Quiet Helpers

Quaker Service in Postwar Germany

Achim von Borries

Published jointly by Quaker Home Service & the American Friends Service Committee

Quiet Helpers

Quaker Service in Postwar Germany

Achim von Borries
edited by Peter Daniels

based on translations by
John & Cathy Cary
and
Hildegard Wright

Published jointly by
Quaker Home Service and American Friends Service Committee
January 2000

QHS and AFSC acknowledge with thanks the assistance of the Deutsches Historisches Museum, and the work of the translators, John and Cathy Cary and Hildegard Wright.

We also acknowledge with thanks the original advice and support from Professor Fritz Stern of Columbia University, Professor James F. Tent of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Professor J. William Frost of Swarthmore College, Thomas Conrad and Lutz Caspers.

Published jointly by Quaker Home Service, London, England, and the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, PA, USA, January 2000.

http://www.quaker.org.uk and www.afsc.org

ISBN: 085245 319 1

Editor: Peter Daniels

Designer: Trish Carn, Compositions by Carn

Typeset in Palatino.

Printed by: Smith-Edwards-Dunlap, Philadelphia, PA, USA

Let us then try what love can do:
for if men did once see we love them,
we should soon find they would not harm us.

William Penn
Some fruits of solitude, 1693

Contents

Preface to the English edition

This book was written on the occasion of the exhibition *Stille Helfer – Die Quäkerhilfe im Nachkriegsdeutschland,* first shown in Berlin at the Deutsches Historisches Museum early in 1996, subsequently touring across Germany for more than two years. It was a remarkable success. Many older people remembered their experience with the British and American Quakers after World War II; the younger people were impressed by the documents and pictures which reconstructed the humanitarian engagement of the Friends. And there were many moving conversations with British and American Quakers who had worked in Germany in those years.

My text was designed to inform a German public about Quakers and Quakerism, not only the Quäkerhilfe in Germany after World War I, in the Nazi years and after the Second World War. There are a few Friends in Germany, a small, respected religious minority, some of them now engaged in peace work in areas of emergency outside our country. But unfortunately Quakerism is not part of the German religious tradition and the German social life; it is, rather, a nearly 'unknown quantity'. That's the difference.

So I had to provide for German readers, a short introduction on the history and the peculiarity of the 'Religious Society of Friends'. I don't know what this booklet will mean to the English-speaking public, not to say American and British Friends who know their own Society better than I do. May they take it as a modest attempt to 'open a window'.

I have to thank the Archives of the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, and the Library of Friends House, London, for helping me to collect the materials for the booklet. And now I owe John and Cathy Cary, Hildegard Wright and Peter Daniels my debt of gratitude for this subtle translation. Lastly, I hope that the treatise reflects somehow that spiritual and moral encouragement to improve our common world, inspired by faith, which has been for more than three hundred years the distinction of 'the people called Quakers'.

Achim von Borries

Foreword

It isn´t often we have the chance to return after half a century to the scene of events that helped shaped our lives and the lives of others who are dear to us. In 1996, we were given just such a rare opportunity as co-leaders of a group of Quaker volunteers who returned to Germany at the invitation of the German government to take part in the opening of the exhibit "Stille Helfer" (Quiet Helpers).

This program documented Quaker Service in Germany fifty years before. It was a rich and memorable experience for both of us. And it gave us a vivid perspective on the value of cooperative work between British, U.S. and German Quakers.

This beautiful publication, written by Achim von Borries, a historian from Bremen, was provided as background to the "Stille Helfer" exhibit. It was published by the German Historical Museum at the time of the exhibit and has gone through two printings since. Whilst it gives a distinctive German perspective on the service and reconciliation programs Friends carried out in Germany and interprets the spiritual origins of Quakerism for a German audience, American Friends Service Committee and Quaker Home Service feel it is immensely valuable as inspiration and history to an English-speaking audience.

Achim von Borries understands the commitment and motivation that were essential elements in this work and communicates them clearly and compellingly. At the same time, we feel it is important to add that Quakers were by no means the only volunteers who served in Germany. The British Red Cross, CARE, the coalition of relief agencies known as CRALOG and COBSRA, the Mennonites and many other organizations provided food, relief supplies and other kinds of aid in the months and years after the war.

The beginnings of large-scale Quaker aid in Germany go back to 1919 when Quakers helped students and launched a countrywide feeding program for children in the wake of the sanctions imposed after World War I. The second phase of Quaker aid involved service to Jews and other persecuted people during the Hitler era. This encompassed emigration and resettlement, children´s transports and material assistance. The third "chapter" followed in the midst of the postwar chaos, starting in 1945 when

Germany was still smouldering. British and U.S. Quaker teams worked with refugees, civilian families, displaced persons, camp survivors and a host of other victims, establishing neighborhood centers and providing practical aid. Once again, the "Quäkerspeisung," or Quaker feeding, helped a generation of young Germans keep hunger at bay.

Though generally known as "the Quakers," our teams were made up of people of all persuasions. As relief workers, our volunteers tried to relate to individuals with respect, however helpless and desperate they appeared to be. Quaker teams got on with their work, quietly and without much fuss. They were sometimes referred to as quiet helpers. Thus the title of the exhibit.

The Quiet Helpers exhibit travelled to more than twenty cities after it opened in Berlin. Local governments, banks, museums and individuals helped support the program, provided space, hosted events and took care of visitors. German Quakers were involved in the program. At nearly every stop, former British or U.S. volunteers were invited to be on hand. They were invited to talk about their experiences, met people in cities where they worked fifty years ago, gave interviews and returned home – as did we – enriched beyond all measure. Few have forgotten their time of service in Germany. In the end, the Quakers, who themselves came to help, were quietly, imperceptibly, given more than they gave.

Don Gann and Brenda Bailey
Philadelphia and London

Leonhard Ragaz

If the Society of Friends, in our day small in number, has attracted such wide notice across the world and brought a new respect to the name of Christ even among non-believers, this hasn't occurred because they taught something quite new, but rather because they took to heart, and put into practice, a few long-familiar, quite simple teachings of the Gospels.

1929 Von Christus zu Marx- von Marx zu Christus

I The Quakers

The Quakers – much lauded, little known

Three times in the twentieth century the Quakers have become known in Germany as 'Quiet Helpers'. In the years of hardship following the First World War the *Quäkerspeisung*, the feeding program organized by British and American Quakers, was a humanitarian undertaking which saved the lives of millions of German children. From 1933 to 1945, during the years of terror and destruction of human lives, German, British, and American Quakers aided countless people who were threatened and persecuted – in Germany itself, in the occupied countries of Europe, and wherever the victims of dictatorship and racial madness found refuge. And once again, following the end of the Second World War, Quakers from Great Britain and the United States were among the first to arrive in a Germany suffering from cold and hunger and facing an uncertain future amid enormous destruction. They came to do what they could to lessen the everyday hardships of the defeated, and also to offer spiritual and moral help, something the Germans of 1945 felt a need for no less than their need for food, clothing and medicines.

All this came about because of the willingness of the Quakers to come

June 29, 1945 429 (Advt.) THE FRIEND

F A U
IN
GERMANY

Relief Teams are in
OSNABRÜCK
HANOVER
VECHTA
CELLE
HAMBURG
WENTORF
WILHELMSHAVEN

" Peace in Europe has brought with it the realisation of all the old problems the war has not solved, and of all the new ones it has created."

—Report from F A U Relief Section in Germany

We are doing all we can Please help us to carry on

FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT
4, GORDON SQUARE, W.C.1
(Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

St. Christopher School
LETCHWORTH
A school community of some 300 boys and girls (between 5 and 18 years) and 70 adults practising education on sane and successful modern lines. The school is full, but applications for vacancies from 1948 onwards can be considered.

WESTWAY HOTEL
ENDSLEIGH STREET, W.C.1
BEDROOM WITH BREAKFAST
FROM **10/6**
Close to Northern Termini and FRIENDS HOUSE
Proprietors: Associated Hotels Ltd.
NIGHT PORTER

Advertisement in *The Friend*, (London), 29 June 1945.

to the aid of anyone facing extreme hardship, regardless of nationality, race, religious belief or political conviction. Their humanitarian commitment has been carried out in Europe, in the United States and increasingly in Asia and Africa. In 1947 their relief work was recognized when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to two Quaker relief organizations, the Friends Service Council (Great Britain) and the American Friends Service Committee (USA). The award was given for their 'silent help from the nameless to the nameless'. (*The Friend* 1947) For one moment the Quakers found themselves in the spotlight of world publicity, which was not something they sought. The work goes on quietly in many countries and in many ways, on many levels – in practical humanitarian assistance as well as in work on behalf of disarmament and nonviolent conflict resolution.

In Germany in particular Quakers are remembered with gratitude. For many older Germans, the phrase 'milksoup and cocoa' is probably the first and only thing they associate with the word 'Quaker'. Yet in Germany, where there are only a few Quakers, more is known about the help given than about the helpers themselves. Quakers don't put themselves forward, they let their actions speak instead. This has led to misunderstandings. Although they are known as humanitarians and as consistent opponents of war, they are primarily a religious society, a community of human beings who attempt in their lives to give expression to their belief in the immediate bond between humankind and God.

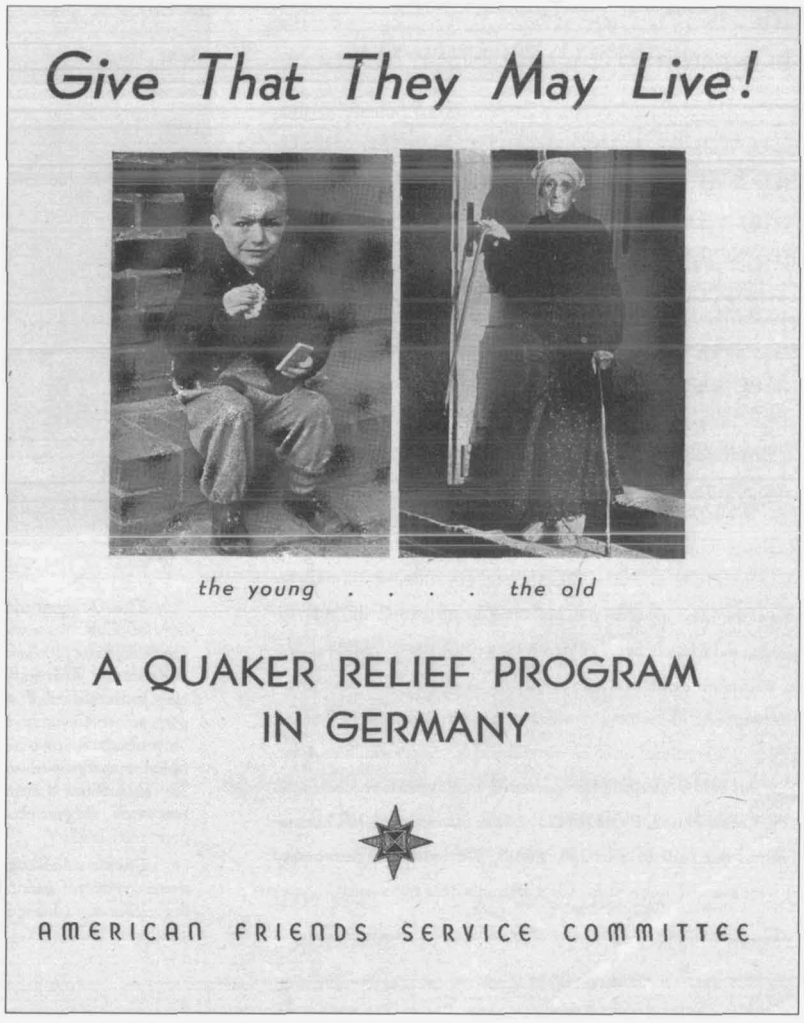
This Religious Society of Friends (the official name of the Quakers) differs from the majority of Christian churches in some essen-

tial features. It is made up entirely of the laity, without priests or other ecclesiastical dignitaries. Quakers worship in silence, gathering in unadorned meeting houses without a sermon, though anyone present may speak. Ritual and music have no place in the meeting for worship. In the words of William Penn: 'The less form in religion the better, since God is a Spirit; for the more mental our worship, the more adequate to the nature of God; the more silent, the more suitable to the language of a Spirit.' (Penn 1693) The Christian faith of the Quakers is based on a belief in the direct access to God, without the mediation of sacraments, without credal dogma or the Bible as absolute authority. Robert Barclay, the English Quaker theologian, wrote in the second half of the 17th century: 'The Scriptures are a declaration from the fountain, but not the fountain itself. We believe and accept them because they were inspired by the Spirit.' (Barclay 1678) Quakers continue to trust in the presence of this Spirit and remain open to new and immediate religious experience.

All of this makes the Quakers 'religious mystics', but mystics of a special sort. Albert Schweitzer complained that the 'ethical content' of mysticism in general was too slight, that mysticism brought people 'forward on the path of inwardness but not on the way of a living ethic'. (Schweitzer 1923) If this is so, then the Quakers are an exception to the rule, since for them the ethical and the inward are bound together. 'True Godliness don't turn men out of the world, but enables them to live better in it and excites their endeavours to mend it.' (Penn 1682) In this sense Quakers are unwavering idealists, but without ideology or fanaticism.

Quakerism arose in England in the middle of the 17th century and was carried to the North American colonies soon after that. Today the Society of Friends has about 17,000 members in the United Kingdom, about 100,000 in the United States and about 300,000 worldwide. In Germany, Quakerism existed only sporadically until the 20th century. After the First World War, however, German Quakers were able to form their own society, or Yearly Meeting, which today comprises some three to four hundred members.

Since the 17th century Quakers have been a clearly identified voice in the public life of Great Britain and the United States. At the time of its origin Quakerism was 'one of the most novel of all experiments in religious democracy [with a] cumulative effect upon the development of world democracy.' (Jones 1927) Through its religiously-grounded belief in human equality, freedom of conscience and toleration it has contributed to the rise of modern social democracy.



Advertisement with a request for funds for the German Relief Program of American Quakers

Compared with the great churches and other Christian communities, Quakers are so few in number that they can sometimes be viewed as a 'religious sect'. But this phrase can have a very negative meaning these days in places like Germany, and may mislead. For Quakers do not have the typical sect-like characteristics: they are without religious or ideological fundamentalism, have no fanatical desire to convert everyone, take an undoctrinaire approach, open to the world and ready to cooperate – in other words, they are outsiders without seeking to be on the outside; they are a small minority in Christianity, but not in the least 'sectarian'.

The beginnings

Quakerism arose from the passionate religious, social and political conflicts in 17th century England, which in 1649 led to the execution of Charles I, the fall of the monarchy and the disestablishment of the Church of England. The turmoil continued, and when the Commonwealth was set up numerous radical Protestant sects rebelled against the severe doctrinaire governance of the Puritans. This sectarian radicalism was rooted in a combination of motives – religious and social as well as political – which gave it its drive and a powerful appeal.

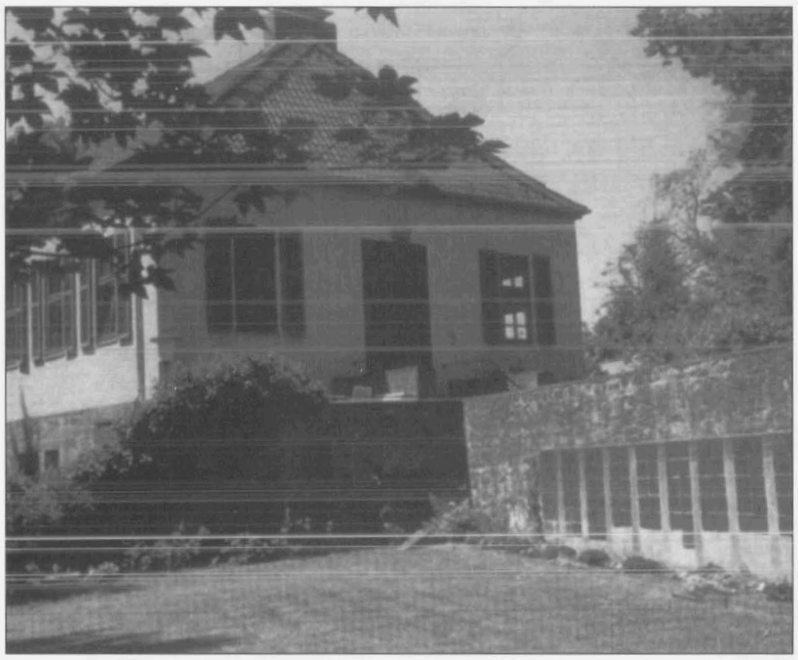
In these groups, the dissatisfaction with traditional ecclesiastical forms and institutions was as alive as the protest against social and political inequality. Among those seeking a 'pure' piety, free from all mediation between God and human beings and based on the immediate experience of God, were the founders of a new group which began to form around 1650 and in the beginning called itself 'Children of the Light' and 'Friends of the Truth'. It was a movement of religious as well as social protest: its first adherents came from the lower social strata and were farmworkers and crafts-

people, shoemakers, tailors, or weavers. Numbers of them had previously belonged to other sects and now, disillusioned spiritually, and often politically as well, turned to the 'Friends'.

