 1) Support and assistance from the organisation Auroville in order to facilitate agreements and to obtain licenses from the government of India.
- 2) Commercial contacts throughout the world by the future

presence of foreigners from all over the world living in Auroville.

- 3) Possibility to find among the inhabitants of Auroville specialised labour and technicians from different countries.
- 4) Close collaboration with the authorities of Auroville to make it a sound business. Safe labour – no social conflicts nor claims for higher wages – social relations are easy by the fact that Aurovillians have come for a special reason and that they have a special idealistic view on work and life.
- 5) A good market for the production is assured because of the presence of 50,000 Aurovillians.
- 6) There is hope that sometime in the future the territory of Auroville will acquire an international status.

B. Summary of general Conditions:

- 1) In accordance with the charter of Auroville and according to the arrangements followed so far, all industries built on the territory of Auroville will belong to Auroville.
- 2) During the so called launching – and refund – periods an absolute independence will be granted to the industrialists as far as the direction and the exploitation is concerned. This should however be done in accordance with the ideal and the experiment which is being made
- 3) All industrial foundations are submitted to the general legislation of the government of Madras and the Central government.
- 4) The location of the industries will be decided in accordance with the organisation of Auroville, consideration being taken of every different type. The land is presented by Auroville and, if possible, provided with the necessary equipment.

Type of industries

- a) Foundation of industries by funds belonging to the Auroville organization.
- b) Foundation of industries by personal funds belonging to members of the Auroville Community.
- c) Foundation of industries by groups of industrialists or financiers who do not belong to the Auroville community, but are interested in the experiment.

Basic elements for agreements

As to the categories a + b for each foundation a special agreement with Auroville is necessary defining the principles and details of the agreement. Once all administrative steps have been taken and licenses acquired, the agreement should be specified so as to be adapted to the nature of the industry, the way of investment, the interest required and the way the production is sold.

All administrative and legal procedures should be undertaken in collaboration with the legal department of the Auroville organization.

How collaboration could work

During the starting period of the industry that means (2 years) after the construction of the plant, Auroville will ask no participation whatever (Launching period).

After this initial period, Auroville will receive a percentage of the profit (to be specified 10% over 10 years) calculated according to the time which is necessary to the money-lender to recuperate the totality of his initial capital together with an interest of 10% over the investment.

So called Recuperation or Refund – period

At the end of this period there will be a collaboration established with Auroville (over 10 years to be fixed) during which the profit will be deviled 50 to 50%. This is the period in which new investments should be considered for modernisation and better return.

So called recuperation or refund period

After this period Auroville should become proprietor of the whole establishment.

Suresh Hindocha's archive, undated

[Typed letter, with the Mother's answer noted down:]

Mother,

In Bommaipalayam and Kuilapalayam, Auroville has about fifty acres of Cashew in small bits of 1, 2, or 3 acres spread over roughly three square miles. Hence it will be difficult to organize the collection of Cashew seeds efficiently.

I feel that we may lease out the rights of collection of seed for this season alone to some party in this area only.

Is this approach correct?

Pranams

(signed: Dayanand)

It would be better to find among the people of Auroville some who will be happy to do this work.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, 28.12.1968

Sweet Mother,

The construction of the first huts at "Hope" is progressing slowly but satisfactorily. The time for occupation of the huts is drawing near and consideration is now being given to having some suitable activity for those who are going to be the first residents of "Hope".

In a conversation with Dayanand I find that he is willing to reside at "Hope" for some time and carry out some definite activity and after discussion I pray for Thy consideration of the following proposal and if approved by Thee, I pray for Thy blessings:

- *That the cashew grove where "Hope" is situated comes under the control of those responsible for "Hope".*

- *That the crop when ready be harvested and sold on the market in order that funds can become available for further development of "Hope".*

[Mother said "No" to selling]

If possible the cashew crop when harvested to be canned for sale on the export market. This would have many benefits. It would create an income and also provide an activity of work for some of the residents of "Hope". Although the cashew grove falls under the Auro Orchard at present, no attention has been paid to it recently and it therefore requires a lot of attention to ensure a good crop. This we are willing to do.

It is also proposed that the whole area, approximately ten acres, earmarked for "Hope" become the responsibility of "Hope" for agricultural development, until such time as facilities are available to build the entire project of "Hope".

[Mother said it was alright if Nava and Gérard approved.]

Naturally the closest co-operation and co-ordination will be maintained between Orchard and "Hope". It is only felt that for all practical reasons at the present time a division of responsibility should exist.

In devotion and surrender,

Thy child

Henry Bell

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, 10.1.1969

[This document continues the discussion, this time with the Mother, which Suresh Hindocha, Roger Anger and others had two months earlier in Paris with Sidney Firstman, as reported in the introduction to this chapter:]

1. Establishment of a corporation to raise finance for Auroville's industrial development only by issue of irredeemable preferences shares without voting power, control or interference in Auroville.

Yes. Such a corporation can be formed initially to get Auroville going and later all preference shares should be liquidated, as we do not want to employ money to make money in Auroville.

2. *Employment of paid experts, whose services are donated by the Ford Foundation⁷, to facilitate the application of systems engineering.*

Yes – but the experts who come here must work in the spirit of Auroville and as such must be chosen by me.

3. *Circulate a questionnaire in Auroville amongst its personnel to discover talents and skills available in Auroville already.*

Yes – but we should choose the people for a particular function.

4. *What image should Auroville project consistently to the world and to individuals?*

It is only a little mental affair. You get together and decide what should be the image of Auroville and then bring it to me. I will change it if necessary; and that image must be the final image and must be consistently followed.

Auroville in Mother's words, pp. 163-4, 22.1.1969

[Excerpt from André Morisset's⁸ letter to Suresh Hindocha:]

...it seems quite all right to plan an ideal sequence of the phases of conception, study and implementation and I see no objection to showing it to the Ford Foundation in support of an application for a grant. The discussion should centre on the first phase, insisting on the paragraph, page 9 of your report, which reads as follows:

“During the town concept phase a study to assess the economic potential of the Auroville area to support industry, agriculture

7 At that time the Ford Foundation was to be contacted to finance a Rs. 5 crore feasibility study to build Auroville within five years, using the newly developed systems engineering approach to town planning. [Comp.]

8 The Mother's son.

and people can be carried out, this would give out a town feasibility analysis. On this basis we can determine preferred industry, commerce, agriculture, and other economic activities such that this would be our preliminary economic activity plan.”

Auroville Archives, 28.1.1969

Need of an organisation. Problem of the location of the bricks.

Consequences of the choice: Industrial Zone, or Big Lake [Usteri].

If we can, I prefer in the Industrial Zone. If the survey doesn't allow it, on the big Lake.

(...)

Suresh [Hindocho] for the finances.

Yes.

About Laljibhai [Hindocho]?⁹

He would be at his place investigating industries for Auroville.

See with Nava.

Roger Anger's archive, 28.1.1969

Laljibhai [Hindocho]:

Director of the organisation of the Industrial Zone of Auroville.

Blessings

The Mother

Suresh [Hindocho]:

Yes, I prefer him, there is a wealth. I am not mistaken.

Roger Anger's archive, 30.1.1969

9 A successful industrialist, and the father of Suresh Hindocha. [Comp.]

Taking the Block Making Unit¹⁰ as an example, what is the best form of agreement to make with the industries that will start in Auromodel? As an example, the principle of 30% of the revenue given to Auromodel or Auroville has hints of capitalism. Isn't it preferable that the industry belongs to Auroville and that what is given is the totality of the revenue after withdrawing the manager's wage, where the manager has the freedom and responsibility to set the amount?

Yes, it is much preferable. The revenue would be distributed to Auromodel after retaining an amount for future investments and the manager's wage.

Could we envisage loans from the State Bank [of India]?

Yes, as long as they are in the name of the interested party.

Roger Anger's archive, 1.2.1969

Problems and Reflections on the Nature of Industries in Auroville

If Auroville doesn't want to remain a limited, circumscribed experience but, on the contrary, be capable of proving its originality and its universal message in all domains, material as well as spiritual, it seems that Auroville must have a new type of economy that would be exemplary. Consequently, it should succeed by putting into question certain economic principles, of production, of marketing and of management, while experimenting with new structures.

Roger Anger's archive, undated, probably early 1969

[Drafted in French, the following guidelines for industries were approved and signed by the Mother when the plans for Auromodel were being made. This text is of a particular importance because three years later, on May 23, 1972, it will be presented to the Mother with minor changes, and she will sign it again.]

10 A business unit linked to 'Auropress'. It will be inaugurated on June 23, 1969 at one of Pondy's industrial estates. [Comp.]

PRINCIPLES FOR STARTING INDUSTRIES IN AUROVILLE

The objective of Auroville, as it has been defined, is that all economic activities, whether industrial, agricultural, handicrafts or community services, shall be carried out by Aurovilians.

Since Auroville provides the material needs of the Aurovilians, they should work without any monetary recompense. This aim, which should under no circumstances be forgotten or delayed in its application, remains the ideal to be realised.

An intermediary stage of practical experimentation and 'running-in' remains necessary before reaching it.

During this stage, industries to be established in Auroville, within the framework of the 'Aurovilian' conditions, may employ for some time, according to their needs, specialists and technicians who will be paid.

In any case this employment will be for a limited period, under an annually renewable contract.

Their role will be to enable the launching of the industries concerned, and to help train as quickly as possible an Aurovilian labour-force capable of replacing them.

In addition, all arrangements in the organization of work are to be made in harmony with the ideal of Auroville.

Auroville in Mother's words, p. 161, probably early 1969

[Drafted in English, the following guidelines were approved and signed by the Mother.]

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN AUROVILLE

1. All industries should belong to Auroville from the beginning or eventually.
2. Until Auroville acquires an international status, the industries will be subject to the Indian laws.
3. Beginning of industries in Auroville:

A Central Fund for the development of economic activities should be set up which would help Aurovilians to start proper industries and to provide any other assistance that may be necessary. All surplus profit will go to the Central Fund.

- a. Those who wish to start industries may give money to the Central Fund conditionally or unconditionally, and let the Central Fund handle the money.
- b. Others may start industries on their own and work under the supervision of the Central Fund conditionally or unconditionally.
- c. Those who wish to donate only a part of their profits to the Central Fund could start their industries anywhere in the world.

Auroville in Mother's words, pp. 161-2, probably early 1969

*Regarding the sale of [agricultural] products:*¹¹

(The Mother says:) This is unavoidable.

To be valid, the question is the level of consciousness. It is not [yet] the solution of the future, but people are still too far away to accept the new solutions. At the present stage it is necessary.

The higher the level of consciousness, the broader the field of vision.

Roger Anger's archive, 11.2.1969

[Written questions, in French, submitted to the Mother by Roger Anger.]

Does the Mother really agree that Auromodel is to be an autonomous organization within the Sri Aurobindo Society?

11 On January 10, the Mother had replied «No» to Henry Bell who had asked permission to sell part of the cashew harvest.

Yes.

Does the Mother agree that in Auromodel, property will only be collective?

Yes.

Can a separate bank account be opened for Auromodel?

Yes.

If property is only collective can industries, for instance, take bank loans? This implies Auromodel's legal responsibility, hence of Auroville, hence of the Sri Aurobindo Society.

Each case must be studied separately.

Roger Anger's archive, 12.2.1969

[Prem]Mallik: The Mother asks to see him next time. She agrees, after reading the documents, to open a separate account and, in principle, under Mallik's signature!

Roger Anger's archive, 13.2.1969

Mother,

X, Y and Z will be the partners in this project to construct a factory named Auro-steel. They will invest various sums of money. How should the profits be distributed? In proportion to their investments or some other way? X's will be the biggest share. All told it needs Rs. 2 lakhs.

They do not seem to know that in Auroville after all expenses are paid, including their own maintenance, the profits go to the town.

MCW03, XVII, p. 322, 17.10.1969

MINUTES OF THE FIRST MEETING
IN AUROVILLE OFFICE ON SUNDAY 15TH MARCH 1970

A meeting was held on Sunday 15th March in Auroville Office to discuss the possible status of economic activities in Auroville.

The following were present: Andre, Roger, Anjani, Laljibhai,

Suresh, Haresh, Malik, Bouma, Wil.

At the outset Andre expressed regret that Nava was absent. Roger also agreed and said that as the date had been fixed in advance, it was felt that this meeting could go on.

Roger informed those present of a few suggestions of his which had been approved by The Mother

- 1) To have an administrative Committee with the following members:

Anjani	-	Administration
André	-	Coordination
Nava	-	Collection of Funds
Laljibhai.	-	Promotion of Industries
Suresh.	-	Technical Management
Dayanand	-	Agriculture
Malik	-	Marketing Management
Roger	-	Town Planning

to be joined by Syamsunder for Legal matters.

This Committee will meet every Sunday morning at 10.30 a.m.

- 2) Wil acts as secretary of the Committee,
- 3) Each member gives to Wil any points to be put on the Agenda by Wednesday and she distributes it to all members
- 4) Any member who is absent from the meeting, will give his or her opinion in writing to Wil.

Roger further informed that The Mother has given the following name to this Committee: "Comité Administratif d' Auroville" ("Administrative Committee of Auroville"). The following three points will be placed before The Mother for Her approval:

- 1) All decisions of the Committee must be by consensus of all members. These will then be approved or changed by The Mother.

- 2) If the decision cannot be unanimous, the different solutions will be presented to the Mother and Her decision shall prevail.
- 3) Individual members should not put before the Mother anything relating to Industry and Agriculture without consulting and getting the opinion of the Committee.

The only item on the Agenda: Suresh' paper on economic activities in Auroville was taken up for consideration. The following points were made out:

- 1) That approach to Government of India in the Ministry of Foreign Trade to take up a study on the possibility of establishing a Free Port in Auroville be made.
- 2) 11 (2b): it was felt that the *[unreadable]* sentence should be modified as follows: that the original owner keeps the direction of the Industry as long as he manages the industry in harmony with the Ideals of Auroville.
- 3) IV: services offered may be simplified as: all management services will be made available to all industries established in Auroville.

For the rest the paper was approved by those present. Subject to the last two points it was considered that the paper could be placed before the Mother for approval in principle before going further into the legal aspects of the various issues involved. After approval of the other is obtained Suresh, with Haresh, Bouma and Roger, in consultation with Syamsunder, will prepare a further detailed paper that could be used as a circular letter, that could be issued to industrialists desirous of starting industries in Auroville.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Suresh Hindocha archive, 15.3.1970

[In Suresh Hindocha's file this comes next, the Mother's quotes included. It is probably the follow-up of the meeting, notes for which are reproduced above, "held on Sunday 15th March to discuss the possible status of economic activities in Auroville."]

AUROVILLE-BULLETIN

Mother's message given 2-4-1970:

“METTEZ VOUS TOUS D' ACCORD.

C'EST LA SEULE MANIERE DE FAIRE DU BON TRAVAIL.”

Avec mes bénédictions.

La Mère.¹²

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

A general committee has been stated to which Mother gave the name: Administration Committee. The Committee is comprised for the moment of: Andre, Anjani, Dayanand, Laljibhai, Malik, Navajata, Roger, Suresh with Wil acting as secretary. Shyamsundar will be available for juridical matters. The committee will be extended as the need arises with those representing special other aspects of Auroville. The committee started March 15th and meets every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. in the Auroville-Office. The recommendations of the committee are by consensus of all members and are then approved or changed by the Mother. If the recommendation cannot be unanimous, the different solutions will be presented to the Mother and Her decision shall prevail. The minutes of each meeting are put before the Mother.

EXTRACTS OF THE MINUTES.

Working committees have started:

THE AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE

Is comprised of Dayanand, Gerard, Mercier, Allan, Seshadri, with Dayanand as secretary and meets every Thursday at 5p.m. in the Auroville- Office.

