

The ACORN

A Gandhian Review

September 1986

Vol. I, No. 2

To the Reader	2
Working for Peace: Six Talks Thich Nhat Hanh	4
The Kingdom of Mind Ham Sok Hon	8
Nonviolence and the Dilemma of Power Gordon C. Zahn	9
Nonviolence Michael N. Nagler	11
Gandhi and Prayer Eknath Easwaran.	13
Two Poems Ham Sok Hon.	15
Gathering for Dialogue: A Manifesto	17

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.

Editorial Committee:
Ha Poong Kim, Editor
Robert Barford
David Downing

Cover and Art Work:
Gaye Harrison

A year's subscription to *The Acorn* (2 issues) costs \$5.00. A subscription form appears inside the back cover. Address all subscription and other mail to *The Acorn*, Philosophy Department, Eastern Illinois University, Charleston, IL 61920.

The Acorn accepts no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts. Unless accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope, no manuscript will be returned. Because of limited space, *The Acorn* rarely publishes unsolicited materials.

The Acorn welcomes letters to the editor, which should be no longer than 200 words in length. *The Acorn* reserves the right to edit and shorten all submissions.

Copyright © 1986 by Ha Poong Kim. All rights reserved.

To the Reader:

This summer I traveled to Korea. In Seoul, a metropolis of ten million people, almost everything that met my eyes seemed to confirm now familiar reports of the vitality of this newly industrialized nation: high-rise buildings, department stores full of consumer goods, endless streams of automobiles, express-ways, an ultra-modern subway system, etc. And the city seemed to have been caught by a sort of collective fever, as it was preparing for the 1988 Seoul Olympics, an occasion which Korea's military rulers will no doubt use in order to convince the world of their extraordinary accomplishments and, thereby, of their right to govern. Then there were stories of college students burning themselves to death in protest against the military regime, and the story of the rape of a female student activist by a police interrogator. (While I was in Seoul, a public rally was planned to denounce the use of sexual abuse as a means of torture by police, but the rally was quickly suppressed by the government.) In addition, of course, there were stories of students' clashes with police and the government's constant surveillance, arbitrary arrests, torture, etc.

These were, I must say, mostly stories that I had to hear from friends and others—stories of events of the kind for which first-person reports cannot be expected to appear in the strictly controlled Korean media. That means they were mostly the kind of stories that may easily and conveniently be dismissed by the government as groundless or distorted. In fact, such official denials would seem quite convincing (particularly to outsiders, including foreign reporters) in view of the business-as-usual climate of Seoul, which would not allow itself to be disturbed even by the most violent clash between students and police. Student demonstrations seldom take place in public view, since students can manage to gather in great numbers only on campuses. Most student rallies are like other campus events; they are a sort of stage act without spectators, as the government intends them to be.

Since my return from the Far East, many American friends have asked me about the situation in Korea. Usually I tell them two kinds of stories: stories of things such as skyscrapers, highways, cars, etc. and stories of people suffering and struggling under a repressive government. But most people are more impressed by stories of the first kind than by stories of the second kind. It's not that they do not trust my stories of surveillance, torture, etc.; they take such incidents simply as passing episodes of a much larger and more important story in the making. (How many governments are there that are really free of the charge of repression?) Then there is something else: a common misconception. Let me formulate it. "You tell us about all those modern goods and modern conveniences available in Korea. In fact, Korea has multiplied its gross national product almost forty-fold since 1961—all thanks to those generals and their technocrats. You yourself say that most Koreans are now economically much better off than twenty or thirty years ago, even though there may be an enormous difference between the rich and the poor. Most of them can now afford even TV sets, refrigerators, washing machines, etc. Isn't that good enough for the general public? They may indeed be thankful to those generals. Do farmers,