In George Fox (1624-1691) the new movement found an inspiring leader of prophetic passion and charismatic conviction. The son of a Leicestershire weaver, Fox drew crowds by the force of his spirit and his eloquence. In his posthumously published journal he says at one point that, 'God, who made the world, did not dwell in temples made with hands ... but in people's hearts'. Through his own immediate experience of God, Fox felt himself called to turn people away 'from all their images and crosses ... their holy days (so-called) and all their vain traditions, which they had gotten up since the apostles' days'. (Fox 1694/1952) Fox became the founder of a community of believers who sought 'pure knowledge of God and Christ alone, without the aid of any man, book or writing'.

George Fox and the first Friends emphatically rejected the Puritan doctrine of predestination by grace, which distinguished between those 'elected' by God and those eternally damned. In this they were guided by the belief in the 'Inner Light' in every human being. This belief, fundamental to Quakerism, found its Biblical support in *John* 1, 7-9. Fox himself wrote that God through his invisible power had revealed to him that every human being was 'enlightened by the divine light of Christ'. This belief in the Divine Light in every person was the basis not only for the absolute religious equality of all, but also contained a liberating message. 'How alarming to the ruling classes must the theology of Quakers and others have seemed, who believed that something of the divine resided in every man. "Where all are equals, I expect little obedience to government", wrote a colonel about Quakers in 1657.' (Hill, 1968)

George Fox (1624-1691)



Quaker House in Bad Pyrmont with the burial ground plaques.

The first Friends would 'show honour' to God alone, and they expressed this religious-social egalitarianism in renouncing all titles, in using 'thou' toward every person regardless of social rank, and in refusing to remove their hats toward social superiors, as was the custom – unconventionality which swiftly caused public attention and outrage.

George Fox spread his message as an unflagging and powerfully effective wandering preacher in England and later in countless missionary journeys which took him to the West Indies, North America and Europe. He did not avoid provocation and confrontation and would not be intimidated by official ordinances or bans. He was arrested eight times and spent a total of six years of his life in English prisons.

When Fox was on trial in Derby in 1650 he warned the judge that people should 'tremble at the word of God': the judge thereupon called him and his followers 'Quakers' (Fox 1694/1952). The derisive nickname quickly spread, and Friends did not shy away from appropriating it for themselves. Their religious certainty in this early phase could take on qualities of exaltation. Among some Friends there was even the firm expectation that a general conversion to the 'new faith' was at hand which would bring about a religious upheaval with radical social and political consequences far beyond England.

As early as 1656 three women arrived as Quaker missionaries in North America, with the intention of preaching in the colonies of Maryland and Massachusetts. The severe Puritan authorities in Massachusetts had been forewarned from England about the cursed mob of heretics called Quakers, (Jones 1911; Barbour and Frost 1988) and after subjecting them to harsh physical treatment ordered them out of the colony. Soon afterwards the same authorities executed four Quakers who had attempted to proclaim their beliefs in public in spite of the laws prohibiting it. Among them was Mary Dyer, who today is commemorated by a statue in front of the Boston State House (with a copy also in Philadelphia). From the

Epistle from the Quaker elders at Balby, 1656, quoting St. Paul.

Dearly beloved Friends, these things we do not lay upon you as a rule or form to walk by, but that all, with the measure of light which is pure and holy, may be guided; and so in the light walking and abiding, these may be fulfilled in the Spirit, not from the letter, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.

beginning women played a significant role in the new religious movement. They enjoyed equal rights in most though not yet in all matters and were included in the ministry, in striking contrast to the other churches and sects of the time. This, too, was the consequence of the belief in the Inner Light in every person.

Persecution and steadfastness

Among the rigid Puritans in England the new movement aroused nothing but revulsion and hate. Quakers were mocked, reviled and mistreated, they were considered blasphemers of God and disturbers of the peace bent on fomenting conspiracies against the authorities. All the same, they did enjoy a degree of tolerance during the Puritan Commonwealth and above all from the Lord-Protector Oliver Cromwell.

With the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 and the resulting re-establishment of the Church of England, dissenters in general became subject to persecution. Quakers were among those singled out for particularly harsh treatment. They adamantly refused to recognize the Anglican creed or perform the loyalty oath to the Crown. (They refused all oaths on religious grounds.) In keeping with their religious witness they ignored the legal restrictions on their right to worship and to preach. The zeal of their faith was matched by the zeal of their persecutors. The number of Friends thrown into jail between 1661 and 1689 has been estimated at about 12,000, of which more than 300 died from inhuman treatment. Not until the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688 and the subsequent Toleration Act of 1689 did Quakers obtain legally-protected religious freedom. Civil and political equality, however, was still denied them.

The three decades from 1660 to 1689 were a time in which Friends' beliefs were tested and asserted through severe sacrifice. At the same time the Society of Friends came to see itself in a new light. The anticipated religious and social transformation had not happened. This disappointment, combined with pressures from outside and a spiritual deepening within the Society, caused Friends to give up immediate political expectations

from their belief in equality. They continued all the more firmly, however, in the promulgation of their radical religious beliefs even in the face of continuing persecution.

During these decades of persecution George Fox proved himself an organizer of exceptional capacity and vision. His enduring achievement was the integration of the Society of Friends, which from its beginnings attracted a diversity of religious and political convictions. Fox gave the Society an inner cohesion, with a high degree of discipline together with certain norms of conduct for its members, yet without an authoritarian structure. Local Quaker groups were to remain largely independent, while the 'Yearly Meeting' was to form the consultative and decision-making body at the regional and national level. With the addition of various gatherings for consideration of specific problems, this in its essentials has been the structure to which Friends adhere to this day.

In 1677 George Fox was in northern Germany, visiting several small Quaker groups which had already arisen in Emden, Hamburg and Friedrichstadt. Other English Friends came to Germany as missionaries in those years, among them William Penn, and Robert Barclay, author of the most significant theological account of Quaker beliefs, *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity as the same is held forth and preached by the People called, in scorn, Quakers* (1676 in Latin, 1678 in English). The German Quaker communities came under pressure from the prevailing religious and political intolerance, however, and were unable to continue.

In the New World

Around the end of the 17th century there were about 40,000 Quakers in England and nearly that number in the North American colonies. Repression in England had aroused in many Friends the desire to find a place of religious and political freedom on the other side of the Atlantic. Some of the colonies offered possibilities, among them Rhode Island, with its reputation for religious tolerance. Others were ruled out because of their Puritan governance. The best hope lay in the founding of a new colony, which came about through William Penn (1644-1718).

An admiral's son with an upper-class background and access to the education and public career which this afforded, young Penn had been drawn to Quakerism during its years of persecution. He was expelled from Oxford University for attending Friends' meetings for worship. Within a year of his joining the Society of Friends (1667) he experienced his first arrest.

During another imprisonment for publicly declaring his Quaker beliefs (1670-71), Penn wrote his treatise *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience*, a penetrating plea for freedom of religion. This was the great cause of his life, in an England riven by persecution and by accusations of heresy. Penn demanded liberty of conscience not only for his own Society but for all Christian persuasions, including Catholics.

One place where religious freedom, but also political self-determination were to be practised, was the colony founded by William Penn in 1681 and named 'Pennsylvania' in honour of his father. The foundation was made possible because the king owed a considerable sum of money to Admiral Penn, now deceased, and as payment the son requested the territory lying between New York and Maryland. The new commonwealth was planned as a refuge for Quakers from England and other European countries. It was to be open to settlers of all faiths, a colony in the spirit of Quakerism, but not a Quaker colony in an exclusive sense.

The first constitution for Pennsylvania, written by Penn himself, envisaged what for that time was an exceptional degree of democratic self-government and freedom of conscience. There was to be compulsory education for all. In place of prison there were to be workhouses. Prisoners were to be reformed rather than punished. In an age when petty criminals could still be executed, the death penalty was limited to high treason and murder. There were to be no military forces. Along with this liberal and humane order, there were laws which today seem excessively rigid. Not only

William Penn (1644-1718)

That Extraordinary & Worthy Character
WILLIAM PENN,
famous for being Founder *of the* Province *of* Pensylvania *in* North America, &c, 1681.

William Penn and the Indians. After a painting by Benjamin West, 1771.

were adultery and blasphemy outlawed, but also drunkenness, card playing and theatrical productions.

Immediately upon his arrival in Pennsylvania in 1682 Penn undertook negotiations with the Indians living in the area. They had been assured in advance by Penn of his peaceful intentions, and he did not approach as a member of a superior culture but instead declared his respect for them, and expressed his interest in their customs and practices. By means of treaties of friendship he laid the foundation for a peaceful coexistence of settlers and Indians in Pennsylvania which endured for decades.

The focal point of the colony was to be the city of Philadelphia, laid out by Penn himself. In 1684 there were already 2,500 inhabitants, and 4,500 by the turn of the century. Penn lived there at two different times, 1682-84 and 1699-1701. The developing colony did not fulfill all the expectations of its founder. He himself as legal owner had his financial and other differences with the settlers. The diversity of the settlement created larger problems than Penn had foreseen.

Penn died in England in 1718. In the colony tension increased between Quakers and non-Quakers and came to a climax in 1756, when Pennsylvania became involved in

the North American phase of the war between Britain and France. Quakers refused to pay the war tax demanded by the Crown because it conflicted with their testimony of nonviolence. This led them to withdraw from further responsibility for the governance of the colony.

Pennsylvania remained central to Quakerism in the independent United States. During the 18th century Philadelphia became the largest city in the British colonies, an economic and cultural metropolis which played a key role in the creation of the independent republic. To this day it is the city most closely associated with Quakerism – the 'City of Brotherly Love' – and the seat of the worldwide relief work and initiatives for peace of the American Friends Service Committee maintained by members of the Society of Friends. In its suburbs are located Haverford, Bryn Mawr and Swarthmore Colleges, highly regarded institutions founded by Quakers.

Philadelphia City Hall with its 11 metre tall statue of William Penn

On behalf of the human rights of slaves

Despite its difficulties, William Penn's 'Holy Experiment' was a noteworthy historical venture, a foray into unexplored political territory and a significant step on the way to modern democracy. Pennsylvania became the starting point for one of Quakerism's greatest humanitarian achievements, its struggle against slavery and the slave trade. It was a struggle which had to be carried out first of all within the Quakers' own membership. The original impetus came from a group of largely German Quakers. In 1683 some Quaker and Mennonite families from Krefeld and the region around Worms came to Pennsylvania, and found the religious liberty and freedom from military service they had been denied in the Germany of

sovereign absolutism. They joined with other German settlers to found Germantown, the first German settlement in North America (now a suburb of Philadelphia). In 1688 some of these settlers joined with other Quakers in issuing an urgent appeal to their co-religionists, in which they condemned the holding of slaves among Friends as unchristian. In 1671 George Fox had urged Quakers in Barbados to treat their slaves humanely and to free them eventually. The Germantown Declaration expressed the issue more forcefully. It belongs with the great documents of Quaker history, and of the history of social conscience. Success was not quick or easy, in fact the contrary: admonitions of this kind aroused displeasure and resistance among some Friends.

For some decades the balance was still in favour of slave ownership within the Society of Friends, but the moral pressure grew steadily in the course of the 18th century. In 1711, Pennsylvania prohibited the importation of slaves. In 1758, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting resolved that all members must free their slaves. Finally in 1776 all Friends in Pennsylvania who did not live up to this standard were disowned by the Society. Other Quaker groups in North America took similar steps. By the end of the century there were no Quaker slaveholders. Friends were far ahead of their time: in 1783, the year of American independence, the thirteen colonies contained no fewer than 600,000 slaves.

One of those who paved the way for the abolition of slavery among Quakers was John Woolman (1720-1772), who has been called 'the greatest Quaker of the 18th century and perhaps the most Christlike individual that Quakerism has ever produced'. (Drake 1950) A simple man of great sensitivity of conscience, with compassion for the sufferings of humans as well as animals, Woolman rode through the colonies for several years from one farm to another, attempting to convince Quaker slaveholders of the incompatibility of slavery with Christ's commandments and the spirit of Quakerism. He appealed to the Christian conscience of the individual, frequently with success, and (as the German Quaker writer Alphons Paquet remarked), 'solely by means of a reminder, person to person, that the Society originated from the Gospel'. (Paquet 1951)

London Yearly Meeting of Friends disowned all slaveholding members in 1761. For British Friends the slave trade operating through Liverpool became the focus for an intense struggle, which they conducted together with others. In 1783 they sent a petition against the slave trade to Parliament (from which Quakers were excluded until 1832

because they were not members of the Church of England). In 1787 they were among the founders of the 'Committee for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade'. There began an unprecedented public campaign, with a stream of petitions to the House of Commons, pamphlets, meetings and resolutions, a mobilising of public opinion which lent effective weight to the struggles conducted in Parliament by Thomas Clarkson and William Wilberforce. In 1807 the prohibition of the slave trade was achieved in Parliament. Quakers were once again a driving force in the further struggle against slaveholding in the British colonies (almost all in the West Indies), which came to a successful conclusion in 1838.

In the United States, Friends had freed their slaves, but there was no general abolition of slavery. Quakers therefore also became active in this cause. Lucretia Mott (1793-1880), active in many areas as a social reformer, a pioneer in women's rights, founded the 'Female Anti-Slavery Society'. The work of the Quaker poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892) was an eloquent contribution to this prolonged struggle for liberation. Quakers were assisting slaves from the southern states who had escaped their masters and were trying to reach Canada. This was the legendary 'Underground Railroad': the slaves were guided from one 'station' to the next until they had reached secure freedom beyond the border. As the words 'Quaker' and 'Abolitionist' had been synonymous for generations in England, now 'Quaker' became synonymous with 'Underground Agent' in the United States. For example, Levi Coffin in Indiana helped 3,000 escaped slaves to freedom by the Underground Railroad, and his efforts earned him the honorary title 'President of the Road'.

Johann Gottfried Herder

The Quakers, which this letter refers to, bring to mind, from Penn on, a number of the most praiseworthy men who have done more for our species than a thousand heroes and pompous, starry-eyed idealists. The most practical efforts toward the abolition of the shameful slave trade and slavery are their work... A history of the abolition of slavery and the slave trade in every part of the world will some day be a beautiful monument in the very forecourt of the temple of humanity, the erection of which we can look forward to in time to come; a number of Quaker names will appear there, shining in silent glory. In this century it seems to me to be our primary duty to banish the spirit of frivolity, which degrades everything good and great. This the Quakers have done.

Letters toward the Promotion of the Ideal of Humanity, Letter 115

Affluence and humanitarian involvement

In England, Quakers had enjoyed religious toleration since 1689, yet they were still excluded from civil and political equality. Their religious beliefs precluded access to public office as well as to Oxford and Cambridge Universities. In this environment there was now created the stereotype of the Quaker as an outsider, eccentric but known for benevolence, good works and good will. The 'typical' Quaker wore an identifiable, uniformly simple dress, with the Quaker hat; abstained from 'frivolous pursuits' like theatrical shows, hunting, gambling; and led a modest way of life anchored in the family. Tradition and convention came to play a larger role in a Quakerism far removed from the religious intensity of the 17th century.