12 “YOU MUST ALL AGREE.
THAT IS THE ONLY WAY TO DO GOOD WORK.”

With my blessings.

The Mother”

THE INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEE

Is comprised of Suresh and Harish Hindocha, Bouma, Malik, Bhatt and Murthy with Malik as secretary. This committee meets every Saturday at 10 a.m. in the Auroville-Office.

THE COMMITTEE FOR CONSTRUCTION

Is comprised of Roger, Piero, Gloria, Ranganathan and Neeta with Roger as secretary and meets every Saturday at 4 p.m. in the Auroville-Office. If necessary, notes and suggestions can be put before the Administration Committee addressed as follows: To the secretary of the Administration Committee, Wil, Auroville-Office.

AGRICULTURAL COMMITTEE

The scope of the committee is Agriculture, Horticulture, Dairy, Husbandry, plantation crops, soil conservation and erosion control. An Agricultural Fund has been started to which specific donations are directly credited and from which funds can be drawn.

Those who desire to do agriculture or any given subject mentioned within the scope of the committee should inform the committee by the 15th May 1970, for the new agricultural season in the prescribed proforma. For further details please contact Dayanand, secretary of this working committee.

Important conditions are that the land belongs to Auroville, that a part of the profits or produce should be given to Auroville or used for the benefit of Auroville, and that the area is open for assessment by the Agricultural Committee.

CONSTRUCTION COMMITTEE

Top-priority will be given during the next three months to see that concentrated efforts are made to prepare detailed plans, drawings and estimates for the entire Auromodel project; Residential accommodation for Auroville-workers must be provided for on the site as soon as possible.

The Auroville Executive Committee is responsible for the preparation of the general plan of Auroville and for the Execution of all construction as per the plan working in conjunction with the C.A.A.

The committee will be assisted in this task by technicians, architects, engineers and organizations who are ready to offer their collaboration within the framework of the ideals of Auroville.

Architectural and engineering offices will be established to take up the “Technical disciplines” of the various stages of work listed as follows:

A. Preparatory stage.

Participation in the detailed study and implementation of the new living conditions, methods etc.

Defining suitable habitations and constructions according to needs and available funds.

Study of projects devoted to beauty and aesthetics.

Establishing experimental research concerning building materials, constructions methods, sources and total requirement for water supply, electricity etc.

Establishing economical structures in construction and training craftsmen in various trades of construction.

B. Project Study.

Detailed study of the various aspects by experts in the fields of water supply, transportation, geophysics, economics, etc. in collaboration with the committee to finalise the lay-outs

C. Urban.

Drawing, relating to all construction in Auroville.

D. Construction.

Planning and supervision of all construction in Auroville.

Industrial Committee

An industrial fund will be started as soon as possible, the legal aspects are being taken up for study.

A paper “Economical activities in Auroville” is being prepared which could be used as a circular letter that could be issued to industrialists desirous of starting industries in Auroville.

The feasibility for starting a hand-made [paper] factory is being studied.

Miscellaneous

Transport – Reorganization of transport is under consideration.

Communication – As the necessity for a general information letter is generally felt Rob, who has been approved by the Mother to try, is asked to put one together.

Quotation

THERE ARE SOME LIVING WHO ARE ALREADY DEAD.

THERE ARE SOME DEAD WHO ARE STILL ALIVE.

THE MOTHER

Suresh Hindocha archive, undated, probably March 1970

[The following is mentioned in Gilles Guigan's compilation:]

Draft brochure on industrial activities in Auroville.

Auroville Archives, June 1970

Visitors: On 25.6.70 Dr. Triguna Sen, Union Minister of Petroleum and Chemicals, and Mines and Metals.

Bulletin p.131, 25.6.1970

[Typed conversation. Possibly answers to a proposed questionnaire regarding the UN's World University.]

K.: The new socio-economic order will be spiritual in character and will be ushered in by spiritual means by working sincerely and one-pointedly for the realisation and manifestation of the Divine Consciousness in physical life.

Very good.

(...)

Q.: What are the definite proposals for the economic ills of the country?

K.: To enthuse the people with a new light inspiring them to work sincerely and diligently for continuous increase in production; to start new industries and raise the standard of living; to tap fully the resources of the country; to call upon all the capitalists to spend for the nation, instead of remaining indifferent to, or resisting, the welfare of the people; to replace competition and

domination by cooperation and collaboration; to give education and training to the people, in all fields, including the technical, agricultural and economic; to encourage small-scale, self-supporting industries all over the country; to avoid one-sided industrialisation and to insist on every industry or occupation to provide to each individual the joy of work and the leisure to grow inwardly.

To create conditions for full employment; to realise that work is not the means of earning one's living, but to express one's capacities and possibilities, of doing at the same time service to the whole group, which on its side would provide for each one's subsistence and for the field of his work; to create townships all over the country on the lines conceived by the township of Auroville; in such townships, property will belong to no one in particular but to the community as a whole; each individual will be a willing servitor of the Divine Consciousness; to radiate the light of these townships all over the country so that people may feel inspired to emulate the example of this new life in the whole country and in the world.

Very good, very good, excellent.

Auroville Archives, July 1970

[Entry in Gilles Guigan's compilation:]

“Auropress Trust” was started in Calcutta by Arun Tagore with the object of ‘establishing a press for the furtherance of the aims and ideals of Auroville and for its benefit and service.’ Paragraph Three of the Trust Deed states that the name of the press started under the Trust shall be “Auropress” and it will carry on the business of printers and publishers and will form part of the Auroville project. The deed was drawn up with ‘full knowledge and consent of the Mother’, and the Trustees nominated were André Morisset, Roger Anger, Arun Tagore, Navajata, K.C. Patel (S.A.A.) and Sudha Sundaram (S.A.A.).

Auroville Archives, December 1970

(Someone asked whether chemical fertilisers and pesticides should be used in Auroville.)

NO, NO, NO.

Auroville should not fall back into old errors which belong to a past that is trying to revive.

MCWCE, XIII, p.239-40, March 1971

Cultivation without chemical fertilisers and dangerous insecticides is advisable.

MCWCE, XIII, p.240, 1971

I spoke to Mother about the need of a Woodworking unit at Auroville for construction purposes. No suitable person to establish and run the unit was there at Auroville at the moment and Roger had spoken to Ved Prakash at the Ashram about it. Ved Prakash said that if Mother saw like that he could take up the work at Auroville. Mother said "Very good" and she wrote on Ved Prakash's letter;

Your collaboration would be extremely useful and fully appreciated.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 113, 1.4.1971

Lisa has been producing textile articles with a new tie-dye technique and now suggests the name Aurocreation as a trade label. Or any other name that Mother may give.

Mother approves the name Aurocreation.

I can help in the organisation of the work.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 115, 12.5.1971

Mother gave the name Auropolyester for the polyester factory. She said that she would write the name when the factory will be constructed.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 116, 22.5.1971

(Note read out to Mother and approved by her)

The residents of Silence will go on vacating their places for Bharat Nivas without causing any delay in the work. They

will help in the quicker construction of the Matrimandir Workers Camp so that some of them can shift there and some will be accommodated in the huts on the border of Silence not immediately required for Bharat Nivas. These too will be vacated as soon as needed.

The residents of Silence wish to set up some cottage industry like ceramics and tiles and live near Kottakarai village and work for the development of this village and better relations with the people of this village. A concrete scheme will be made by them in such a way as to suit the overall Auroville program in consultation with Shyam Sunder and Roger and placed before the Mother for approval and blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 118-9, 23.7.1971

For the proposed optical glass industry at Auroville, the Government's license and know-how collaboration can be arranged by Sharma, a friend of Ved Prakash.

Mother approved of it, but asked twice whether we have a man who knows it. Shyam Sunder told her that we have none at present and [that he] can ask Sharma himself.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 124, 23.2.1972

Aurela Soap Industries had charged the first pan for making 501 Brand soap on 21.02.72. One soap tablet was offered today to Mother. Even the markings on the wrapper were noticed by her. Champaklal will send for it for washing clothes.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 124, 24.2.1972

Letter of Tim Rees regarding the Forest Seedling Nursery.

Mother said, "It will have an effect on the climate."

In response for a name, she said Success and wrote it.

Regarding agriculture I wanted to know whether more farms should be developed by giving charge to capable persons for each farm, to one or two for each farm.

Mother agreed and advised, "But it is necessary that the Europeans who do it should first know the Indian conditions."

“Should we have one Indian with one European?”

“Yes, yes.”

After a pause she mentioned Mercier’s name.

“But, Mother, he may not be having time.”

“Yes, and he is old.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 138-9, 16.3.72

Auroville has taken 26 lakhs from the State Bank of India. The lands are given as security. Six lakhs are to be repaid by 30.06.72 and the balance by 31.12.72. It is not expected that we will accumulate this big sum to be paid off at one time. So, although we are in financial shortage at present, from the monies which come I can go on repaying 50% to the Bank. Mother said, “Yes, yes. This is what should be done.”

The Polyester unit’s construction has stopped for want of money. Louis Cohen could not bring money from France. The bank is willing to give money for it. It is an industrial unit and repayment can be made out of its earnings.

Mother approved.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 149, 3.4.1972

Mother made a card for Auroshilpam, the Sanskrit name for Auroindustries, the industrial sector of Auroville.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 149, 4.4.1972

Gujadhar’s proposal for horse-breeding in Auroville on profit sharing basis was not approved.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 157, 5.4.1972

Anjani is willing to take up the development and organisation of industries in Auroville. Mother said:

Yes, it is good, but if she stays here.

I also mentioned that we will tap new sources for finance for industries. Nava is bringing money for the general Fund.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 158, 8.4.1972

In the Industrial sector of Auroville, we have sufficient lands for

four or five industries. We wish to start Workshops, Soap, etc. Mother liked the idea of starting.

Regarding the optical lens industry in particular and industries in general there, Mother answered that we could have local paid labour, but as for technicians from other places, they should be those who have understood and liked and accepted Auroville and its life. "Otherwise", she said, "you will not come out of the old thing."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 165, 17.4.1972

Jean Pierre, Louis and Jacques have returned after a month from Bombay where they had gone to bring money for the Polyester unit. They haven't brought any money. (Mother had a laugh). They have procured some orders for decorative things in polyester. (Samples were shown to Mother). They want to make it self-supporting by external orders and wish to know if it is in accordance with Mother's will.

Mother asked, "Where will it be produced?"

"At Aspiration."

"That is a place for experiences. It can be there."

She wanted to know more about polyester.

In the end she said that it will be good if it were done well. She also added that Auroville is for new things.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 177, 11.5.1972

[This text on industries, appearing in Syham Sunder's journal, is particularly relevant because the Mother did sign a similar one in 1969. As there are only marginal changes, these are to be considered the Mother's consistent guidelines for industries and productive units in general. This includes "Since the requirements of the Aurovilians are completely looked after by Auroville, the question of salary does not arise. This objective, which should not in any case be forgotten or delayed in its application, is the ideal to be attained." Here is the text, probably drafted by Roger Anger.]

(A note put up before Mother on 23.5.1972 and signed by her)

Some guidelines for setting up industries at Auroville

One of the objectives of Auroville is that economic activities of all kinds, whether industrial, artisan, agricultural etc, should be completely taken up by Aurovilians. Since the requirements of the Aurovilians are completely looked after by Auroville, the question of salary does not arise.

This objective, which should not in any case be forgotten or delayed in its application, is the ideal to be attained.

An intermediary stage for practical reasons seems necessary before attaining this.

During this period the industries which would come up in Auroville, can engage for a certain period, according to their needs some salaried specialists or technicians.

However, engagement of this paid personnel would be only for a limited period under a form of contract, to be renewed annually. Their role will be to help start of industries and then help form a team of Aurovilians, as soon as possible, who would replace them.

Moreover, any enterprise or project undertaken at Auroville should be in consonance with Auroville's ideals.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 180-81, 23.5.1972

Ved Prakash letter:

Mother said that it is a good chance for him to work in Auroville. His should be the first industry there. The Aspiration people are to be told not to meddle in his work; they have nothing to do with it. Aspiration is not Auroville; real Auroville has not started.¹³

¹³ The Mother is reported as having said "I am a benevolent dictator". So, for example, she repeatedly made clear that no one was to interfere with her work with Roger Anger, the chief architect whom she went on minutely instructing, day in and day out, about the plans for Matrimandir and the town. From the above quote, it appears that she also had the same attitude towards industrial operations and the first company that was to be established in Auroville in 1972. [Comp.]

Mother does not agree to see him every week for the work.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 182, 26.5.1972

The rinderpest at Aurodairy was reported to Mother. She put questions for more information. Five cows have already died. Eight more are infected.

The soap unit is to be set up at Aurogarage.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 182, 28.5.1972

At Auro-dairy one cow and one calf died yesterday. Total number of death is ten cows and ten calves.

Mother asked about the disinfection of the place. Shyam Sunder replied that disinfection, vaccination and segregation have been done.

*

I spoke to Mother about Roger's letter to me and Mother's approval for the soap industry in the industrial zone of Auroville.

Mother confirmed it, also the fact that Roger is in charge of the architecture of Auroville. She laid stress on harmony.

(...)

In the evening I informed Mother that I have asked the soap industry man to construct at Aurogarage and that when Roger comes she can reassure him that he is the only person responsible for the Auroville architecture and its execution.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 184, 1.6.1972

The question was raised regarding Aurofood being shown as a part of Auroville when it is neither on the Auroville land nor run according to the Auroville way nor does any part of its income come to Auroville.

Mother said that the Aurofood man [Manibhai Patel] should be asked whether it is part of Auroville.

Down Memory Lane, p. 185, 2.6.1972

Regarding trees plantation in Auroville, Prabhat has written asking Mother whether she suggests some specific trees. The names of trees were read to her.

She advised that the trees should be selected according to the soil and climate, and asked: "How many trees you wish to plant?" "A thousand this year", I said.

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p.188, 11.6.1972

Mother approved of the proposal of taking loan from the State Bank of India for the Annapurna Farm and signed the Society's resolution for it.

Down Memory Lane, p. 192, 26.6.1972

A question was raised regarding the use of chemical fertilisers in our afforestation work.

Where there are no eatables, it can be used.

Down Memory Lane, p.205, 30.7.1972

Aurela Soap Industries have offered Rs 5,000/= to Auroville. We expect more sums now. The sum of Rs 5,000/= will go to meet a part of our food and rent expenses for the members.

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 207, 4.8.1972

Louis wanted Mother's authorisation to operate the Bank account of Auropolyester.

Mother said, "After the Bank loan is repaid."

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 214, 24.8.1972

The subject of the soap industry came up again. Mother's remark, "I do not change my decision. When I say a thing, for me it is done, and then I forget it. I had thought it was done. Why quarrel? It is out of my consciousness."

I prayed to Mother for her help in this knotty problem. And she helped.

Shyam Sunder; Down Memory Lane, p. 221, 9.9.1972

Auroville Designs is getting a new contract with State Bank of India at Bombay. Other works also are likely to come. For working convenience an account is to be opened in Bombay. William Netter prefers single operations by himself.

Mother does not approve.

For joint operations she said, "For operations of the Bank account in Bombay there should be someone in Bombay."

William suggests Behram Palkhiwala.

Mother asked, "Does he agree?"

"I think so, but he will be asked."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 227, 26.9.1972

Aurodairy's construction should be complete in a month. But one part will be ready on Sunday, 8th inst, for the cows to move in. Krishna is asking for date and time and blessings.

Mother said, "Monday, 9th inst," and wrote the name card Aurodairy with blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 232, 5.10.1972

Mother signed the resolution for loan from the State Bank of India for the Hand made Paper Unit. We hope to start production in February.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 240, 27.10.1972

In accordance with our afforestation plans, we have planted eight hundred trees at Fertile.

"Eight hundred!" Mother said with a smile.

