Social Christianity and the American Friends Service Committee's Pacifist Humanitarianism in Germany and Appalachia, 1919-1941

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Abbreviations

AFSC American Friends Service Committee
ARA American Relief Administration
ARC American Red Cross
DZA *Deutscher Zentralauschuss fur Auslandshilfe* (German Central office for Foreign Aid)
FERA Federal Emergency Relief Administration
FOR Fellowship of Reconciliation
NRA National Recovery Administration

"...we ought to reap what we have been sowing."

Wilbur K. Thomas, AFSC, 1923

Introduction

"Speak truth to power." The title of a pamphlet on international relations issued by the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) in 1955, the phrase has come to mean the bold confrontation of organized injustice and oppression with the truths of essential human equality and every human being's right to freedom and dignity.[1] Among those who know the immediate provenance of the phrase, it is often assumed that the words originate ultimately with an eighteenth-century Quaker or even with the founder of Quakerism himself, the British shoemaker's apprentice George Fox. Not so.

The first person to use the phrase, it seems, was the African-American Quaker civil rights activist Bayard Rustin, who wrote in 1942 that the role of a religious group was to "speak truth to power." Rustin himself attributed the phrase to a speech he had heard by Patrick Malin, a professor of economics at Swarthmore College who was to head the ACLU from 1950-1962, but it appears that Malin never used that exact phrase.[2] A little over a decade later, Rustin helped write the pamphlet *Speak Truth to Power*. But the AFSC expunged his name from the list of authors because of his arrest on charges of

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[1] Stephen G. Cary, A. J. Muste, Clarence E. Pickett, Bayard Rustin, et al, *Speak Truth to Power: A Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence. A Study of International Conflict Prepared for the American Friends Service Committee* ([no publisher information], 1955).

[2] Bayard Rustin to New York Monthly Meeting, August 15, 1942, in Bayard Rustin, *I Must Resist: Bayard Rustin's Life in Letters*, ed. Michael G. Long (New York: City Lights Publishers, 2012), 2.

committing a homosexual act in 1953. Another co-author claimed the phrase just occurred to him spontaneously.[3]

The pamphlet's most prominent co-author, A. J. Muste, coined a less famous but no less influential phrase of his own: "There is no way to peace; peace is the way." A motto of absolute pacifists in the twentieth century, Muste's aphorism that only peaceful means can yield a peaceful end sits atop the entrance to the AFSC's archive in Philadelphia on a large laminated poster like an epigram to the organization's one-hundred-year history. This dissertation asks whether Muste was right. It provides historical data for humanitarians, pacifists, and even ethicists to ponder as they consider the relationship of means to ends in the pursuit of peace. It argues not that peacefulness in general, but that humanitarianism in particular, did little or nothing to help the AFSC achieve its ultimate goal in any of the interwar crises in which it intervened: to bring peace and banish conflict. This dissertation suggests that the Quakers of the AFSC failed to bring any true and lasting peace to any of the war zones it entered—political or industrial—at least in part because they succeeded so extravagantly as relief workers. Relief required a political and religious neutrality that compromised the AFSC's ability to work for lasting peace.

Speaking truth to power comes with a price. The ease with which the phrase is uttered today conceals the cost of putting it into practice, as well as what it cost the AFSC to be able to utter it in the first place. Between its founding in 1917 and its co-acceptance

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[3] See https://www.afsc.org/sites/afsc.civicactions.net/files/documents/Speak_Truth_to_Power.pdf for the "Historical Note about Bayard Rustin" the AFSC appended to *Speak Truth to Power* in 2012. For the story about the title occurring to one of the other authors, see Paul Lacey, *Quakers and the Use of Power*, Pendle Hill Pamphlets, Vol. 241 (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1982), 15.

of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947 on behalf of Quakers worldwide, the AFSC learned well that the less powerful often need the help or permission of the more powerful in order to minister to the needs of the powerless. To have spoken truth to power would have cost the AFSC its claim to neutrality. The Red Cross, with whose American branch the AFSC collaborated to help rebuild France along the Western Front between 1917 and 1919, had already established the principle of neutrality in relief work well before the AFSC was founded. So the principle was well recognized among those persons and agencies seeking to relieve humanitarian emergencies.

But the AFSC in the 1920s and 1930s almost never referred to itself as a strictly humanitarian agency, but instead thought of itself as an agency for the Christianization of the international and social order—that is, as a vehicle of social Christianity and the Social Gospel. It was, after all, a *service* committee.[4] The Social Gospel flourished in the

[4] To take just two representative examples of AFSC's understanding of itself as a Social Gospel agency: in 1923, a report summarizing all of the AFSC's work since its founding in 1917 stated, "The Friends believe that Jesus taught men how to live and that his teaching is applicable to present day conditions" ("Statement of the Work," box General Files 1923: Reports to Comms and Orgs (American Committee for Relief of Russian Children), American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, PA [herafter AFSC]); and in 1929, in its plan of reorganization, the AFSC stated as its "objective" "the interpretation of the Christian ideal of good-will and understanding as the preventive and corrective of strife between economic, racial, and national groups" ("Report of Reorganization Committee of the AFSC," AFSC General Meeting Minutes, March 21, 1929, AFSC). See also Hugh Barbour and J. William Frost, *The Quakers*, Denominations in America, Number 3 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 264-265. The influence of the Social Gospel on the AFSC is, in fact, evident through at least the mid-1950s, thus supporting historian Christopher H. Evans's stretching of the usual timeframe of the Social Gospel well past the generally accepted ending dates of 1925 or 1930. See Evans's forthcoming *The Social Gospel in America: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2017). For the earlier ending dates of the Social Gospel, see esp. Susan Curtis, *A Consuming Faith: The Social Gospel and Modern American Culture* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991); and Gary Scott Smith, *The Search for Social*

United States between 1890 and 1920, inspiring progressivism in the political sphere. In response to the demands of industrial immigrant workers in particular, prominent white Protestant ministers and scholars like Washington Gladden, Josiah Strong, Shailer Matthews, Vida Scudder, and Walter Rauschenbusch, together with settlement-house leaders like Jane Addams, African-American ministers like Reverdy Ransom, and businessmen like Arthur "Golden Rule" Nash and Harold Hatch, made it a widely accepted tenet of evangelical Christianity around the turn of the twentieth century that individual salvation was incompletely effectual without social salvation. Converted individuals could still get swept up in the sins of fallen social systems, which were always in the process of placing the hearts and minds of still other individuals beyond the reach of the (individual) gospel.[5]

The most helpful scheme for understanding the early AFSC's various shades of social Christianity is that of historian Henry R. May in his *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (1949). May divides social Christians into three groups: conservatives, progressives, and radicals. Conservatives distrusted labor unions and rejected state interference in the economy. Most of the AFSC's early board members and executive staff were of this conservative stripe; many were themselves industrial or financial executives. Progressives were the stereotypical Social Gospelers (May, in fact, restricts his use of the label to this group) in that they supported labor unions and urged Christian capitalists to replace profit and competition with the law of love, welcoming

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Salvation: Social Christianity and America, 1880-1925 (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2000).

[5] For a comprehensive review of the historiography of social Christianity and the Social Gospel, see Smith, *The Search for Social Salvation*, 1-49.

state intervention to this end. Some of the AFSC's staff and many of its volunteers in the field were progressives in May's sense. This dissertation calls them liberals. The story of the AFSC's first thirty years is in many ways that of liberalism overtaking conservatism within the organization. Almost no one in the early AFSC was a radical, espousing socialism and advocating revolution.[6] The organization's often uneasy collaboration with radicals like fellow Quaker A. J. Muste and the Presbyterian and Socialist Norman Thomas constitutes a minor theme in the following pages.

As historian Donald Meyer argues, Protestant churches in general, or at least their ministers and lay elite, saw the church as a neutral mediator between warring social factions, especially capital and labor.[7] Before the 1930s, these social Christians feared taking sides in social conflicts lest they become complicit in either side's sins. In the abstract, this neutrality looks like craven captivity to capitalism, and many historians have taken social Christians to task for catering to wealthy congregants and failing to stand with workers and unions in their fight for economic justice and political recognition.[8] While there is much truth to this criticism, the early history of the AFSC offers another, perhaps fresh, way of looking at social Christians' reluctance to take sides: it is one thing to denounce a social order and seek to change it by converting hearts, minds, and laws, and quite another thing to seek to feed the hungry, clothe the

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[6] May, *Protestant Churches and Industrial America* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), 163-181, 235-262. See also Smith, *The Search for Salvation*, 6.
[7] Donald Meyer, *The Protestant Search for Political Realism, 1919-1941*, 2nd ed. (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988 [1960]), 104, 109-110.
[8] For the most recent examples, see Heath Carter, *Union Made: Working People and the Rise of Social Christianity in Chicago* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), and William A. Mirola, *Redeeming Time: Protestantism and Chicago's Eight-Hour Movement* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2015).

naked, and give shelter to the poor in those places where the social order has broken down and where the springs of human decency, let alone justice, are choked with fear, hatred, and violence. In such places what is necessary is not prophetic indictment but concrete acts of mercy. And often the gatekeepers to these nether regions of suffering are the very powers—whether capitalists at home or dictators abroad—to whom to speak truth, or to have spoken truth, would mean refusal of entrance. From this angle neutrality looks like compassion rather than cowardice.

The Christian social order the AFSC envisioned was distinctly pacifist. As Quakers, their pacifism tended to be absolute and religiously based. All of the "historic peace churches"— Mennonites, Church of the Brethren, and Quakers—find pacifism mandated by the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount, and Jesus' injunction to "resist not evil." Yet Quaker pacifism is distinct from that of the Mennonites and Brethren in that it springs ultimately not from biblical literalism, but from an experiential awareness of the light of Christ in every human being. Friends try to enter into that spirit in which the Scriptures were given forth, and to recognize and respond to "that of God" in every person. This experientialism has lent Quaker pacifism a peculiar flexibility: at times it has led Friends to adopt absolute positions against war—refusing to pay any taxes whatsoever, refusing to hire substitutes when conscripted—while at others it has led them to take up arms. In the American Revolution a group of Philadelphia Friends formed the Free Quakers when they were "disowned" (expelled) by their "meetings" (local religious bodies) for supporting the military effort for Independence, and many Friends fought in the American Civil War to end slavery, and in the great "war to end all wars," World War I.

While it might be anachronistic or too simplistic to speak of Quaker pacifism as aspiring to absolute neutrality before the Great War and the founding of the AFSC, Quakers historically have so emphasized the unity of the Holy Spirit that traditionally they have made all corporate decisions not by majority rule but by the "sense of the meeting." This is something more than consensus, but often less than unanimity: not everyone must be in agreement, but no one can be in absolute disagreement with a decision before a body of Quakers can adopt it. One of the first Friends, Edward Burroughs, offered the following guidelines in 1662 for proceeding in unity (emphasis added): "Being orderly come together, not…seeking to outspeak and over-reach one another in discourse as if it were controversy between party and party of men, or *two sides violently striving for dominion*, not deciding affairs by the greater vote, but…in love, coolness, gentleness and dear unity—I say, as *one only party*, all for the truth of Christ."[9] This sounds much like an early Quaker prescription for what the Quakers of the early AFSC were to call neutrality.

The history of the AFSC's major relief work between 1919 and 1941 opens a window onto how this conviction of fundamental spiritual unity aspired to transcend national boundaries. Quakers might be famous as pacifists and humanitarians, but not as major geopolitical players who swayed the fates of nations. Yet the Quakers of the AFSC helped keep Germany intact after the Great War by feeding over five million German children between 1920 and 1924. They were the first group of citizens in history from a victorious nation to help, for primarily humanitarian reasons, the nation who started the

[9] Quoted in Michael L. Birkel, *Silence and Witness: The Quaker Tradition*, Traditions of Christian Spirituality Series, ed. Philip Sheldrake (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004), 67-68.

war recover from defeat. Then six years after Hitler took over the country they had helped save, AFSC leaders praised the Nazis' hospitality in granting them permission (or so they thought) to evacuate all of Germany's able-bodied Jews and non-Aryans. Here was absolute neutrality practiced in the name of spiritual solidarity with human beings who, though they were of a different faith, still had the same Light within them as dwelt within the Quakers of the AFSC.