Quakers and Quakeresses in the 17th century. An engraving after a painting by Egbert van Heemskerck, 1698

In the economic life of early capitalism in the 18th century, however, English Friends found a terrain in which they could move freely, and where some of them moved with conspicuous success. If the first Quakers of the 17th century had come largely from the lower levels of society, now there arose in Great Britain, as in North America, a Quaker middle class with some considerable affluence and growing bourgeois respectability. At the same time George Fox's strict advices governing Friends' conduct in business affairs were heeded. Quakers earned a reputation as honest and reliable business people, not least, for example, through their practice of fixed pricing, unusual at the time. Quite a few proved to be innovative entrepreneurs and founded firms which became known far beyond England: banks such as Barclay's and Lloyd's, the chocolate made by Cadbury and Rowntree, and Clark's shoes. The economically-successful Quaker families combined their newly-won bourgeois self-confidence with a strong sense of social responsibility toward their employees. They themselves held firmly to a relatively simple conduct of life, did not flaunt their wealth, renounced luxury and turned over a considerable portion of their fortunes to philanthropic enterprises.

From the Quaker belief in the 'Inner Light in everyone' it followed that

no one is lost or damned forever and that those in pain or distress deserve help and support simply by virtue of being a part of humanity. Quakers have again and again addressed themselves to the needs of the marginal segments of society, to those 'who labour and are heavy laden', to the 'lowly and despised'.

From the early days of their own Society, the Quakers knew what imprisonment meant, and they knew the dreadful conditions of English prisons. Prison reform became one of their earliest social concerns. William Penn established workhouses in place of prisons. Elizabeth Fry (1780-1845), from an affluent Quaker family and married to a banker, became known as the 'Angel of Newgate'. When in 1813 she visited London's notorious Newgate Prison for the first time, she was so appalled at the conditions there that she devoted herself tirelessly to the women of this hell on earth. She also cared for women released from prison, set up soup kitchens for the poor, and initiated humane improvements in penitentiaries which were influential in improving conditions beyond England.

The Quakers' struggle against the death penalty had already begun with George Fox. Penn in his constitution broke with its widespread application in England. Friends have never ceased in their demand for the abolition of the death penalty and in their support of initiatives toward this end.

Space prevents more than a few highlights of the Quakers' contribution to changes in educational thinking and practice. George Fox was already emphasizing the importance of elementary education, and in England the first schools for Quaker children were founded as early as 1668. William Penn included in his constitution compulsory education for anyone up to the age of twelve, to be followed by vocational training. In 1779, English Friends founded the first large boarding school for both boys and girls at Ackworth in Yorkshire. A similar school was founded in Portsmouth, Rhode Island, in 1784. The Quaker Joseph Lancaster became a pioneer in English education as the initiator of a new kind of experimental school. In 1801 he opened a school for children of the lower social classes in London. Lacking the funds to employ enough teachers, he had the older pupils instruct the younger ones. The adult education movement in Great Britain and the United States has been influenced by Quakers in significant ways since the end of the 18th century.

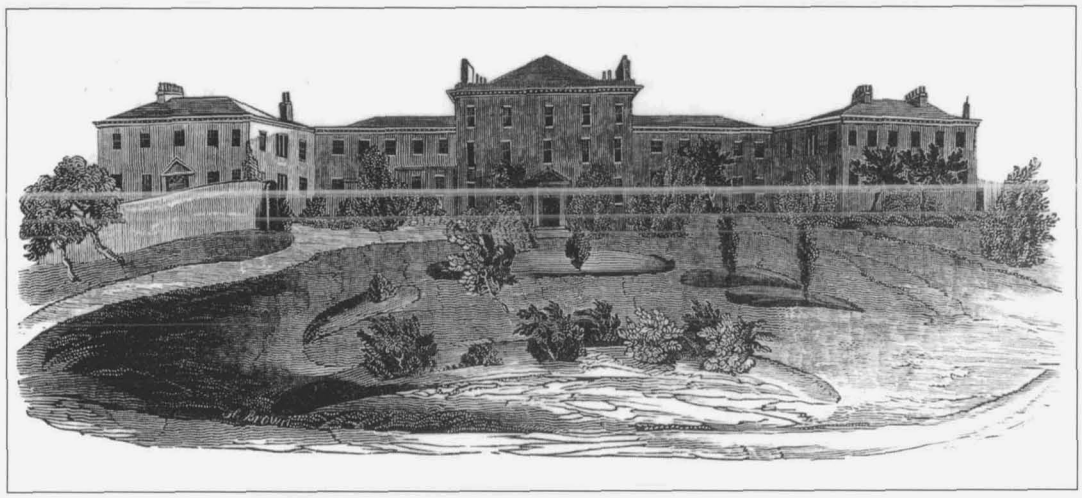
A list of all the humanitarian initiatives of Friends in the 18th and 19th centuries would go far beyond these few references. One further

pioneering deed must not go unmentioned: with the opening in 1796 of the hospital 'The Retreat', which exists to this day in York, the English Quakers created the first institution in which the mentally ill were treated in an humane fashion.

The Peace Testimony

Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975), the eminent English historian, reported in a memoir: 'When I was a child, the institution of war, which by then had been in existence for perhaps about five thousand years, was still taken for granted by most people in the world as a normal and acceptable fact of life. One small religious community, the Society of Friends, was at this time singular in condemning war as immoral and consequently refusing to have any part or lot in warmaking.' (Toynbee 1970) Since the 17th century the best known Quaker characteristic next to humanitarian work has been the unconditional 'No' to war, with the personal consequences of refusing military service. This position is not motivated by political, pragmatic or humanistic considerations: it is a religious testimony. In 1650 George Fox was approached in prison by a recruiting officer who offered him his freedom and an officer's commission in the Commonwealth army. In his journal Fox writes that he refused this offer with the reply: 'I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion for all wars ... I told them I was come into the covenant of peace which was before wars and strife were'. Following this unambiguous refusal to the offer of the recruiters, the twenty-six year old spent another six months in prison – 'amongst thirty felons in a lousy, stinking low place in the ground without any bed'. (Fox 1694/1952)

The first Friends were by no means uniformly religious pacifists, and their sense of mission was not without its aggressive militancy. It



The Retreat, York

> Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace, and ensue it, and to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all. All bloody principles and practices we do utterly deny, with all outward wars, and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world. That spirit of Christ by which we are guided is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any many with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world.
>
> A declaration from the people called Quakers *presented to the king (Charles II), 1660*

took time for the renunciation of bearing arms to become a fundamental testimony. This development was hastened by the political situation following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660. The Quakers found themselves suspected of involvement in a conspiracy against the Crown, and four thousand Quakers were immediately arrested. Under these circumstances Fox and several other Quakers considered it necessary to issue a statement by 'the harmless and innocent people of God, called Quakers' in order to refute such accusations once and for all. This was published in January 1661 ('new style' – January 1660 'old style', as the new year until 1752 began in March). It amounted to a declaration of loyalty to the king which was intended to allay all doubts concerning the peaceful intent of the Quakers. (Fox et al. 1660)

This declaration became famous as the 'Peace Testimony' of the Quakers, and was more than an act of political opportunism and survival strategy. With its emphatic commitment, grounded in Christianity, to an unconditional rejection of all forms of war, and to participation in any kind of war including civil wars, the Society of Friends took the formal first step on the distinct historical path which it has pursued to this day. A decade and a half later Robert Barclay reaffirmed this decision in his *Apology*, the most significant theological work of Quakerism: he quotes *Isaiah*, saying that God had commanded his people, 'to beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles and henceforth not to learn outward and carnal wars any more'. (Barclay 1678) The 'Peace Testimony' of 1660/1 continued beyond the original cause of its writing and became the fundamental statement of the Quaker

> As Christians we cannot accept two kinds of morality: one for the dealings between individuals, the other for the dealings between nations. The morality which Christianity requires [of human beings in their relations with each other] is no less binding when these same individuals are called on to act in the name and in the interests of their country.
>
> *London Yearly Meeting 1885*

commitment to nonviolence. The practical consequences for the individual were, and continue to be, a rejection of military service on grounds of conscience, and a willingness to endure discrimination and persecution for the sake of religious testimony. In fact, refusal of military service is not prescribed or demanded of members; it remains a matter of individual conscience. The First World War was an especially difficult test for the pacifism of British and American Friends. The Society of Friends condemned this war, although when national conscription was introduced in both countries, a number of young Quakers obeyed the call to arms. Those who refused took a difficult path. In an atmosphere of hatred stirred up by patriotic passions they were exposed to extreme hostility. In England most of the Quakers who offered to perform unarmed alternative service were exempted from military duty. A minority, however, refused alternative service because they considered it part of the war effort. These so-called 'absolutists' faced prison and forced labor. Among them was Corder Catchpool (1883-1952), who subsequently spent years in humanitarian work in Germany. He was arrested in January 1917 and imprisoned until April 1919, under harsh conditions which severely affected his health. (Catchpool 1941; Hughes 1956) Over 270 members and regular attenders of Friends Meetings for Worship took the same stand.

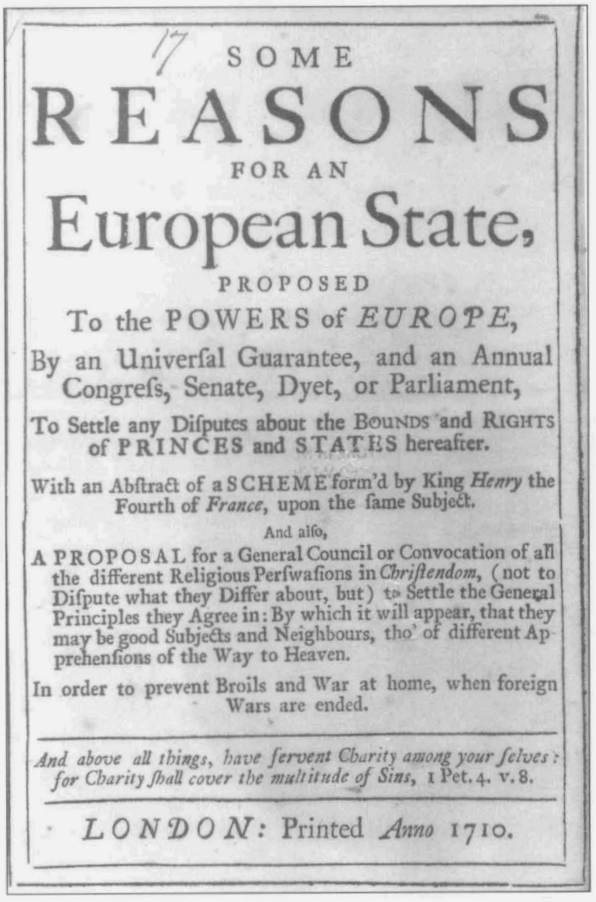
The Quakers have not simply said no to war: the longer they have taken this stand, the more strongly they have combined it with working for peace in the future. This kind of peace witness found its first published form in William Penn's *Essay Towards the present and future Peace of Europe by the Establishment of a European Dyet, Parliament or Estate*, published in 1693. With a unique blend of political realism and creative political imagination, Penn sought to offer Europe a way out of the endless succession of wars which were tearing it apart. To this end he proposed the creation of a European parliament, an agreement of the nations to a considerable reduction in arms, and the settlement of international conflicts by negotiation.

In 1710 there appeared anonymously a treatise, *Some Reasons for a*

European State, by another English Friend, John Bellers (1654-1724). Bellers was an author of exceptional versatility and foresight in economic, social and political matters (much admired by Karl Marx). His project of a European state is remarkable for the fact that in the face of prevailing prejudice he included the hated Russians and Turks in his European union. He stated:

> the Muscovites are Christians and the Mahometans Men, and have the same faculties, and reason as other Men, they only want the same Opportunities, and Applications of their Understandings, to be the same Men: but to beat their Brains out, to put sense into them, is a great Mistake, and would leave Europe, too much in a state of War; whereas, the farther this civil Union is Possible to be Extended, the greater will be the Peace on Earth, and good will among Men. (Bellers 1710/1987)

From the beginning of the 19th century there was a growing realisation by Quakers, among others, that 'peace on earth' cannot come from governments alone, but that the work for peace had to take other forms. English and American Friends played a key role in the founding of the first 'peace societies' in their respective countries, and in the first international peace congresses. The introduction of the concept of arbitration in international disputes, of arms reduction agreements, as well as the creation of an international court of law for the peaceful settlement of conflict – these were important concepts publicly advocated by Quakers and non-Quakers alike. Richard Cobden, the passionate advocate of free trade and of a pragmatically argued 'pacifist' British foreign policy, though no Quaker himself, wrote in 1853: 'The soul of the peace movement is the Quaker stand against all wars.



SOME

REASONS

FOR AN

European State,

PROPOSED

To the POWERS of *EUROPE*,

By an Univerſal Guarantee, and an Annual Congreſs, Senate, Dyet, or Parliament,

To Settle any Diſputes about the BOUNDS and RIGHTS of PRINCES and STATES hereafter.

With an Abſtract of a SCHEME form'd by King *Henry* the Fourth of *France*, upon the ſame Subject.

And alſo,

A PROPOSAL for a General Council or Convocation of all the different Religious Perſwaſions in *Chriſtendom*, (not to Diſpute what they Differ about, but) to Settle the General Principles they Agree in: By which it will appear, that they may be good Subjects and Neighbours, tho' of different Apprehenſions of the Way to Heaven.

In order to prevent Broils and War at home, when foreign Wars are ended.

And above all things, have fervent Charity among your ſelves: for Charity ſhall cover the multitude of Sins, 1 Pet. 4. v. 8.

LONDON: Printed *Anno* 1710.

Title page of John Bellers' book

Without the stubborn zeal of the Friends there would be no peace societies and no peace conferences'. (Cobden 1853) Together with Cobden, John Bright (1811-1889), the most important Quaker politician of the 19th century, spoke out forcefully in Parliament, as well as in other public forums against the government's policy which led Britain into the Crimean War.

Through the rapid development of weapons systems modern war became increasingly destructive and involved civilians. Tied to this was the ideological mobilisation of nations. All of this made work for peace even more urgent. It demanded taking issue with the hate campaigns of nationalists, imperialists and racists. An example of this was the experience of British Quakers during the Boer War (1899-1902). This war had fostered a spirit of extreme nationalism. Friends along with others condemned the war and were reviled as traitors to their country. Thereupon the Quaker chocolate manufacturer George Cadbury acquired the *Daily News* and made that newspaper into an organ of protest against war and blind patriotism. In the years before the First World War Quakers supported various efforts toward understanding among European nations, and they pressed for disarmament agreements. In 1913 the London Yearly Meeting issued an urgent warning against the fateful consequences of the European arms race, and as the European catastrophe of the First World War strengthened Friends' resolve to work for a lasting peace, they joined with other religious and political groups who espoused this cause.

Albert Schweitzer 1923

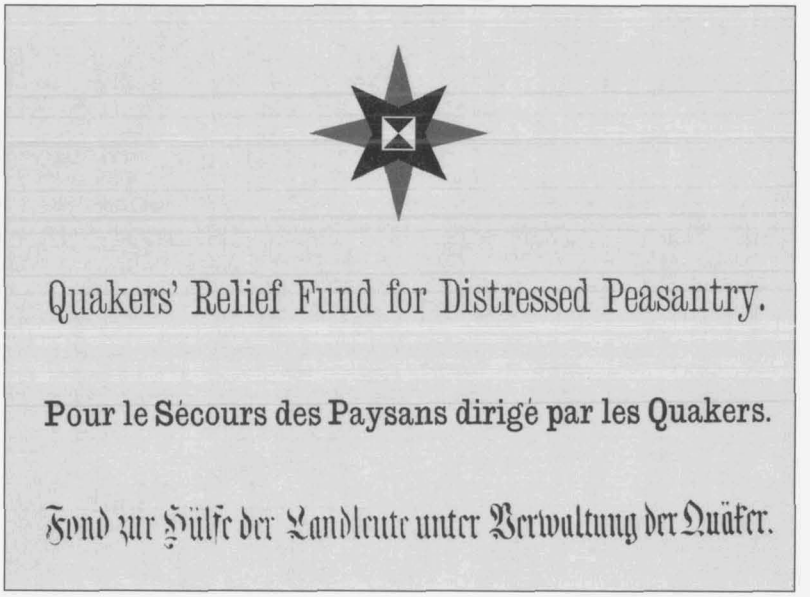
It fell to the church to call men to their senses away from the struggle of nationalistic passions, and to keep their minds focused on the highest ideals. However, the church was unable to achieve this; indeed it did not even make a serious effort to do so. Too much caught up in the demands of history and organization and too little a religious community moved by the Spirit, the church fell victim to the spirit of the times and confused the dogmas of nationalism and realism with religion. One miniature communion alone, the Religious Society of Friends, has taken it upon itself to uphold the absolute validity of reverence for life as it is expressed in the religion of Jesus.