"The work continues, Mother."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 243, 5.11.1972

Mother signed the resolution authorising loans from SBI to Auropolyester.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 245, 15.11.1972

George wishes to work on tree plantation and prays for self-progress.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 253, 17.12.1972

Mother gave blessings for Stephan Joss for tree-plantation on new plots.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 255, 20.12.1972

Industries in Auroville should pay for Aurovilians if they are prospering. If any industry is in difficulty, I have not to ask for it.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 268, 23.1.1973

Aurofood is not on Auroville land. Nor is it contributing anything to Auroville in money or by produce. Is it correct to include Aurofood in Auroville brochures? (Mother nodded negatively.) Even Roger asked the television team to go to Aurofood.

Mother remarked:

“When they are having Auroville’s name, they should contribute at least something to Auroville.”

Manibhai has offered personally big amounts to Mother.

“That cannot be doubted.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp. 269-70, 29.1.1973

Mother did not give names for a personal business and a village teashop.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 270, 1.2.1973

Chernet has sent fresh biscuits made again at Aspiration. Asks for a name.

“If they are good”, said Mother, “Aspiration Biscuits”.¹⁴

The biscuits are given to Champaklal, Kumud, Purna and Udar. Udar says, “It is good”.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 273, 14.2.1973

To the Bhatt couple, confused due to difficulties in the soap industry, suggesting sale of the unit in Pondicherry and change to Auromodel, Mother replied, “If you run away from difficulties, you will have to run away from life.”

Mother doesn’t like the change. She remarked, “Life, everywhere, is full of difficulties.”

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 275, 18.2.1973

Aspiration Bakery has started regular production. A loaf offered to Mother.

(...)

Rs 10,000/- are given to Auroville by Aurocreation.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 275, 19.2.1973

14 The next day Syam Sunder noted down, “Mother wrote the name Aspiration Biscuits.” [Comp.]

Mother approved of the setting up of “Auro-Tibetan Handicraft” by Katak.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 282, 19.3.1973

Shyam Sunder informed Mother of the opening of the Handmade Paper unit fixed for tomorrow at 7 a.m. Trial production starts. Regular production in two weeks. Mother gave her blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 286, 23.4.1973





MONEY IS “A COLLECTIVE POSSESSION” AND SO IS PROPERTY

[In 1965 Gilbert Gauché submitted a series of questions and proposed answers about Auroville to the Mother, who wrote her replies. Among these were:]

12. Will money be used in Auroville?

No. Auroville will have money relations only with the outside world.

13. How will work be organized and distributed in Auroville?¹

“Money would no longer be the sovereign lord; individual worth would have a far greater importance than that of material wealth and social standing. There, work would not be a way to earn one’s living but a way to express oneself and to develop one’s capacities and possibilities while being of service to the community as a whole, which, for its own part, would provide for each individual’s subsistence and sphere of action.”

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 195-6, 1965

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem. The second part, reproduced in the chapter on organisation, is about the true hierarchy, based on one’s power of consciousness leading to “a minimal need of material necessities”.]

The conflict is between what we might call “opposing proprietors.” And the truth is that money belongs to no one.

1 At first the Mother wrote ‘Good’ on Gilbert’s following proposed answer, “*The aim to attain is to distribute activities not according to the ‘wealth’ or the individual’s social position, but according to each one’s capacities. Work must become a way to express one’s personality and to develop one’s specific aptitudes, not to ‘earn more’, but to serve better the general evolution of society towards a better human life.*” Afterwards she substituted this passage with an excerpt from “A Dream”. [Comp.]

This idea of “possession” of money is what has perverted everything. Money shouldn’t be a “possession”: it’s a means of action, which is given to you just like a power, but you have to use it according to... what we might call “the Donor’s will,” that is, impersonally and with foresight. If you are a good instrument in the spread and use of money, then it comes to you, and it does so in proportion to your capacity of using it in the right way. That’s the true working.

(...)

The true attitude is this: money is a universal force meant to do the work on earth, the work needed to prepare the earth to receive the divine forces and manifest them, and it must come into the hands (the utilizing power, that is) of those who have the clearest vision, the most general and truest vision.

The first thing, to begin with (this is elementary), is to have no sense of possession – “It’s mine,” what does that mean? What does it mean?... I can’t really understand it now. Why do people want it to be theirs? – To be able to use it as they wish, do with it what they wish and handle it according to their own idea. That’s how it is. Otherwise, yes, there are people who love to keep it in a pile somewhere... But that’s a disease. To be sure of always having money, they heap it up. But if people understood that one must be like a receiver-transmitter set; that the vaster the set (just the contrary of personal), the more impersonal and generous and vast the set is, and the more forces it can contain (“forces,” that is, to translate materially, banknotes or money). And that power to contain is in proportion to the best capacity of utilization – the “best,” that is, from the standpoint of general progress: the broadest vision, the broadest understanding and the most enlightened, exact, true utilization, not according to the ego’s falsified needs, but according to the earth’s general need in its evolution and development. In other words, the broadest vision should have the broadest capacity.

Behind all false movements, there is a true one: there is a joy in being able to direct, utilize, organize things so as to keep

wastage to a minimum while having a maximum of results. (That's a very interesting vision to have.) And that must be the true side in those who want to amass: a capacity of utilization on a very large scale.

As this vision grows clearer... It's a long, long time, years and years, since the sense of possession went away; that's childishness, it's nothing – it's so silly! Will you tell me what pleasure a man can take in keeping heaps of papers in a box or in his wall! A real pleasure he can't have. The height of pleasure is that of the miser who goes and opens his box to look at it – that's not much! Some people love to spend, they love to possess and spend; that's different, they are generous natures, but unregulated, unorganized... But the joy of enabling all TRUE needs, all NECESSITIES to express themselves, that's good. It's like the joy of turning an illness into good health, a falsehood into truth, a suffering into joy, it's the same thing: turning an artificial and stupid need, which doesn't correspond to anything natural, into a possibility which becomes something quite natural – a need for so much money to do this and that which needs to be done, to set right here, repair there, build here, organize there – that's good. And I understand one may enjoy being the transmitting channel for all that and bring money just where it's needed. It must be the true movement in people who enjoy... (that's when it becomes stupid selfishness) who need to hoard.

The combination of the need to hoard and the need to spend (both of them ignorant and blind), the two combined can make for a clear vision and a utilization as useful as possible. That's good.

So then, there slowly, slowly comes the possibility of putting it into practice.

But naturally, to be everywhere at the same time and do everything at the same time, one needs very clear brains and very upright intermediaries (!) Then this famous question of money would be solved.

Money belongs to no one: money is a collective property that only those with an integral and general, universal vision must use. And let me add, a vision not only integral and general, but also essentially TRUE, which means you can distinguish between a utilization in conformity with universal progress, and a utilization that might be called fanciful. But those are details, because even errors – even, from a certain point of view, wasteful uses – help in the general progress: they are lessons in reverse.

(...)

A little later

I am thinking of my money affair again: that's how life in Auroville should be organized – but I doubt people are ready.

That is, it can be done as long as they accept the direction of a sage.

Yes.

Mother's Agenda, IX, 1995, 10.4.1968

Auroville is the ideal place for those who want to know the joy and liberation of no longer having any personal possessions.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 208, 18.9.1969

Have you seen this?

(Mother holds out a note)

Auroville is the ideal place
for those who want to know
the joy and liberation of not having
any more personal possession.

It's the last thing that has come. "Personal possession" in the singular: I mean the sense of personal possession.

Mother's Agenda, X, 1998, 20.9.1969

[The Mother tells Satprem about "the Persian" who "has already founded a society called 'Auroville International' with members in Europe and its head office in the United States":]

From the point of view of the attitude towards circumstances and others' character, there's that wonderful atavism of ours, which is so "natural" that we don't even notice it, and now... For years I've looked and looked, and well, you know, when you were born into the bourgeois middle class, you're awfully bourgeois! And you don't even notice it! (*Mother laughs*) It's so ridiculous!... Here, with the Indians, I've noticed that they have the atavism of their caste; even when they have deliberately left their caste, they still have that atavism. That's how I began to see. And then, I realized it was exactly the same thing with me! You were born into the middle class and you're awfully bourgeois, awfully – ridiculously!

It goes away in a smile.

It's in the relationship with others. I don't know if it's the same thing in your "bourgeoisism": a sort of distrust of the adventurer.

Oh, yes!

That's it – what isn't "solidly accepted." I saw that. But now, it's over. Now one can see all that and smile – it's all gone. In ACTION, I mean (in thought it's a very long time since it's been out of question), it's in action, in one's way of acting with others – there, one can catch oneself in the act!... That's the amusing thing.

(silence)

And Auroville is a great Adventure.

I see how it's being organized, it's really interesting, really interesting.² Have you met the Persian?

No, I haven't seen him.

He isn't an intellectual.

What does he want to do?

2 See in addendum Mother's latest notes about Auroville.

He's an inventor, a man of action – I might say, an “inventor-adventurer,” but I won't: he's still here! (*Mother laughs*) But it's really interesting.

But what does he want to do here?

Oh!... He wants to “help” in the creation of Auroville. He already has a society, “Auroville International,” and he is going to start his action – he's traveling here and there. He's a man who knows four or five languages, and he has the mind of an inventor. It seems his invention... some engineers here saw it and said it was remarkable, so... As for me, I can't judge. It's for these machines (*Mother points to the tape recorder*), it's a transformation of receiving and recording machines. I don't know, but others told me it was remarkable. He likes to organize, but he is... as I said, he loves adventure, it's in his temperament (after all, inventions are adventures, and that's how he is). So he's already founded a society called “Auroville International” with members in Europe and its head office in the United States... the whole outfit. As for me, I watch and have great fun! In appearance he's very surrendered and devoted, but... For the moment, I don't have proof it's anything other than a “necessary appearance.” But he's nice and a man of real goodwill... but I see him with a plume in his hat!

So we'll see.

*Did he react to the reading of the “Great Sense”?*³

Oh, he did, he has “savoir-faire,” mon petit (!) He said, “It's very beautiful” – in a tone a great conviction! But... I don't know, I didn't see him enough later on to see whether it had changed his point of view. I think it made him shrink back a little, I noticed he inwardly reacted. And what I saw was that it has made him a bit cautious towards me!... Maybe it made him feel I could see through him! (*Mother laughs*)

3 Mother had given him that text.

But he is among those people who really aren't bourgeois from the standpoint of money, that is, who don't have much notion of personal property. So then I caught myself (that's how I caught myself!)... I myself made an effort to reach the viewpoint that money is a force that must circulate and must not be a personal property. In the consciousness, everything is fine, but the body has its old habit, and it observed the state in which this man is: for him money is a force that must circulate, go where it has to go, it doesn't belong to this or that person – so it [the body] first had this reaction: "Oh, watch out, he's an adventurer." (*Mother laughs*) I caught myself, I said, "See, you preach, and when someone does as you say...!" I found it very amusing. But I saw how he is enthusiastic about the idea of Auroville, and it seems to be quite sincere, he even said it's what he has been looking for for a long time. So he goes about it "fair and square"... He was a minister in Persia, but there were revolutions in Persia and he left, he is in America. But he's a man who's used to earning money.

I really caught myself there, I had some real fun. I said to myself, "See, you've come across the man who understands you!" (*Mother laughs*) It's funny, you know!

This Auroville is going to be a very interesting experience.

At first glance, Auroville isn't made up of people burdened with morality!

Oh, no!...

Mother's Agenda, X, 1998, 15.11.1969

At Auroville nothing belongs to anyone in particular. All is collective property. To be utilized with my blessings for the welfare of all.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 213, 14.5.1970

[Excerpt from "To Be a True Aurovilian":]

3. The Aurovilian should lose the sense of personal possession. For our passage in the material world, what is indispensable to

our life and to our action is put at our disposal according to the place we must occupy.

The more we are consciously in contact with our inner being, the more the exact means are given to us.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 214, 13.6.1970

The Yoga of Wealth

Despite a refined way of living where, in terms of material possessions, individuals have everything they wish, something within is starving, which leads them to the pursuit of the highest spiritual goal. We find such people in all ashrams and true spiritual communities. Nor is this an exclusive feature of India as such souls take birth in all countries and all ages and the quest is same. The fact that, particularly during Sri Aurobindo's and the Mother's years, their Ashram harboured a concentration of such personalities, eventually living in single rooms provided by the Ashram, goes along with their system of yoga, with its special appeal to an elite humanity. One of them was Shyam Sunder Jhunjhunwala, who recently passed away. After visiting the Ashram back and forth for fifteen years Shyam Sunder gave up his legal practice in Calcutta; surrendering to the Mother he settled at the Sri Aurobindo Ashram with his wife and children.

In February 1971 the Mother asked Shyam Sunder to be the Liaison with Auroville, adding, "*I will hold you morally responsible for all that happens in Auroville.*" There are several written statements by the Mother about the responsibilities she entrusted to Shyam Sunder. He wrote, "*The land for the Matrimandir building had not yet been purchased. Its construction was a priority of which Mother had been reminding before. Land purchase for the other zones of Auroville was another neglected priority of Auroville. Regulating the admission of people to Auroville and making the people aware of the needed discipline for the Auroville life was another. Financial management was absent. I had to look after almost every detail.*"⁴ In order to fulfil his obligations, Shyam Sunder used

4 Down Memory Lane, pp. 89-90.

to report in minute detail on all matters to the Mother, receiving instructions directly from her. Besides meeting him personally, day in and day out, the Mother sent him three or four letters a day, resulting in a trove of over four thousand letters, more than any other sadhak ever received from her.

The following correspondence between the Mother and Shyam Sunder is taken from “On the Path”. The selection is specifically about the struggle to free oneself from the forces of money and material possessions. Shyam Sunder succeeded so well in exorcising this drive that, when he unconditionally offered to the Mother all that he had, she had to remind him to keep some for his own family.⁵ Here are the excerpts.

One day, if it interests you, I will explain what should be the true role and true place of money.

Yes, Mother, I pray to You to explain the true role and place of money.

In a truer world, towards the realization of which the creation is moving, money has to be one of the earthly forces placed at the disposal of the Divine Consciousness for its work on earth.

The first step towards this realisation is the abolition of the sense of ownership. Each one is the user and distributor of the money at his disposal – and this leads naturally to the next step: those who have the truest and vastest vision and knowledge have to become these distributors and users.

The processes to arrive at this result should be elaborated and put in execution in accordance with the need and possibilities.

29.6.1969

Isn't the sense of ownership an attribute of the ego?

The sense of ownership is surely a manner of being natural to the ego, but in spite of his blindness man has not the sense of

5 This episode was reported to me by the yogini who spent twenty-eight years, eight hours a day, serving the Mother in her room, until 1962. J.K.K. (the sister-in-law of Rishabhchand) was present during the encounter. She commented with me, “Shyam Sunder is a very good man.”[Comp.]

ownership for the air he breathes, the water of the river or the falling rain.

1.7.1969

If the Mother has the time I can note down my financial situation in four or five pages of this note book. I want to act according to the Truth.

Very good, I will find time to read it.

3.7.1969

My offerings to Mother are still not free from the sense that it is I who offer.

Perhaps because that way they give me more pleasure.

11.7.1969

The pleasure of possession now appears like dust in front of self-giving.

The pleasure of possession is a purely vital and physical thing which, to the extent that the inner being is developed and the consciousness is enlarged, gets replaced by the sense of judicious employment, and becomes a clear vision of the true use of all things.

6.8.1969

I understand that the true use of things depends on the loss of the sense of ownership and on the growth of consciousness.

The sense of ownership belongs to the ego, and when the ego disappears the sense of ownership is replaced by the correct vision of the true use of each thing (money or object), and it remains only to act according to what one sees.

8.8.1969

I find that I still have attachment to money – direct or indirect.

It is the contagion of collective attachment. Money is a god universally worshipped on the earth and difficult to dethrone. When it will be nothing but an instrument of divine work, the difficulty will disappear.