The AFSC's leaders were internationalists, but mostly of the liberal, or Wilsonian, variety described most recently by historian Cara Burnidge in *A Peaceful Conquest* (2016), rather than the radical Christian kind professed by the subjects of historian Michael Thompson's *For God and Globe* (2015).[10] That is, these Quakers emerged from the Great War identifying the cause of America with the cause of the world, rather than opposing all nationalisms, including American. They did not seek to blunt their own nationalism, but believed with Woodrow Wilson that the United States, as the very embodiment of liberty and equality, was the universal telos of the development of the nation-state, and so it should take the lead in establishing and maintaining a new world order in which democracy defined the inner workings of nations, while the rule of law and arbitration regulated relations among them.

The AFSC's relationship to the state, however, was more ambivalent than its enthusiasm for Wilson's postwar vision suggests. The meeting of national Quaker representatives that was to form the AFSC started meeting on April 30, 1917, just

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[10] Cara Lea Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest: Woodrow Wilson, Religion, and the New World Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 3; Michael G. Thompson, *For God and Globe: Christian Internationalism in the United States between the Great War and the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015), 4.

eighteen days before President Wilson signed the Selective Service Act into law. On July 11 of that year one hundred young men—"the Haverford Unit"—started training under Prof. Rufus Jones and Dr. James A. Babbitt at Haverford College, a Quaker college outside Philadelphia, for reconstruction work with the American Red Cross in France. The work was to consist largely of assembling "demountable houses" in former war zones. Only fifty-one of the hundred men, plus three women, sailed for France in early September, arriving in Paris on September 14, 1917. The other forty-nine men had been drafted.[11]

The draftees had to report to their designated mobilization camps and await furloughs that were long in coming. Most were treated respectfully at camp when they refused to drill or carry a weapon or even wear the military uniform, but some were beaten, had their eyes gouged and their ears boxed, were imprisoned and chained to their cell doors and fed nothing but bread and water for days on end, and were also psychologically abused with ridicule, threats of shooting, and never-ending argument. Several were court-martialed and sentenced to anywhere from ten to thirty years imprisonment. Many camps segregated conscientious objectors and kept them in enforced idleness. This, according to Jones, broke some of the men, but the majority "kept the faith" to the end.[12]

The end for each man finally arrived in spring of 1918 in the form of a possible furlough from the Army so he could "engage in civil occupations and pursuits," without

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[11] Rufus M. Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time: American Friends Relief Work in Europe, 1917-1919*, Pennsbury Series, Vol. V (New York: Macmillan, 1920), 21, 27, 64-65, 25.
[12] Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time*, 87, 96, 103-105.

pay, in the interest of "national security and defense," to quote the Act of Congress signed into law by Wilson on March 9, 1918. The War Department then ruled that the AFSC's work of reconstructing French villages qualified as one such occupation and pursuit, and appointed a three-person board of inquiry to interview the COs at each camp to determine the "sincerity" of each man's conscientious objection. According to Jones, nearly every CO deemed "sincere" accepted service with the AFSC. Just at this time the AFSC's own executive secretary, Vincent D. Nicholson, was drafted and was unable to secure exemption; he languished in a military camp until the armistice. So the AFSC turned in August 1918 to Wilbur K. Thomas, of Boston, who led the AFSC in its great postwar work in Germany (and elsewhere in Europe and Russia), where the AFSC fed over five million children between 1920 and 1924.[13]

So for the Quakers of the AFSC, Weber's definition of the state as that "human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory" was not theoretical.[14] They experienced firsthand the legitimate coercion and even violence of the state firsthand. This helps explain their political conservatism relative to the statist enthusiasm of so many political progressives, and of such Social Gospel agencies as the Federal Council of Churches, which no body of American Quakers joined. Behind every governmental intervention in the social and economic order lay the iron hand of physical force. How could an organization of absolute pacifists like the AFSC promote or endorse statist solutions to the problems of military and industrial conflict, when those solutions rested ultimately on physical force?

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[13] Jones, *A Service of Love in War Time*, 114, 116-117.
[14] Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, trans. and ed. H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), 78.

The experience of COs in the Great War would have merely activated the voluntarism woven into the collective DNA of early-twentieth-century Anglo-American Quakerism. English Friends had been so terribly persecuted by the Crown after its Restoration in 1660 that they called their national administrative body in London the Meeting for Sufferings. American Friends had suffered vigilante violence during the Revolution for their pacifism, and imprisonment, distraint of property, and social ostracism during the Civil War. Suspicion of the state ran deep, and after the Great War many Quakers bore on their flesh and in their souls the literal and metaphorical marks of the American government's monopoly on legitimate physical force. Only something world-shaking could have driven them into the arms of the state. It took a direct encounter with the radical and overwhelming suffering of the Great Depression in the hills and hollers of Appalachian coal country to persuade the AFSC to advocate and approve massive governmental intervention in the country's economic order.

The salience of these denominational particularities and peculiarities should not obscure the otherwise broad theological and social agreement between the Quakers of the AFSC and liberal American Protestants at large.[15] Pacifism and political economy aside, almost all of these religious liberals subscribed to some kind of theological modernism—endorsing Darwinism, higher criticism of the Bible, and the belief that God was immanent in the human historical process—denounced racial oppression and cutthroat

[15] Smith, *The Search for Social Salvation*, emphasizes that between 1900 and 1920, "Protestants across the theological spectrum [Smith rejects the 'two-party paradigm'] affirmed the centrality of the Bible, based their piety, theology, and practice on devotion to Jesus Christ, stressed the importance of the Kingdom of God, and wholeheartedly supported the foreign missions movement" (4).

capitalism, and strongly supported Prohibition.[16] They all came to agree over the first third of the twentieth century that Protestantism's enemy was not, in fact, Catholicism, or even Judaism or Islam—was not, in fact, any world religion at all—but secularism and materialism.[17] Social ethics provided Protestants one point of entry into interreligious dialogue and cooperation as they sought to stem the tide of global godlessness, but the primary portal was religious experience, specifically mysticism. And here non-programmed or silent-worship Quakers, who constituted the majority of the early AFSC's staff and volunteers, were peculiarly poised to lead the way.

Quakerism had always exhibited a mystical bent, but Rufus Jones (1863-1948), professor of philosophy at Haverford College and influential prophet of religious liberalism, persuaded much of American Quakerism that mysticism was the distinctive Quaker contribution to the body of Christ.[18] Between 1900 and 1920, in a series of books on Christian mysticism and Quaker history, Jones distinguished "affirmation" or active mysticism from "negation" or passive mysticism, and associated the latter with neo-Platonism, Catholic cloisters, and the Quakers' own (in his eyes) quasi-heretical Quietist period of the eighteenth century.[19] The former he associated with all of the ethically engaged saints of the church, from Francis of Assisi to John Woolman, whom immediate contact with God had propelled *into* the world rather than out of it. For Jones, this was

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[16] See esp. William R. Hutchison, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976).
[17] See esp. William Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 161.
[18] See esp. Rufus M. Jones, *Quakerism: A Spiritual Movement. Six Essays by Rufus M. Jones*, ed. Mary Hoxie Jones (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Friends, 1963).
[19] See esp. Rufus M. Jones, *Social Law in the Spiritual World Studies in Human and Divine Inter-Relationship* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1904), 152-153.

the sort of mysticism that Quaker meeting for worship on the basis of silence was supposed to cultivate among Friends. This ethical mysticism was to engender experimentally in Quakers what the Social Gospel was to encourage theologically in their liberal Protestant brothers and sisters: a spiritual impetus to serve society and to work for social justice.

American religious historian Leigh Schmidt has identified ethical mysticism as one expression of liberal American Protestants' belief in the experience of immediate contact with God as the common ground of all the world's religions. Schmidt points out that this universalism was the product of a particular historical moment, in which Protestantism held sway over the United States and believed itself the fulfillment of religion the world over.[20] This sense of cultural power and confidence often lent American Protestants an air of being above history, above the fray, an air which manifested itself in social Christianity as the right and responsibility of the church to stay neutral and mediate between warring social, political, and economic factions still caught in the maelstrom of history. The Quakers of the AFSC, despite—or perhaps because of—the peculiarity of their pacifism, shared in this cultural power, this middle-class Protestant sense of having risen above all of the pettiness and greed and envy that sparked so much industrial and geopolitical strife. It might not be too much to call this a liberal Protestant culture of neutrality, which thrived between 1890 and 1930, with Woodrow Wilson as its high priest.

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[20] Leigh Eric Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71:2 (June 2003): 290, 293.

The AFSC in the 1920s and 30s provides a case study in how this liberal Protestant culture of neutrality reacted under the stress of direct confrontation with the suffering inflicted by war and capitalism.

This Dissertation's Additional Contributions to Scholarship

Quaker Studies. Studies of twentieth-century American Quakerism are scarce, even though, as Leigh Schmidt has persuasively argued, Quakers had an enormous influence on American religion and culture during the last century.[21] The AFSC was a major purveyor of Quaker influence, but the few studies of the AFSC's first twenty-five years are either dated, romanticized, or too narrow and brief to register the AFSC's significance beyond Quakerism.[22]

Holocaust Studies. Neither of the major studies that assess the AFSC's role in rescuing European Jews—William Nawyn's *American Protestantism's Response to Germany's Jews and Refugees* (1981) and Haim Genizi's *Amerian Apathy* (1983)—discusses the AFSC's mission to the Gestapo in 1938. Nor do Harry Feingold's *The Politics of Rescue* (1970), David Wyman's *Paper Walls* (1985), or Richard Breitman and

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[21] Schmidt, *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), esp. chap. 6, "Seekers."

[22] Lester M. Jones (no relation to Rufus), *Quakers in Action: Recent Humanitarian and Reform Activities of the American Quakers* (New York: Macmillan, 1929) is still useful. Mary Hoxie Jones (Rufus's daughter), *Swords into Ploughshares: An Account of the American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1937* (New York: Macmillan, 1937) is largely fictionalized. John Forbes, *The Quaker Star under Seven Flags, 1917-1927* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1962) is restricted to the AFSC's dealings with foreign governments. J. William Frost, "'Our Deeds Carry Our Message': The Early History of the American Friends Service Committee," *Quaker History* 81:1 (Spring 1992): 1-49, speaks only to American Quaker historiography.

Allen Lichtman's *FDR and the Jews* (2013). Hans Schmitt's *Quakers and Nazis* (1997) is cursory and does not provide the Gestapo's point of view.[23]

History of Philanthropy and Humanitarianism. A few historians have analyzed the explosion of American philanthropy and international humanitarianism during the first half of the twentieth century, most recently Branden Little in "Band of Crusaders" (PhD. diss., 2009), Olivier Zunz in *Philanthropy in America: A History* (2011), and Julia Irwin in *Making the World Safe* (2012).[24] The AFSC's mass child-feedings, however, fall outside the purview of each of these works. Apart from Merle Curti in *American Philanthropy Abroad* (1963), American historians have almost entirely neglected the AFSC's work in interwar Germany and Appalachia.[25]

History of Pacifism. The AFSC's humanitarian methods distinguished it from the other major pacifist organization of the interwar period, the Fellowship of Reconciliation

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[23] Genizi, *American Apathy: The Plight of Christian Refugees from Nazism* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983), 172–214; Nawyn, *American Protestantism's Response Germany's Jews and Refugees, 1933–1941* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Research Press, 1981), 107–136; Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938–1945* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1970); Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1985 [1968]); Breitman and Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2013); Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997), 107-109.

[24] Little, "Band of Crusaders: American Humanitarians and the Remaking of the World, 1914-1924" (PhD diss, University of California, Berkeley, 2009); Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History*, Politics and Society in Modern America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[25] Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 278, 279.

(FOR).[26] The FOR's social and political influence was broader than the AFSC's, yet what the AFSC lacked in activist fervor it made up in humanitarian labor, and its sustained presence abroad in places like Germany made it a significant nonstate diplomatic actor.

Why Germany and Appalachia?