Albert Schweitzer:
Kultur und Ethik, *1923*

In a declaration by the London 'Meeting for Sufferings' in 1919, one year after the end of the war, it was stated: 'This Light of Christ in the heart of every man is the ground of our hope, the basis of our faith in the spiritual unity of all races and

nations ... The profound need of our time is to realize the everlasting truth of the common Fatherhood of God – the Spirit of Love – and the oneness of the human race.' (Society of Friends 1919)

Quaker star first used for Quaker relief work in France 1870/71



II Germany 1920-1950

Help for the vanquished

From the middle of the 19th century Friends increasingly provided aid to the victims of war. These efforts took on an organized form for the first time in the creation of the 'Friends War Victims Relief Committee' in London in October 1870, several months after the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War. They were soon able to raise considerable funds from public contributions and dispatched 40 relief workers, both men and women, to Paris, the region around Metz and the Loire Valley. They distributed clothing, food, bedding, seeds and agricultural implements to the refugees from the war zones of eastern France. The badge of these workers was the red and black eight-pointed star which, since the First World War, has become the worldwide symbol of Quaker relief work.

The First World War was the starting point for new forms of Quaker relief. Immediately following the outbreak of hostilities the Friends War Victims Relief Committee was re-established, and as early as autumn 1914 started its relief work in the war zones of France. In addition the committee provided material and moral support to Germans who had been interned in England at the beginning of the war, an activity which in the climate of nationalistic war hysteria was far from popular.

In April 1917 American Quakers

Quäkerspeisung, in Germany during the 1920s.

founded an organization which took the name American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). It offered Quakers as well as non-Quakers an alternative to military service. In the summer of 1917 the first AFSC workers went to France to help in the repair of war damage. Ultimately several thousand Americans took part in the 'Civilian Service' in France, among them 600 Quakers. Six American Quaker women went to Russia in the summer of 1917 to take up work there.

The end of the war did not mean an end of this work. It continued, mainly in France, Poland, Serbia and Russia immediately following the armistice. Defeated Germany was at first excluded, not at the wishes of the British and American Friends, but at the insistence of the Allied governments. At the beginning of 1919, when British Friends received permission to send milk powder and infant clothing for delivery clinics and children's hospitals of the former enemy, they came up against domestic resistance at home, including 'bureaucratic difficulties'. At first they were forced to keep their work secret. They were forbidden to make public appeals or to publish accounts in the papers. When they finally did publish circulars, they were dubbed 'Hun lovers'.

The blockade imposed on Germany until the signing of the Versailles peace treaty and maintained by the victorious powers until June 1919, together with other factors, brought about alarming conditions which demanded relief for humanitarian as well as political reasons. In the days immediately following the treaty signing, British and American Friends arrived in Berlin to inform themselves about conditions and to make preparations for relief work. Herbert Hoover, who later became US president, was a Quaker and was appointed Secretary General of the American relief program in Europe. In November, 1919, he asked the American Friends Service Committee to take on the organization of relief work in Germany. This involved primarily the feeding of children, 3,000,000 of whom were already being fed in other European countries.

February 26th, 1920, marked the beginning of the first Quäkerspeisung, the child-feeding program which became legendary in Germany and which is still remembered today. It was a masterful organizational achievement, made possible by a small team of British and American Friends working together with some 40,000 German helpers. The principal recipients were under-weight and undernourished children aged six to fourteen. Subsequently two- to six-year-olds as well as pregnant and nursing mothers were included. The additional hot meals they received consisted of either half or three quarters of a litre of cocoa, rice with milk, and soup of peas or beans with a piece of white bread or biscuit.

The ingredients for this feeding program were bought mostly in the United States. The 'European Children's Fund' assumed shipping and insurance costs. The transport costs were borne by the German Government, which from October 1920 also paid for flour and sugar supplies. The Quakers carried the costs of personnel and overall organization. The relief program was supported by contributions from Americans from all walks of life, much of it by German-Americans.

American and British Quakers divided the work between them. From the summer of 1920, up to 30,000 children were fed by a British-run programme in Cologne, and the British Quakers also organized meals for almost all the universities and technical high schools in Germany, benefiting students and academic staff.

The first American feeding program ran for about six months, until July 1920. During the second program from August 1921 to July 1922, about 500,000 German children were fed daily. Quaker relief in Germany also included the distribution of food packages, clothing, medicines and other kinds of medical supplies. After a German Central Committee for Foreign Aid had taken on responsibility for the feeding in August 1922, the Quakers continued to supplement this work. About 1,000,000 children were involved. In October 1924, the Friends ended their aid program in Germany, now that conditions in the country had improved.

Germany's Central Committee for Foreign Aid stated in its official report on the child feeding operation from March 1920 to April 1925: 'It is calculated that at least a quarter of all German children born between 1909 and 1919 have been fed for a minimum of half a year'. The President of the Republic, Friedrich Ebert, in an address on 17 June 1924, thanked the Quakers for their help, saying that the feeding of children had been incorporated as

Albert Einstein 1920

In these difficult years, which have brought so much disappointment to the friends of human dignity and justice, for me the finest consolation is in thinking of the blessed and wide-ranging effectiveness of the English and American Quakers ... No other phenomenon in public life is so qualified to recover mutual trust among peoples of the world, and more should be done to make people fully aware of the Quakers' beneficent work.

an essential part of German social welfare work.

The impressive statistics tell much about the scope of this aid, but not everything. What the Quäkerspeisung and other relief measures meant to Germans can only be measured against the desolate material and spiritual situation of Germany during the first post-war years. Millions of German children were saved from the permanent physical damage caused by hunger and illness, and the same applies to thousands of German mothers. No less significant, however, was the psychological effect of Quaker relief in a country isolated from the outside world, morally stigmatised and politically humiliated. American and British Quakers came not as victors among the vanquished but as Christians to those in need. They understood this relief as work of reconciliation. An American Quaker woman who volunteered for this work wrote that Friends had to perform 'an important service in spiritual healing and reconstruction' in Germany. Spiritual healing was in fact as necessary as the healing of bodies. The English Quaker Elizabeth Fox Howard first came to Germany in 1920, and was a prominent Quaker figure there in the turbulent decades that followed. She reports: 'Alongside the purely relief work we were always trying to carry a quiet and unostentatious message of friendship and reconciliation.' (Howard 1941) Many moving expressions of gratitude testify to the good brought about by this attitude of the 'quiet helpers'. A German teacher wrote: 'You can hardly imagine what all this meant to us. For years we were cut off from everything, for years we heard of nothing but fighting and hatred. Now suddenly you come to us and show us that beyond the world of conflict the real world still exists, the world of brotherhood'. British and American Friends in Germany carried out what Albert Einstein called these 'works of beneficence' because following the First World War Germany's need was greatest. At the same time, and following the close of the relief work in Germany, they continued work in countless other countries.

The humanitarian work of the Quakers in Germany had conse-

quences for the Society of Friends itself. In Germany Quakers were virtually unknown or were thought of in connection with British or American culture. The entry under the word 'Quaker' in the 1899 edition of Meyer's Dictionary read: 'In Germany only to be found in the Pyrmont area, respected for their industry and domestic virtues'. Now, following the First World War, Quakers and the spirit of Quakerism became familiar to Germans. This undogmatic and at the same time practical Christianity of the Friends drew adherents from those who were disillusioned by their churches. The number of Quakers grew, and this led in 1925 to the formation of an independent German Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends.

1933: Quakers – 'a ray of hope'

The National Socialist takeover in Germany on 30 January 1933 was immediately followed by the persecution of Communists, Social Democrats, pacifists and Jews, and by open terrorism after the March elections. The International Quaker Center in Berlin soon came to feel the effects of these measures. Its British representative was Corder Catchpool, who since the 1920s had dedicated himself to work for international reconciliation, above all in Germany. As early as 13 March, he reported that the Berlin office had become a refuge of hunted men and fearful women. He expected a 'visit' from the police at any moment. When Jewish stores were boycotted on 1 April he and his wife Gwen entered several of these shops to show their solidarity with the owners. Two days later the Gestapo appeared and accused him

The title page of practical guidance laid down for those dispensing Quäkerspeisung, 1922

DEUTSCHER
ZENTRALAUSSCHUSS FÜR DIE AUSLANDSHILFE E. V.
(AUSSCHUSS FÜR KINDERSPEISUNG.)

Beauftragter des American Friends Service Committee (Kinderhilfsmission der religiösen Gesellschaft der „Freunde" [Quäker] von Amerika) und des Reichsministers für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft für die Durchführung der Kinderspeisung in Deutschland.

Vorsitzender: Geh. Reg.-Rat Dr. Bose (Reichsministerium für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft).

Geschäftsstelle: BERLIN NW., Dorotheenstraße 2, I Tr.

Richtlinien

für die sachliche Durchführung der Kinderspeisung in Deutschland.

Genehmigt in der Ausschuß-Sitzung vom 13. März 1922.

I. Verteilung der ausländischen und vom Reichsminister für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft zur Verfügung gestellten Lebensmittel.

1. Die Aufstellung des Hauptverteilungsschlüssels (Zuteilung der Portionenzahl auf die Mittelstellen) erfolgt gemäß Ziffer II. 1) b) 1. der Richtlinien für die Organisation der Kinderspeisung in Deutschland (Organisationsrichtlinien) durch den D. Z. A., A. K. Zugrunde gelegt wird dabei das dem D. Z. A. von der Kinderhilfsmission der Religiösen Gesellschaft der „Freunde" (Quäker) von Amerika und dem Reichsminister für Ernährung und Landwirtschaft überlassene und das zum Zwecke der gleichmäßigen Verteilung der Auslandsliebesgaben über die in Deutschland vorhandenen Notstände von dem D. Z. A. gesammelte Material mit der Maßgabe, daß die zur Verfügung stehenden Mittel nach der bis jetzt festgestellten Zahl der in den Gebieten vorhandenen, in ihrer Ernährung geschädigten und gefährdeten Kinder auf die Mittelstellen verteilt werden (vergl. III.).
2. Bei der Aufstellung des Unterverteilungsschlüssels (Verteilung der den Bezirken zugewiesenen Lebensmittelmengen vergl. II. 2. b) 3. der Organisationsrichtlinien) sind die Verwaltungsausschüsse der Mittelstellen innerhalb der folgenden allgemeinen Grundsätze nicht beschränkt.

Ueber die gesonderte Belieferung von Anstalten und Heimen vergl. V. 4.

II. Zu erfassende Bevölkerungsgruppen (Altersgruppen).

1. In erster Linie kommt wie bisher die Speisung von Schulkindern in Betracht.
2. Kleinkinder sind in der Regel an den Speisungen nur soweit zu beteiligen, als sie bereits in Kindergärten (Tagesheime aller Art für Kleinkinder) gesammelt sind (vergl. das V. 2. a) Gesagte.
3. Die Speisung von Jugendlichen hat sich grundsätzlich auf erwerbsunfähige, in ihrer Erwerbsfähigkeit beschränkte oder noch nicht vollerwerbstätige zu beschränken. Es wird davon ausgegangen, daß für Vollerwerbstätige von den Arbeitgebern die notwendigen Einrichtungen getroffen werden.
4. Bei hoffenden und stillenden Müttern ist ein Abweichen von der Form der Massenspeisung und die Verabreichung unverarbeiteter Lebensmittel ausnahmsweise gestattet, falls der Ernährungsnot dieser Bevölkerungsgruppe nicht aus anderen Mitteln gesteuert werden kann und geeignete Fürsorgeorgane eine entprechende Kontrolle gewährleisten.

Dem Ermessen der Speisungsorte (Ortsausschüsse) bleibt es überlassen, im Rahmen dieser Richtlinien die verhältnismässige Beteiligung der vorstehend genannten Gruppen an der Speisung zu bestimmen.

III. Auswahl der zu speisenden Personen.

1. Für die Auswahl von Kindern, Jugendlichen und Müttern (in der durch die zugewiesenen Lebensmittelmenge begrenzten Zahl) zur Teilnahme an der täglichen Speisung

> So much love, so much goodness, so much practical Christianity is set free if one, out of love of Christ, refuses one's energies to war's work of destruction and puts them instead in the service of life.
>
> *Dominican Father Franziskus-Maria Stratmann 1924*

of being 'a Communist, a Quaker, a leader of this sect, a pacifist and a member of the peace movement' and interrogated him. (Hughes 1956) After thirty-six hours with the Gestapo he was released on condition that he would not leave Berlin. This was not to be his only acquaintance with the Gestapo.

In April 1933, Gilbert L. MacMaster, an American who had been active for the American Friends Service Committee in Berlin, reported his impressions of a trip through Germany in a letter to the AFSC in Philadelphia. The main topic of conversations there was the situation of the Jews. What was being done to them was a 'very cruel business'. By this he did not mean the boycott. The cruelty was that 'hundreds of thousands of their race suddenly overnight are no longer a part of the German people'. He also reported that there was no longer an effective political opposition in Germany. The British and American Quaker relief organisations placed a high value on reliable information about the situation in the country under Hitler in order to know where help was needed and how it could be delivered. Accordingly, Friends came repeatedly to Germany from England as well as America, providing extraordinarily revealing and, in retrospect, historically useful reports.

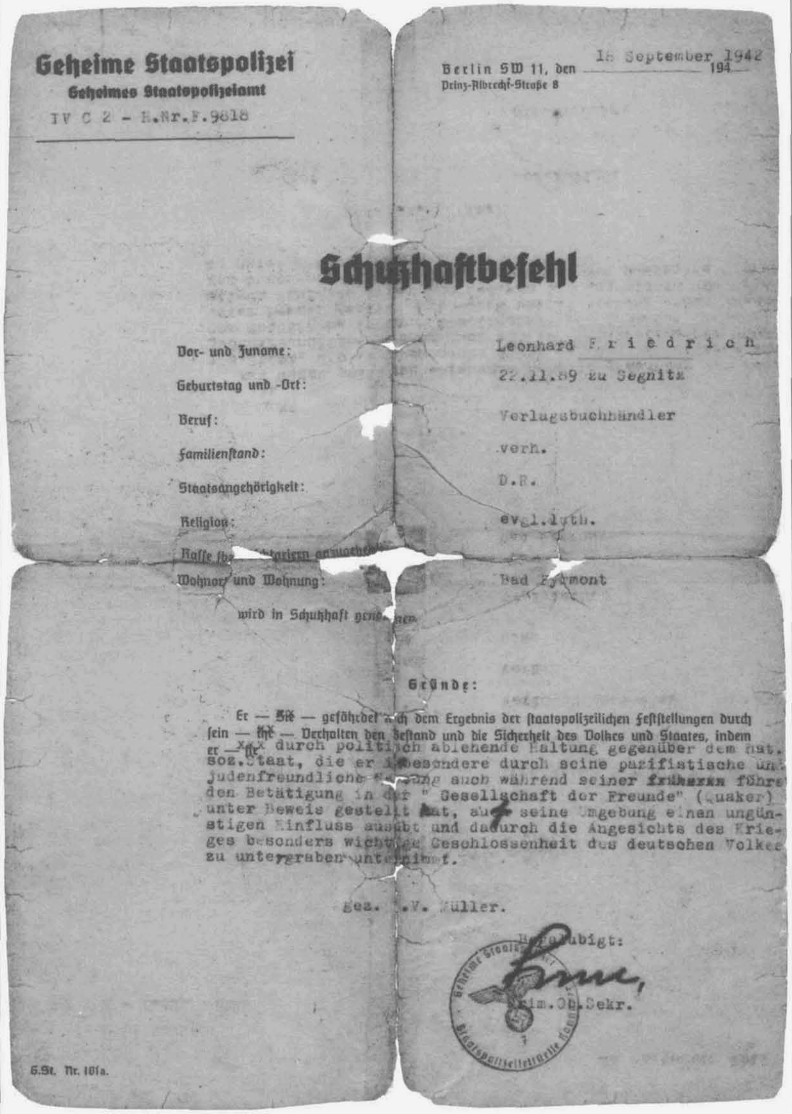
The waiting room of the International Quaker Centre in Berlin, Prinz-Louis-Ferdinand Strasse 5, in 1930

German Quakers found themselves put to a difficult test by the political events of 1933. Many of them belonged to the International Fellowship of Reconciliation and other peace organizations, some were members of the Social Democratic Party or other democratic parties. As pacifists as well as Social Democrats they were now endangered. A number lost their jobs, and underwent house searches and imprisonment. The Religious Society of Friends was no political organisation, however, but a religious community, and while the ideology and terrorism of the Third Reich

could not be reconciled with Quakerism, Quakers could not consider themselves a political opposition. On the other hand, the ideology and terror tactics of the new regime were a moral challenge for Friends. Their willingness to help all those facing distress and harassment was demanded now more than ever, even at personal risk.

