

The ACORN

A Gandhian Review

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The Acorn, A Gandhian Review is a biannual publication devoted to the examination of various global issues of our time from the Gandhian standpoint of *Satyagraha*. *The Acorn* is published with the support of Eastern Illinois University.

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To the Reader:

Isn't there already a superabundance of publications dealing with spiritual issues of our time? Why then another such publication? Would it not merely contribute to the further obscuring of our fundamental problems? Following Gandhi and all other spiritual teachers of humankind, we believe that all spiritual issues must ultimately be traced to the condition of the self, and that their solution must be sought through self-purification. We also believe that we will gain clarity concerning our problems only when we look at them as what they really are—that is, as issues of the self. In our view, there still exists a need for a journal seeking this kind of approach to the problems of humanity.

We are very happy to inaugurate *The Acorn* with articles by three great spiritual teachers from the East. The piece by Ham Sok Hon first appeared in Korean under the title "Politics and Religion" in 1959. Although it was written in view of the particular condition of Korea under the authoritarian regime of Syngman Rhee, its relevance to our time should be obvious to the reader. Ham has been revered by many Koreans as Korea's Gandhi, but virtually unknown outside his country—except among the Quakers in the United States and Great Britain. The American Friends Service Committee has recently nominated him for the 1986 Nobel Peace Prize. Fujii Nichidatsu, founder of Nipponzan Myohoji (a Japanese Buddhist order), died a year ago at the age of ninety-nine. After seeing the advent of the atomic age through the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, he devoted himself until his death to the cause of world peace, adhering to Gandhi's teaching of ahimsa—thus becoming a leading spiritual voice in the world peace movement. His essay translated here was written in 1951; however, one may find his message perhaps more telling today than ever before. Thich Nhat Hanh, a Zen master and poet, was the leader of Vietnam's Buddhist nonviolence movement in the 1960s. For his work Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967. Nhat Hanh, now living in southern France, has been known for his "engaged Buddhism." Several of his works have appeared in English. Last year, the Fellowship of Reconciliation published his book *A Guide to Walking Meditation*. His piece in this issue is an edited version of a talk that he gave during his recent visit to the United States.

The Editors