This dissertation ignores the AFSC's other work in other places—humanitarian aid in France, Russia, Poland, Serbia, Austria, China, and Spain abroad, interracial relations and peace education at home—for several reasons in addition to limits of space, resources, and time.

The AFSC saw the German feeding as its signal contribution to the cause of peace and humanity after the Great War. It dedicated more resources—if not personnel—to Germany than to all other concurrent foreign and domestic operations combined. As mentioned above, the feeding represented a historic leap forward in humanitarianism, an unprecedented extension of human sympathy and care. And it was more crucial to the political survival of its recipient nation than was any other of the AFSC's feeding programs. Yet for all of its historical significance, the AFSC's German feeding has received little scholarly attention over the last one hundred years, and almost none in the last twenty-five. No study before this one has related Quaker spirituality to the origins of the feeding. The AFSC's internal tussle over Quakerizing Germany has also never seen the light of day, though it illuminates themes of secularism and the evolution of Christian

[26] For the FOR, see Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).

missions in the twentieth century. Finally, no one until now has used German primary sources to delve beneath the legend of the AFSC's mission to the Gestapo.

If historians have neglected the AFSC's German work, they have entirely ignored its Appalachian work. Jerry Bruce Thomas, in *An Appalachian New Deal* (1998), seems to be the lone exception, and even he pays scant attention to the AFSC.[27] The AFSC's own insistence on the continuity between military and industrial warfare invites comparison between relieving the victims of each—hence this dissertation's chapters on the AFSC's relief of striking miners and mill workers. Also, Allan Austin's *Quaker Brotherhood* (2012) covers the AFSC's cautious attempts at racial reconciliation during this same period.[28] This leaves the AFSC's peace education programs—most notably its "peace caravans"—as yet unexplored in the scholarship, as well as its relief of civilians on both sides of the Spanish Civil War.

The "Politics of Neutrality"

The AFSC might not have called itself a humanitarian agency in the 1920s and 30s, but it acted like one, including careful cultivating of a reputation for absolute political and religious neutrality. Scholars of humanitarianism over the past two decades have sifted "neutrality" for its various historical, anthropological, and ethical meanings.

The AFSC was hardly the only humanitarian agency to practice the politics of neutrality. On the contrary, such politics are endemic to humanitarianism. In *Empire of*

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[27] Thomas, *An Appalachian New Deal: West Virginia in the Great Depression* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1998). See chapter 4 below for specific references.

[28] Austin, *Quaker Brotherhood: Interracial Activism and the American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1950* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

Humanity (2011), a history of humanitarianism, political scientist Michael Barnett identifies four enduring principles of humanitarianism: "humanity" (all human beings deserve help), "impartiality" (aid is to be given based on need alone), "neutrality" (aid is not to be used to bolster any one side of a conflict), and "independence" (aid should have no ties to a directly interested party). Barnett also identifies two major kinds of humanitarianism: "emergency" and "alchemical." The former tries, in accordance with the four principles, to keep people alive, and considers itself apolitical. The latter also saves lives but is less rule-bound and accepts and even embraces politics as a way to remove the root causes of suffering—a melding of emergency humanitarianism with modern philanthropy.[29] When the AFSC involved itself in Roosevelt's New Deal, it moved haltingly from emergency to alchemical humanitarianism.

Emergency humanitarians are ipso facto political, however much they might protest to the contrary. Barnett finds them practicing a "politics of resistance, of humanity, of protest against an international sacrificial order that sacrifices so many in the name of justice, of life."[30] Certainly the AFSC practiced this brand of politics when it fed starving Germans and workers whom many if not most Americans deemed bloodthirsty "Huns" and revolutionary "communists." Yet the AFSC practiced also what this dissertation call a "politics of neutrality." This was the careful and intentional cultivation of a reputation for absolute neutrality in matters of religion and politics in order to be able to save lives.

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[29] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), 33, 37-39.
[30] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity*, 38.

Anthropologist of humanitarianism Peter Redfield considers humanitarian neutrality a "negative form of politics: a strategic refusal with moral inflections."[31] In other words, humanitarian neutrality is never a passive stance but always a positive assertion, a calculated means to certain ethical ends. The AFSC's ultimate end was peace, its immediate ends the preservation of life and the reduction of suffering. So though the AFSC of the interwar years conceived of itself as a thoroughly Quaker institution, it never tied its aid to the religion of potential recipients ("religion" understood as belief or intellectual assent to a set of doctrines) and was allergic to any whiff of religious evangelism or proselytization by its workers. And though the AFSC was proudly American, it never tied its aid to political persuasion; one did not have to subscribe to capitalism and liberal democracy for one's children to be fed.

Yet neutrality is as historically contingent as any other concept or practice. It means different things to different people in different times and places. Redfield explains that neutrality as a formal legal category emerged in early modern Europe as sovereign powers sought to protect their material interests and political and geographic integrity in the midst of various religious and imperial wars. It was never absolute, but only valid for certain conflicts and for certain kinds of relationships. Neutrals had to refrain from conflict and treat all sides impartially, lest they lose their claim to neutrality. So neutrality began as pragmatic, self-interested, limited, and fragile. "Only in the nineteenth century did neutrality come to be defined as an absolute state." In the context of total war, a

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[31] Redfield, "The Impossible Problem of Neutrality," in Peter Redfield & Erica Bornstein, eds., *Forces of Compassion: Humanitarianism Between Ethics and Politics* (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, Advanced Seminar Series, 2011), 53.

certain population could only hope to protect itself by totally abstaining from conflict and having its abstention officially recognized.[32]

Then the Great War and the ensuing disillusionment with the Treaty of Versailles did much to discredit militarism in the United States and vindicate pacifism. Pacifism steadily became no longer the peculiar doctrine of a few small sects and societies but, for a growing number of Americans, a necessary means of human survival. So the AFSC could proselytize for pacifism in Germany, but not for Quakerism; pacifism was no longer considered inherently religious. Because many leading liberal Quakers embraced Wilson's conception of democracy as essentially selfless and peaceful, the AFSC could also unabashedly promote the values of liberal democracy—rule by parliamentary majority and an individual right to private property—while still believing it was behaving apolitically. In Appalachia in the 1920s and 30s the AFSC's relative religious neutrality held, but its political neutrality began to give. Confronted with immense suffering in their own country, many AFSC field staff working in the Appalachian coalfields agonized over whether they should side openly and actively with those who were poor and dispossessed while their leaders in Philadelphia carefully maintained the organization's posture of absolute neutrality.

When it came to helping Jews escape Nazism after the Night of Broken Glass, on the other hand, the AFSC had no choice but to remain neutral. It is generally recognized that Gandhi's nonviolence was able to succeed in India only because the British were relatively liberal and humane. It is hard to imagine nonviolent resistance working in a totalitarian state like the Third Reich, where anybody at any time could be whisked away

[32] Redfield, "The Impossible Problem of Neutrality," 55-57.

in the middle of night and never seen or heard from again. The viability of political nonviolence, explains ethicist James F. Childress, rests on a basic level of trust between activist and adversary—and the Nazis could not be trusted.[33] The AFSC could not raise the slightest protest against the treatment of the Jews in Germany, lest the Nazis close its office in Berlin and perhaps arrest or even murder its workers (highly unlikely in the years before the war, but always a possibility). Yet the constraints of operating in a totalitarian state should not excuse certain of the AFSC's leaders for believing in the Nazis' good faith, nor the tendency in Quaker circles down to the present day to memorialize the AFSC's mission to the Gestapo as an actual—if momentary—triumph of love and goodwill over hate and evil.

Thomas R. Kelly (1893-1941), professor of philosophy at Haverford College, was one of the influential members of the AFSC who in the late 1930s entertained few illusions about the imminent fate of the world and the AFSC's power to alter it. Some suffering was inexorable, he believed, and that which could be ended usually yielded only to the work and prayer of multiple generations. Shaped as he was by Rufus Jones's mystical conception of Quakerism (which itself had been shaped by William James's radical empiricism), Kelly called his fellow Quaker pacifists to surrender themselves to the Light Within. Social action, he reminded them, was only one of the many fruits of "holy obedience" to the Light. And if action in this world did not bear within it the seed of eternity, it could hope neither to shelter the afflicted nor ramify into the generational commitment necessary to eradicate the affliction itself.

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[33] Childress, *Moral Responsibility in Conflicts: Essays on Nonviolence, War, and Conscience* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982), 1-28.

Overview of Chapters

In 1919 Germany was in danger of dissolving in civil war and ceasing to exist as a nation-state only fifty years after Bismarck midwifed its bloody birth out of the "Wars of Unification." American Quakers helped the country hold together by keeping its children from starving to death. Chapter 1, "Feeding Germany," critically examines the AFSC's American nationalism during its mass feedings of German children even as it tried to maintain a posture of absolute political neutrality. Chapter 2, "Quakerizing Germany," discusses an AFSC worker's proposal for converting hundreds of thousands of Germans to Quakerism, and suggests that the explosion of American international humanitarianism during and after the Great War, of which the Quaker feeding was a part, contributed to the liberalization of American Protestant foreign missions. Eight years after the Quaker feeding, Germany scrapped democracy and under Hitler began violently to repress its Jews (whom the AFSC had insisted on feeding alongside Catholics and Protestants). Eventually the AFSC was to come face to face with the leader of this repression, Gestapo chief Reinhard "Hangman" Heydrich.

Between the hunger and the "Hangman," however, the AFSC relieved those they saw as victims of another kind of war—one being waged right on its doorstep. Industrial warfare was starving the innocent women and children of striking miners and mill workers in southern Appalachia, just as the Allied naval blockade during and after the Great War had starved innocent women and children in Germany. AFSC leaders drew precisely this parallel to justify their intervention in domestic labor battles between 1922 and 1936, and deployed many of the same personnel and foodstuffs in Appalachia as they

had in Germany. Chapter 3, "Quakers and Labor," focuses on the 1920s and shows how AFSC workers in Appalachia discovered and agonized over the outright conflict between social justice and humanitarianism. Chapter 4, "A Quaker New Deal—New Deal Quakers," shows how these Quakers came to shed enough of their voluntarist scruples to actively seek massive government intervention in the economy. Talk of "justice" began complementing talk of "love" within the AFSC. Relief without "rehabilitation" was no longer enough. Laws and institutions had to be changed along with hearts.

As the New Deal replaced private philanthropy with public aid, the AFSC shifted its attention back to foreign affairs—especially in Germany, where the AFSC and the Friends Service Council (Britain) had kept an office in Berlin since the days of the child-feeding. Chapter 5, "The AFSC's Mission to the Gestapo," tells the remarkable story of the AFSC's three-man delegation to the Gestapo and Reinhard "Hangman" Heydrich in Berlin in December of 1938, just after Kristallnacht—a story that lays bare the tragic choices humanitarians often have to make when faced with a violent government whose permission they need in order to save people from its own brutality.

Chapter 6, "The Totalitarian Claims of Christ," examines the ethical mysticism of the aforementioned Thomas Kelly as he came to articulate it after his visit to Nazi Germany in the summer of 1938. His meeting with the rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel that summer solidified for him the link between mysticism and the responsibility to alleviate suffering. Only those who had surrendered themselves utterly to the will of God, he said, could speak of hope with any authenticity to a German Jew. It was a time for saints more than social workers. By the end of 1939 the AFSC's mission to prevent a second world war through material relief had failed. Speaking at large annual gatherings

of Philadelphia Friends between 1938 and his death in 1941, Kelly offered an ethical-mystical alternative to the pacifist-realist debate.

The epilogue briefly sketches the history of the AFSC from 1941 to 1955. By 1955 the AFSC was ready to "speak truth to power." Gone was absolute neutrality. Gone also was large-scale relief. It seems that the American state, by assuming the lion's share of relief at home and abroad with the New Deal and the Marshall Plan, had freed the Quakers to speak their truth without restraint. To speak truth *to* power, perhaps one cannot also be *in* power.

"Children are always the first catastrophe of war."