It was an individual decision how to witness nonviolently under these circumstances. Some German Quakers led very withdrawn lives in the following years. Others, often at personal risk, cared for persons facing persecution, offered protection to Jews, hid Jewish and half-Jewish children, sought emigration possibilities and as quiet helpers demonstrated in various ways their human solidarity with victims of the regime. Eighty-six German Quakers have been identified who 'suffered in prison or in concentration camps, were persecuted or interrogated or forbidden to practice their professions' between 1933 and 1945. (Society of Friends, Germany, 1992)

Leonhard Friedrich (1889-1979) was destined for an exceptional role. He had been one of the founding members of the German Yearly Meeting in 1925 and later ran the Quaker publishing house in Nuremberg. From 1934, with his English wife, he administered the Quaker House in Bad Pyrmont. Both repeatedly aided Jews and


Geheime Staatspolizei
Geheimes Staatspolizeiamt
IV C 2 - H.Nr.F.9818

Berlin SW 11, den 15 September 1942
Prinz-Albrecht-Straße 8

Schutzhaftbefehl

Vor- und Zuname: Leonhard Friedrich
Geburtstag und -Ort: 27.11.89 zu Segnitz
Beruf: Verlagsbuchhändler
Familienstand: verh.
Staatsangehörigkeit: D.R.
Religion: evgl.luth.
Wohnort und Wohnung: Bad Pyrmont

wird in Schutzhaft genommen.

Gründe:

Er — Sie — gefährdet nach dem Ergebnis der staatspolizeilichen Feststellungen durch sein — ihr — Verhalten den Bestand und die Sicherheit des Volkes und Staates, indem er — sie — durch politisch ablehnende Haltung gegenüber dem nat. soz. Staat, die er insbesondere durch seine pazifistische und judenfreundliche Haltung auch während seiner früheren führenden Betätigung in der " Gesellschaft der Freunde" (Quaker) unter Beweis gestellt hat, auf seine Umgebung einen ungünstigen Einfluss ausübt und dadurch die angesichts des Krieges besonders wichtige Geschlossenheit des deutschen Volkes zu untergraben unternimmt.

gez. I.V. Müller.

Beglaubigt:

Krim.Ob.Sekr.

G.St. Nr. 10Ia.

Translation of the indictment (Haftbefehl der Geheimen Staatspolizei Berlin vom 15 September 1942-7) for Leonhard Friedrich, Bad Pyrmont

According to the findings of the 'Gestapo' (Staatspolizei) his conduct endangers the existence and security of the people and the state. This is occasioned by his politically negative attitude to the National Socialist state, evidenced by his pacifist and pro-Jewish attitudes, particularly in the context of his prominent role in the Society of Friends (Quakers). He exercises an undesirable influence on the neighbourhood and those around him and thereby undermines the unity of the German people which is of special importance in time of war.

other victims of persecution. At the end of May 1942, Friedrich was arrested by the Gestapo. In the arrest warrant it was stated that 'the existence and security of the people and the state' were threatened by his pacifist views and his friendliness toward Jews, attitudes which he had exhibited in his 'leading role in the Society of Friends (Quakers)'. (Bailey 1994) Friedrich was put in Buchenwald concentration camp until the end of the war, a period of two and a half years.

Harold Poelchau was a Protestant chaplain in various prisons around Berlin, such as Tegel and Plötzensee, and stood by countless political prisoners in the last hours before their executions. He remembers the friendship of Quakers with gratitude as a great help to him and his wife, 'particularly in the years 1933 and 1934, when humane traditions were falling apart. They held unswervingly to their belief in the Inner Light in everyone, didn't despair of the human capacity to respond to it, even among those who stood for the use of force, and thus managed to alleviate much suffering, even in the concentration camps. They held their Meetings for Sufferings and made it a principle to care for persecuted Jews, whereas among the members and ministers of my own Lutheran Church that was only done by individuals; and the officially sanctioned Lutheran Church went so far as to approve a church rule precluding anyone of Jewish descent from becoming a pastor. The theologian Emil Fuchs, a spiritual leader among the Quakers at this time, meant a great deal to us. Despite the imprisonment and death of his children, as well as his own arrest, he maintained an unshakable calmness of spirit. In Quaker meetings for worship he recalled for us the inward quiet of George Fox and John Woolman and helped us to face this time with the right spirit.' (Poelchau 1963)

Emil Fuchs (1874-1971) was a Protestant theologian, a college teacher, and since the 1920s, one of the leading religious Socialists in Germany. He felt close to the Friends and had become a member of the German Yearly Meeting in 1933. As a Social Democrat and a pacifist he had lost his professorship at the Pedagogical Academy in Kiel when Hitler took power. He was placed in prison, awaiting trial. He recalls: 'Two members of the Society of Friends visited me: Joan Mary Fry from London, and Gilbert MacMaster our American Secretary, who was working in Berlin and bringing help to many in this time (his advocacy made many releases possible and also helped Jewish people to emigrate). That was a great joy – and a help. It made a difference to a prisoner's treatment if it was known that foreigners were concerned about you.' (Fuchs 1959)

The Germany Emergency Committee (G.E.C.), founded in London in April 1933, undertook to coordinate all information and aid work by British Friends in National Socialist Germany. In order not to endanger its relief operations, it took no political stance against the Nazi regime, but made every effort to aid victims of racial and political persecution. This involved caring for the increasing number of German immigrants in England, of whom many were seeking the chance to find admission to other countries.

Elizabeth Fox Howard, familiar with Germany since the 1920s, went to Germany in July 1933 at the request of the G.E.C., to inform herself about the sufferings of the families of political prisoners. She pressed for a place of refuge devoted to these families to be opened in Berlin. The G.E.C. asked the English Quaker William R. Hughes, who had cared for German prisoners of war and civilians interned in England during the First War, to look after political prisoners and their families in Germany.

Hughes arrived in Germany in October 1933, and accomplished much, thanks to his skills and with the help of many personal connections. He was repeatedly able to obtain a visitor's permit to prisons and concentration camps, and made efforts, some of them successful, to ease conditions and to gain releases. Within the limits of his means he lent support, material as well as psychological, to the families of the imprisoned. At the beginning of 1934 he visited the Lichtenberg concentration camp, followed by others in the course of the next year, including Dachau. The former editor-in-chief of the Leipziger Volkszeitung, Hermann Liebmann, was a Social Democrat who had been arrested in April 1933, and remained in 'protective custody' until April 1935; his wife was enabled by Hughes to stay for six weeks in Dresden, from where she could make weekly visits to her imprisoned husband. Following Liebmann's death in September 1935, she wrote to Hughes: 'Never will I forget that helping hands appeared at a difficult time. I hope that this can be repaid some day, but I wish with all my heart that all will turn away from evil so that no

Corder and Gwen Catchpool
c. 1927

one need suffer any more, not even those who did evil to me'.

At the end of November 1934, four women members of the Friends Service Council sent a telegram to the German Ministry of Justice in Berlin, expressing their concern about the uncertain fate of several women political prisoners who had been confined for a prolonged period without a hearing. In April 1935 the London Meeting for Sufferings sent a public appeal to Hitler (which was published in the Quaker periodical *The Friend* in English and German), in which it demanded the cessation of political persecution in Germany. Here, too, the English Friends kept from sharp accusations but appealed to the humanity of the Führer and pointed to the necessity of good relations between Germany and England, which would be seriously harmed by further repression by the National Socialist State.

In January 1935, two years after the beginning of the National Socialist regime, Gilbert MacMaster in a report from Berlin was sceptical about successful prospects for visits to the camps and prisons. He mentioned the cases of Carl von Ossietzky and others in which Quakers had become involved and continued: 'A man of my age who was released at Christmas time came to us and told us that the ones in the camps talked continually of the Quakers'. In fact, as a Jewish woman who had been deported to Piaski in East Poland wrote, Friends were for many inmates 'a ray of hope', often the last straw to cling to. The Quakers' widely-known humanitarian commitment made this quite understandable. But Quakers saw themselves increasingly confronted with hopes and expectations which they could not fulfill. In the letter already quoted, MacMaster reflected: 'Our reputation exceeds anything that we can possibly do.' (AFSC 1990)

The AFSC came to the aid of Carl von Ossietzky, a Berlin journalist who was an outspoken critic of militarism. Ossietzky became a leading nominee for the Nobel Peace Prize during his imprisonment and mistreatment in a concentration camp. The resulting international attention embarrassed and angered the Nazi Government at the time in 1936 when it wanted to display the 'new Germany' during the Berlin Olympic Games. Ossietzky was released for medical treatment to a prison hospital. Albert P. Martin, the AFSC representative in Berlin, assisted in his admission to a private clinic. Ossietzky was awarded the 1936 Peace Prize.

From 1933 on, when Hitler took over, the Quaker Center in Berlin had become a place that people turned to for counsel, help, and

encouragement. Corder Catchpool was available around the clock for those in need. Again and again it was the question both of emigration from Germany and immigration to a country that would take them. Catchpool was courageous, but at the same time concerned not to endanger his work with careless deeds and utterances. He consciously cultivated contacts with government officials who often proved useful. Nevertheless he had a number of encounters with the Gestapo, who systematically watched his office. In 1936 he returned to England. Those who encountered him would always remember his human warmth, his winning nature and inexhaustible readiness to help. 'When Corder and Gwen left Germany in order to finally give their children an English education after five years abroad, it seemed as if our last protection was gone and that there was no longer any wall between us and a terrible sense of fear', wrote Julie Schlosser in her book *Friendship with an English Quaker.* (Schlosser 1956)

A special kind of help was offered by British Friends through the so-called rest home which they established in Falkenstein in the Taunus Hills in 1933. In this convalescent home, released prisoners found the means to renew themselves physically and spiritually. Elizabeth Fox Howard, who looked after the home, wrote in her memoirs: 'We had among our guests Jews, Catholics, Lutherans, and people of all the Left Wing political parties'. Between 1933 and 1939 about 800 people were taken in, usually for a two week period. Among these was Ernst Reuter, the Social Democratic mayor of Magdeburg until 1933, who was twice in a concentration camp, and released for the last time in 1934. (He became the legendary mayor of Berlin during the turbulent post-war years). It is clear that the atmosphere in this rest home was highly beneficial. In a letter to Elizabeth Fox Howard one of the guests called it 'that island of kindness amid a storm of wickedness'. The home was later moved to Bad Pyrmont, the gathering place of the German Yearly Meeting. (Howard 1941)

After 9 November 1938

The British and American Quakers who were working in Germany from 1933 witnessed the gradual marginalising of Jews through discrimination and the threat of physical harm. Their material situation was worsening from year to year. Particularly oppressive was the situation of the so-called 'non-Aryan Christians', who although Christian in faith were considered 'non-Aryans' by descent. They were deprived of more and more rights through laws founded on racial ideology. They, as well as Jews with

The three men who travelled to Berlin-Reesendin in December 1938.
Courtesy: Christian Science Monitor

no religious affiliation, found themselves without effective help from either the Christian churches or from Jewish organizations. From the reports of British and American Friends it becomes clear again and again how desperate their situation was and how much they in particular were in need of material and psychological support from the Quakers.

From the Kristallnacht pogrom of 9-10 November 1938, the persecution of German Jews rose to a new high. Emil Fuchs writes in his memoirs: 'It can probably be said that during those days Jews who lived where there were Quakers were not deserted, but found sympathy and help.' (Fuchs 1959) Friends in Great Britain and the United States were among those who were shocked by the events of this night and what followed. Once again they took pains to obtain accurate information on the spot in order to get a clear sense of the kind of help that would be useful. They concluded that for Jews in Germany there was no future with human dignity, perhaps not even physical survival, and that the only alternative left was emigration as quickly as possible. Accordingly, the speediest efforts to bring about a mass emigration were called for. The emigration problem far exceeded the resources of the Quakers and the various charitable organizations. It could only be solved at the government level. Yet the chances for such a solution seemed slight, especially following the completely unsatisfactory outcome of the Evian Conference in July 1938 at which representatives of thirty-two countries and numerous relief agencies, including the Germany Emergency Committee of British Friends, had taken part. Counsel and help in every individual case remained critical, and the Berlin Quaker Center was sought out by more people than ever.

Dismayed by the news out of Germany following the events of 9 November, three prominent American Quakers assumed an unusual mission. Rufus M. Jones, the highly

respected chairman of the American Friends Service Committee, George A. Walton and D. Robert Yarnall journeyed to Europe in early December on the Queen Mary, to find out in Berlin about the situation of German Jews and to intervene for them as far as possible.

In Berlin, Jones, Walton and Yarnall soon realized that while material aid for Jews was still important, what had to be given the highest priority was 'speedy emigration on a large scale'. The three Americans were able to conduct conversations in the Foreign Office and with the Gestapo, though only with mid-level officials. Arranging a meeting with Gestapo chief Heydrich was as unsuccessful as the hoped-for talk with Hitler. Their contacts at the Gestapo assured them that two representatives of the Quakers would be allowed to move freely in Germany to organize relief for 'non-Aryan Christians' and to aid their emigration where possible. Near the end of their stay Jones, Walton and Yarnall met with Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, who also stressed the urgency of the emigration problem and the need to solve it on a large scale. Schacht told them: 'Be quick, for nobody knows what happens in this country tomorrow'.

On 22 December 1938 the three Americans left Germany. The immediate outcome of their trip certainly fell short of their hopes. Still, the assurances given for a continued Quaker presence in Germany amounted to something positive. In addition, the Philadelphia AFSC office was more concretely informed about the conditions and possibilities in Germany.

In addition, a trip by Yarnall to Vienna, as well as trips of inquiry by other British and American Friends following 9 November 1938 were a valuable contribution. There was a repeated emphasis on the particular plight and needs of the 'non-Aryan Christians'. Howard Elkinton, the American representative at the Berlin Quaker Center, reported from Vienna that the situation of the Jews there was even worse, their treatment even more brutal than in Germany. He characterized developments in Germany at the end of 1938 with these words: 'Things have turned from bad to worse for the Jews ... Ghettoes are forming rapidly with all the confusion and wretchedness and anguish attached and many hamlets and towns boast "Kein Juden" ... There is a swiftness about the moves that make it difficult to keep pace.' (AFSC 1990)

Under these alarming circumstances the Quakers now concentrated their efforts on the speedy rescue of Jewish children. Thanks to the cooperation of the Friends with

other relief organizations, almost 10,000 children, without their parents, were brought out of Germany to England in the period from December 1938 until war broke out in September 1939. British Quaker families took in German Jewish children. From Berlin Howard Elkinton urged the AFSC to make every effort to assist the entry of Jewish children to the United States. (AFSC 1990)

In the Second World War

With the outbreak of the Second World War British Friends were forced to stop the work at the Berlin Center. American and German Friends could continue to work there but were faced with many new problems. In June 1940 a young American Quaker, Leonard S. Kenworthy, came to Berlin and directed the Center until the summer of 1941. He reported: 'There were also some persons who had given up hope of emigrating. They were desperately lonely and hopeless. What they really wanted was someone to talk to, someone who would give them a little encouragement. They were like drowning individuals who were searching frantically for friendship; our Center seemed to them like a life jacket.' (Kenworthy, 1982)

Between 1935 and 1941 the Berlin Center was able to help 1,135 persons to emigrate. 'Of these, 960 left in the three years between 1938 [and] 1940, 84% of the total, but a small percent of those who came to the Friends for help.'(Seadle, 1978) Those seeking help knew that they were not coming to a large bureaucratic organization in which they would be treated merely as a case number. The Quaker Center was also an office having to cope with its own bureaucratic and organizational business. But it was and largely remained an office 'with a human face'. Besides British and Americans, German Friends also played their part. In the summer of 1941 the Berlin Quaker Olga Halle assumed the directorship of the Center at the request of the AFSC. With circumspect courage, she and Martha Roehn were able to continue work at Prinz-Louis-Ferdinand-Strasse right through the hardest years of the war, up to April 1945.