28.1.1970

Is it something in my vital aided by mental wisdom that preserves the dirt of money?

The physical atmosphere is full of the suggestion and one cannot breathe without absorbing it; and the attachment in the vital comes from the collective conviction of the invincible power of money. This is the cause of almost all difficulties.

30.1.1970

One cannot breathe without absorbing what is in the terrestrial atmosphere. Mother, what is the solution?

To become more and more constantly conscious of the Divine Presence that counterbalances marvelously everything which may be absorbed in an automatic consciousness.

9.2.1970

For most of the problems there is now only one answer: self-giving.

When self-giving is truly and completely realised, there is no longer any problem, all becomes simple.

30.5.1970

An integral love seems to me to be the first necessity for self-giving to be integral.

From the moment the first contact with the Supreme Lord takes place, one feels overwhelmed and enveloped by so marvelous a love that the response is spontaneous and natural.

1.6.1970

Isn't the Divine Will the only Truth to be followed in Action?

All exists in and by the Divine Consciousness, and the place which each being and each thing occupies in the whole depends on the extent to which a thing or a being is aware of the Supreme Consciousness and identified with it.

5.6.1970



ORGANISATION: THE INNER HIERARCHY

The Mother explains that, "... essentially each being contains in itself all the universal potentialities. To what extent he is capable of developing them... it's a kind of hierarchy which is established among individuals and their degree of development. But, essentially, in each one there is the Divine Presence and therefore the Supreme Consciousness. Only, for some to be able to become conscious of it, it will take thousands and thousands of years, and others have by inner and outer circumstances come to the moment where they are ready to become aware of it. It is rather a hierarchy in realisation than one in potentialities."¹

In the occult hierarchy, grouping is organised in order of merit. The Mother's Auroville wishes to be a 'hierarchy in realisation', based on the power of consciousness of individuals lead by the psychic being. How does this translate in the practical organisation of things? The texts below shed light on the question.

A Higher Consciousness Working to Manifest the Truth of the Future

I have always considered the Ashram and Auroville to be part of an integral whole. I cannot see them as different entities. How then was a difference made by you, Mother? Or is it that I am wrong somewhere? To me it seems that there is a great need for a move towards integration in our outlook.

The Ashram is the central consciousness, Auroville is one of the outward expressions. In both places equally the work is done for the Divine.

The people who live in the Ashram have their own work and most of them are too busy to give time to Auroville.

1 CWMCE, VII, pp. 339-340, 19.10.1955.

Each one must be busy with his own work; this is essential for a proper organisation.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 210-1, undated

[After a conversation with the Mother on the future organisation of Auroville someone noted down the following text. This appears to be the inspirational source behind Roger's series of questions and formulations, two and half years later, regarding the organisation of Auromodel, which the Mother commented upon and finally approved.]

What will the political organisation of Auroville be like?

There will be no politics.

The town will be directed by a Municipal Council, a committee of technicians, headed (in order to avoid any arbitrariness) by two people in authority who are no longer imprisoned by the mind, who possess true knowledge.

Any regulations will be as liberal as possible and very flexible. Rules should arise according to the requirements. Plasticity and swiftness are needed in order to keep up with world-movements, so as not to fall behind the universal progress.

Truth is a totality, not exclusion.

Future man will not be an intellectual.

The rules of life within the city should comply with those of the country.

Gazette Aurovilienne, 19.8.1966

[Written on an Auroville letterhead:]

When one is unable to follow a discipline, one is also unable to make anything in life that is lasting and worthy.

Auroville Archives, February 1967

I met Y. They're preparing an issue on Auroville, and she came with a list of questions this long (*gesture*), saying, "I don't know

Auroville's sociology too well." I told her, "Neither do I!" Then she asked me questions (very intelligent ones, mind you) and I answered her. But there was one thing about the selection of people and admissions to Auroville; I told her that naturally, the essential condition to be able to select people was that preferences, attractions and repulsions, likes and dislikes, all moral rules, all of that must have completely disappeared – not that one should be on the way to overcoming it, it's not that: it must have disappeared (*laughing*), there must be no more ego! Then I told her, "It's not a judgement, it's not that you look at people and judge whether they are fit to be there or not, destined to be there or not, it's not that at all – you don't 'judge'..." And after she left, I noted the end of the thing (*Mother takes a note and reads it out*):

"The Force is put on all, identical and supreme..."

The Force is identical for all (*uniform gesture all over the earth*) and supreme, that is... well, it means supreme, like this (*same even, outspread gesture*). Whoever they are, whatever their attitude, the Force is put on all identically – and THEY are the ones who classify themselves; it's not that you decide that such and such person goes here or there or here: they classify THEMSELVES according to...

"... And everyone classifies himself, by himself, according to his own receptivity and the quality of that receptivity – or else his refusal or incapacity."

All degrees are there, of course. When it's a refusal or incapacity, then the person flees BY HIMSELF, saying, "They're fools, they are trying to do something impossible and unrealizable." (I know many such people, they think they have superior intelligence.) But even to place themselves, it's people themselves who will do it... She came with the idea of a hierarchy. I said, "Yes, everything is always in a hierarchy, especially all conscious individuals, but not out of any arbitrary will: it's people themselves who spontaneously take their place without knowing it, the place they must have. It's not," I told

her, “it’s not a decision, we don’t want categories: this category, that category, and so this person will go here, that person will go there – all that,” I said, “is mental constructions, it’s worthless!” The true thing is that NATURALLY, according to his own receptivity, his own capacity, his inner mission, everyone takes up the post which in the hierarchy he truly and spontaneously occupies, without any decision.

What can be done to make the organization easier is a sort of plan or general map, so that everyone need not build his position but will find it ready for him – that’s all.

It was amusing, but very interesting.

(Mother gives her note to Satprem) But water from the flowers fell on it, so it’s half erased!

The danger with all those people is that they want to codify things.

Oh, they want to build a mental construction, like that, as square as a prison, it’s awful.

Mother’s Agenda, VIII, 1993, 11.10.1967

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem. The first part, reproduced elsewhere, is about money as “a collective property that only those with an integral and general, universal vision must use.”]

The first thing to be accepted and recognized by all is that the invisible, higher power (higher in the sense that it belongs to a plane of consciousness which, although veiled to most, one can gain, a consciousness one may call as one likes, any name – that doesn’t matter – but which is integral and pure in the sense that it’s not mendacious, it’s based on the Truth), that this power is capable of governing material things for everyone in a MUCH TRUER, happier and more beneficial way than any material power. That’s the first point. Once everyone agrees on it...

And it’s not something you can pretend to have; a being can’t pretend to have it: either he has it or he doesn’t, because (*laughing*)

if it's a pretense, life will use the slightest opportunity to make it obvious! And moreover, it won't give you any material power – here also, Théon² said something in this regard, he said, “Those who are all the way up” (he was referring to the TRUE hierarchy, the hierarchy based precisely on each one's power of consciousness), “one who is all the way up (one or those) necessarily has the least amount of needs; his material needs decrease as his capacity of material vision increases.” And it's perfectly true. It's automatic and spontaneous; it's not the result of an effort: the vaster the consciousness and the more things and realities it embraces, the smaller the material needs become – automatically so – because they lose all their importance and value. It's reduced to a minimal need of material necessities, which will itself change with the progressive development of Matter.

And that's easily recognizable, of course. It's difficult to feign.

The second thing is the power of conviction. That is to say, the highest consciousness, when it's put in contact with Matter, spontaneously has... (what should I call it?... It's not an “influence,” because there's no will to influence... I might put it this way:) it has a power of conviction greater than that of all intermediary regions. Through simple contact, its power of conviction, that is, its power of transformation, is greater than that of all the intermediary regions. That is a fact. Those two facts make it impossible for any pretense to last. (I am looking at it from the standpoint of a collective organization.)

As soon as you come down from that supreme Height, you find the whole play of diverse influences (*gesture of mixture and conflict*), and that's in fact a sure sign: if you come down ever so slightly (even into a region of higher mentality, higher intelligence), the WHOLE conflict of influences starts. Only what's truly all the way up, with perfect purity, has this power of spontaneous conviction. All substitutes you may try are therefore an approximation, and not a much better one than

2 Max Théon taught occultism to the Mother. She considered him a Vibhuti of the Asura of Death. [Comp.]

democracy – by “democracy,” I mean the system that wants to rule through the greatest number and lowest masses (I am referring to “social democracy,” the latest trend).

If there is no representative of the supreme Consciousness (which can happen, of course), if there isn't any, we could perhaps (this would be worth trying) replace him with the government by a small number – we would have to choose between four and eight, something like that: four, seven or eight – a small number having an INTUITIVE intelligence. “Intuitive” is more important than “intelligence”: they should have an intuition that manifests intellectually. (From a practical standpoint it would have some drawbacks, but it might be nearer the truth than the lowest rung: socialism or communism.) All the intermediaries have proved incompetent: theocracy, aristocracy, democracy, plutocracy – all that is a *complete failure*. The other one too is now giving proof of its *failure*, the government of... what can we call it? Democracy?³ (But democracy always implies the idea of educated, rich people.) That has given proof of its complete incompetence.

It's the reign of the most equally shared stupidity.

Yes, that's right!... But I am referring to the system all the way down, socialistic or communistic, which represents material needs... Basically, it corresponds to a sort of absence of government, because they don't have the power to govern others: they are forced to transfer their power to someone who exercises it, like a Lenin, for instance, because he was a brain. But all that... all that has been tried out and has given proof of its incompetence. The only thing that could be competent is the Truth-Consciousness choosing instruments and expressing itself through a certain number of instruments, if one can't be found (just one isn't enough, either, that one would necessarily need to choose a whole collectivity). Those possessing this consciousness may belong to any class of society: it's not a privilege arising from birth, but the result of personal effort and development. In

3 Mother means socialism or communism.

fact, that would be an external sign, an evident sign of change on the political level: no question anymore of classes or categories or birth (all that is outdated), but those individualities that have reached a higher consciousness would have the right to govern, whatever class they belong to – and no others.

That would be the true vision.

But all those participating in the experience would have to be absolutely convinced that the highest consciousness is the best judge of the MOST MATERIAL THINGS. You see, what has ruined India is this idea that the higher consciousness has to do with “higher” things, while it’s not interested in lower things and knows nothing about them! That’s what has caused the ruin of India. Well, this error must be completely abolished. It’s the highest consciousness that sees the most clearly – the most clearly and the most truly – what the needs of the most material thing should be.

With this, we could try out a new kind of government.

There.

Mother’s Agenda, IX, 1995, 10.4.1968

Divine Mother,

Do we need a Personnel Department in Auroville?

No.

Should it be a part of the Liaison Office?

Do not multiply departments, titles and names. It complicates life uselessly.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 236, 28.6.1968

Auroville

No big creation is possible without discipline –
individual discipline,
group discipline,

discipline towards the Divine.

MCW03, XIII, p.204, 16.9.1968

The freedom we want to realise in Auroville is not licence – each one doing what he pleases without concern for the well being of the organisation of the whole.

MCW03, XIII, p.207, 1969

[This appears to be the first set of questions and answers on organisation between Roger Anger and the Mother, to be followed by several others:]

Has the time for such an organization come, to realize a responsible three-headed central committee?

Indispensable

Who? It is the problem.

Roger, Naval!

Redistribution of responsibilities?

Yes

All suggestions, good and bad, will be presented to the Mother, along with the committee's opinion.

Yes, it is good.

Advantages of the proposed solution:

- 1) At the highest level of organization to build harmony and the right attitude, which must be exemplary.*
- 2) Learning to work together, opening to the ideas of one's partners, and remaining as efficient as possible.*
- 3) Putting in place a plastic, evolutionary organisation that can develop according to the needs and the people.*

Yes.

Roger Anger's archives, handwritten note, 25.1.1969

Auroville:

There is a tendency to attribute privileges to money, whereas the real issue would be to give priority to those people at the highest level of consciousness.

It is sure.

Roger Anger's archives, 30.1.1969

[Handwritten note by Roger:]

Gilbert's letter:

No reply.

Overall Organisation:

Gilbert's scheme seen in detail – yes to everything; agreement in general about the people.

Roger Anger's archives, 3.2.1969

[Excerpt of a conversation with Satprem:]

There are the proofs of the Bulletin.

Oh, we must see them.

This is the Synthesis, then the Questions and Answers: this very long talk [on illness]...

In this connection, yesterday R. [Auroville's architect] asked me questions so as to be able to answer people; he asked me if it was necessary to have organization and so on. And then it came, but in such an imperative manner; I replied that organization was discipline in action, and that to live, discipline is quite indispensable. I said that the body's whole functioning is a discipline, and if there is a part that no longer wants to follow the discipline – out of revolt or incapacity or... for any reason – if it stops following the discipline, you fall ill.

It came so clearly that I told him.

That paper is with R., I've asked him to give it to me.⁴

I have another here, which I am going to show you in a little while.

But the strange thing is that the experience came BEFORE his question, as it always does. In the morning, I had that experience, I was looking... looking at the body's functioning, and I thought, "What a mar-vel-ous discipline!" And each thing does its work regularly. Naturally, when there is a bad will or a whim, or some incapacity for any reason, and a part stops playing its precise role, poff! you fall ill. ...

ADDENDUM

Notes of Auroville's architect⁵

1. To build Auroville, do we need a method of working, organization, coordination?

Discipline is necessary to live. To live, the body itself is subject in all its functions to a rigorous discipline. Any slackening of this discipline results in illness.

2. What should the nature of this organization be? In the Present and in the Future?

Organization is a discipline of action, but for Auroville we aspire to go beyond organizations, which are arbitrary and artificial. We want an organization that is the expression of a higher consciousness working for the manifestation of the Truth of the Future.

4 We publish in addendum R.'s notes on Auroville's organization.

5 In the notes from the personal archive of Roger Anger this document is preceded by the following: "Tomorrow there will be a meeting to see whether it is possible for all of us to come together on a course of action. No one speaks the same language. The individuals are very different and don't submit to a common discipline of action. I would like to receive from you clear answers, in writing, so that I know what to say – something that would be the Truth and which could help to dispel confusion." [*Comp.*]

3. Until we have a common consciousness and the true and correct way of working collectively is in operation, what should we do?

A hierarchical organization gathered round the most enlightened center, submitting itself to a collective discipline.

4. Should we use methods of organization of proven efficiency, but based on human logic and the use of machines?

This is a makeshift to which we should submit ourselves only very provisionally.

5. Should we let the individual initiative manifest freely, personal action be impelled by inspiration and intuition, and turn down any suggestion which the individual concerned does not feel to be good?

To be viable, this would demand that all Auroville workers should be yogis, conscious of the Divine Truth.

6. Has the time come to aspire to, set up or attempt a general organization, or should we wait for the correct attitude and people?

An organization is needed for the work to be done. But the organization itself should be supple and progressive.

7. If the solution is to wait, is it nevertheless necessary to define principles of organization and to prevent the occurrence of an uncontrollable disorder?

All those who want to live and work in Auroville must have:

An integral goodwill, a constant aspiration to know the Truth and submit oneself to it.

A plasticity sufficient to face the demands of the work and a ceaseless will for progress so as to progress forever towards the ultimate Truth.

Finally, a bit of advice:

Be more preoccupied with your own faults than with those of others.

If everyone seriously worked to perfect himself, the perfection of the whole would automatically follow.

February 6, 1969

Mother's Agenda, X, 1998, 8.2.1969

Briefing the Mother on the organisation for Auromodel.

It will be difficult to find the [right] consciousness. What's needed is to find not a yogi – there are so many sorts of yoga! And they have stopped acting – but a person who knows how to put the organization in order according to the true consciousness.

Are there other forces that need to be expressed?

(The Mother ponders): They are the forces presently at work; they must be transformed.

No boss.