Rufus M. Jones, 1947

1: Feeding Germany

On a bright and breezy October day near the end of the Great War, a large and imperious Quaker woman in a gray corduroy suit sat in her family home in Mt. Kisco, New York, and wrote a short note to her denomination's infant "service committee."[1] One of a family of socially conscious Quakers, by 1918 she had already served on missions to Cuba, Mexico, Jamaica, and Native American reservations, had directed the New York Colored Mission in Manhattan for several years, and had helped found the very service committee to which now she appealed.[2] She had a "concern," she said—not especially for her fellow Americans or for any of the Allies, but for the so-called "Huns" whom the world blamed for the horrors of the last four years. "For the past two or three years I have felt a concern for service among the people in Germany," she wrote on October 15, 1918. "As the opportunity for such service seems to be approaching I write to volunteer under your leadership. I believe that Friends have, awaiting them in that country, an important service in spiritual healing and reconstruction."[3] A member of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), she felt called to be a friend to the friendless. And Germany in 1918

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[1] Hugh Barbour, "The Woods of Mt. Kisco," *Quaker History* 87 (April 1998): 11.
[2] Barbour, "The Woods of Mt. Kisco," 7, 11.
[3] Wood to AFSC, October 15, 1918, box Personnel Files: Win to Z, 1917-1927, American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia, PA [hereafter AFSC].

was truly a forsaken country, a byword for suicidal imperialism at the dawn of a democratic age.

Almost six years to the day after Carolena Morris Wood put her note in the mail, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) officially ended its child-feeding program in Germany, having fed over five million German children between February 26, 1920, and September 30, 1924. That was one meal, every day, for six months, for one quarter of all German children born between 1909 and 1919. A new word even entered the German language: *gequackert*, "to get Quakered," i.e., to receive the AFSC's supplementary meal. The Quakers of the AFSC were the first group of citizens in history, from a nation that won a war, to systematically and for primarily humanitarian reasons help the country who started the war recover from defeat. The National Lutheran Council and the Commonwealth Fund might have provided substantial money, food, and clothing from American donors, and neutral countries like Switzerland and Norway might have helped supply German soup kitchens (which at one time fed 1.5 million people a day) and given $2 million for the care of German children, respectively. But it was the AFSC that actually administered the bulk of foreign relief in postwar Germany.[4]

Historian Martin Marty has argued that American religious denominations have historically been "part of a complex national ecosystem" out of which parochial issues have often "emerged transformed" as issues of "geopolitical significance."[5] The AFSC's feeding of Germany exemplified this immense democratic potential of American

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[4] Merle Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad: A History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 278, 279.
[5] Martin Marty, *Modern American Religion, Vol. Two: The Noise of Conflict, 1919-1941* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 28.

denominationalism, with an individual Quaker's "concern" setting off a chain of events that resulted in the survival of a temporarily crippled foreign power. For one could say without much exaggeration that American Quakers saved not only millions of Germans but even the country itself. The director of Weimar's Ministry of Food and Agriculture told an American journalist in 1921 that the child-feeding had helped the Republic survive its early days. By providing the children of the poorer classes with the basic means of survival, the Quakers had arrested the spread of bolshevism and despair.[6] All of this while the United States and Germany were still officially at war: the U.S. Senate refused to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, so the two countries remained officially at war until July 1921, when President Harding signed the Knox-Porter Resolution declaring peace between the United States and the former Central Powers of Germany, Austria, and Hungary.

The AFSC's German feeding is glaringly absent from the historiography of American involvement in Europe during and after the war. The Commission for Relief in Belgium (CRB) and the American Red Cross (ARC), on the other hand, have received sustained attention from historians Branden Little and Julia Irwin. One of Little's main protagonists in "Band of Crusaders" is Herbert Hoover, a Quaker himself, who led the CRB and the American Relief Administration (ARA).[7] Little's timeframe runs from 1914 to 1924, but he omits the AFSC's German feeding, even though Hoover initiated it and

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[6] Ministerialdirektor Erich Hoffmann's answers to questionnaire from an anonymous American journalist, July 6, 1921, R43I/1270, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde, Germany.

[7] Little, "Band of Crusaders: American Humanitarians and the Remaking of the World, 1914-1924" (PhD diss, University of California, Berkeley, 2009).

gave it crucial support through the ARA. That Irwin in *Making the World Safe* would ignore the AFSC's German feeding is understandable since the ARC is her subject, not the AFSC. Yet her work inadvertently helps explain why American diplomatic and international historians have ignored the AFSC's feeding: they have preferred to focus on official or semi-official, rather than entirely private ("non-state"), individuals and agencies.

But it was precisely because it was not affiliated with the US government that the AFSC was able to help save Germany and thereby play such a pivotal role in foreign affairs. The AFSC decided just before the feeding ended in 1924 to become a permanent organization and to seek a charter from the state of Pennsylvania (granted in 1928), but it never sought or attained the quasi-public status of the ARC. When the United States declared war on Germany, the ARC abandoned any remaining pretense it had to neutrality and canceled all of noncombatant relief to the Central Powers; the ARC War Council decided that the American government's official aid agency could not give aid and comfort to the enemy.[8] A member of the ARC's Executive Council put it bluntly: "We do not propose to be tried for treason."[9] Then as the war drew to a close, the appropriation for the ARA came with strings attached: no aid for the former Central Powers.[10] So neither the American Red Cross nor the ARA could directly help German civilians survive and rebuild, even though Wilson's vision of liberal internationalism

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[8] Julia F. Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 68, 73.
[9] Charles Norton, quoted in Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 73.
[10] Sydney Brooks, *American Aid to Germany: 1918-1925*, ed. Donald S. Howard, Administration of Relief Abroad: A Series of Occasional Papers, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1943), 15.

depended ultimately on civilians everywhere being well enough fed to go to school, work hard, and govern rationally.[11] It ultimately fell to the entirely private AFSC to carry the Wilsonian vision of civilian relief behind enemy lines.

The Quakers of the AFSC were more than willing, indeed eager, to promote Wilson's vision. Historian Cara Burnidge describes this vision as a political theology that "regarded democracy…as an ideal society reflecting the ethos of the social gospel and, therefore, worth spreading around the world."[12] When war broke out in Europe in August 1914, an editorial in the Philadelphia Quaker periodical *The American Friend* captured the Wilsonian spirit as it was aborning. "America is not an enemy to any people. She, as no other can do it, has the opportunity of the ages to bear aloft the torch of human liberty that will call all men to the ideal of universal brotherhood." America was to do this "not as a superior, but as a brother to all."[13] Before a meeting of the Federal Council of Churches in Ohio the following December, Wilson said, "America is great in the world, not as she is a successful government merely, but as she is the successful embodiment of a great ideal of unselfish citizenship. This is what makes the world feel America draw it like a lodestone."[14] What could be more unselfish than feeding the enemy's children?

The AFSC wanted to feed Germany in large part because the country was an international pariah, but within Germany physical need alone determined who got fed. German governmental organizations came to model their own child welfare techniques

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[11] Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 71.
[12] Cara Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest: Woodrow Wilson, Religion, and the New World Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 3.
[13] "What Are We to Learn from the Conflict?" *American Friend* II:33 (Aug 13, 1914), 547, 548.
[14] Quoted in Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest*, 3.

on the Quaker feeding.[15] The AFSC participated in a secular discourse about children as vulnerable innocents on whom the future depended. Sociologist Laura Suski summarizes historiography on childhood as concluding that nations "discover" childhood as they industrialize. That is, children become emotionally and psychologically valuable precisely when they become economically useless. Born as the United States industrialized after the Civil War, the Quakers of the early AFSC were primed to idealize childhood as a "space outside the demands of adult life." As Suski explains, when a person from an industrialized society hears, say, about a German child living on nothing but turnips or potatoes, maybe with a little grass thrown in, and sees a picture of the child with its legs bent inward at sharp angles from rickets, "the image functions to express an ultimately destabilizing rupture with the modern child." The image stirs up feelings of pity, disgust, and compassion. When these feelings impel action—when, say, a group of American Quakers is moved to feed starving German children—they can then be labelled political.[16]

And yet Wood's note indicates that from the very first many of the Quakers involved in Germany wanted to do more than feed the hungry and clothe the naked (clothes were also made, donated, and distributed) and so preserve the Weimar Republic and protect the future. Or rather, they invested such material relief with hopes of "spiritual healing and reconstruction." Not everyone shared these hopes, though, and

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[15] See "Minutes of Meeting of the Work Office of the German Central Office for Foreign Aid (DZA)," January 24, 1923, R86/5403, Bundesarchiv Berlin-Lichterfelde.
[16] Lauren Suski, "Children, Suffering, and the Humanitarian Appeal," in Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown, eds., *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 203, 204, 207, 217.

some feared that the mere mention of "religion" might vitiate the AFSC's message of unconditioned goodwill. The Quakers of the AFSC constantly debated among themselves whether what they were doing in Germany (and on a smaller scale elsewhere in Europe and in Russia) was in fact religious, and if so, how. This was not an academic question. It lay at the heart of the individual workers' sense of identity and purpose. Were they bureaucrats or missionaries? Were they relief workers or evangelists? Were they Americans engaged in the realpolitik of stemming the communist tide while easing American farm surpluses, or were they Quakers preaching pacifism with deeds instead of words?[17] Chapter 2 will address these questions more directly.

The politics of neutrality complicated and intensified these questions. Germany was divided politically and religiously after the war. Socialists, communists, and nationalists of varying kinds were all fighting for control of the country. The AFSC could not appear to favor any one of these. Wood herself appreciated the need for neutrality. When she and two other AFSC representatives, Jane Addams of Hull House and her associate Dr. Alice Hamilton, were finally granted access to Germany in May of 1919 in order to assess the country's actual need, she assured the AFSC, "We shall, of course, be most careful to avoid the least complicity in political matters."[18] Yet neutrality for many of Wood's friends in the AFSC did not preclude American nationalism. This was entirely in keeping with the social Christianity of Wilsonian internationalism, in which, in

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[17] See Frank Costigliola, *Awkward Dominion: American Political, Economic, and Cultural Relations with Europe, 1919-1933* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), 39-50, and Adam Tooze, *The Deluge: The Great War and the Remaking of Global Order, 1916-1931* (New York: Allen Lane, 2014), 291.

[18] Wood to Wilbur K. Thomas, May 8, 1919, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.

Burnidge's words, "the US government, formed by the consent of the people, served as the culmination of Christian progress."[19] The AFSC might have undertaken the feeding partly as a way to show that love transcended nation, but it was not always above nation itself, nor wished to be. So when some Germans responded to the Quaker feeding with injured pride and hopes for national rebirth, they were reflecting as much as they were perverting the very values cooked into the AFSC's food.

Quaker Pacifism and the Origins of the AFSC

Pacifism became normative for Quakers in 1660, when George Fox and other early Friends issued a "Declaration" assuring the recently restored English Crown that the "harmless and innocent people of God, called Quakers," repudiated sedition and "outward weapons."[20] The first major tests of Quaker pacifism in the English colonies came in William Penn's Holy Experiment of Pennsylvania. In the 1740s war broke out between England and Spain and France. The influx of Scots-Irish Presbyterians and others in the first half of the 1700s had made the Quakers only one-fifth of the colony's population even as they controlled about two-thirds of the colonial assembly. The Scots-Irish were not pacifists, and they settled on the colony's western frontier, where Indian attacks grew more frequent and more terrible as the French and Indian War gathered momentum in the 1750s. Discomfort with Quaker overrepresentation joined with pacifist principle to induce six of the leading Quaker assemblymen to resign their offices in 1756

[19] Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest*, 79.
[20] Quoted in Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony, 1660-1914* (York, UK: William Sessions Limited Book Trust, 1990), 25.

rather than declare war on the Indians. The Quakers hoped their momentary retreat would allow them to regain power once peace returned. But in 1758 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (the yearly gathering of all local meetings in the mid-Atlantic region), under pressure from its counterpart in London as well as from stalwart pacifists within, made the holding of any civil magistracy a punishable violation of the Society's peace testimony.[21]

The American Revolution further clarified and solidified the Quaker position of neutrality during war. Friends in England actually chided their American coreligionists for appearing passively Loyalist rather than neutrally pacifist: American Quakers several times during the first years of the Revolution denounced the colonies as unholy rebels against the king's divinely ordained authority. Their protest resulted in mob violence against several Philadelphia Quakers, and hamstrung the attempt of Friends in England to mediate between the two sides as Quaker pacifists who were therefore entirely neutral. Yet American Friends during the Revolution inaugurated the Quaker tradition of relieving the victims of a conflict regardless of which side they were on when a Quaker named Moses Brown organized the feeding of both Loyalists and rebels during the siege of Boston in 1775, and a local Quaker meeting did the same in central North Carolina in 1781.[22] The AFSC continued this tradition of impartiality on an exponentially larger scale with its child-feeding in Weimar Germany.