The Second World War burdened Quaker relief organizations with a host of new tasks, above all where the German army occupied countries that had been places of refuge for opponents of Hitler, and Jewish emigrants. Now these people were once again threatened. Moreover, soon the persecution and deportation of Jews began in all parts of the German-controlled areas. It was more important than ever, and more difficult, to protect people, to save lives, to ease the plight of those who had already been robbed of

their freedom. There was a wide network of Quaker relief offices, not only in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Paris, Marseille, Toulouse, Geneva, Madrid, Lisbon and Rome, but also in Tokyo and Shanghai. Once again, with other relief organizations, the Friends entered the French internment camps Gurs, Rivesaltes and others. They hid Jews, helped those fleeing arrest or danger on their way to freedom, and cared for rescued political refugees; as they also cared for interned German civilians and prisoners of war in England. Norwegian Quakers supported the non-violent resistance to the German occupation forces in their country.

The German invasion of the Netherlands soon had serious consequences for a much respected Quaker school project. At the beginning of 1934 a boarding school had been opened at Eerde-Ommen in Overijssel province. It was intended primarily for the admission of Jewish children from Germany but was open to non-Jewish children of any nationality; it also aimed to offer work to teachers who were forbidden to work in Germany because of their Jewish background or their political views. The school found quarters in a castle owned by Baron von Pallandt, who leased the facilities to the Quakers for 25 years.

The Ommen Friends School, led by Katharina Petersen (1889-1970), an experienced German educator, was a primary and secondary boarding school. By Christmas 1934 it already had 46 boys and girls from age six to seventeen. By the time Katharina Petersen relinquished its administration in 1938, 140 pupils were being cared for by 15 teachers. Since it was becoming increasingly clear that there would be no secure future for Jews in Germany, probably in Europe, it was determined that the task of the school now needed to include practical preparation for a later life in other countries. For this purpose a farm school was added on land rented nearby.

Following the German occupation of the Netherlands in 1940 the school at first remained largely unmolested. In September 1941, however, the Jewish children were forced to be 'isolated' into their own dormitory. But there was worse to come. When the persecution of the Jews in the Netherlands demanded more and more victims, the school administration succeeded in removing some of the Jewish children out of the reach of authorities, thereby saving their lives. But on 12 April 1943, twelve children were taken to the Vught concentration camp and then deported through Westerbork to the death camps in the east. The school was forced to close at the end of 1943 when the castle was requisitioned by the Hitler Youth. In 1946 it was reopened and continued as a Friends School until 1951.

The Austrian educator and socialist Ernst Papanek, in exile in France, had run a convalescent home for Jewish refugee children since 1938, to which he added several other children's homes in the Montmorency area, north of Paris. After the German invasion started in 1940, Papanek managed to flee, first to the south of France and from there to the United States. In his book *Out of the Fire* Papanek praises the extraordinarily successful work of the Friends, and offers an explanation for it: 'The reason why in all the world the Quakers, and only the Quakers, can accomplish such things, is one of the most fascinating chapters in the history of mankind. The strength of the Quakers lies in the fact that they take part in no fighting and belong to no party. They give help to everyone and therefore exert an influence on everyone. In Spain they gave help to both sides. They saved children of Franco supporters and got them into Catholic children's homes. They saved the children of Republicans, some of whom landed in our homes in France. They help the oppressed, every human being who is in need ... And since the oppressed very often become the oppressors, Friends have an influence which cannot be refused them.' (Papanek & Linn, 1975)

Germany, a disaster area

May 1945: Europe, including conquered Germany, is liberated from National Socialist tyranny. The war is over, but its legacy is everywhere apparent. Destruction, desolation, expulsion, endless streams of refugees make up the image of the continent. Reconstruction becomes a problem in dimensions utterly different from those of the years following the First World War.

American and British Friends had already prepared themselves during the war for the tasks which were expected. Already two and a half weeks after the end of hostilities the British Quaker weekly, *The Friend*, carried an appeal by the Friends Ambulance Unit (FAU), which noted that 250 men and women were working in FAU teams in Europe, and another 150 in China, India and Syria. 'Relief; Reconciliation; Rehabilitation', these were the basic principles of the FAU. The Netherlands, Belgium, France and to some extent Eastern Europe were the sites of their first work after the war.

In the same issue of *The Friend* (25 May 1945) appeared an appeal by another British Quaker relief organization, the Friends Relief Service (FRS), which read: 'Now in Germany!' A photo shows Lilian Impey, the head of the FRS team that was working inside the

liberated concentration camp at Bergen-Belsen. This appeal indicates what Quaker relief in Germany meant: immediately and primarily aid to the many thousand victims of the Nazi regime who had been liberated from the camps, as well as help for Jews, Russians, Poles, Gypsies and people of other backgrounds who had to be supplied with the most basic necessities. Now 'liberated', they found themselves in a kind of no-man's land and were making their way back to their homeland, or seeking a new home, whether in Palestine or the U.S.A., in Canada or Australia – wherever anyone was willing to receive them.

In the first post-war summer Germany was a vast expanse of ruins and remained that way for several years. Its situation differed from that following the First World War. This time not only was there great physical damage, but Germany had surrendered unconditionally. It no longer existed as a state, it was completely occupied by victorious armies and divided into four occupation zones. And this conquered Germany had to bear the moral burden of an immense guilt for which it was reproached and scorned. There was little willingness to offer the Germans any help.

At the same time it was clear that something had to be done, if only out of humanitarian concern. Soon it became apparent that political sense demanded it, too.

The British and American Quakers were at pains to bridge the gulf between Germany and the rest of the world without wishing to remove the Germans' burden of responsibility for their tyrannical regime and its crimes. All relief measures required the authorisation of a military government, however, and entry into Germany

May 25, 1945 345 (Advt.) THE FRIEND

FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT

For millions of people in Europe culture, civilisation and amenity no longer exist ; continuing life can be constructed only by the provision of food and shelter and essential commodities now. In this immense task, 250 men and women of the F.A.U. are assisting as relief workers.

In China, India and Syria, 150 others are engaged in the same tasks.

RELIEF
RECONCILIATION
REHABILITATION

Money is needed to continue and extend their work

FRIENDS AMBULANCE UNIT
4, GORDON SQUARE
LONDON · W.C.1

— REGISTERED UNDER THE WAR CHARITIES ACT, 1940 —

Advertisement in *The Friend* (London) 25 May 1945

Advertisement in *The Friend* (London) 25 May 1945

by a civilian was possible only under this condition. The Quakers, therefore, had to overcome considerable practical and psychological obstacles if they wished to extend their relief work in Germany beyond the victims of the Germans, to the Germans themselves.

For the British and Americans the liberation of Bergen-Belsen and Dachau in 1945 came as an enormous shock. There had been talk of the German camps but the gruesome reality now encountered face to face was almost beyond belief – it was an experience which had its repercussions in the attitude of the victors toward the German people.

The first team of the Friends Relief Service sent to the Continent, FRS team 100, had spent two months on reconstruction work in Belgium. On 19 April 1945 they were ordered to leave immediately for Bergen-Belsen. They arrived only days after the liberation of the camp, soon after British troops had discovered about 10,000 dead – and thousands of those liberated facing death from epidemics and exhaustion. This FRS team, which took part in the very first rescue among the survivors, included Jane Levinson, the only Jewish civilian relief worker in Belsen.

At the end of June 1945 there was a new appeal by the Friends Ambulance Unit and Friends Relief Service, announcing seven relief teams as being stationed at Osnabrück, Hanover, Vechta, Celle, Hamburg, Wentorf and Wilhelmshaven. The teams now deployed in Germany operated largely independently of each other, but under the direction of the British Red Cross HQ at Vlotho, on the Weser.

The teams of the FAU and the FRS each consisted of a dozen mostly young volunteers, among them many women. Most of them were not trained as social workers. They were, as German Quaker Magda Kelber wrote, 'well-meaning amateurs with a strong will to help.' (Kelber, 1949) They were by no means all Quakers. In some teams the majority were non-Quakers, but the teamwork was guided by the Quaker spirit. Members of the British teams were required to wear a kind of uniform and had the

status of army officers. This gave them a privileged position which many of them found inappropriate and psychologically burdensome.

In the summer of 1945 FRS team 100 assumed the care of several thousand Poles who were waiting in a camp near Braunschweig for their return home or for emigration to another country. A second team was sent in July 1945 to the Goslar area, where liberated persons from different nations were accommodated in thirteen camps. These were the so-called Displaced Persons, whose situation in temporary camps, with uncertainty over their future, was exceedingly difficult. The British Government and Quakers provided for considerable self-government in the camps. The Quakers also worked at establishing contacts between the camp inhabitants and the German population, something which proved difficult.

FRS team 125 at first had cared for liberated foreign workers and former Italian prisoners of war in the Ruhr area, but was moved to Cologne on 1 November 1945. It was the first British Quaker team to give support to German public welfare organizations. Now Quaker relief was beginning to reach the German population. This involved the distribution of food and clothing from British relief drives, the care of children and the elderly and practical help with reconstruction. In summer 1946, 160 members of the Friends Relief Service were active on twelve sites in Germany. Until the middle of 1946 teams of the Friends Ambulance Unit were working there, and when its German operations ceased, a large number of members joined the FRS and continued in Berlin, Hannover, Oberhausen, Aachen and Buer, collaborating with other relief agencies. A report by the FRS at the end of July 1946 states that by far the largest part of the distributed food and clothing was now going to Germany, along with shipments to France, Poland, the Netherlands and Belgium.

From the beginning, Quaker relief for the German population was impeded by the military governments' ban on 'fraternising with the enemy', a decree which also applied to relief teams. It forbade contacts with Germans. This contradicted the basic convictions and traditions

The American Friends Service Committee leaving Paris for Germany

of Friends, who found ways round it until its cancellation opened the way for informal relations with Germans. The Quakers considered their assistance as person-to-person help: they faced those in need of assistance not as an anonymous organization, nor did they consider the Germans only as 'relief recipients'. They knew that the climate, the human atmosphere, was an essential element in relief work, especially in the Germany of the first post-war years, with its creeping despair and cynicism and its anxious uncertainty about the future. Spiritual support, help for the soul, the mind, the strength of moral conviction, was no less urgent at this time than practical aid toward the alleviation of suffering. The Quakers were particularly aware of this.

At the end of 1945 William R. Hughes was able, as the 'first general Quaker visitor in civilian clothes', to enter the British Occupation Zone and Berlin. In his report on this trip, made so soon after the end of the war, he described his first reunion with German Friends after the years of enforced separation. They were, he wrote, in part quite critical of their own conduct in the Third Reich. In contrast to most Germans, however, they did not appear at all apathetic or hopeless; rather they were thinking about the shaping of the future. Hughes found it noteworthy, 'that among Friends it was not generally necessary as so often elsewhere, to try to direct German minds and eyes away from an exclusive attention to the sorrows and sufferings of their own folk; there was also consideration and sympathy directed to the needs of other peoples.' (Hughes 1946)

Now, in conquered Germany, the Quakers still held firm to their principle of helping those in desperate need, regardless of their background. After the collapse of Hitler's Reich tens of thousands of former members of the National Socialist party, as well as others judged 'incriminated' by the military governments, had been interned, in some cases under inhumane conditions. William Hughes, who since 1933 had lent his support to the inmates of concentration camps and prisons so persistently and so prudently, now in 1947 visited under Quaker auspices various internment camps in the British Zone as well as the Fischbeck camp for war criminals near Hamburg. He did so in order to inform himself about the conditions in the camps and to obtain improvements where these were needed.

During the first post-war years the British FRS also helped refugees who had come to Germany from former German territories in

Eastern Europe, from Silesia, Pomerania and East Prussia. In the early part of 1946 FRS team 152 was stationed in the Oldenburg area, where a particularly difficult situation had arisen because of the overwhelming numbers of Germans fleeing the East. It served there for two years.

The last team sent to Germany, FRS 154, arrived in early 1946 in the city of Solingen. In cooperation with the German Red Cross and the German Workers Welfare Association it provided needy elderly people with warm meals. This team was under the direction of Magda Kelber (1908-1987), a German social worker who until the end of the war had lived in England as a German emigrant. From Solingen she directed all Quaker relief work in the British Occupation Zone until 1949. Later she was for many years the head of the Association of German Neighborhood Centers.

After British Friends had brought their work in Solingen to an end in the spring of 1948, a German social worker thanked them in a letter written on Palm Sunday. He wrote that their work of reconciliation had meant a kind of inner liberation for him. They had come to the Germans in 1946 as 'messengers of peace and reconciliation, something one had scarcely dared hope for.' In the months that followed Friends Relief Service became an institution in the town. More and more people found their way to Weyerstrasse, and many happy hours were spent there – whether at a musical evening or a refugee gathering or in debate and discussion or in the hour of Silent Worship on Sundays. And now our friends have left us. But in spite of that we no longer feel lonely because they have helped us to find something which we had thought lost for ever.' (Wilson 1952)

By May 1948 Friends Relief Service, whose work was taken over by the Friends Service Council, had provided a total of 770 tons of foodstuffs and more than 10,000 bales of clothing for relief in Germany. A list of places where the FRS was active in Germany from 1945 to 1948 includes several dozen names, ranging from Hamburg to Cologne, from Hannover to Berlin. (Wilson 1952).

Quäkerspeisung again

Unlike their British counterparts, American Friends faced considerable difficulties before relief work could get under way in the U.S. Occupation Zone. The first guideline for American policy in Germany stated that the aim of the occupation was not for the 'liberation' of the Germans, but to treat their country as a 'defeated enemy

Top: Huge rally for the German Relief Program held by American Quakers in Madison Square Garden, New York City on 21 September 1947.

Bottom: President Herbert C. Hoover speaking at the rally

state'. U.S. Government directive JCS 1067 contained a plan for limiting German industrial capacity as part of a punitive policy. Accordingly the military government had no wish for private relief work in Germany.

Nevertheless, in spite of this obstacle the Quakers had set in motion a comprehensive relief program by 1946. Thanks to foodstuffs they sent, a school feeding program could be inaugurated. It reminded older Germans of the work of the Friends after the First World War. In addition the AFSC sent 204 tons of clothing and shoes as well as medical supplies worth $68,000 at the time (about one tenth of the 2000 price).

Now came the harsh winter of 1946-47, particularly hard for the Germans because of the unprecedented cold coupled with the dwindling of food reserves. With it came a shift in American policy, out of humanitarian as well as political motives, which opened the way for American aid organizations to operate in Germany. The American Government viewed the deteriorating conditions in Germany with alarm, especially because of the possible political consequences. At this juncture Herbert Hoover was once more given a key role, as he had been at the end of the First World War. He had already visited Europe and Asia in May 1946 to inform himself about the demand for, and

Quäkerspeisung in the US zone, 1946/47

the feasibility of, humanitarian assistance. Now he was commissioned by President Truman to begin preparations for aid to the German people. Beginning in February 1947 Hoover spent three months in Germany and immediately upon his return presented his ideas to the U.S. Government. He pointed out the desperate situation of millions of German children and adults as well as the high mortality rate among older people, and how 'in food, warmth and shelter' Germans had 'sunk to the lowest level known in a hundred years of Western history.' (Hoover 1947; Lyons 1964) Hoover recommended releasing a part of American military food supplies in Germany for the feeding of undernourished German children.

The American Government, already convinced of the urgent need for such measures, ordered that foodstuffs then worth $19,000,000, stored in Germany for distribution to displaced persons, be used instead to provide 3,000,000 children in the 'Bizone' (the American and British Occupation Zones) with a daily school meal of 350 calories. At the same time Hoover appealed to the humanitarian feelings of the American people, urgently asking for donations. A considerable portion of the donations in money, food and clothes came from German-Americans.

After the key year 1947, American aid became an integral part of the new American policy toward Germany. At the beginning of the year Secretary of State George C. Marshall made a dramatic speech at Harvard University announcing a relief and reconstruction program for Europe, in which Germany was to be included. Directive JCS 1067 was replaced by directive JCS 1779, which stated that Germany was now to be given the possibility of rebuilding its economy and of assuming self-government. Congress approved the Marshall Plan, including an additional figure of over $300,000,000 for the 1947 fiscal year to provide Germany with food-stuffs, artificial fertilizer and seed. This amount was doubled in 1948.