Yes, it is precisely this: it is according to qualifications that the hierarchy will be determined.

Regarding the faculties.

Yes.

Roger Anger's archives, 11.2.1969

[Written questions, in French, submitted to the Mother by Roger Anger:]

AUROMODEL. It is about an organization that sees itself as one single Being.

The functions of this Being are societal functions – identified and acting together to create life-activity.

All activity requires all organizational functions, but their 'level' of intervention varies as required.

The basic organic cell includes seven functions.

Good.

The idea is to become aware of the true organizational functions that facilitate the harmonious and efficient functioning of the collective body – to individualise them – and organize the coordinated play of the functions within cells of harmony, [which are to be] the basis of the societal functioning.

- *Are the envisaged functions the correct ones? If not, which ones?*
- *Are there other functions to individualise within Auromodel's society?*

Auromodel is an attempt and an experience. As it develops, the organisation will modify itself according to needs. All organization must remain supple and flexible so that it always progresses and modifies itself according to need.

At the top, the original cell – the core is constituted by the most qualified people to best express the organizational functions. Together they form but one and same 'person' automatically seeking the highest consciousness. At the coordinating centre at the highest position in the hierarchy, is the person who is most in contact with the higher consciousness.

This is very good.

In each organizational function there is a hierarchy, at the top of which is the person who is the most advanced in that specific domain. They are the 'Masters' of the organizational function in question.

'Master' must be understood in the sense of guide and support.

The harmony cells, the foundation of each societal functioning, are of two kinds:

1. *An activity cell – specialised action unit, with three grouped functions: conceptual ideas, finance, production.*
2. *An organic cell of the social body – with 7 functions:*

- a) *Communication*
- b) *Aids to become conscious – information – relations – transparency – reflexivity – mirroring.*
- c) *Idea* [Creativity – renewal – right orientation – motor].
- d) *Environment.* [Utilisation of space – aesthetics – quality of life.]
- e) *Finance* [Evaluation – right value].
- f) *Movement* [Commerce – transport – exchange – distribution].
- g) *Materialisation* [Production – execution].
- h) *Coordination (harmony).*

Are the envisaged organizational functions the correct ones? If not, what are they?

Are there other functions to be individuated within Auromodel's organization?

The new faculties should correspond to the different organizational functions of the collective body. The highest faculty, that of coordination, is the faculty of harmony, the faculty of unity.

Thus each faculty has a field of education which reorganizes and modifies the traditional disciplines.

The studies one pursues will correspond to one's natural predisposition. People will develop in the best way and will, consequently, be most useful to the social body.

It is good. Blessings

[The Mother wrote this comment on the margin:]

To begin with it is good. It must be able to modify itself according to needs and experience.

Blessings.

Roger Anger's archives, 12.2.1969

Overall organisation: I hand over to the Mother Gilbert's papers. She will reply tomorrow or the day after.

(...)

She signs and gives her approval to the note on the overall organisation.

Roger Anger's archive, 13.2.1969

Ah, the *Aphorisms*... Have you read yesterday's?

On the anarchic state?

Yes! It's fine, isn't it?

(Satprem reads)

320 – The anarchic is the true divine state of man in the end as in the beginning; but in between it would lead us straight to the devil and his kingdom.

And what do I answer to the previous aphorism?

Ah, yes...

319 – Governments, societies, kings, police, judges, institutions, churches...

Yes, he put everything into it: religions and police together!

Yes, it goes together!

I was delighted.

... laws, customs, armies are temporary necessities imposed on us for a few groups of centuries because God has concealed His face from us. When it appears to us again in its truth and beauty, then in that light they will vanish.

And what did I answer?

You said:

“The anarchic state is the government of everyone by himself.

“And it will be the perfect government when everyone is conscious of the inner Divine and obeys Him and Him alone.”

I'll write, then a sequel will come, but I don't have the time to note it down.

Someone from Auroville wrote to me that he thought he had come here to obey no one but himself (or words to that effect), but he noticed there are rules and laws. And he said, "I am not going to do any of this; I am a free man and refuse to do this." This was reported to me, naturally,⁶ so I wrote to him (I don't remember): "One is free only when one is conscious of the Divine and conscious that it is the Divine who makes decisions in everyone, otherwise one is the slave of one's desires, one's habits, of all conventions...." I sent him that, and he kept quiet.

That's what I wanted to add here [to this aphorism]. We should say: One is free only when it is the Divine who makes decisions in each of us, otherwise men are the slaves of their desires, their habits, of all conventions, all laws, all rules... And the more they think themselves free, the more bound they are!

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 7.2.1970

The problem is always the same: those given the responsibility should be people with a... universal consciousness, of course, otherwise... Wherever there is a personal consciousness, it means someone incapable of governing – we can see how governments are, it's frightful!

(long silence)

There's something very interesting on a psychological level: it's that material needs decrease in proportion to the spiritual growth. Not (as Sri Aurobindo said), not through asceticism, but because the focus of attention and concentration of the being moves to a different domain... The purely material being, quite conceivably, finds only material things pleasing; with all those who live in the emotive being and the outer mind, the interest of the being

6 One of the most irritating practices in that Ashram was the compulsive habit almost everyone (at least among those who had access to Mother) had to "report" to Mother, as in a boarding school. As if they had nothing better to do. And Mother would "absorb."

is turned to... for instance, things of beauty, as with those who want to live surrounded by beautiful things, who want to use nice things. Now that appears to be the human summit, but it's quite... what we might call a "central region" (*gesture hardly above ground level*), it's not at all a higher region. But the way the world is organized, people without aesthetic needs go back to a very primitive life – which is wrong. We need a place where life... where the very setting of life would be, not an individual thing, but a beauty that would be like the surroundings natural to a certain degree of development.

Now, as things are organized, to be surrounded by beautiful things you need to be rich, and that's a source of imbalance, because wealth usually goes with quite an average degree of consciousness, even mediocre at times. So there's everywhere an imbalance and a disorder. We would need... a place of beauty – a place of beauty in which people can live only if they have reached a certain degree of consciousness. And let it not be decided by other people, but quite spontaneously and naturally. So how to do that?...

Problems of that sort are beginning to come up at Auroville, and that makes the thing very interesting. Of course, the means are very limited, but that also is part of the problem to be solved.

(long silence)

The conditions to organize – to be an organizer (it's not "to govern," it's to ORGANIZE) – the conditions to be an organizer should be these: no more desires, no more preferences, no more attractions, no more repulsions – a perfect equality for all things. Sincerity, of course, but that goes without saying: wherever insincerity enters, poison enters at the same time. And then, only those who are themselves in that condition can discern whether another is in it or not.

At present, all human organizations are based on: the visible fact (which is a falsehood), public opinion (another falsehood), and moral sense, which is a third falsehood! (*Mother laughs*) So...

Mother's Agenda, XI, 2000, 25.3.1970

For everyone to agree each one must rise to the summit of his consciousness; it is on the heights that harmony is created.

MCWCE, XIII, p.211, April 1970

This is the advantage of being in contact with the higher regions. One can participate in the decisions; whereas on the mental plan, when people don't know, they have to adopt fixed laws that are not valid for everyone.

About the expenses for the Bharat Nivas file:

It is the work we will take up when you return – knowing how to learn what to do at each instant, what decision to take, to understand and see in the world of intuition the thing to do.

For the time being we must do our best with what we know, but later we will live in the world of intuition.

Roger Anger's archive, 28.6.1970

In Auroville "all is collective property." Does this mean that everything can be used by everyone? Or should things be given only to those who treat them well?

I have also noticed that delicate pieces of equipment become attached to one person and do not work well if they are lent to others.

All this implies a consciousness which is not very widespread on earth.

This does not mean that things should be given to people who do not know how to use them.

What is needed to administer Auroville is a consciousness free from all conventions and conscious of the supramental Truth. I am still waiting for someone like that. Each one must do his best to achieve that.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 214-5, 15.7.1970

The only true freedom is the one obtained by union with the Divine.

One can unite with the Divine only by mastering one's ego.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 221, 1971

(Some temporary visitors claimed the right to intervene in the organization of Auroville. In this regard Mother wrote:)

To the inhabitants of Auroville

Only those who have resolved to stay in Auroville for good have the right to intervene in its organisation.

CWMCE, XIII, p.215, 22.1.1971

“Should Auroville have any more new committees?” The Mother does not agree to any new committees for Auroville. She says, “More committees, more useless talk.”

Blessings.

MCWCE, XIII, p. 215, 17.2.1971

What political organization do you want for Auroville?

An amusing definition occurs to me: a divine anarchy. But the world will not understand. Men must become conscious of their psychic being and organize themselves spontaneously, without fixed rules and laws – that is the ideal.

For this, one must be in contact with one's psychic being, one must be guided by it and the ego's authority and influence must disappear.

MCW03, XIII, p.225, 28.12.1972

[An excerpt from the account of the Dalai Lama's visit to the Sri Aurobindo Ashram. The Dalai Lama's questions were put to the Mother by Kireet Joshi, the Registrar of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram Centre of Education, who in turn conveyed the Mother's answers back to the Dalai Lama.]

(Dalai Lama:) It is my dream to have the perfect economic development of Tibet, the perfect organisation, the efficiency that we find in Communism, but all this based upon, founded upon the Buddhist qualities of Compassion and Love, so that the people in power do not degenerate into corruption. What is

Mother's view of this dream, and whether such a thing will be realised in Tibet?

It is not a dream. It will naturally be. But the time it will take, I do not know. This is something like what Sri Aurobindo has said about the Supramental.

Truth, Love, Compassion will give a basis to the new creation. It is not birth but the value of men that should give the right to authority.

If the teaching of Sri Aurobindo can spread over the world, and if there is the full manifestation of the Supramental, then the Supramental will be the power of the liberation of Tibet.

It is bound to come, it will come; but if it goes as it is going now, it will take hundreds of years. But if the Supramental is manifested, it may come quick. Quick does not mean ten or twenty years – that would be almost miraculous.

(Kireet:) But the Supramental is now working very powerfully.

It is, it is working. It will be manifested with enough power when the right people have the authority.

For the moment, it seems that the opposition, the falsehood attacks with full power before dying. Never, never have men lied as much as they are doing now. It seems the old habit comes spontaneously. But it must be broken.

We are at a very – what we could call an unpleasant moment of the history of the earth. It is interesting because the action is very powerful, but I can't call it pleasant.

But I have told you that already; I wrote it.⁷¹

7 Message of November 26, 1972: "Before dying, falsehood raises in full swing. Still people understand only the lesson of catastrophe. Will it have to come before they open their eyes to the truth? I ask an effort from all so that it has not to be. It is only the Truth that can save us; truth in words, truth in action, truth in will, truth in feelings. It is a choice between serving the Truth or being destroyed."

(Kireet:) Yes, Mother. The Mother has given the message.

(Dalai Lama:) As for myself, I have no desire to continue in power in the Government. For I feel that the Government involves so much of conflicts of parties, and the necessity of taking sides with one party against the other...

One can govern without taking sides. That is the mistake of all the governments; they reduce their capacity tremendously.

But beyond the mind, there is a higher and deeper consciousness – they would find a Consciousness in which one can make use of all the capacities. It is a question of the consciousness being broad enough, so that each capacity can be put in its place in order to make a general harmony.

(Dalai Lama:) There is a good will, there is sincerity among people all over the world, but the number of such people is not large. Will they be able to have an effect to change the conditions of the world?

It is bound to change; it is bound to change. Only, if the people are sincere it will shorten the time; it will go faster if the people are sincere.

The first and indispensable step is to stop all falsehood. Falsehood is all that contradicts in us the Presence of the Divine.

Mother's Agenda, XIII, 1983, 20.1.1973





RELATIONSHIP WITH THE VILLAGERS AND INTEGRATION AS AUROVILIANS

The Mother considered the population residing in the surrounding villages as the first natural inhabitants of Auroville. Integration of the villagers was encouraged in all ways; but before this happened, whenever the worker accepted, the Mother recommended the Auroville Prosperity 'in kind' system instead of wages. The children of the workers were welcomed in the Auroville schools on an equal basis with Aurovilians. The Mother also sought the creation of model villages along with rural cooperatives, where villagers and Aurovilians were to work side by side; not only in order to make Auroville self-sufficient but also as an effective education in human unity.

Ashram Workers: Members of a Family with the Mother as their Head

[The text below, not often quoted, concludes with Mother's vision in 1946 for an ad hoc syndicate of the Ashram's workers that "should elect a committee which represents the various shades of opinion among the workers". Then, "having deliberated and arrived at a decision that it considers just and reasonable, (the committee) would present it to me (the Mother) for action through their president."]

DECLARATION TO THE WORKERS OF SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

It is my desire to explain to the workers the special relationship that exists between them and me as compared with the ordinary relationship between employer and employees. It is also my desire that having understood this special relationship the workers should always keep this understanding before them in all their deliberations and in all the joint demands which they make to me.

This special relationship is as follows:

(a) The work in the Ashram is not done for profit, as is well known. Therefore during the war when things became expensive and difficult for everyone, it became so for me too, without my income increasing in any way by the fact of the same circumstances. Industrial and commercial concerns made more profits and so could easily increase the wages, but here in the Ashram only the expenses went on increasing. In spite of this, in view of the difficulties of the workers I gave them regular increments and dearness allowances.

(b) There have been times when there was no work for some workers, but unlike business firms I have never dismissed workers but have always endeavoured to find some other work for them to do. It has always been my policy not to send away, for want of work, workers who have served faithfully. I could have easily done so and could have even closed down all the works without any serious hardship to the Ashram. But by doing so I would have only increased the general misery which is already so great, and that I did not want to do.

(c) There are a good number of workers who have worked for me for many long years and have served me with devotion and faithfulness and who besides considering me as their employer have also looked to me as their protector, of them and their families.

(d) On the whole the workers of the Ashram have so far worked more or less as members of a family with me as their head, and this special relationship has no doubt brought benefit to many of them. I would like to preserve this relationship and make it the foundation for all my dealings with the workers.

With these points in view, it is suggested that the workers of the Ashram should form a separate syndicate of their own, since they stand with regard to their employer in a different position from other workers, as has already been explained. This syndicate might be affiliated to the general body of workers, but would maintain its own line of action and conduct.

It is further suggested that this syndicate of Ashram workers should elect a committee which represents the various shades

of opinion among the workers. This committee would receive and consider the demands put forward by the workers and, having deliberated and arrived at a decision that it considers just and reasonable, would present it to me for action through their president. I will receive with goodwill and sympathy all requests of this kind and will act for the best according to the reasonableness of the demand.

In these times of struggle and conflict and misery and suffering I offer to all who wish to work under me, with me, the possibility of a reciprocal understanding and a fruitful and beneficial collaboration.

MCWCE, XIII, pp. 176-8, 5.3.1946

[Envisaging an ideal set up for the employees of the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the Mother wrote this second text in 1954, shortly before writing "A Dream".¹ The concepts presented in the following text resurfaced in the notes regarding the Auroville "Labour Colony", which the Mother had planned for the workers of the Auromodel construction site and, afterwards, for the town itself. "A Dream", and this text as well, contain in nuce principles that are essential for the comprehension of the Mother's vision in its integrality.]

TO THE EMPLOYEES
OF THE SRI AUROBINDO ASHRAM

What I wish to do for you.

I shall tell you how I view the solution of your problems, both individual and collective, and what is the truth of the relation between us.

But for the working out of the programme I am going to place before you, two essential conditions are necessary. First, I must have the financial means to execute my plan; secondly, you must show a minimum of sincerity, honesty and goodwill in your attitude towards me and towards your work. You have

1 Although written originally for the Sri Aurobindo Ashram, the latter has been associated to Auroville since its inception. [*Comp.*]

most unfortunately the habit of trying to deceive me. Bad advisers have taught you that that is the best thing to do in your relation with your employer. It may be that when the employer himself seeks to deceive you and exploit you, this attitude on your part is legitimate. But in regard to me it is a foolishness and a blunder; first of all, because you cannot deceive me and your deceit becomes immediately obvious and takes away from me all desire to come to your aid, and secondly because I am not a "boss" and I do not seek to exploit you.