But the conflict over which American Quakers most agonized was the Civil War.

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[21] Peter Brock, *Pacifism in the United States: From the Colonial Era to the First World War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 136, 142-143, 146, 153-154.
[22] Brock, *Pacifism in the United States*, 183ff., esp. 183, 193-195, 252, 258.

The war forced antislavery pacifists to choose between peace and freedom, nonresistance and justice. It scattered the nonsectarian pacifist witness in America even as it divided the peace churches themselves. Lincoln late in the war captured their dilemma when he wrote a Friend who had visited and prayed with him in the White House, "Your people—the Friends—have had, and are having, a very great trial. On principle, and faith, opposed to both war and oppression, they can only practically oppose oppression by war. In this hard dilemma some have chosen one horn and some the other."[23] The dilemma was especially poignant for Quakers, as they had initiated the antislavery movement itself. Many Friends chose to fight for the Union or support its war effort through alternative service (working in hospitals or caring for freed slaves).[24] Yet many Friends resolutely refused the Union or Confederate armies any cooperation. Southern Quakers in particular suffered imprisonment and loss of property as a consequence.[25] So the Civil War set the pattern for how American Friends would act when the draft in both of the next century's world wars presented them with the putative choice between peace and freedom: many fought, many others served in alternative ways, and some went to prison rather than lend any support to the war effort.

After the Civil War, the Holiness revival divided the American Quakers peace witness largely along regional lines, with New York and Philadelphia-area Quakers adopting a more ardent pacifism than other American Quakers. In the Midwest and West, salvation trumped pacifism as Quaker evangelicals won souls for Christ without regard

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[23] Lincoln to Gurney, September 4, 1864, quoted in Brock, *Pacifism in the United States*, 717.
[24] Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony*, 172.
[25] Brock, *Pacifism in the United States*, 713ff., esp. 744, 765.

for those souls' views on war. Ironically, the revival of pacifism in the Northeast painted the venerable peace testimony with a liberal and modernist brush, and many Midwestern and especially Western Quakers found pacifism guilty of liberalism by association.[26] In England, meanwhile, British Quakers formed the Friends' War Victims Relief Committee in 1870 during the Franco-Prussian War to care for victims on both sides of that conflict. British Friends revived the committee for service in the Great War.

Philadelphia Quakers in 1914 were generally wealthy and thoroughly assimilated, except for their pacifism. In 1827 they had split into two opposing wings over biblical and congregational authority, the culturally conservative but theologically liberal Hicksites (named after the lightning-rod Inner-Light preacher Elias Hicks), and the Orthodox, who at first had been culturally as well as theologically conservative. By the start of the Great War many of the old wounds had healed. Both groups had gradually opened to the wider American culture over the course of the nineteenth century, growing in wealth and influence as they built large manufacturing and financial institutions in Philadelphia.[27] But the debate over religious authority remained. The Orthodox privileged the Bible; the Hicksites the Inner Light—the light with which Christ endows every human being who came into the world, a source of direct and continuing inspiration and revelation.

The crucial figure in bridging this divide was Rufus Jones (1863-1948), the leading American Quaker of his day. Jones did more than any other individual Friend to

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[26] Brock, *Pacifism in the United States*, 872, 879-880, 883.
[27] See Philip S. Benjamin, *Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age, 1865-1920* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1976), 170-191.

create the liberal, social-justice oriented Quakerism most Americans associate with the Society of Friends today (though liberal Quakers constitute a minority of worldwide Quakerism). Yet Jones saw himself as working passionately to steer historic Quakerism between the whirlpool of secularism on one side and the shoals of dogmatism on the other. Jones lived these tensions out in his own life. Born in Maine in 1863 to a family of Orthodox Quakers, Jones grew up a moderate evangelical. By 1893 he had moved permanently to Philadelphia.

In Philadelphia Jones assumed a professorship at Haverford (the Orthodox wing's college in Philadelphia) and the editorship of the moderate *Friends' Review*. He soon merged the latter with the Holiness *Christian Worker* to create the *American Friend*. Then in 1897 he traveled to England, where, under the influence of John Wilhelm Rowntree and other English Quakers, he embraced a modernist agenda of adapting Quakerism to modern culture, higher criticism of the Bible, and the theory of evolution. In 1907 Jones worked tirelessly to prepare and orchestrate the modernist takeover of the Orthodox Five Years Meeting.[28] Until his death in 1948, Jones remained committed both to liberalism and to Christianity. Jones melded the liberal Hicksite emphasis on the humanity of Jesus with the conservative Orthodox emphasis on the divinity of Christ.[29] From his denominational bully pulpits, speaking widely and writing prolifically, he singlehandedly brought the two factions closer together than they had ever been since 1827.

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[28] Thomas D. Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends, 1800-1907* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 147-148, 171-172.
[29] Hamm, *Transformation*, 16-17.

By 1914 Philadelphia Quakers were nearly of one mind and spirit, if still of two institutional bodies, both calling themselves Philadelphia Yearly Meeting. The war brought them still closer. Quakers have no creeds, sacraments, or ordinances, and even the quasi-ritual of waiting quietly upon the Spirit's leading in worship was no longer universal by the mid-nineteenth century, as pastoral meetings arose in the Midwest. Rather, what bound the body together since its early days, according to the liberal Quaker interpretation of Quaker history that grew up around Quaker educator and historian Howard Brinton in the middle of the twentieth century, were "testimonies," divine calls to action for building the kingdom of God on earth: simplicity, integrity, community, equality, and peace.[30] In March 1917, a group called the Friends National Peace Committee published a "Message from the Society of Friends" in the country's leading newspapers and magazines: "The alternative to war is not inactivity and cowardice. It is the irresistible and constructive power of good will."[31]

When Wilson asked Congress for a declaration of war on April 2, Rufus Jones and other Friends at Haverford began work on a plan to give conscientious objectors constructive alternatives to combat. Congress declared war on April 6, and four days later Jones, with the help of his colleague Dr. James F. Babbitt, organized an Emergency Unit to train their students (Haverford was all-male at the time) for volunteer service on the

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[30] Some Friends now add "stewardship," of the environment in particular. See esp. Howard H. Brinton, *Guide to Quaker Practice* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hille Publications, 1943).

[31] Quoted in Elizabeth Gray Vining, *Friend of Life: A Biography of Rufus Jones* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1958), 156.

Western Front.[32] Jones originally intended for the Haverford unit to work with the British Friends' War Victims Relief Committee. But the War Office in London was reluctant to grant permits to the American Friends. Jones's next idea was to create an American Friends Ambulance Unit under the auspices of the Red Cross, but he had to abandon this plan when he learned that the military, not the Red Cross, would be directing all American ambulance work in Europe. He then decided his Haverford boys could best and most conscientiously serve their country as an American Quaker unit for Relief Work in France, on lines similar to the British Friends War Victims Relief Committee.[33]

Meanwhile, the Friends National Peace Committee gathered in Philadelphia. Its members represented all of the major groups of American Quakerism. At its head was Henry J. Cadbury, a Bible professor at Haverford who later became a famous scholar of Luke-Acts at Harvard. Cadbury was one of the "Young Friends" who first proposed a national pacifist Quaker organization at a conference at Lake Winona, Indiana, in 1915. Cadbury had hoped that American Quakers could "make neutrality something bold and courageous" by declaring their support for President Wilson's peace proposals.[34] As the Friends National Peace Committee was met in the wake of the failure of those proposals, the American Red Cross was reorganizing itself with a former Haverford student at its helm. Jones and several members of the Friends NPC took the train to Washington in early May to meet with the new Chief of the ARC. After this meeting and another one in New York, Jones's relief group was approved and placed under the civilian service of the

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[32] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 157.
[33] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 157.
[34] Henry J. Cadbury, "Thoughts from Winona Lake," box PG4, the Quaker Collection at Haverford College, Haverford, PA [hereafter Haverford].

ARC. By the time Jones and Friends met again on June 4 in Philadelphia, the Friends National Peace Committee had changed its name to "American Friends Service Committee," and had set up headquarters at Twenty South Twelfth Street in the center of Philadelphia. The newborn AFSC asked Jones to be its Chairman. A week later he accepted. The AFSC innocently assured him that the position would not unduly disrupt his teaching and scholarship.[35]

Six hundred AFSC volunteers eventually made their way to the Western Front. After the war, AFSC volunteers stayed in France a little over a year to help clothe, shelter, and feed 60,000 refugees in 345 villages.[36] Yet the AFSC wanted to show that it was a friend to all of humanity, not just to America's allies; to demonstrate how the "power of reconciling love" could transcend both nation and party.[37] So when it learned of the slow starvation of the German people, it commissioned Jane Addams of Hull House, her associate Dr. Alice Hamilton, and the indomitable Carolena Wood to investigate and draw up a report. What the women found was mass undernourishment, of women and children in particular. As Jones later scrawled on the back of his speech celebrating the AFSC's share of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1947, "Children are always the first catastrophe of war."[38]

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[35] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 158, 159.
[36] Caroline G. Norment, "American Food Served in Germany's Schools," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany: List of Cities Where Child Feeding Occurred to TB Materials, AFSC.
[37] Rufus Jones, [Acceptance Speech for AFSC's Nobel Peace Prize], box 91, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford.
[38] Jones, [Acceptance Speech]. The prize was awarded to both the AFSC and its British counterpart, the Friends Service Council, in recognition of worldwide Quakerism's witness for peace.

Following the Quaker Food Commission's work with great interest was the Allied Director of Relief and Reconstruction and the head of the American Relief Administration (ARA), Herbert Hoover, a birthright Quaker from Iowa.[39] His mother had been a "recorded minister" (i.e., recognized by her Meeting as having a gift for vocal ministry). After Hoover made his fortune all over the world as a mining engineer, Wilson tapped him in 1914 to head the United States Food Administration during the war. From this position, he fed and clothed about ten million people in Belgium and northern France. After the Armistice, the Allied governments put him in charge of European relief and reconstruction, and with congressional approval he organized the ARA to manage America's contribution to the undertaking.[40]

When the Treaty of Versailles was signed in July 1919, Hoover had already seen to it that ten million children throughout the Continent had been fed. He then drew official relief operations to a close, but transferred his staff to the ARA and fed another three million children over the following year under the ARA's European Children's Fund.[41] Though he had lost his parents at a young age and ventured far from his Quaker home in Iowa, he was still influenced by the Quaker conviction that every human being, of whatever nationality, bore the light of Christ within.[42] When Congress appropriated $100 million for Hoover to run the ARA, it also prohibited him from using any of that

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[39] "Miss Addams on Mission," *New York Times-Chicago Tribune* dispatch, July 3, 1919.
[40] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 169.
[41] Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 16.
[42] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 169. See also David Burner, "The Quaker Faith of Herbert Hoover," in *Understanding Herbert Hoover: Ten Perspectives*, ed. Lee Nash (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, Stanford University, 1987), 53-64.

money to relieve and reconstruct the former Central Powers.[43] The Allies, for their part, refused to lift their blockade of Germany even after the armistice. Hoover thought the blockade a human travesty and political spitting-in-the-wind, and as an advisor to Wilson at Versailles he tirelessly lobbied the President to persuade the Allies to lift it. When they finally did, in March 1919, they still refused to let Germany trade abroad. So Hoover arranged for Germany to pay for food with gold. This arrangement lasted until September 1.