These were the political parameters for the considerable expansion of relief work by the American Friends Service Committee in occupied Germany.

Already in February 1946, on directives from President Truman, the Committee of Relief Agencies Licensed to Operate in Germany (CRALOG) had been created as an umbrella organization. In 1947 the AFSC planned and carried out its relief work in conjunction with CRALOG, primarily the sending of food and clothing, which went through the port of Bremen and was delivered by German welfare organizations.

In its annual report for 1947 the AFSC stated that together with other relief agencies it had given one additional meal daily to 200,000 children in larger cities in the U.S. Zone, as well as extra rations to 5000 German young people in summer camps in the state of Hessen. German agencies were given large amounts of clothing, shoes and food for distribution to children, the elderly, refugees and returning prisoners of war. In the French Zone the AFSC worked out of Freiburg-Breisgau. In 1947 it cared for 10,500 children, 7,000 adults and 3,000 pregnant and nursing mothers in the region of the Black Forest and along the Rhine north to Koblenz. Clothing, blankets and shoes were distributed as well.

In the British Zone the AFSC worked together with the British Quakers. The 1947 report tells of soya, wheat, maize, milk and sugar going to 30,000 children in North Rhine-Westphalia, while 7,000 children in Dortmund and Aachen received extra rations. Joint American and British Quaker work also included help to German refugees from Eastern Europe, and preventive measures against tuberculosis, as well as the construction of youth camps.

The AFSC in Philadelphia assumed

the logistics of the work, planned projects and took care of raising the necessary funds and relief supplies, as well as the shipping. By the end of 1947, the distribution was in German hands in cooperation with on-site representatives of the AFSC. The American presence was modest in numbers, but it proved to be very effective. By this time the AFSC had by its own account 53 workers in Germany, 20 of them in the British Zone, 24 in the French and 6 in the American Zone, as well as 3 in Berlin. A large number of German fellow workers, German Quakers among them, cared for the serving of the meals and the distribution of various kinds of relief goods.

At first it was possible, to a limited extent, to include the Soviet Zone in the relief work of the AFSC. The Central Committee of the Volkssolidarität (People's Solidarity), the state welfare organization of the East (Soviet) Zone, thanked the AFSC in September 1946 for a shipment of 7,535 blankets. The rapid deterioration of East-West relations made the continuation of this program impossible.

The 1947 AFSC report described these extensive relief efforts, but it was forced to conclude: 'Suffering and confusion have continued to deepen in Germany, threatening to pull all of Europe down into chaos and destruction.' Accordingly the need for the continuation and the widening of relief efforts was emphasized.

Helping others to help themselves

The 1947 AFSC report describes the establishment of 'Neighborhood Centers' as one of 'the most promising developments in Europe'. These were in fact the most original and interesting contribution of the AFSC to the relief work in Germany. The American Friends had from the start attached great importance to the establishment of workshops and facilities for training and education. They wanted to provide 'help toward self-help'. The Neighborhood Centers represented in a sense the development of this concept.

The stimulus for this had come from Hertha Kraus, a German Quaker and social worker who had emigrated to the United States. She had drawn on American settlements (like Jane Addams's Hull House in Chicago) as models in establishing similar projects in Cologne after the First World War. As early as 1943 she had proposed to the AFSC a program for the establishment of Neighborhood Centers in Germany once the war was over. Together with the AFSC she sought to initiate this idea, but this was rejected by the American military government in Germany. In spite of this the AFSC planned two in the U.S. Zone, in Frankfurt

Top: Ludwigshafen, August 1948

Bottom: People lining up for Quäkerspeisung at Ludwigshafen.

and Darmstadt. $100,000 was set aside for this project. The wooden barracks to house the Centers were to come from Sweden.

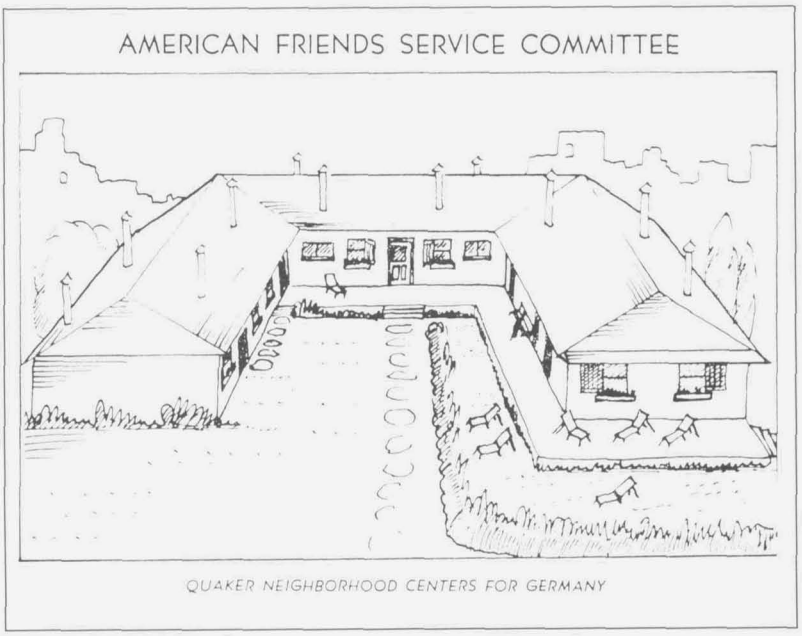
In March 1947 the military government finally gave the green light. By July the Frankfurt Nachbarschaftsheim opened, on Rohmerplatz in the Bockenheim district. It was neither an American nor a Quaker institution: it was provided by the American Friends, but its direction was in German hands, in collaboration with some Americans. German welfare agencies undertook the fitting out and administration, and were responsible for the programs that were offered. The Neighborhood Centers were conceived, in part, as an experiment in democracy and as a contribution to the promotion of democratic thought and practice in post-Hitler Germany.

Emil Fuchs, already mentioned above, had moved to Frankfurt at the time and relates in his memoirs: 'In Frankfurt I had first of all visited the old Friends in the Quaker group and had taken up work with them. We held our meetings for worship, carried on our relief work with the support of English and American Friends and began the significant work of founding a Neighborhood Center in one of the most destroyed sections of Frankfurt. The city put the space at our disposal, and we were able to erect barracks and create a kindergarten and even a shoe repair shop – how difficult the matter of shoes was for people who went to work! Here something had to be done. Much thought and organization was called for, and all members of the group were drawn into the effort. The undertaking was funded by the city and by Quakers abroad. From England and America came young people who took on administrative tasks. Soon work was under way in this place which meant something to many – to children, to young people, to the old

and to those seeking spiritual and intellectual stimulation and support. We held our meetings for worship there. Gradually the Center took on a more attractive appearance.' (Fuchs 1959)

What functions such a place could fulfill can only be measured against the background of post-war Germany's material and psychological plight, especially in a large city as heavily affected by the war as Frankfurt. Living conditions were catastrophic, many people were still forced to live in air-raid shelters, others as refugees in camps. Young people had hardly any place where they could meet for common activities, to exchange ideas or to play; they were on the street, in a wasteland of ruins. Hunger, cold, and a thriving black market were still part of everyday life in the cities in 1947.

In this world, damaged in every way, the neighborhood centers were an oasis, a place for social encounters and for self-help such as a sewing room, a laundry and a shoe repair shop. At the request of Herbert Hoover the American textile industry contributed large quantities of cotton and wool material, which were used in the centers for making clothing. There were libraries and so-called 'warm rooms'. Group activities played an important role, and young people especially were provided with practical and spiritual stimulation.



The Darmstadt Neighborhood Center opened in June 1947. It found its makeshift home in the tumbledown ruin of Schloss Kranichstein, and in an annexe of wooden huts. Among other things it provided a kindergarten, as well as playgrounds and facilities for older children. That September in Berlin,

Top: Model for the neighborhood settlement centers

Bottom: The neighborhood center at Frankfurt am Main, 1947

the Mittelhof Neighborhood Center opened in Nicholassee; this was a notable event in the Berlin of those first post-war years. 'Everyone is warmly welcome', read the announcement of the opening. It contained a 'Social Work Center', a 'Rest Home', and an 'Adult Education Center'. The size of its facilities as well as the range of its programs was more extensive than those of the others.

Together with British Quakers and German agencies, the AFSC initiated the establishment of centers in the British Zone, in Cologne, Wuppertal, and Braunschweig. The latter was supported by the Friends Relief Service team stationed there and the local Quaker group, and the primary concern was the large number of German refugees from the East. Here too the facilities included a shoe repair shop, a sewing room and a laundry. The British Friends Service Council commented in November 1948 that 'the running of the centre is in itself an exercise in democracy'.

Advice-giving session in the neighborhood center

In the French Zone there were centers founded with the help of the AFSC in Koblenz, Ludwigshafen and Freiburg. The aim of this American Quaker initiative which had proved so successful was, as a statement by the AFSC put it, 'to offer opportunities for helpful human relations that could rekindle hope and faith'. Here, too, 'material and spiritual' help given by Friends were thought of as essential to each other.

This account of the relief work of British and American Quakers in post-war Germany has necessarily been limited to a few striking examples of the work itself, as well as of the gratitude it evoked.

It would, however, be inexcusable to omit mention of one most unusual project. Two weeks before Christmas 1947 a column of thirty trucks arrived in Hamburg from Norway, loaded with clothing and foodstuffs, potatoes, cereal, cod liver oil, herring and other things, intended for distribution by the Hamburg Quakers and the Holm-Seppensen Children's Center established by German Quakers in North Germany. The initiative for this project came from Anna Anderson, a Quaker in Stavanger, Norway. Her country had

suffered particularly harsh treatment under the German occupation, but support for this project was spontaneous and wide-spread. Seventy-five volunteered as drivers, people who because of their views had been put in prison and concentration camps, where they had undergone severe treatment. At the beginning of December, 1947, under Anna Andersson's leadership, a caravan of 16 trucks of the Quaker Relief Drive and 14 trucks of Europe Aid got underway.

Meeting of Quaker volunteers in the French Zone, 1940's.

III What next?

The work goes on

The continued improvement in living conditions in Germany after the end of the 1940s caused the American and British Friends to shift their relief work to other areas of extreme need. In the five decades since then they have been active in Korea, Algeria, India, Nigeria, Biafra, China, Zimbabwe, both parts of Vietnam, Bangladesh, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guatemala and Chile – the list could be longer. In Bangladesh, for example, during a disastrous famine, 16,000 undernourished children received nourishment with a high protein diet twice daily. Development projects in the Third World have been initiated, victims of wars, civil wars and natural disasters have received help. The Quakers continue to collaborate with other relief agencies. 'Help Toward Self-Help' is, where possible, the guiding principle. The American Friends Service Committee has also been long active in depressed areas within the United States. As one statement issued by the AFSC puts it: 'AFSC supports the rights of immigrants, undocumented workers, small farmers, farmworkers and refugees. It advocates on behalf of people who are hungry, poorly housed, homeless, or unemployed. It has programs on Indian reservations, in high schools, in rural areas such as Appalachia and northern Mexico, in crowded cities, in prisons and in factories along the Mexican-U.S. border'.

In Germany a Quaker relief organization, Quäkerhilfe, has been in existence since 1964. From 1963 to 1973 German Quakers undertook relief work in Algeria, from 1974 to 1986 they supported with funds and personnel a project for children of Palestinian refugees in West Jordan, and since 1972 they have

been involved in a rural service project in Kenya, administered by Kenyan Quakers. In addition they have given support to projects of British and American Quakers around the world. German Friends initiated a project for counseling and assisting physically disabled children in Poland. Quäkerhilfe, in conjunction with British Friends, has also been deeply involved in work in Moscow.

The Quaker commitment to peace has lost none of its relevance or urgency since the Second World War. Already in the early years of the Cold War American Friends spoke out and warned against the 'fruitless cycle of threat, fear and counter-threat which leads to catastrophe'. This declaration of 1951 goes on to say: 'Peace and security can best be achieved by an imaginative creative foreign policy in which military planning is subordinate, not predominant, as at present.' (AFSC 1951) Quakers viewed the United States as little concerned with such a 'creative foreign policy' during the following decades.

> Don't forget that those who struggle the most courageously against militarism come from the camp of the Quakers, that is of a religious group.
>
> *Albert Einstein to Henri Barbusse, 17 June 1932*

The east-west arms race, spurred on by inflexible ideological claims of both sides, appeared more and more menacing. In 1955 a group of American Friends published a study of international conflict titled *Speak Truth to Power*. It was a declaration of belief in nonviolence in international politics as a constructive alternative to the prevailing thinking. 'Acceptance of the doctrine of violence is so widespread that man is becoming hardened to mass extermination, and indifferent to mass human suffering. Indeed, man's indifference to violence is almost as disturbing a symptom of our time as his readiness to practice it. This is an age of violence.' (AFSC 1955) These American Quakers were convinced that violence would continue to exist until human beings freed themselves from the attitudes by which they justified their actions. It was a matter of dealing with conflicts in a creative and nonviolent way – and in this the Quakers were not lacking in experience. According to this view, which takes issue with the conventional 'realism' of so-called power politics, a demilitarized politics requires demilitarized thinking, diminished aggressiveness, and the overcoming of nationalistic self-aggrandisement and ideological fundamentalism. This does not mean that conflicts are ruled out for the future. The aim

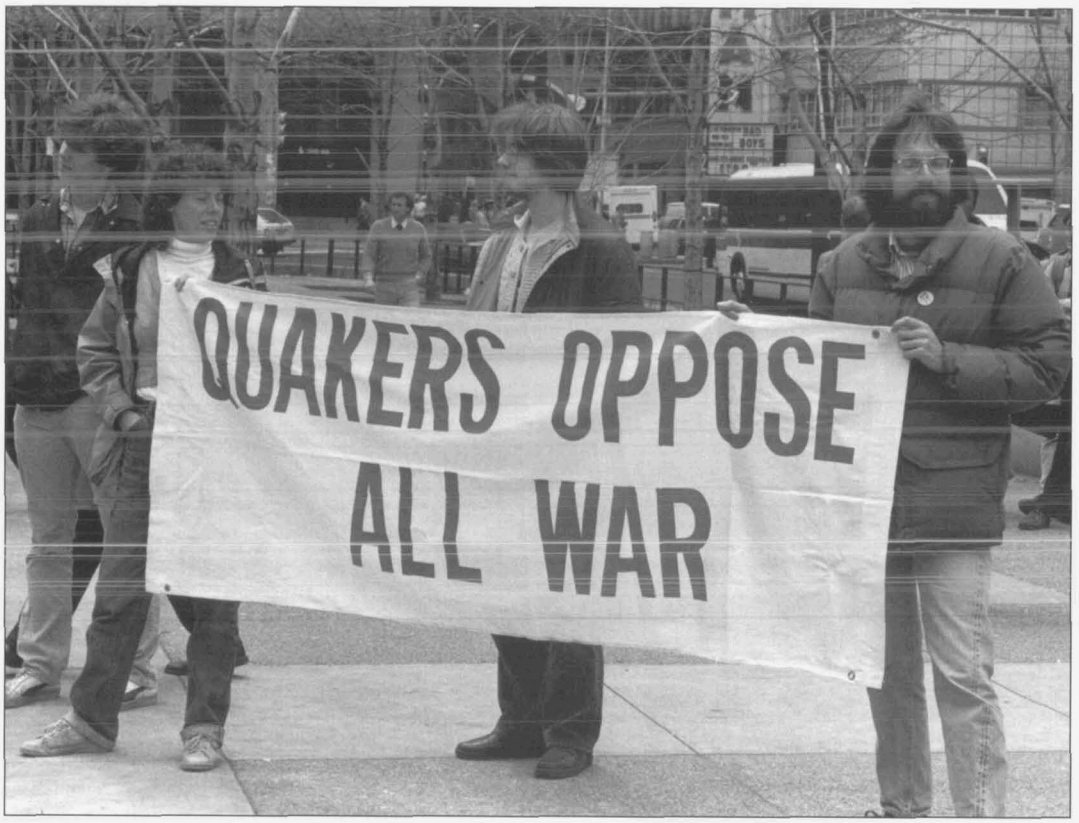
Quaker service today in Cambodia

is a nonviolent solution, surely no 'naïve and idealistic' goal in an age of weapons of mass destruction. Quakers think of nonviolence as an active position, or as an alternative mode of thought and action. In the last decades they have 'professionalized' their work for peace, promoting peace education and research, and initiating and funding objective studies of current conflicts in Germany as well as in Britain and America. Their traditional 'Peace Testimony' finds its expression today in intellectual and journalistic fields, as well as through participation in action against the arms trade and war.

