

# The ACORN

## A Gandhian Review

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### To the Reader:

A new season in South Africa? Promising Nelson Mandela's release and announcing the lifting of a ban on the African National Congress and other restrictions on anti-apartheid activities, President de Klerk of South Africa declared: "The season of violence is over," Archbishop Desmond Tutu said: "We are probably seeing history in the making in South Africa." If the "season of violence" is indeed over, it must truly mean "history in the making." But is that terrible season really gone? Let us hope that it is. When tulips open, we announce that the winter is over, or know at least that spring is not far away. How does spring come after winter? Not suddenly overnight. Doesn't spring have winterlike days, and winter springlike days? But, of course, spring is not winter, winter not spring; nobody confuses them. So, when the farmer sees signs of spring approaching, he gets ready for planting, though he knows that there may be even April blizzards. What is it to declare the passing of "the season of violence"? It must mean the arrival of a new season, the season of nonviolence. That's why I think Bishop Tutu says, "We are probably seeing history in the making." Why "probably"? Perhaps, the season of nonviolence will come inevitably after that of violence. (Otherwise, we would eventually destroy ourselves.) But nobody knows how long the season of violence lasts. There is no calendar to consult. So we say "probably" with uncertainty but hopefully. Should we lament the fact that we cannot predict the arrival of the season of nonviolence with calendrical certainty? No. For the season may arrive instantly, at any moment. It all depends upon us, humanity. Mr. de Klerk declared the passing of the season of violence. It's up to him (and many others) to make it happen. In the meantime, we must not forget that the season of spring may have many wintry days. We must have faith that the season of nonviolence has arrived. Only those who have this faith will bring this new season.

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Beginning with this issue, *The Acorn* will provide space for the Gandhi-King Society's announcements. For some time the G-K Society and *The Acorn*, with their common Gandhian dedication, have maintained a close relationship. Many members of the G-K Society are already our readers, and some our contributors. We feel that this arrangement will help both the Society and *The Acorn* grow.

As we are about to send this issue to press, we have just received the sad news that Professor Warren E. Steinkraus, one of the founders and former co-chairperson of the Gandhi-King Society, died of cancer on the 19th of February. Our readers may recall his article on "King's Radicalism and Its Detractors," published in *The Acorn* a couple of years ago. A committed civil rights and peace worker, he wrote extensively on Martin Luther King, Jr. As we include the G-King Society news in this issue, we think of him particularly because he always sought a closer relation between the Society and *The Acorn*.

(H.P.K.)