All my effort is towards realising in the world as much truth as actual circumstances will allow; and with the increase of truth, the welfare and happiness of all will necessarily increase.

Differences of caste and class have no truth for me; all that counts is individual value. My aim is to create a big family in which it will be possible for each one to fully develop his capacities and express them. Each one will have his place and occupation in accordance with his capacities and in a relation of goodwill and brotherhood.

As a consequence of such a family organisation there will be no need of remuneration or wages. Work should not be a means of earning one's livelihood; its purpose should be twofold: first to develop one's nature and capacity for action, and, secondly, in proportion to one's physical means and moral and intellectual aptitude, to give service to the family to which one belongs and to whose welfare it is but proper to contribute, as it is proper for the family to provide for the real needs of each of its members.

To give a concrete form to this ideal under the present conditions of life, my idea is to build a kind of city accommodating at the outset about two thousand persons. It will be built according to the most modern plans, meeting all the most up-to-date requirements of hygiene and public health. It will have not only residential houses, but also gardens and sports grounds for physical culture. Each family will be lodged in a separate house; bachelors will be grouped according to their occupations and affinities.

Nothing necessary for life will be forgotten. Kitchens equipped in the most modern hygienic way will supply equally to all simple and healthy food, assuring the energy necessary for the proper maintenance of the body. They will function on a co-operative basis of work in common and of collaboration.

In the matter of education, what is necessary is to arrange for the moral and intellectual instruction and development of all, children and adults: various schools, technical instruction in different vocations, classes for music and dance, a cinema hall where educational films will be shown, a lecture hall, a library, a reading room, varied physical education, a sportsground and so on.

Each one can choose the kind of activity that is most suitable to his nature and will receive the required training. Even small gardens will be provided where those who like cultivation can grow flowers, fruits and vegetables.

In the matter of health, there will be regular medical visits, a hospital, a dispensary, a nursing home for the segregation of contagious cases. A department of hygiene will have the exclusive function of inspecting all public and private buildings to see that the most rigorous rules of cleanliness are observed everywhere and by all. As natural adjuncts to this department public baths and common laundries will be put at the disposal of everyone.

Finally, big stores will be set up where one can find all the small "extras" which give life variety and pleasantness and which one will get against "coupons" that will be given in recompense for especially notable achievement in work or conduct.

I shall not give a long description of the organisation and the working of the institution, although everything in it to the smallest details has already been foreseen.

It goes without saying that for admission to live in this ideal place the essential conditions that need to be fulfilled are good character, good conduct, honest, regular and efficient work and a general goodwill.

MCWCE, XIII, pp.179-81, 10.7.1954

No Personal Servants or Paid Workers: Integration

[Excerpt from notes written by Shri Aravind Shankar Baan, ICS, after an interview he and his family had with the Mother on 24.2.1967:]

In Auroville, there will be no domestic servants. All the modern amenities will be there so that people can do all their own work. Mother said that she approves of the old joint family system in India, where some used to attend to the material side of life, some were free to pursue the spiritual life, and some, the intellectual life. But Mother said that however much a person is occupied with spiritual matters it is necessary for him to do some material work of his own too. Unless people do some work for themselves their bodies lose fitness and strength.

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, dated after 24.2.1967

[Copy of a letter dated 23.5.1967, probably from Navajata to Mrs. Anjani Dayanand:]

Dear Sister Anjani,

The Mother has given you time on 28th morning at 10.a.m.

She says it is better you see Her alone.

She has seen the photo of Sri A.V. Sankara Menon. She does not approve of his paid appointment. In fact she has said that "from today no paid employee in Auroville".

With my best wishes. Yours sincerely,

Shyam Sunder file, Auroville Archives, 23.5.1967

The Mother was asked, "At the beginning of Auroville, will the Westerners' houses be different from those foreseen for the Tamils (experimental huts)?" She replied,

Those who can't accept to have the same houses are not ready to live in Auroville. Meanness must cease. It is not only houses, but the soul state that must be built in Auroville.

Roger Anger's archive, February 1968

[Copy of a handwritten letter with the Mother's response written by someone on the letter itself:]

Sweet Mother,

This morning Piero, Gloria and some workers laid out the guidelines for the positioning of the huts to be built at the model village site at the Auro Orchard. The main construction of the huts will commence on Monday 23rd December 1968 after the foundation have been excavated.

Our prayer for Thy blessings and guidance that the work will go well and that the commencement of this work will be the start of a new era in the creation of Auroville.

It is also prayed that you may give a name to this village.

With devotion

Thy children

Piero, Gloria, Gérard + Henry

“Hope”.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder's file, Auroville Archives, 19.12.1968

Mother Divine,

A few points on which Thy divine guidance is required.

There is resistance from the villagers in selling their lands. This may be because we have done nothing to integrate them with Auroville. They feel it is a foreign imposition on them which will do them no good but will drive them from their hearths and homes.

Should we not demonstrate to them our real intentions by providing them with facilities such as a dispensary, a school, clean drinking water, etc.? This would be money well spent if it is done with love and humility and not as charity.

This is indispensable.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 248, April 1969

*(Someone working at the Community Workers Kitchen near
Aspiration wrote:)*

*Some would like to continue giving food to the workers, others
feel that even if funds were available they could be utilised
better elsewhere. Please give us your guidance.*

Once you have started giving food to the *workmen*, you cannot
stop doing so, otherwise you would lose their confidence. This
is imperative—show it to the others.

Blessings to all.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 248, 4.4.1969

For the Tamilians:

Collective Kitchen, it's very good, it is the solution to make
them change. They can also go and fetch their food.

For the cows:

A cow is very sensitive and the kind of attachment they feel is
actually something true. One must give them a house where
they can be taken care of and loved.

Roger Anger's archive, 25.4.1969

For the Tamilians:

They have to be told in simple terms that we have not come to
take their land away from them.

Roger Anger's archive, 28.4.1969

*(After the departure of the supervisor of the Community
Workers Kitchen, someone wrote:)*

*The feeding of the Auroville workers has never been interrupted and
I personally will manage it, till a new arrangement can be found.*

Very good.

*It would give all of us strength and the awareness of unity if this
program of giving a free midday meal to all Auroville workers
received a message from you.*

Goodwill for all and goodwill from all is the basis of peace and harmony.

Blessings.

CWMCE, XIII, p. 249, 13.8.1969

Those who are in contact with the villagers should not forget that these people are worth as much as they are, that they know as much, that they think and feel as well as they do. They should therefore never have an attitude of ridiculous superiority.

They are at home and you are the visitors. §²

CWMCE, XIII, p. 249, September or October 1969

To the inhabitants of Aspiration:

A relationship that is not only cordial but friendly with the inhabitants of the neighbouring village is absolutely indispensable.

For the realisation of Auroville the first step is to establish a true human fraternity – any shortcoming in this regard is a grave mistake which can compromise the whole work.

My blessings are with all sincere effort towards harmony.

CWMCE, XIII, p. 249, 23.11.1969

Auromodel: the inconvenience of the nearness of the Tamil village should be considered an advantage – like that it will be more difficult...

[In Roger's notes, this undated passage appears elsewhere:]

The greater the difficulties, the more beautiful will be the experience.

[Taking these two notes together they appear consistent with a

2 As indicated in the CWMCE, "...comments by the Mother were noted down from memory by sadhaks and later approved by her for publication. These are identified by the symbol §." *[Comp.]*

report of Mother's words published in the "Auroville Gazette" in 1972:]

Mother also says: The nearness of Aspiration and Auromodel to the Tamil village should be considered as an advantage. It will be more difficult but if the difficulties are greater, the experience also will be more beautiful.

Roger Anger's archive, 24.1.1969? Auroville Gazette, 1972

[Excerpts from an "Aspiration talk" with some Aurovilians and the Mother's granddaughter:]

A: We have two questions to ask you, if you don't mind. The first one is about a young boy from the Tamil village next to Aspiration. For some time now he has been coming to work in the garden at Aspiration; and we feed him, and little by little he has started to participate, to live a little bit with the camp. And I, J and K have decided to take responsibility for this child, along with the whole group, of course, but the three of them especially; and to look after him, and little by little to integrate him into the life of the camp. Do you think it is all right?

It is all right, on condition that the parents agree. You should have someone talk with the parents and tell them, if they agree, ask them, explain to them. You cannot take a child, just like that, without the agreement of the parents, his father and mother.

A: L. is looking after village relations. He is going to try and see the family and get in touch with the father and mother, to see whether it is possible.

And he will go there?

A: Yes, yes.

This is what I am saying. That is the condition. He must go there, talk to the father and mother, explain things to them, ask them whether they agree. If they do, it is very good, quite all right.

A: Because there is no question of cutting him off from his village...

No, no.

A: But to try little by little...

On the contrary...

A: We must not...

On the contrary, he must maintain the contact. Then it is fine.

(...)

The young boy, the young Tamil boy who is coming – what are you teaching him, English or French?

A: Oh, for the moment we're not really teaching him anything.

Poor little fellow, you simply put him to work.

A: Oh no, not only that.

G: They feed him as well, Sweet Mother.

A: Gradually, as he comes more often, we will organize something and teach him French.

You must involve him in the life there, and then it would be interesting. When children hear you speak, they want to know what is being said and they learn the language. Indians are wonderful at learning languages. They can learn four or five languages without mixing them up. This young boy would learn very well – it would be a good thing.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 325-31, 31.3.1970

[Excerpt from an "Aspiration talk" with some Aurovilians and the Mother's granddaughter:]

G: (referring to L, who wrote to Mother asking how Aurovilians should relate to the local villagers) This is L. He is the one who asked the questions.

Ah! For your questions, the best way, you see, it is education. To

educate them not by words and speeches but by example. If you can make them mix with your life and your work, and they get the influence of your way of being, your way of understanding, then, little by little, they will change. And when they become curious and ask questions, then it will be time to answer and to tell them what you know.

G: Here are some offerings from the villagers.

Oh!

G: Varadharajan brought them, Mother – from the villagers.

Oh!

L: Two persons.

They know of my existence?

L: Yes, Mother! [laughter]

Two?

L: Two.

Then you will give them that. (*Mother gives two Blessings Packets.*) You'll tell them: the Mother is sending that for you. And you tell them: keep that upon you, it will help you.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 333-4, 14.4.1970

[The Mother signed with 'Blessings' the following text calling for the abolition of servants and paid workers:]

NOTE ON THE PROBLEM OF INTEGRATION OF AUROVILLE WORKERS AND VILLAGERS

Guidelines are being asked from the Mother for the C.A.A. [Comite Administratif d'Auroville] to study provisory regulations that will enable us to clearly define the policy regarding the integration of Auroville workers.

When making suggestions in the context of these guidelines, and in keeping with the Charter of Auroville, two stages have to be kept in view: one provisory stage, taking into account the

present situation; and a second, which has to be the definite future: total integration. The first study which has to be made now will render it possible to settle the problems arising out of the fact that a number of paid workers asks for an increase of salary.

In this context the Mother has defined:

- 1) The notion or feelings about servitude must not make themselves felt any more in any group of Aurovilians, whether the worker is paid or not. This prejudgment, which belongs to the nature of labour or to the social class, which was generally charged with it, is expired and has to disappear.
- 2) From now on no worker can be employed, that is: paid, by any group of Aurovilians whatsoever, when there are Aurovilians in the group who don't have a clearly defined occupation.
- 3) The presence of a paid worker can only be admitted as an exception, when none of the members is capable to do the work needed (or if all the members do have an occupation, which is considered to be more useful for the community).
- 4) In this eventuality the service rendered shall be only daily, within the limits of time and possibilities.
- 5) As soon as one of the workers (preferably from Auroville territory) will have shown his qualities in spirit and profession and if he is accepted by Mother, the regulations of the Auroville workers will be proposed to him, as he has to have the same rights as the workers already employed.
- 6) In case he refuses, his salary shall be decided righteously and objectively, by competent people, who will have to take into account the individual needs of each worker in order to avoid creating social misery or legitimate claims.
- 7) The provisory regulations of the workers will have to enable them to get:
 - food for their family
 - a common school for the children, shared with the other Auroville children.

- better housing (Tamil huts with water and electricity)
- a “prosperity” distribution, according to their legitimate needs (to be decided).

To be studied by the C.A.A.

- means regarding birth limitation
- social life (children parents, role and work of women, ceremonies)
- pocket money
- collective or individual kitchen
- geographical situation of the housing.

Roger Anger's archive, undated

[The Mother had decided to start on August 7th, 1970, an integration program for the village families inside the Auroville area. Five families from Kuilapalayam were first accepted. Vharadharajan, in charge of this program, wrote to the Mother for guidance. Probably due to her difficult health condition the Mother replied only on September 10.]

In connection with the integration program of the families from the village, which starts on Friday, the 7th of August 1970, we pray for your guidance in the following:

1. Whether they are to be treated as Aurovilians in all matters?

Yes.

2. Whether regular Prosperity should be issued to them?

Yes.

3. Whether all Prosperity items can be taken from Auroville Prosperity?

All that they choose to take.

4. Whether any guiding principles should be laid down for them on joining Auroville? If yes, Mother may kindly enlighten us.

Certainly it would be good if somebody was intelligent enough to do it and do it well.

5. *Whether any particular amount for food should be fixed per person per day; if yes, whether Rs.2.50 per adult and Rs.2.00 per child will be all right?*

There must be a period of at least one month during which they are given what they ask. Afterwards, we shall see what may be done reasonably.³

MCWCE, XIII, p. 250, 10.9.1970

[Excerpt from a meeting held at Aspiration between members of the Comité Administratif d'Auroville (CAA) and Aurovilians residing on the plateau, organized to discuss the problems arising from a proposed notification to acquire 130 acres of land for the Matrimandir, the Bharat Nivas and Auromodel. Unfortunately, one side of the tape was so badly damaged that the transcribers had to omit certain parts. In addition, portions of the 'good' side, often in broken English, were difficult to decipher because of noise caused by the wind, inarticulate speech and people continually interrupting each other.]

Richard: *I agree with what Vincenzo said (about relations with the village people) because there have been many good relations set up among the village people and the individual communities: at Forecomers there was one, at Peace they have been good and here I take it there have been some very good relations; but one Act such as this [notification for acquisition of] 130 acres that no one knew about is enough to pull the rug out from under everybody.*

Francis: *They come to you and ask you: what is Auroville doing? They heard the propaganda from the other side and you just*

3 In his compilation Gilles adds at the end of this entry that André Morisset (the Mother's physical son) observed that she replied to two more questions, as follows:

– Regarding their visiting the Ashram departments, Samadhi, etc. the Mother said that Auroville workers can go to the Samadhi at any time, just like any other Aurovilian.

– Regarding work, the Mother said that there should be no compulsion on the type of work etc. workers do. They can even be lazy, until they become fed up with being lazy. [Comp.]

stand there with your mouth open because they are telling you something is happening in reference to Auroville that you don't know anything about.