Meanwhile, the team of Addams, Hamilton, and Wood arrived in Germany on July 7 with $30,000 from the AFSC to spend on food, and twenty-five tons of clothing for women and children in and around Berlin, some of whom were dressing in curtains and sheets.[44] Wood knew she stood at the vanguard of the US's postwar relations with Germany. She felt it "a great privilege to represent the Society of Friends as an ambassador of Christ when my government has as yet no representative here."[45] She visited Field Marshal von Moltke, secured $2000 in aid for Polish Jewish refugees to Germany, and attended a Peace Education Conference sponsored by the League of Nations. "The leaders of this nation turn to us to lead them," she wrote Philadelphia. "Have we spiritual bread for them?" She composed a message to accompany every gift of food and clothing: "To those who suffer in Germany with a message of good will from the American Society of Friends (Quakers), who for 250 years, and also all through this

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[43] Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 15.
[44] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 170; Wood to AFSC, August 25, 1919, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.
[45] Wood to Wilbur K. Thomas, Report of July 22 to August 1, 1919, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.

great war, have believed that those who were called enemies were really friends separated by a great misunderstanding."[46] At the end of September, on the cusp of the year's harvest, Wood remained in Germany while Addams and Hamilton returned stateside to report to the AFSC. It decided immediately to send more workers into Germany.[47]

Germany's continuing need over the winter of 1919-1920, even after the harvest, would have outstripped Hoover's funds at the ARA. So Hoover cast about for another agency that could not only help fund the feeding but also manage it. He met with Rufus Jones and the AFSC in late October, and then wrote Jones on November 1 to ask "if your society would be willing to undertake the expansion of your activities to the extent of becoming the repository of any funds which may be subscribed for this purpose in the United States, and to the extent of increasing your personnel in Germany to further organize and safeguard the distribution of food to this specific purpose."[48] On November 6, 1919, the 217th anniversary of William Penn's first landing on the shores of the Delaware River, Jones and the AFSC adopted Hoover's proposition.[49]

Hoover confirmed the arrangement in a letter to Jones on November 17 in which he spelled out his humanitarian concerns as well as his belief in the charity of the American people. "We have never fought with women and children," he declared, and the "real American" would not let Germany's innocent women and children starve. The

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[46] Quoted in Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 15-16; Wood to Thomas, August 18, 1919, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.
[47] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 171.
[48] Quoted in Vining, *Friend of Life*, 171.
[49] Howard Brinton, "Hoover Opens a Door," press release for Quaker periodicals, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.

country's men both started and prosecuted the war, but the country's women and children bore the brunt of war shortages as military needs trumped domestic ones. In particular, the destruction of cattle and the shortage of cattle-feed had dangerously curtailed the country's supply of milk.[50] Hoover neglected to mention that the Reparations Commission created by the Versailles Treaty required Germany to restore thousands of dairy cows to France. Jane Addams wrote Hoover protesting this further privation just as he was compacting with the AFSC. Hoover responded testily that justice demanded Germany make this sacrifice, and that Germany had enough cows to restock France as well as feed itself, provided its remaining cows were themselves adequately fed.[51]

Hoover's compassion was limited. So was the American people's—as Congress's strictures on the ARA appropriation indicate. If the AFSC wanted to feed and clothe Germany, it had to play by Hoover's rules, which refined the Versailles Treaty's "war guilt" clause blaming Germany alone for the war. Hoover distinguished between Germans who were in fact guilty (men) and those who were not (women and children). This was politic as well as sincere. Anti-Germanism was still rampant after the war. The American Legion persuaded even a Quaker church in Indianapolis to refuse Jane Addams its space for a fundraising talk on Germany.[52] But feeding innocent children was not pro-German, Hoover argued. It was pro-humanitarian.

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[50] Quoted in Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 16-17.
[51] See correspondence between a German named Kerschner (no first name given), Addams, and Hoover, including the "Memorial to the Reparation Commission" by Addams et al, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.
[52] W. O. Trueblood to Wilbur K. Thomas, December 16, 1919, box General Administration 1919: Foreign Service, Country-Germany to Country-Russia, AFSC.

Hoover needed the AFSC as much as the AFSC needed him. The ARA was too closely linked to the American state for it to relieve Germany directly. The public outcry in the United States would have ended the ARA's operations before they began. The American Red Cross was "the official volunteer aid department of the United States" and so was too closely tied to the government for Hoover's purposes.[53] Hoover needed an entirely civil organization that was nonpartisan, trustworthy, able, and "American." The AFSC satisfied all of these criteria. Its "American character" was above suspicion: Quakers founded the colony of Pennsylvania, the birthplace of the Republic; traced their ancestors back to Britain rather than to Germany like the other peace churches; and, despite their pacifism, served their country on the Western Front, albeit in a non-military capacity. Also, Quakers were famous for their "probity," dealing fairly with Native Americans and refusing to haggle on prices. And their material success, especially in Philadelphia, proved their "ability."

But above all they knew how to practice the politics of neutrality. Here was the primary reason "why so large a job should be the exclusive assignment of so small a body as the Society of Friends," as Rufus Jones's biographer puts it.[54] Friends were adept at avoiding controversy. Even their most politically charged stance, pacifism, had recently been blunted by many Friends' eagerness to serve during the war in alternative ways. So Hoover could trust the Quakers of the AFSC not to use the feeding program as a platform from which to broadcast their political or religious views.[55] The only "evangelical

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[53] Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 6.
[54] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 172.
[55] Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 17.

propaganda" he would allow was the preaching of pacifism.[56] The AFSC proved so trustworthy in their neutrality that a "Protestant pastor" in Berlin compared them unfavorably with the missionaries of "old time" who went "forth with bread in one hand and the gospel in the other." The Friends responded, "We have wished to come with bread in both hands and believe that by doing so we best carry out the spirit of our Mission."[57] Saving human life was paramount.

With Hoover's seal of approval, the AFSC collected $861,000, largely from German Americans, to which Hoover added $13.6 million from the ARA's European Children's Fund. The Germans themselves eventually added a staggering $205 million. (In the fall of 1920, to raise more money from the American people, Hoover created the European Relief Council, whose member agencies included the American Red Cross, the Federal Council of Churches, and the AFSC, among others.)[58] The *Quakerspeisung*—"Quaker-feeding"—was born.

Its beginnings were hardly auspicious.

The Feeding of the Five Million

When the first eighteen volunteers from the AFSC arrived in Berlin just after the New Year, 1920, they found the city awash in bad food and civil unrest. "This thing of eating in Germany is a unique experience," one of them wrote. Fats had been "systematically…

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[56] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 172.
[57] Catherine Morris Cox, "Denial of Quaker Propaganda," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany: List of Cities Where Child Feeding Occurred to TB Materials, AFSC.
[58] Brooks, *American Aid to Germany*, 18; Curti, *American Philanthropy Abroad*, 274.

extracted" from the food and put to use in making bombs, and the war had decimated the country's livestock, making milk and butter scarce. "One keeps on eating never to be satisfied."[59] Yet even this fatless food was rationed. One needed tickets for everything—by law, anyway. The Quakers quickly learned that the restaurants in Berlin rarely demanded tickets, and that Berliners routinely ignored the food regulations.[60] This blithe disregard for the law was the benign side of a seething discontent with the government. After being awakened in the middle of their first night in Berlin by people shouting about "the ever increasing price of food," the group's leader wrote Philadelphia that "after our own observation of the price of necessities it is impossible to see how people of the middle class with a fixed income can go on from day to day."[61]

This relatively conservative and comfortable group of middle-class Americans identified more readily with the bourgeoisie than with the proletariat. The leader of the group, a warm and witty bank executive from Philadelphia, Alfred G. Scattergood, wrote the executive secretary of the AFSC, Wilbur K. Thomas, that middle-class Germans were the ones hardest hit by the postwar depression. They were "too proud to ask for help and too honest…to buy smuggled food." Reflecting the culturally conservative attitudes of much of Progressive America, Scattergood worried that "the morals are all being

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[59] Herman Newman to Wilbur K. Thomas, January 14, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[60] Newman to Thomas, January 14, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[61] Alfred G. Scattergood to Wilbur K. Thomas, January 3, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

lowered."[62] The group's "written instructions [were] to avoid politics absolutely," yet they inevitably brought their cultural prejudices to bear on what they saw around them in Berlin.[63]

Ironically, their very desire to feed all undernourished German children—"no religious or political distinctions [will be made], the only basis of selection being the necessity of each…child"—opened them to charges of political radicalism.[64] Shortly after the group arrived in Germany, "a Chicago paper" apparently attacked Hoover and the AFSC for coming to Germany's aid.[65] A year earlier, the *Chicago Tribune* had carried a story under the headline "Freed Prisoner Tells Cruelties Imposed by Hun," about an American POW just returned from a German "punishment camp" in Belgium who had no sympathy for the hungry German. "Now that we have whipped the Germans," he spit, "we ought to be real magnanimous. Just look how they are torn by the revolution [more on that below], and they say they haven't enough to eat. Gee, I feel real sorry for them. We ought to be real kind to them – like — we ought!" Though the Quaker Food Commission and the AFSC's plan to help the "Hun" were months away, this brutalized young man had people like Carolena Wood in mind: "I hear there are some nice folks back here at home who can't find it in their hearts to hate anyone, even the Germans.

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[62] Scattergood to Thomas, January 17, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[63] Albert J. Brown, "Extracts from Letters," January 22, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[64] James G. Vail to Thomas, April 1, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[65] Scattergood to Thomas, January 17, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

Those people ought to have gone through what I did and to have seen what I saw. They'd think a whole lot different."[66] Fortunately for millions of German children, the Quakers did not think different.

If the "Chicago paper" that attacked Hoover and the AFSC in January of 1920 was also the *Tribune*, it struck obliquely. On January 5, just after the AFSC had arrived in Germany to relieve the country of mass undernourishment, the *Tribune* had carried a story in its back pages about "Europe Rapidly Rebuilding." One of Hoover's "chief aids in war relief work," Col. J. W. McIntosh, was quoted as saying, "The central section of Europe has had good crops." Germany was doing especially well. "German labor…is working long hours and seems to be satisfied." The Quakers' experience soon put the lie to this. "As a result, German goods are being exported to the other countries of Europe to a much greater extent than the latter are exporting into Germany."[67] So, the article asks implicitly, why are the Allies having to feed Germany's children? Why can the Germans not do it themselves?

The German people, for their part, seem to have grasped the difference between Quakerism and any sort of social or political radicalism. "The Quaker is not regarded as a socialist in Germany," reported one of the Friends, "but a friend to humanity."[68] The Germans' grasp of this distinction was as sensible as it was crucial, as it allowed the Quakers to work unhindered by German political infighting. The AFSC's nonpartisan

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[66] C. V. Julian, "Freed Prisoner Tells Cruelties Imposed by Hun," *Chicago Tribune*, January 13, 1919, p. 6.
[67] "Europe Rapidly Rebuilding," *Chicago Tribune*, January 5, 1920, p. 24.
[68] Brown, "Extracts from Letters," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

status gained them access to thousands of communities across Germany, and lent them the cooperation of tens of thousands of German staff and volunteers.

To adopt nonpartisanship was itself an eminently politic move in Weimar Germany. When the American Friends had first landed in Germany, they had found a tide of civil unrest swirling about their feet. One reported that after just one week the group had already witnessed three mass protests—the early-morning row over skyrocketing food prices, another later that same day over a bill that raised rents, and a third over a proposal for industrial democracy that the workers apparently thought was a "joker." It was almost enough to drive "a wanderer from the dry land of the West" to drink, quipped one AFSC worker—especially since most of the restaurants where the Quakers were eating did not serve water. "Lest there might be some apprehension," he added, "I hasten to say that mineral water is always available and is becoming quite popular as a Quaker drink."[69]

If these Prohibition-era Friends easily resisted the lure of German beer, they had a harder time concealing their dismay over a certain shipment of American whiskey. Scattergood and company had expected their first shipment of food to arrive on the *Sark* on January 15, but the ship encountered mechanical problems and had turn around for New York.[70] Then the *Kermoor* docked at Hamburg in early February with a slightly different cargo from what the Quakers had expected. "We are very suspicious," Scattergood wrote Wilbur Thomas, "about the fact that on the 'KERMOOR' was a great

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[69] Newman to Thomas, January 14, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[70] Scattergood to Thomas, January 17, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

quantity of whisky, instead of our food."[71] Scattergood's wry tone belied the group's mounting frustration. The situation inside Germany was intolerable. The group had it from a "reliable source" that "parents [had] come down from the mountains in East Saxony and sold their girls for a sack of potatoes each."[72] A British Quaker physician in Germany told of children's bones so depleted of calcium that they bent like supple branches, and of skulls so soft to the touch, that slowly, like dough, they closed the impressions made by probing fingers. The Addams commission had seen children so weak they could not even stand on their own, let alone walk.[73] Tuberculosis cases languished in the absence of cod liver oil. Even with fish oil, Scattergood knew, only some cases would be cured, but "there are many…which only death will solve."[74] About a week after Scattergood made this sober note, the *Kermoor* arrived with its fermented cargo.