Numerous Friends were involved in the movement against nuclear armament in Great Britain in the sixties and seventies. British Friends also belonged to a small nonconformist minority which protested publicly against the widely supported Falklands War in 1982. German Quakers were active in the peace movement in the eighties, while already in 1948 the German Yearly Meeting had opposed the planned rearmament of West Germany. Opposition in America to the Vietnam War, which became a public force, received sustained support from Quakers, including members of the AFSC.

Above and beyond this, at the international level, Quakers try to break down prejudice and adversarial thinking and to foster the willingness for dialogue and accommodation. To this end they maintain offices in New York, Geneva and Brussels, at the seat of

Quaker demonstration for peace in the USA



the United Nations and of the European Union. There something like discreet Quaker diplomacy goes on (again, 'quiet helpers') seeking to offer opportunities of dialogue when official channels seem impossible or fruitless. They are granted non-governmental organization status at the United Nations, through the London-based Friends World Committee for Consultation.

The Religious Society of Friends is not a political organization, and certainly has no political power, but in Britain and the United States the Quakers have become a moral force in public life. They speak out again and again with their criticism of political expediency, offering their own constructive initiatives, concepts and projects for solving problems at national and at international level. They avoid being forced into the ideological antagonisms and power struggles of the world and the friend-foe thinking that goes with it. This political 'neutrality' does not mean passivity. As J. Duncan Wood expressed it (in German) in his lecture to the 1982 Yearly Meeting of German Quakers: 'The striving for peace, which surely is the first duty of our political leaders, is not simply a political sum to add up, it is above all an ongoing spiritual search.' (Wood 1982)

For a new world

In the three and a half centuries since their founding Friends have remained a very small religious community, but have become a very active one. Quakerism has undergone many changes, yet it has maintained its own unmistakable identity. There have been periods of withdrawal into isolation and rigidity yet the Society of Friends has overcome such stagnation again and again. Thanks to their freedom from dogmatic credal doctrine Quakers have remained spiritually open and able to respond constructively to new experience. In the course of the 19th and 20th centuries they have come forward with creative suggestions and initiatives on behalf of social action and peaceful political relations. Quakers have remained open to the future.

If one considers how small this Religious Society is, its accomplishments seem considerable. These have resulted from energy combined with composure and persistence, grounded in strong spiritual reserves. The prerequisite for this has always been a watchful religious conscience. The inward will to act constructively arises above all from the expectant waiting in silent worship.

When young Friends met for an international conference in England in 1920, closely following the First World War, they formulated their calling with the words: 'We are called to live as citizens of the new world while still in the old.' (Int. Conf. of Young Friends 1920) Rufus M. Jones, the spiritual leader of American Quakerism in this century, described Quakers as believing that the Kingdom of God comes into being among us only through the existence of a core of human beings who in this extraordinarily difficult world are already realising their faith through their deeds.

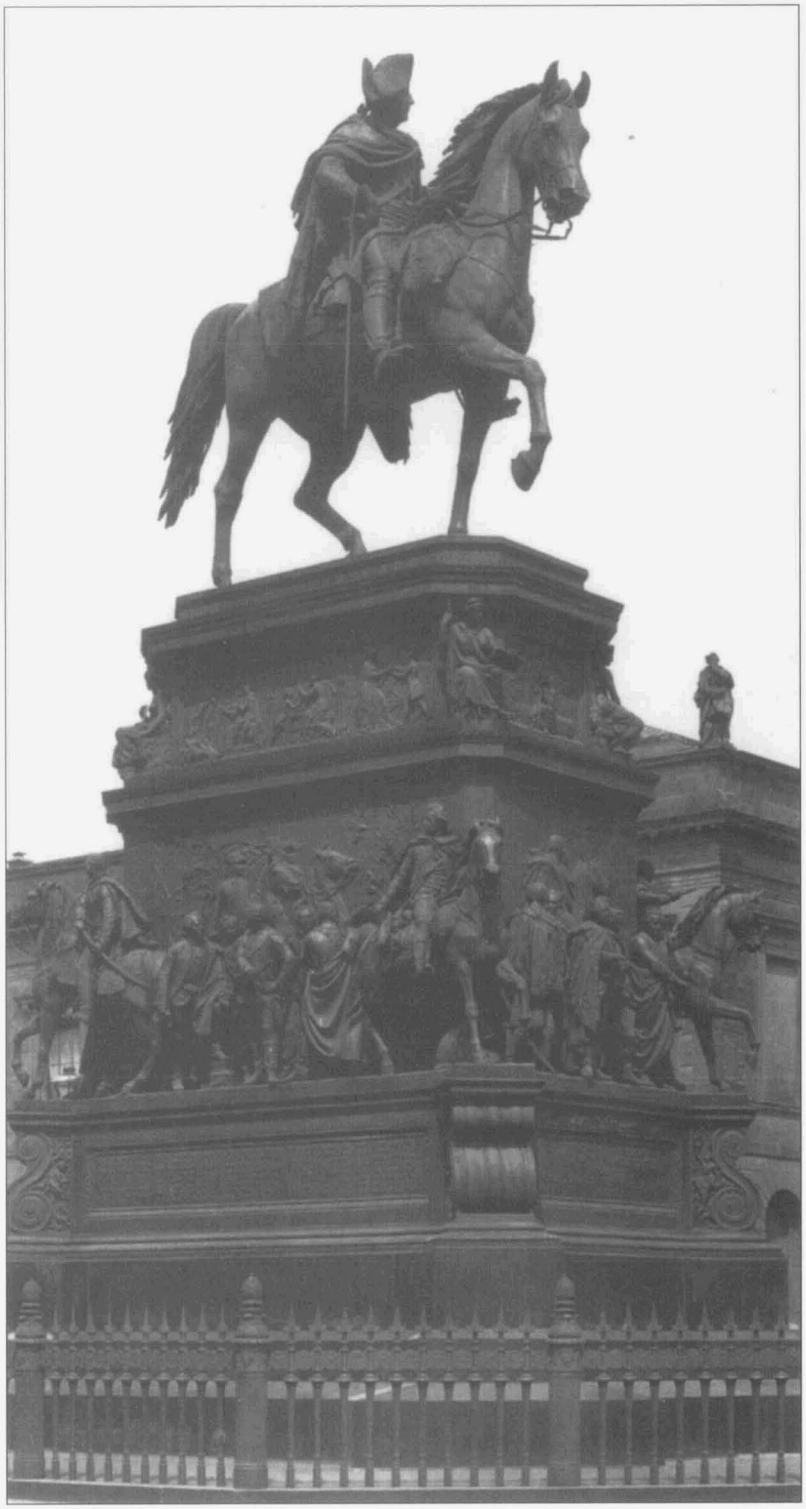
Rufus M. Jones (Chairman of AFSC, 1917-1928, 1935-1944) sitting; Clarence E. Pickett (Executive Secretary AFSC 1929-1950) standing

Jones says that it is not the business of Quakers to draw up abstract designs for a new social order. He stresses (and in this he seems very American) the pragmatic, experiential character of Quaker work for humanity and peace. Before any new

and better ordering of society can come about, 'there must be experiments tried, ways of life tested out and many practical attempts made to bring the lives of men into happier and more harmonious order. These experiments in love and fellowship, these attempts to show that the kingdom of God is already here among us, are a serious part of the faith and practice of the Quakers.' (Jones 1927)

I have read your article on war, and trembled. How can a sovereign whose troops are decked out in rough blue uniforms and headgear with white piping, troops that he can order left and right, how can he lead these to glory without earning the honorary title of robber-chief, since he is after all only commanding a gang of ne'er-do-wells forced by fate to become hired butchers, who under his command follow the fine calling of highway robbers? Can you have forgotten that war is a scourge that throws all kinds of men together and, what's more, encourages all manner of crimes? So you can probably see why a man who is even slightly concerned about his reputation, after reading these wise maxims of yours, must avoid all language that we use in referring to the worst criminals ... These are military considerations which escape my lips; I ask philosophy's pardon for this. Up to now I am only half a Quaker; if one day I become like William Penn, I shall do as others do and make public speeches against the privileged murderers who lay waste the earth.

Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, to Voltaire, Potsdam, 9 October 1773



Memorial to Friedrich II by Christian Daniel Rauch, Berlin, Unter den Linden

Bibliography

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) *Annual Reports*

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) (1951) *Steps to Peace: a Quaker view of U.S. Foreign Policy*

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) (1955) *Speak Truth to Power: a Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence*

American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), ed. Jack Sutters (1990) *Archives of the Holocaust: an international collection of selected documents, vol.2* (Part 1 1932-1939; Part 2, 1940-1945) [Published version of AFSC records forming part of a series of historical archive sources]

Brenda Bailey (1994) *A Quaker couple in Nazi Germany: Leonhard Friedrich survives Buchenwald*

Hugh Barbour and William Frost (1988) *The Quakers*

Robert Barclay (1678) *An Apology for the true Christian divinity as the same is held forth and preached by the people called, in scorn, Quakers*

John Bellers (1710) *Some Reasons for an European State...*; in George Clarke, ed. (1987) *John Bellers: his Life, Times and Writings*

T. Corder Catchpool (1941) *Letters of a Prisoner for Conscience Sake*

Richard Cobden (1853) *1793 and 1853, in Three Letters*

Lawrence Darton (1954) *An Account of the work of the Friends Committee for Refugees and Aliens, first known as the Germany Emergency Committee of the Society of Friends, 1933-1950*

Thomas Drake (1950) *Quakers and Slavery in America*

George Fox *et al.* (1660) *A declaration from the Harmless and Innocent People of God, called Quakers, against all Plotters and Fighters in the World...*

George Fox (1694) *The Journal of George Fox*; revised edition by John L. Nickalls (1952)

The Friend [Quaker periodical published in London since 1843]

Emil Fuchs (vol.1 1957; vol.2 1959) *Mein Leben*

Christopher Hill (1968) *Reformation to Industrial Revolution*

Herbert Hoover (1947) *German Agriculture and Food Requirements*

Elizabeth Fox Howard (1941) *Across Barriers*

William R. Hughes (1946) *Friends in Germany Today*

William R. Hughes (1956) *Indomitable Friend: the Life of Corder Catchpool*

International Conference of Young Friends (1920) *Jordans 1920: being the report of the International Conference... edited by Bertram Pickard*

Rufus M. Jones (1911) *The Quakers in the American Colonies*

Rufus M. Jones (1927) *The Faith and Practice of the Quakers*

Magda Kelber (1949) *Quakerhilfswerk Britische Zone 1945-1948*

Leonard S. Kenworthy (1982) *An American Quaker inside Nazi Germany: Another Dimension of the Holocaust*

Eugene Lyons (1964) *Herbert Hoover: A Biography*

Ernst Papanek & Edward Linn (1975) *Out of the Fire*

Alfons Paquet (1951) *John Woolman: ein grosser Helfer*

William Penn (1670) *The Great Case of Liberty of Conscience*

William Penn (1682) *No Cross, No Crown*

William Penn (1693) *An Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe...*

William Penn (1693) *Some Fruits of Solitude*

William Penn, ed. Edwin B. Bronner (1993) *The Peace of Europe, the Fruits of Solitude and other writings* [Includes all the above except *No Cross, No Crown*]

Harold Poelchau (1963) *Die Ordnung der Bedrängten: Autobiographisches und Zeitgeschichtliches seit den zwanziger Jahren*

Der Quäker [German Quaker periodical]

June Rose (1980) *Elizabeth Fry: a biography*

Julie Schlosser (1956) *Friendship with an English Quaker* [published in Hamburg]

Albert Schweitzer (1923) *Kultur und Ethik*

Michael Seadle (1978) *Quakers in Nazi Germany*

Evakatrin Sieveking (1948) *Die Quäker und ihre sozialpolitische Wirksamkeit*

Society of Friends, London [Britain] Yearly Meeting (1919) *To All Men*

Society of Friends, Germany Yearly Meeting (1992) *Lebensbilder deutscher Quaker während der NS-Herrschaft 1933-1945: Sammlung von Schicksalen aus der Erinnerung, aus Briefen, Zeitungsartikeln und anderen Dokumenten*

A.J. Toynbee (1970) *Experiences*

Roger C. Wilson (1952) *Quaker Relief: an account of the relief work of the Society of Friends 1940-1948*

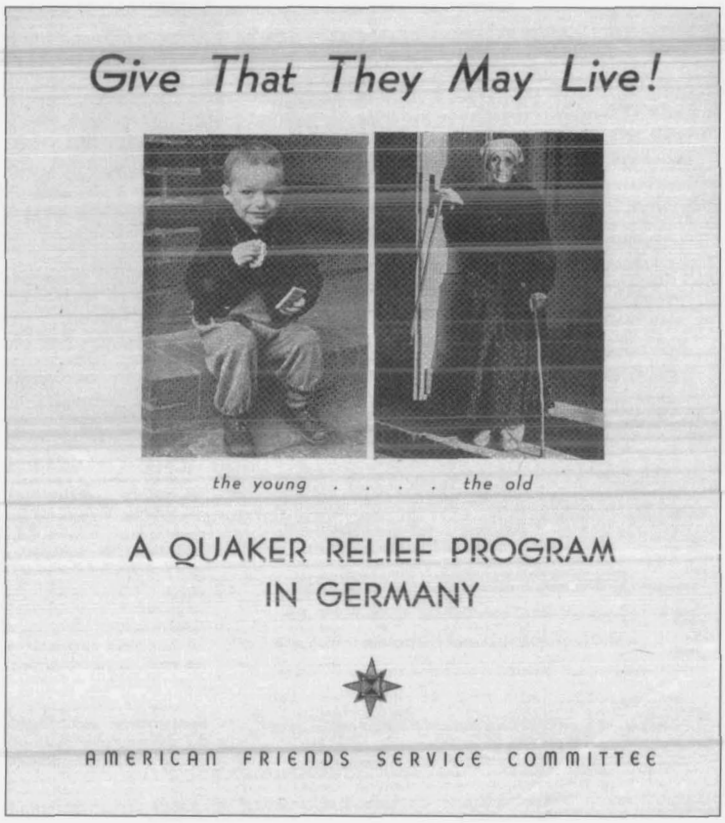
J. Duncan Wood (1982) *Frieden schaffen in Glauben und Handeln der Quäker* (Richard L. Carey Lecture)

Picture credits:

Page 2: *The Friend* (London); pg. 4: American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA; pg. 5: Friends House Library, London; pg. 6: Quäkerhilfe Stiftung, Bad Pyrmont; pg. 9-10: Friends House Library, London; pg. 11: private photo Maria von Borries; pg. 14-22 Friends House Library, London; pg. 24-28: American Friends Service Committee (AFSC); pg. 29: Brenda Bailey, London, translation of document – Paul Oestreicher (1992); pg. 31 Friends House Library, London; pg. 34: *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston, Massachusetts); pg. 39-40: *The Friend* (London); pg. 41-57: American Friends Service Committee (AFSC); p. 59: Ullstein Bilderdienst.

American Friends Service Committee
1501 Cherry Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102 USA

Quaker Home Service
Friends House
173 Easton Road
London NW 12BJ UK



We all need to know something of our history to be able to understand what we are today. Quakers have a historic testimony against all wars – but what does that mean in practice, and what does it mean for us now? The work done in Germany at the close of World War I and World War II, and during the Nazi era, are examples to all of us as to what we can each do to make the world a better place.

Let us try what love can do: for if men did once see we love them, we should soon find they would not harm us.

William Penn

Achim von Borries was born in Hamburg in 1928. After studying Philosophy and History, he is now a freelance historian and writer, living in Bremen. He has translated books into German, notably works by John Stuart Mill and Bertrand Russell, as well as writing on Quakers and other subjects.

ISBN 085245-319-1
9 780852 453193 90000>

American Friends Service Committee
and
Quaker Home Service
'books to nurture the spirit'