Bob: *I wanna know for myself how I can, may be the way you are doing it, justify land expansion when we are not utilising the land we already have.*

André (Mother's son, a CAA member): *That's another story.*

Anjani (a CAA member): *Let me explain. The Mother decided the Matrimandir shall come here and the Bharat Nivas there and Auromodel will come in effort to collect the places. Now either you accept that we complete Matrimandir and Bharat Nivas and all that before 1972 but we can't change the whole masterplan can we? The chief-architect, Roger, has done it in consultation with the Mother. After Mother's approval he has done it. The execution has been decided. Now the whole thing can't change.*

Josephine: *But why wasn't everybody in Auroville being told about what was going to happen and what the committee [has] just decided? No, nobody knew about it. Did Mother say it must happen, the land must be bought, has she said that?*

Rob: *I would like to know about the relationship with the village, what are you going to do about it or what do you intend to do. Because you are not here but we are all the time in the village.*

Vincenzo: *They throw stones in the car and things like this, so you bring the police and tell them but when the police is gone, they start again. You know, I crossed the village with the police in the car, they say vannakam, and when police is not in the car they throw stones, so now the police is not here and it is all right, later on you show them what they have done and you bring the police here.*

Prem Malik (a CAA member): *All right but how do you intend to put it across to the villagers why we are taking their land? Even if we want to use some proper propaganda, what are we going*

to tell them? We are taking their land for Matrimandir, we are taking their land for Bharat Nivas. But this is the whole point. This particular man who doesn't want to give his land, what are we going to say to him? The best thing is what Constance said here which I think there is a lot of sense behind. We might examine it and that is, that if you only can get a ceiling on the value of the property price and don't enforce the landlord, that might solve the problem, I don't know.

Vincenzo: I want to tell the comparison of what André asked us in our contact with the village people and the act from Auroville office: don't say anything to the village people and they are just taking the land by asking the government and taking it by force. They ask us to have good relations but I don't see the connection with the attitude of Auroville-office with the village people. I'm sure if we did not ask the land acquisition and if we just take the relation with the people, explain to them what is coming and why we need the land, maybe slowly, slowly then maybe it could be urgently maybe we could build this in two years. I think we can explain to the village, we can integrate. If it doesn't take two years it does not matter, so why hurry? Is it better to go fast and have this kind of relation with the village people? I don't think so. We have life, Mother says this, we have life, why are you in a hurry? 72 is only one day. But don't spoil all the connections with the village people. It is not to ask the government because this is not the Aurovilian way, forcing the people. You don't force, you say it is the government who is forcing, but it is the same thing, you force the people.

Austin: I would like to speak about this question of policy and the question of the way in which the officers of Auroville in this instance have ignored the question of consultation of those living on the site, have made a grievous error of judgement and have placed us all in a most difficult living situation because the policy which has been determined or the beginning of the policy which has been worked out has actually been put into action without any of us having the change to speak to it, to suggest out ideas and to point out some of the difficulties which have been

involved. Down in the village, I discovered about the difficulties which were taking place, the requisition policy which has been carried out, it seems to me secretly and with maladministration, when my servant was struck by the villagers and when we were stoned. When our lives were made very uncomfortable there. And I put this too to the Auroville-office and the administrators that the full method of consultation of those living on the site is absolutely essential, and arbitrary and bureaucratic and singular and isolated decisions which are being made by the administration should stop and that the procedure of consultation and discussions of all major policy should be established with all of us who live here. And if possible that there be given some consideration to our question and that it be discussed in detail with the Mother as to the possibility of the Auroville officers administering Auroville from the land of Auroville and living out here and sharing the life and the difficulties as they develop here. I think this is central to the whole project, absolutely essential and I urge you, upon all those senior officials and those who have been given responsibility to Auroville, to carry this out as soon as possible so that disastrous and... and silly and difficult policies will not once again be imposed upon us and make our already difficult task that much more difficult.

//Bravo//

Bob: How much land does Auroville own presently? (Answer: about 1,800 acres). If the Matrimandir was built on the land that belongs to Auroville, would Mother disagree about it?

André: Mother has selected the place for the Matrimandir.

Vincenzo: I prefer good relations with the village people. I prefer a new consciousness coming here then bricks and cement.

Richard: If we are open, Mother can surely show us the way. But none of us here has knowledge of this, none of us were advised of this. The minutes of the committee are always closed, no one can even go in a committee meeting without prayer and sanction from the committee: number one! Then doors are shut,

windows are closed, no one can get in and no one can hear and no one can know the minutes of the meeting.

Vincenzo: What I think myself is if Auroville has to come and Auroville must come, we find the money also if we have to buy one acre a milliard.

Constance: It is a one time only thing and Auroville is for eternity. If we want it, we want it, we'll pay anything for it, money is no argument.

Lisa: Who decided that these three projects should be finished in 1972? Is it Mother or is it just like a total agreement, that it is nice to have these projects finished by the anniversary of Sri Aurobindo? Because that gives the village a feeling of a kind of pressure and urgency, while they don't even see that we handle the land properly. So there is not so much confidence, and we have now even this pressure that we want something to be finished

Nava (a CAA member): André can answer this best.

André: If you put the question like that, the answer is yes. Because Mother has always said since we are speaking of Sri Aurobindo's centenary, since about three or four years ago, that the building, the erection of Auroville had to be perfectly obvious to anybody on the centenary date of Sri Aurobindo, that was the origin, that was the reason why we have applied for recognition from UNESCO, that was the reason why all of the basis of Auroville has been put to the world in very obvious and perfectly clear words. That's one thing.

Then of course there are all the implications of the decision that were not perfectly obvious at the start. The implications are extremely various. First of all there is the international aspect. This international aspect is borne by UNESCO. You know that UNESCO has had two resolutions in two subsequent general meetings in 1966 and 1968, that the Auroville project was considered beneficial for the aim of humanity as a whole.

Then of course another implication is that Auroville has to be certainly out of bounds of any country, but this the Indian Government is not ready to accept for the time being and it is not possible. So we have to live with Indian rules, let us say the Indian laws.

That is absolutely essential. Why? Many people outside India have asked us why Mother started Auroville in India and the answer was absolutely clear. It is started in India because India is the only country in the world where it can be started, where there is enough flexibility and there is enough understanding of the people. That is why Auroville started in India. Of course as long as Auroville has not the status of International City we'll have to follow and obey the laws of the country. And that is why we had to follow in particular the laws for land acquisition. And this we may regret. We may regret that the laws of India are such that they have no mean in between compulsory acquisition and freedom of selling and buying, entire freedom of selling and buying, but is a fact. What can we do?

Richard: André is it that? There are ways and one of these ways for example would be... we just have to look at that situation now, 23,000 Tamil villagers will be assimilated in Auroville, if they are not going to be homeless, as we understand. Why should there not be representatives from the villages at these meetings with the people who could translate to see what the feeling of Auroville is, the feeling of the people of Auroville, to know what we are saying? Why shouldn't their headmen and the people who have some opening or understanding of Auroville at least be given the opportunity to be at these meetings?

Vincenzo: What you are replying André about this is Mother. Mother asked for Matrimandir, but I want to know if Mother has been informed about what is going on and land acquisition. Because the contacts with the villagers now are very bad and this 23,000 Tamil people living in Auroville after being integrated in Auroville... but now it is impossible.

André: *Well, but now it is perhaps not possible, but we don't know if it is not possible in two years.*

Vincenzo: *But I think you are doing the wrong way.*

Piero: *There is not existing any project to start the developing of the 30,000 people who are living in the territory of Auroville. I think that also the goodwill of 40-60 people who are living in Auroville now is absolutely nothing for developing. It can give a good relation but not a development. The question is, we think, for this people the only result is the land and the agriculture – at the same time, without the existence of any other project to support this people in another way, or to give them another possibility of job. I can understand that it is difficult to get the land, so the things are not connected and in any case now we speak about 1972. But the question will come again and again. And it is regarding a lot of people. What portion of the land, which we are requiring now, was cultivated before?*

Josephine: *Is it not a little show, to show what we have done, to show this, to show that? Everybody is so busy showing the tourist, showing to the people that we have nice houses, European toilets. It's so much show. It seems to be too much show sometimes. Maybe the Matrimandir doesn't have to be finished. Maybe something deeper is more important. Like a good relationship and not only showing. I mean because it becomes very superficial. We can show Americans in 1972...*

Vincenzo: *23,000 people integrated in Auroville.*

Anjani: *The Bharat Nivas; only what is the minimum has been asked. Then for the Matrimandir the garden part has been asked. Auromodel, 52 acres. We cannot withdraw this requisition. We cannot withdraw either; we... you see, Mother has written in one of the bulletins that she has seen every part of Auroville constructed and what is needed is just a little vessel which can bring the force down. It looks as if the Divine wants to manifest the truth of this earth and there is not even a part of land for that. No, I'm trying... you remember the message which Mother gave*

on 15th August 1964 on the First World Conference which was organised by the Society. And please remember it was on that day that Auroville was announced. I think you will remember. People choose to collaborate or the pressing circumstances will force them to collaborate.

Navajata: *I now come straight to this problem of land. It is better you know the full picture. First thing I want to tell you the history. I'm not thinking of judgement, whether the action is right or wrong. When we started purchasing land for Auroville there was not much of a problem. We bought land at three hundred rupees an acre on the main road so you can imagine the price of this area, you must know the picture fully. And our relation with the villagers was very good, everything was very nice.*

The local village chief, he wrote to me that he wanted a loan of 5,000 rupees to pay his loan from a cooperative society and I put the papers to the Mother: no, if we are rich we give, but we can't give him loans like that. The next day the trouble started for Auroville.

We wanted from the government forest land. Again the village chiefs came to us and said a road has to be made before we pass the resolution that this land be given to you.

The road should be put here and Mother did sanction money for that. Even a house for a panchayat and everything, everything ready to function. We paid the money and the resolution was passed. I'm telling you the Divine has been giving concession to human nature as much as possible in order that the people may see the light. Even money was given, the resolution was passed.

The government needed money for forest land whose forest did not exist, even that money was given under Mother's instructions and that land is since four years not coming in our possession.

Then came this land, people suddenly asking for a higher price, and I can tell you this higher price did not come from the poor man. 40 per cent of the population of the village is landless. For them the land acquisition did not arise. Out of

this other 60 percent, 50 percent has less than three or four acres, out of the ten percent, 5 per cent has land between five or ten acres. The other three or four per cent has more than ten or fifteen acres. That is the situation and all this land acquisition is from this three or four per cent, neither from the people who are landless, nor from the people who have small lands.

And in this connection I like to tell you three things. When the [day of the] Foundation Ceremony came, it leaked out that we were going to put this foundation at Kottakarai place – and for the land we were getting at 500-700 rupees an acre suddenly people asked 2,000 rupees an acre. And so I spoke to Mother and Mother said do not come to tell me the price, buy the land. Then I went back to the same person and said to him I needed the land today, so he said 5,000 rupees an acre. And Mother's instructions were to buy, also for 5,000 rupees an acre. He wanted three lakhs and fifteen thousand. I had no money, so I said 30,000 now and the rest over one and a half year and the man agreed. Mother said, you don't know the force of greed. If you think by bargaining you bring down the price, you are wrong. For the first time I learned what the force of greed meant. So we paid him, his priced document was received, the Rs.30,000 balance was also paid after one year to him.

Again a big landlord, then the next place where a foundation stone was paid by Hargris, that place also came available, but in very difficult circumstances. We had to buy other land and give to the man, the seller, and we took the land from him in exchange for that land with the well and everything. The things went on like this.

The present situation is like this. A little away the same land we are buying 1,000 or 800 rupees. Because Matrimandir is coming here there is no limit to greed. They said we want 5,000 and Mother has agreed to 5,000 rupees an acre, which is not the price here. And now a man came to sell land for the Matrimandir, the price was negotiated, everything was done, and the village chief asked the village: why did you tell this man to sell his land to Auroville? Now we'll ask double the price

and Auroville must buy all the land in the area at the same price before we sell this half acre of land.

This happened about two months back. There are people who really want to sell their lands to Auroville. They are being intimidated in not selling the lands to Auroville. Then came the government officers who discussed the matters. The people here, they said there should be no compulsory acquisition. We want to sell the lands to Auroville but we sell at our own time and our own price. And the government officer said to two of them, so you want Auroville to go slip-shot. You don't want anything to come which will really benefit the people.

I'll admit it with both, we have missed the opportunity, the villagers have missed the opportunity to really open to the Supreme, we could have opened perhaps something, some other way would have opened, but let us accept the fact. We are what we are, we have failed, there is no use trying to justify on the grounds that we sought the best way to be done. Under these circumstances we have faced two choices: either allow Auroville to go slip-shot, or at least get the minimum of land necessary.

Our discussions with the government were not only for 130 acres of land. There were another 5,000 acres of land for fixing the price, not for getting, just fixing. Two years time and we also told them we were not in a hurry, let people see how they are getting integrated, perhaps they themselves will offer to get integrated. The problem that arose, the main problem is for 130 acres. The last few days we have even dropped the demand for the 5,000 acres, and even the government is shocked and surprised how we dropped the plan. The government has said they have to put a steel plant and they are requiring 25,000 acres and the question of rehabilitation came, the government approaches us whether we'll rehabilitate the people.

Then I asked the Mother and the Mother said surely, what we can do we give them, that is the first thing. Let them leave it to me, it will be done much better than they can imagine. So I said whatever then it is all right, the question doesn't arise. So now the whole question as far as we are concerned comes down to

the point, firstly have we been able to give the correct vision to the people in the Auroville area? I would say no, we have failed it. The other people have twisted the things, the villagers will be thrown out. We just discussed this today. We are trying to give a correct vision in writing now, till Mother's approval, and they say the villagers will not approve it, whatever we have to say, it will not be approved. Or now we'll give in writing a statement we should print as far as the acquisition is concerned.

I personally don't want to sit in judgement, because the Mother has decided, it is final. I don't want to use my head for it because [the] head can always find arguments pro and contra against it. Let us see. What will come out of this 130 acres [issue], whether we are justified or not justified, it is again a matter of opinion, [for] which I'll not give [my own] opinion.

But one thing I can tell you, both, we and the villagers, have failed in taking the divine grace which has come and the best answer we can give to another, [is] be more and more open to the Mother and do always the right thing. The right [thing], there is no other solution. As for the villager, what we can do is [to] develop the power of communication. Unless we develop the power of communication I think the problem of ignorance will remain and we can't blame them either for it. So, we'll try to improve. And as far as [the] acquisition time is concerned, Mother has a decision and let's see what happens. If it is not the right thing it won't get done. Only the demand has not been modest but, I say, more than modest. The government [people] themselves are surprised. The villagers don't know we [have] asked only for 130 acres. We have not asked for anything more and these people whose land we will buy, we have offered them rehabilitation, much better than what they are receiving today. Behind this commotion are wrong ideas; and I personally feel we cannot summon, but what is the solution, only Mother can offer.

I have no solution to offer because anything will be a mental solution. Some of the people who are really behind the agitation are not the common man. These people have asked the people not to come to Auroville for work because they want those

fellows to work in their fields. And it suits them very well if the villagers continue to be poor, if the villagers continue to remain in the place as they are. The few people educated fits, suits that extremely well. People are very willing to sell the land here much better, for a much better price. Some people want to create this confusion, unfortunately they did not open [to the Mother?].

So I think Mother was not left under the circumstances with any alternative except to perform this surgery. And I trust the people will change, by the time. The government [people] themselves promised to do some work for us, to explain to the villagers the Auroville idea and everything, and personally I feel we had to meet this chance in Auroville, we had to accept all the difficulties which we meet in human life, and find a solution. But the solution which has come is a kind of failure, not success. I did not give you another sign of success and I finish for today.

Vincenzo: You can talk very well and everything now is finished and what we have said meant what: nothing. This seems to me now, like for everybody I think it is the same thing. But in the practical way the problem is still there, because the contact with the Tamilians we have every day, every minute, every second. But I want more, that the people from Auroville-office come to take care of this problem and not leave it like this, because when you are going back to Pondy we are going to meet again the village people. We have talked for one hour very nicely, and then the problem is still there. So, what I want is more connection with the people. Explain them and things like that. But now Varadharajan has no connection at all because if he goes there they are going to beat him up, so we want something coming for that...

Ecce Homo, published by Rob in replacement of the "Auroville Bulletin", 13.9.1970

[People in the surrounding villages feared that they would be evicted from their homes because of land purchases for Auroville. The Mother approved and signed the English translation of the following statement, drafted in Tamil. See minutes of the CAA meeting on 20.09.1970.]