The group at first regretted as a "great handicap" their "not having definite knowledge that our work can become more than a mere dribble."[75] Now they were afraid their mission would be scuttled entirely by being unable to even deliver a "dribble." They had wanted desperately "to avoid the tantalizing dangling of a delectable morsel just out

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[71] Scattergood to Thomas, February 9, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[72] Brown, "Extracts from Letters," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[73] Lester Jones, *Quakers in Action: Recent Humanitarian and Reform Activities of the American Quakers* (New York: Macmillan, 1929), 39.
[74] Scattergood to Thomas, January 29, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[75] Scattergood to Charles F. Jenkins, AFSC Treasurer, January 8, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

of reach of a slowly starving child."[76] The Germans already felt humiliated by the Treaty of Versailles. They suspected the Allies would rather see them suffer than rebuild. England and France had maintained the wartime blockade into peace time, exacerbating the privation in Germany. As Jane Addams pathetically told the AFSC, the Germans "could not understand why the Allies had imposed a food blockade upon them, why their little children were permitted to starve to death, and why they had failed as a nation."[77] Hoover and Friends conceived of the child-feeding program partly as a way to show the German people that not all of the "civilized" world had turned against them. The Quaker group feared the almost farcical delay in feeding might lead the Germans to blame the Allies with neglect or treachery, and the Quakers with connivance.

Add a restive citizenry within the country to a vengeful world without, and the Quakers must have felt as though they were being squeezed in a tightening political vise. The country had only recently stopped fighting itself. In 1918, a revolution led by disaffected soldiers and workers had forced Kaiser Wilhelm II to abdicate the throne, and the German government to surrender to the Allies. Not long after Armistice Day, a group of communists revolted in Berlin, led by the Spartacus League, who a few years before had broken away from the Social Democratic Party (SDP) to protest the German nobility's embroilment of the proletariat in an imperial war. The SDP, led by Friedrich Ebert, joined forces with the army to crush the rebellion and establish the Weimar

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[76] Arthur M. Charles to Thomas, February 10, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[77] Quoted in Lester Jones, *Quakers in Action*, 49.

Republic (named after the city in which the constitution was written), with Ebert as the country's first democratically elected president.

The Weimar Republic was plagued by chronic unemployment and hyperinflation, and was only sporadically stable. In fact, just two months after the Quakers arrived in Berlin, a Prussian reactionary named Wolfgang Kapp staged a coup in the city (the "Kapp Putsch"). The Quakers managed to keep clear of the skirmishes between Kapp's Baltic troops and Berlin's workers. They did, however, venture out into jubilant crowds of the middle classes long enough to catch hold of a couple of the proclamations the new government was throwing out of cars and dropping from airplanes.[78] Yet Kapp failed to gain the confidence of the civil service, and the coup collapsed after just four days. The political and economic conditions that gave rise to the coup persisted until the Weimar Republic's demise at the hands of Hitler and the Nazis in 1933. Back in January and February of 1920, however, the Quakers were thinking about the three mass protests they had seen during their first week in Berlin, as they nervously awaited their first shipment of food.

Finally, on February 13, the now seaworthy *Sark* pulled into Hamburg—with food.[79] Four days later, in Berlin, the Quakers' publicist had a "tantalizing morsel" in hand: "there is on the table before me, a white soup-bean from America; a thrilling sight." It conjured up for him "visions of hundreds meager-bodied and happy-

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[78] Arthur M. Charles to AFSC, Letter 27, March 14, 1920, and anonymous, "March 19," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany: List of Cities Where Child Feeding Occurred to TB Materials, AFSC.

[79] Scattergood to Thomas, February 16, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

eyed…children, gathered at our tables."[80] As it turned out, his imagination that day was to be beggared by the actual numbers of children the Quakers eventually gathered at their tables, bellies full and eyes happy. And beans were only one part of a daily meal that also included rice, peas, milk and cocoa (often served as a soup), and bread made with lard.[81] So much for fatless foods.

While the group waited for this food to arrive in force, they kept themselves occupied with selecting and preparing the feeding centers. Here they built on top of the country's infrastructure that had survived the war. They divided the non-occupied portion of Germany into seven districts, and placed one or two American Friends in charge of each. The Americans worked hand-in-hand with the DZA, the *Deutscher Zentral Ausschuss fur die Auslandshilfe* (German Central Committee for Foreign Relief)—an emergency committee, formed by various German philanthropies, charged with liaising between the Americans and other foreigners giving aid, and the city governments within each district. The DZA appointed a local committee with a full-time, salaried, executive secretary in each city and village, to oversee the cooking and distribution of the food.[82]

The cooking was mostly done in great central kitchens that had been built during the war when most of the women were in industry and unable to make three meals a day for their families.[83] To partly defray costs, the local committee could charge up to 25

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[80] Arthur M. Charles to Thomas, February 17, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[81] Lester Jones, *Quakers in Action*, 54.
[82] Lester Jones, *Quakers in Action*, 51-52.
[83] Caroline G. Normant, "A Day in Berlin," box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany: List of Cities Where Child Feeding Occurred to TB Materials, AFSC.

pfennigs per meal (a quarter of an American cent in 1920) under the condition "that no child is to be refused food because he is unable to pay." The Quakers delegated as much of the detailed work as possible to this local committee, but insisted on "a fairly elaborate system of control" that included regular reports with the following: each child's medical certificate of malnourishment, attendance at meals, inventories of food delivered and served (these had to "check up" with each other), and weekly summaries of the whole operation.[84]

The Quakers established centers in major cities first—Hamburg, Leipzig, Dresden, Chemnitz, and of course Berlin, where the very first feeding finally took place at the end of February.[85] Scattergood, giddy with excitement and relief, wrote Philadelphia on February 25 that the Quakers expected to do their first feeding the next day to seventy-five children and twenty-five nursing and expectant mothers. "We are all going there with a whoop and a camera."[86] The results of the feeding were immediate, and immensely satisfying to the Americans. Scattergood wrote Philadelphia in April, "One Berlin child, eating at our first feeding place…is reported to have gained 4 lbs in…2 weeks!"[87] Some of the children had to start with small portions because they were too weak to eat a full meal. One "poor little girl," another Friend records, "very thin and

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[84] James G. Vail to Wilbur K. Thomas, April 1, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC; Lester Jones, *Quakers in Action*, 52.
[85] Scattergood to Thomas, April 6, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[86] Scattergood to Thomas, February 26, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[87] Scattergood to Thomas, April 6, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.

weak, couldn't eat at all, and wept bitterly about it." A German volunteer took the girl in her arms to comfort her, and assured the American that the girl would be able to eat before long.[88] After one month of feeding, many of the 2000 children eating the Quaker meal had gained 3-5 pounds.[89] This boded well for the program going forward.

The AFSC had all seven districts up and running by the end of 1920. Altogether the cities, towns, and villages where the Quakers and their German volunteers were feeding held 30 million people, almost half of Germany's total population. The numbers fed every day reached almost 700,000 in late summer 1920. Numbers dipped after the harvest but started climbing again in March until they peaked during the third week of June 1921. That week, 1,010,658 children and mothers in 1,640 communities enjoyed a supplementary meal every day from 8,364 feeding centers supplied by 2,271 kitchens.[90] Though the feeding was decidedly something the Quakers did *with* the Germans rather than *for* them, the country owed the Friends an immense debt of gratitude.

Nationalism Triumphant

Displays of thanks were not long in coming. As early as late April, Scattergood wrote Philadelphia that a "well-known composer" was giving a concert to thank the Quakers, and the composer planned to donate half of the proceeds to the feeding work. The main beneficiaries of the feeding were also to have the chance to show their appreciation. "We

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[88] Jesse H. Holmes to Thomas, April 26, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[89] Scattergood to Thomas, April 10, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[90] "Report of the AFSC's German Feeding Mission," June 30, 1921, in Lester M. Jones, *Quakers in Action*, 55.

are going to be sung to by 160 school children in Berlin."[91] As the Americans were being regaled in Berlin, another Friend was making his way across the Atlantic, on assignment from the AFSC to open a feeding center in Frankfurt. Just before the ship hailed Hamburg, a woman approached the Quaker with a letter from a friend of hers in Berlin. The letter told of the great scarcity and high price of food, and of the desperation of many Germans, especially the poor. "But thank God," the letter said, "the American Quakers are now here and our children will be saved."[92] The numbers vindicated such high hopes.

After the harvest that first fall of the feeding, the Americans and the DZA drew down their operations for the winter, and the German teachers, many of whom had been the ones actually serving the meals every day, set their students to writing the Quakers thank-you notes. One boy, whose father had been killed in France, and whose mother was "sick in body and soul," wrote with simple eloquence, "For years hunger has been my permanent guest. You good Quakers have lessened my need. For this my mother and I thank you from our hearts."[93] A "child's poem from Wurtemberg" thanked the Quakers "for the joy, / The gifts, food, clothes and help you gave / To each starving little 'Girl and Boy.'"[94] A girl prayed "in childish thankfulness" that God would bless the "generous

[91] Scattergood to Thomas, April 22, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[92] D. Robert Yarnall to Thomas, April 27, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[93] Karl Baur "To the good Quakers," n.d., box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.
[94] "Translation. Child's Poem from Wuerttemberg," n.d., box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.

spenders what they have done for poor German children, even if they are living far across the sea."[95]

The children in at least two schools themselves felt sorry for the children living the other way across the sea: American children had gone so long without getting new German toys. So these little German girls and boys "begged…to be allowed to make some toys for American children."[96] A little boy, writing much earlier, nicely captured the fast bond forged between American and German by the Quaker feeding program: "We thank you all heartily and we will never forget you Americans."[97]

At some point during the feeding, starting perhaps that first year, "kinder Dankfests" became an annual event. The children in each district held a festival around the turn of fall each year to thank the Quakers for the most recent round of feeding.[98] This sense of communal gratitude was literally stamped onto some of the material culture of the time. Soon after the Dankfests of 1921, the city of Gotha found itself short of small coins. When it decided to mint some "substitute money" for immediate circulation, city leaders thought the new coins might make especially meaningful "thank-you's" to the Quakers. So on one side of the coins they stamped the words "Quaker-Dank 1921" in a

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[95] Elizabeth Sosnick, February 8, 1921, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.
[96] Dora Zettel to "Dear American Friends and Benefactors," December 24, 1920, and Sisters Antonella and Cantal to Edith Moon, December 14, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.
[97] Arthur Hansen "To the dear Americans," May 18, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.
[98] Yarnall to Thomas, September 19, 1924, box General Files 1924: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

circle around an eight-pointed star, the emblem of the AFSC (see image below).[99] The city of Gotha thus rendered unto the Quakers what was theirs—gratitude—while also fueling the hyperinflation that was always threatening to undermine the Weimar's economy and turn much of the Quakers' work to naught.

Yet the outpouring of gratitude was not unalloyed with feelings of bruised national pride at having to be fed by the citizens of a conquering enemy. Even the boy whose "permanent guest" of hunger the Quakers had driven out, begged the Americans not to patronize him, but to hand out "respect" as well as bread. "Contempt hurts a German child worse than hunger!"[100] A woman could not "prevent a bitter drop of affliction from falling into the delight" she took in the Quakers' generosity. The Quakers were "right in making our children the main receivers of your kindness," for in the children's hearts "your love will be sure to find an echo absolutely pure and unlimited."[101] The rector of a school in Leipzig likewise confessed his feelings of shame and humiliation to the Quaker in charge of his district.