The advent of Auroville in Tamil Nadu has given a new hope and cheer to the people. The first citizens of Auroville are those Tamil people who live on the soil of Auroville. The Tamil culture, which is one of the oldest in the world, has a unique role to play in the city of Auroville, which is coming up with the cooperation of various nations of the world and various states of India.

Some people out of various interests are spreading the false propaganda that Auroville is not beneficial to the people, and does not help the poor. But we see today in society that the rich are becoming richer and the poor, poorer.

(The Mother added:)

It is against this calamity that Auroville wants to fight. Auroville wants to show a new way of life.

Because of Auroville, there will be better employment opportunities, the standard of living will improve and health, sanitation and educational activities will increase. Further, those who want to join Auroville completely will be taken as such. Auroville wants to give to each individual without any distinction of caste, community, religion or race, the opportunity to grow fully. Auroville is not merely a city but also a way of life.

Auroville does not want to evict anybody from their houses. It is a gross error to say that people from eleven villages will be forcibly evicted. Fifty-two acres of land in Bommapalayam and eighty acres in Irumbai have been asked to be made available at reasonable rates.

Today mankind is at the crossroad between unprecedented progress and total annihilation. The old methods of solving the problems have failed. New methods and a new way of life are necessary. The UNESCO has commended Auroville to all in its unanimous resolutions. Even before many of the present countries came into existence, the saying "all countries is my country, all peoples are my kith and kin" was well prevalent throughout Tamil Nadu. Today the time has come to prove it. It is certain that the Tamil people will do all they can to realise human unity.

Auroville Organisation

Signed: Blessings

Mother

Auroville Archives, 19.9.1970

[The Mother wrote on the minutes of the Comité Administratif d'Auroville's (CAA) meeting:]

I would like to see the list of the landowners concerned with the land acquisitions. Blessings.

Auroville Archives, 27.9.1970

As we intend to serve a better type of food than the villagers usually take, is it advisable to allow those who are willing to take food from the Community Kitchen on payment at a reasonable rate?

Yes – at cost price.

Blessings.

CWMCE, XIII, pp. 250-1, November 1970

Regarding a separate kitchen for integrated families she said, "Why division, division?" They should be encouraged to feel that they are Aurovilians and not different, integrated, etc.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 117, 9.6.1971

[Varadharajan asked via Shyam Sunder:]

- 1. What is our aim in giving facilities to the villagers?*
- 2. What should be our attitude towards the villagers in dealing with them:*
 - a. in extending them facilities?*
 - b. when they come to us for employment?*
 - c. when some of them have no goodwill towards us?*

We should explain to the villagers that we are there to make life better and easier for them and not more difficult. We would like to take them as people of Auroville if they collaborate and are willing.

We have to explain it to them properly and also show that we mean it.

One has to convince them that we are their benefactors... benefactors, but not with a sense of superiority. They have been so long ill-treated as inferiors that they do not trust us any more. The sense of superiority in dealing with them must not be there. If the Divine took an attitude of superiority, men would be crushed in a minute.

3. To have better contact with the villagers, is it advisable to have a liaison office within the village?

It depends on the attitude of the people there. Those who have goodwill towards Auroville should become stronger.

4. Do you approve of giving 'Prosperity' items (to the ladies) instead of cash wages to the workers of the Hand Made Paper Unit?

To give things they need in place of cash is better but one should not give with miserliness and those to whom we give should feel that it is better for them.

Gazette Aurovilienne, I, 5/6, p.32, 22.10.1971

[Later on Shyam Sunder made the same report in his notes, adding the following:]

When requested for approval of the wish of two pregnant women with three children each in two integrated families for birth control surgery at the time of delivery, Mother said that she was not interested in it. She expects people in Auroville to evolve towards higher life.

If Mother is not interested in it, Shyam Sunder cannot say yes. They can do as they like.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 122, 31.12.1971

From the spiritual point of view, India is the foremost country in the world. Her mission is to set the example of spirituality. Sri Aurobindo came on earth to teach this to the world.

This fact is so obvious that a simple and ignorant peasant here is, in his heart, closer to the Divine than the intellectuals of Europe.

All those who want to become Aurovilians must know this and behave accordingly; otherwise they are unworthy of being Aurovilians.

CWMCE, XIII, p. 251, 8.2.1972

The parents of the child born at the Health Centre on 08.03.72 wants the name to come from Mother as the child was born in the Mother's city. Mother gave the name 'Auroshe' and wrote the names of the parents. Then she made another copy for the child's parents.

(All this for an unknown villager's family).

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.136, 13.3.1972

Informed Mother of the talk Ramanathan, Varadarajan, village representatives and local M.L.As had with the Chief Minister and some other Ministers in Tamil Nadu. For the first time a group of Tamil people have spoken for Auroville to the Government.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.162, 12.4.1972

Mother agreed to see eight village girls with Pippi as a group.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.168, 21.4.1972

Mother approved of a separate kitchen for two integrated families as an experiment.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.171, 1.5.1972

Auroville can contribute Rs 1,000 to the Farmers' Conference in an Auroville village and arrange to take the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu around. No party or faction at Auroville.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.172, 3.5.1972

An American teacher in Aspiration has written to Mother about the difficult children, especially from the village.

Mother remarked that these people do not understand the children there. They can teach language, but even the American English is not good, not liked by Englishmen. Aren't there Indian teachers?

There are some, Mother.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.175, 8.5.1972

The cash and goods totaling Rs 1,3000 stolen from the Matrimandir Camp a fortnight ago have been recovered. A Tamil boy confessed it.

Mother laughed and remarked, "He was candid!", and then asked, "I hope no violence was used?"

"No, Mother. We have now dismissed him."

"What can we do?"

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.176, 9.5.1972

There is a thousand year old temple in the village Irumbai, a little away from the borders of Auroville. It is a Shiva Temple, the Ganesh idol is about five feet. Several hundred years ago one saint Sambandar come there and made a couplet saying that a township would come nearby. There is a good area of land attached to the temple, but the management is dishonest and the temple is neglected. Some villagers wish to ask the Government to give the management to Auroville.

It is alright.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, pp.179-80, 21.5.1972

The second issue of the Action Journal in Tamil was offered to Mother.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.182, 27.5.1972

An integrated family came with their one year old child for the child's birthday.

Mother was touching the child and taking Her hands around his face with such love and tenderness!

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.196, 4.7.1972

(Someone offered to help to clean Last School)

It is all right. But while putting things in order, be very careful not to offend the people from the Tamil village. It has been very difficult for us to win their confidence and nothing should be done which could make them lose this new-born confidence which is of capital importance.

Take with you someone who knows and speaks Tamil fluently so that you can talk with them and explain things to them.

They are your brothers in spirit – this should never be forgotten.

CMWCE, XIII, p. 251, July 1972

There is a proposal to bring out a special card for the villagers on 15.08.72, with Sri Aurobindo's photo, a photo of the Matrimandir construction workers at the site, and a message from Mother. Mother wrote,

Good will and peace to all.

Blessings.

and said, "It should be in Tamil for them."

Yes, Mother; it will be both in English and Tamil.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.200, 16.7.1972

Village programme:

- a) opening today of a playground near the community kitchen for village.*
- b) Taking of village children, 12-14 year of age, for tidying work in schools, huts, etc, and improving their own living habits.*
- c) Education in the village itself.*

Mother approved. She remarked that these workers should know Tamil.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.206, 1.8.1972

Dayanand's report about the disturbing reaction of the FFHC workers to their not being allowed to the Ashram Prosperity on 1st August was conveyed to Mother.

She asked for some details and kept silent.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.207, 3.8.1972

Tomorrow we are opening a class for the children of Tamil workers in Aspiration. Took 12 blessing packets from Mother for the classes.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.208, 6.8.1972

A question was raised about the language in which command is to be given to the village children in the evening playground started at Aspiration. Mother asked,

“They understand Tamil only?”

“Yes, Mother.”

“Then, Tamil.”

For the Aspiration School, French and English to continue in sports and games.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.210, 10.8.1972

Mother was very pleased to know that the Kulapalayam village has contributed Rs 210 for Matrimandir. It is a village of 300 houses and the village elders say that the amount is very small, but they give it as a token of their expression of brotherhood, goodwill and co-operation with Auroville. Shyam Sunder has spoken to Dyuman and they think that the Centenary napkin could be given to each house there.

Yes, yes. I was thinking that something should be given.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.211, 17.8.1972

Narad wrote about thefts by Tamil workers.

For the mango thefts, Mother remarked,

Oh, it is just food!

On hearing of other petty theft, she had a laugh,

They are to be excused this time.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p.218, 3.9.1972

Varadharajan proposes that the provisions for the Workers Kitchen may be supplied to him and he will look after the day-to-day work, without money consciousness.

Blessings.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 253, 17.12.1972

Daniel's letter about Prosperity for village people who wish to join Auroville.

The first question is if the 'pocket money' be provided for each as part of his Prosperity.

Mother said, “It can continue.”

The second question related to the cases where the person from

the village continues to live in his village hut with his family, takes meals with them, and thus shares his Prosperity with them.

Mother was not replying. I said that it then becomes like salary.

She said, "It doesn't matter."

"What to do?"

She remarked, "Human nature is like that, profiteering."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 228, 28.9.1972

In the course of a reply to a question about Arumugham, a Tamil boy in Aspiration, Mother said that he is not meant to be educated intellectually. But people act by their mind, yet if one does not get out of the mind one is nowhere. Goodwill, mental, vital and physical goodwill is more important than intelligence and ability to speak clearly and big words.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 244, 10.11.1972

Yesterday a dispensary was opened by Nata and Satyabrata at Udavi for the benefit of the villagers.

Nata has two more programmes for execution: incense making and weaving.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 282, 22.3.1973

Mother signed Blessings on the First Annual Sports programme of the Kulpalayam village children in Aspiration.

A question is raised about the village children. Will they go to Aspiration school after the pre-school or should there be an independent school for them?

"Why division?" remarked Mother. "There should be unification."

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 285, 30.3.1973

Tomorrow we also commence the village children sports programme at Kottakarai.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 286, 23.4.1973

Three Tamil villagers wish to join Auroville. They are good. Approved.

Shyam Sunder, Down Memory Lane, p. 288, 7.5.1973



AUROVILLE STATUS

This document concludes a three months discussion among the members of the CAA (Comité Administratif d'Auroville), the name was given by the Mother; the minutes were brought to her for approval or amendments. These must be the guidelines mentioned in the C.A.A. meeting on 27.2.71, to which applies the following statement: "The rules for people to be admitted to Auroville have been approved by the Mother, one of the specific rules being that five hours work is compulsory for all Aurovilians".

RESIDENT OF AUROVILLE STATUS

After the probationary period Auroville will support to the extent of its means all the people accepted by the Mother, and for whom an individual caution-money will be given.

Needless to say, from that date onwards the duties of the selected people must conform to the agreement with Auroville, freely accepted by them. These agreements are sufficiently specified in all the definitions, all the teachings and goals pointed out by Mother, so as to be known by everyone and put into practice. No rule, law or constraint is necessary at Auroville, if the members of the community agree to replace these outdated methods by an active sincerity.

STATUS OF AUROVILLE CITIZEN

The Mother Herself will decide when a member of the community will become an Aurovilian – which implies that he has acquired the Auroville consciousness.

So far, there are no Aurovilians.



**“...IT MAY BE IN A THOUSAND YEARS,
I DON’T KNOW, BUT AUROVILLE WILL BE...”**

I had a revelation, in the sense that it was more on the order of a vision.

For external reasons, I was looking at the sorry state in which all countries find themselves, the truly painful and dangerous conditions of the earth, and there was a sort of all-embracing vision showing how nations (men taken as nations) have acted and are increasingly acting in a growing Falsehood, and how they have used all their creative power to create such formidable means of destruction, with, at the back of their minds, the really childish notion that the destruction would be so terrible that no one would want to use them. But they don’t know (they ought to know, but they don’t) that things have a consciousness and a force of manifestation, and that all those means of destruction are pressing to be used; and even though men may not want to use them, a force stronger than they will be pushing them to do so.

Then, seeing all this, the imminence of the catastrophe, there was a sort of call or aspiration to bring down something that could at least neutralize that error. And it came, an answer... I can’t say I heard it with my ears, but it was so clear, so strong and precise that it was indisputable. I am obliged to translate it into words; if I translate it into words, I may say something like this: “That’s why you have created Auroville.”

And with the clear vision that Auroville was a center of force and creation, with... (how can I explain?) a seed of truth, and that if it could sprout and develop, the very movement of its growth would be a reaction against the catastrophic consequences of the error of armament.

I found this very interesting because this birth of Auroville wasn’t preceded by any thought; as always, it was simply a Force

acting, like a sort of absolute manifesting, and it was so strong [*when the idea of Auroville presented itself to Mother*] that I could have told people, “Even if you don’t believe in it, even if all circumstances appear to be quite unfavorable, I KNOW THAT AUROVILLE WILL BE. It may be in a hundred years, it may be in a thousand years, I don’t know, but Auroville will be, because it has been decreed.” So it was decreed – and done quite simply, like that, in obedience to a Command, without any thought. And when I was told that (I say, “I was told,” but you understand what I mean), when I was told that, it was to tell me, “Here is why you have made Auroville; you are unaware of it, but that’s why...” Because it was the LAST HOPE to react against the imminent catastrophe. If some interest is awakened in all countries for this creation, little by little it will have the power to react against the error they have committed.

I found this very interesting, because I had never thought about it.

And naturally, when I was shown that, I understood; I perceived how the creation of Auroville has an action in the invisible, and what action. It’s not a material, outward action: it’s an action in the invisible. And since then, I have been trying to make countries understand it, of course not outwardly because they all think they’re much too clever to be taught anything, but inwardly, in the invisible.

It’s fairly recent, it dates from two or three days ago. I had never been told this. It was said very clearly – “said,” I mean seen, shown like this (*gesture of a scene offered to the sight*). So my interest in Auroville has considerably increased since then. Because I have understood that it isn’t just a creation of idealism, but quite a practical phenomenon, in the hope... in the will, rather, to thwart and counterbalance the effects – the frightful effects – of the psychological error of believing that fear can save you from a danger! Fear attracts the danger much more than it saves you from it. And all these countries, all these governments commit blunder upon blunder because of that fear of the catastrophe.

All this is simply to tell you that if nations collaborate in the work of Auroville, even to a very modest extent [such as this offer of money from the French government], it will do them good – it can do them a lot of good, a good that can be out of proportion to the appearance of their actions.

You speak of the imminence of a catastrophe, but still Auroville will take some time to be realized?

No! I am speaking of the countries' collaboration in CREATING something. It's not when Auroville has been completed: it's the nations' collaboration in creating something – but creating something founded on the Truth instead of a rivalry in Falsehood's creation. It's not when Auroville is ready – when Auroville is ready, it will be one town among all other towns and it's only its own capacity of truth that will have power, but that... remains to be seen.

No, the point is a combined interest in building something founded on the Truth. They have had a combined interest (combined without any mutual liking, of course) in creating a power of destruction built on Falsehood; well, Auroville means diverting a little of that force (the quantity is minor, but the quality is superior). It's truly a hope – it's founded on a hope – of doing something that can be the beginning of a harmony.

(...)

Humanity is not the last rung of terrestrial creation. Evolution continues and man will be surpassed. It is for each one to know whether he wants to participate in the advent of the new species. For those who are satisfied with the world as it is, Auroville obviously has no raison d'être.

Mother's Agenda, VII, 21.9.1966



In the eyes of the practical world we are mad, but this is our strength.

It will be because it must be, in total folly, I tell you.

I guarantee the support, the total backing of the force.

I do not compel you to think like me, but I ask you to trust me.

THE MOTHER - Roger Anger's archive