> It is painful for us to be placed in the position of being compelled, as the defeated party, to accept benefits from the hands of our former opponents, which stamps us as being so reduced as to need assistance….It still remains for us a matter of doubtful propriety to accept this charity before the question who was really to

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[99] One of the coins is in Richard L. Cary's box (recently added to the AFSC's archive) and is accompanied by a letter to Cary from the *Rats-Assessor* of Gotha, D. Saudrock (though the signature is hard to make out), November 21, 1921, AFSC.
[100] Karl Baur "To the good Quakers," n.d., box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.
[101] Dora Zettel to "Dear American Friends and Benefactors," December 24, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.

> blame for the frightful world war which is passed has been decided before the bar of history.[102]

In satisfying their children's hunger, the Quakers might have whetted the Germans' appetite for national vindication.

Not that the AFSC was above nationalism itself. Its careful cultivation of a reputation for absolute political neutrality sat alongside its unabashed assertion of American liberal values as part and parcel of its Wilsonian internationalism. That the two positions sat alongside each other so easily indicates just how convinced most Americans were at the time that their values were self-evident and universal. British Quakers were also in Germany from the very first. Two of them had accompanied the initial Wood-Addams-Hamilton commission. British Quakers started feeding children and mothers in Leipzig even before the AFSC arrived in force in January 1920. They delivered wages over the winter of 1919-20 to the families of German POWs in France who had been conscripted to help the Quakers with their French reconstruction projects. British Friends co-staffed an International Commissioners office in Frankfurt-am-Main with the AFSC, from which one representative each from Britain and America spread the message of Anglo-American "goodwill" to the German people through publicity, speaking, and visitation with German "friends of the Friends." And British Friends established a feeding program and social club for university students in Berlin.

Yet American and British Quakers cooperated but never combined. They almost amalgamated in 1921, but the Americans ultimately insisted on national distinctions. The

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[102] Rector Prof. Dr. Reum to "Professor Pratt," May 25, 1920, box General Administration 1920: Foreign Service, Country-Germany, Thank You Items, to Country-Poland, AFSC.

major reason appears to have been political: Hoover wanted America to get sole credit from the Germans for saving their children, much as the American Red Cross had wanted the Allies to know that the aid it was distributing to them during the war was American.[103] This was humanitarianism as "cultural diplomacy."[104] The AFSC depended on Hoover for the lion's share of their food and so could not afford to thwart his wishes. It had to keep the feeding strictly American. Also, as many of the American Quakers were ardent Wilsonian internationalists, they wanted to "Americanize" Germany so as to pacify it and integrate it into an international community that would forever banish the threat of war.

AFSC founder Henry J. Cadbury was one such Quaker Wilsonian. In October 1920 he applauded the child-feeding's "American" influence on Germany. He had just spent six weeks in Germany in order to get a first-hand look at the feeding for publicity at home. The *New York Times* published his observations in its magazine shortly upon his return. "Germany is becoming Americanized through an intensive drive of American charity and American humanity," he declared in "'Americanized' Germany Through Quaker Eyes." "Germany is losing her spirit of militarism and has adopted one of wholesome humility."[105] Cadbury's unabashed espousal of American nationalism shows how even "neutrality" is historical: it has meant different things at different times and in different places. For Wilsonians the United States was the neutral nation par excellence.

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[103] See Scattergood to Thomas, "Some thoughts on the request of the Conference in London that child-feeding work and the other work of Friends in Germany be operated by one organization," in AFSC General Meeting Minutes, September 30, 1920, AFSC.
[104] Irwin, *Making the World Safe*, 119.
[105] "'Americanized' Germany Through Quaker Eyes," *New York Times*, October 17, 1920, p. BRM22.

It had intervened on the side of the Allies during the war in order only to secure victory for democracy and self-determination, not to aggrandize itself or any other nation or empire.[106]

So the spirit of nationalism was alive and well in the AFSC. Yet so was the spirit of internationalism. In the summer of 1924, as the AFSC prepared to wind down its feeding work for good, it sent a representative to Berlin specifically to carry out "Message work." In keeping with Hoover and the AFSC's original intent, the purpose of this work was not to evangelize; it was to encourage and nurture pacifism, temperance, German Friends, "friends of the Friends," and international understanding and cooperation, especially among students. To oversee this work the AFSC chose Thomas Raymond Kelly (1893-1941), one of Rufus Jones's former students. Kelly had grown up an evangelical Quaker in southwestern Ohio and studied chemistry at Wilmington College, a Quaker school outside Cincinnati, before doing a one-year MA at Haverford. There he came under Jones's spell and switched from chemistry to philosophy and theology. He had just finished a PhD in philosophy from Hartford Theological Seminary before signing on with the AFSC to lead its "Message work" in Germany.[107]

Kelly was deeply spiritual, and his main concern was the religious life of German Friends and their fellow travelers. Yet he was also a dedicated teacher, having taught for two years at a Quaker boarding school in Ontario and for another two years at his alma mater in Wilmington. Still a young man himself in 1924, he was a natural fit to run the

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[106] Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest*, 67.
[107] See Richard Macy Kelly, *Thomas Kelly: A Biography* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966).

AFSC's "Students' Club" for college students in Berlin, where the AFSC tried to feed minds as well as bodies. Between August 1924 and his departure in July 1925, he convened as many as three discussions or debates every week.[108] The subject for debate in May 1925 at the first meeting of the summer semester was "the possibility of a Pan-Europe."[109] A few weeks later, Kelly reported that a "small study circle" had been "systematically and enthusiastically" studying Polish history, economy, art, literature, religion, and philosophy. "They are working on the theory that in order to understand one another, nations must know one another's problems and conditions."[110]

Kelly complemented this group's work not only by arranging for German experts on Poland and Russia to give regular lectures at the Students' Club, but also by hatching a "scheme" of his own "which fits into the whole problem of international good will."[111] The first part of the scheme was to have a German of his acquaintance come to America and study at Earlham, a Quaker college in Indiana where Kelly had been hired to start teaching in the fall of 1925. "I have felt that it would be a very fine thing for the healing of anti-German fever if some of the really splendid German students could live long

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[108] Kelly to Thomas, September 30, 1924, box General Files 1924: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[109] Kelly to Thomas, May 8, 1925, box General Files 1925: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[110] Kelly to Thomas, July 9, 1925, box General Files 1925: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[111] Kelly to Thomas, July 9 and 8, 1925, box General Files 1925: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

enough in America for friendships to develop." He helped the young man secure a scholarship and a job as a janitor at the school.[112]

The second part of the scheme was to promote among eastern Quaker colleges a prominent pan-Europeanist's trip to America. Count Coudenhove-Kalergi was the author of *Pan Europa*, a book that explained the "great difficulties of race and tradition, historical enmities and differences in level of culture, colonial possessions etc. which make [the notion of a 'United States of Europe'] such a terrifically complex question" for Europeans. And yet it was a book that also proffered a solution to all of these difficulties.[113] It is tempting to think that had the AFSC backed efforts like these to eliminate national hatreds with the kind of money and resources it had marshaled to eliminate hunger, the feeding program might have come to represent in the minds of the German people what it really was—a triumph of international cooperation—rather than what it seemed: a triumph of other nations over their own.

Yet it was precisely such interdependence that had fueled German nationalist anxieties in the first place. Starting in the 1890s, a growing sense of "weakness and vulnerability and, not least, of sheer envy" of other great powers seized more and more of the German people. The great pioneering sociologist Max Weber lamented Germany's lack of self-sufficiency in his inaugural lecture at the University of Freiburg in 1895. As historians Thomas Bender and Michael Geyer put it, "the more Germany grew into an interconnected world, the more the sense developed and spread that these ties spelled

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[112] Kelly to Thomas, July 8, 1925, box General Files 1925: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[113] Kelly to AFSC, July 9, 1925, box General Files 1925: Foreign Service-Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

doom for a sovereign Germany."[114] So the non-Quaker pacifist who wrote in the *American Friend* in April 1917, "Suppose that at the close of this war…we should send $100,000,000 to be distributed among the destitute of Germany, accompanied by an expression of sympathy," had it exactly backwards when he then asked rhetorically, "do you think that Germany could then turn about and wage war with America?"[115]

In December 1926, while Rufus Jones was traveling in South Asia, he made time to meet with a fellow pacifist in India. To Jones's chagrin, Mahatma Gandhi was largely unacquainted with Quakerism. "He has apparently read almost nothing of our Quaker books," Jones noted in his diary, "and seemed to know little of [George] Fox or John Woolman," the founder of Quakerism and one of its patron saints, respectively. To communicate the Christ-like spirit of Quakerism to this Hindu admirer of Jesus, Jones turned to the most recent example of how (American) Friends had loved their enemies. "I told him about our child feeding in Germany after the war, and he was interested in the expression of love and good will."[116]

In the twenty years following Jones's visit, Gandhi led his fellow Indians to independence by yoking the power of love and good will to the ideology of nationalism. Nationalism could free one people from an empire while enslaving another to a dictator. The people whom Jones's AFSC fed for five years walked down the latter path. To say

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[114] Bender and Geyer, "Empires: Might and Myopia," in Christof Mauch and Kirian Klaus Patel, eds., *The United States and Germany during the Twentieth Century: Competition and Convergence* (Washington, D.C. and Cambridge, UK: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2010), 17, 18, 19.
[115] Charles R. Joy, "The Faith of a Pacifist," *American Friend* V:15 (April 12, 1917): 285.
[116] Rufus Jones, "Ahmedabad, December 1," in Jones's "Diary 1926," box 63, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford.

that the AFSC played some part in that journey is not to say that it was in any way responsible for it, or that its feeding work was anything less than heroic. It is only to say that it was as much a creature of its time as of the spirit of Christ, and was as susceptible to the modern spirit of nationalism as the country which it helped save—and which was to shatter its peaceable dreams.

"Nobody said: Say your prayer first before you get the food."

President of Berlin Trades Union, 1922[1]

2: Quakerizing Germany

The year 1923 had barely begun and Alfred Scattergood, the former chief of the AFSC's German child-feeding, was already startled, troubled, and more than a little hurt. Scattergood had resigned the directorship of the German feeding in late summer, 1921, and returned to Philadelphia soon after. He, Carolena Wood, and several other former German workers had formed a special subcommittee of the AFSC over the course of 1922 for spreading the Quaker "Message" in European countries where the AFSC had administered feedings. This subcommittee's purpose, Scattergood reported after its first meeting, in March, was not to "proselytize, if for no other reason than because of the relief that has gone before." It had no wish to make religious capital of the feeding. "We must not put ourselves in the position of having come with food in one hand and, in the other, either sooner or later, a religious denominationalism to offer to those who have been objects of our relief."[2]

Instead the subcommittee would distribute literature and give talks to those in Europe, especially Germany, who were curious about Quakerism, and encourage and support those who had started worshipping in Quaker fashion or had even gone so far as to join London Yearly Meeting and officially become Friends (there was no Yearly

[1] Quoted in Caroline G. Norment, "News Notes from Germany," January 1922, box General Files 1922, Foreign Service, Country: Germany, AFSC.
[2] Alfed G. Scattergood, "Report of the First Meeting of 'The Religious Committee for European Countries,'" March 17, 1922, box AFSC Minutes, 1922 to 1925, AFSC.

Meeting in Germany until 1925). The Message Committee's "broad purpose" was not strictly religious at all: it was to make "stronger the international ties already formed."[3] The committee's members soon changed its name from "The Religious Committee for European Countries" to the "Message Committee."[4]

The AFSC's move away from overt evangelism both reflected and accelerated a decades-long trend in American foreign missions. Long a mission field for Catholics and Anglicans during the colonial period, Americans started sending their own missionaries abroad soon after the Republic was founded. Several of the largest Protestant denominations in the country created the extra-ecclesial American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in 1810 to coordinate these efforts. The American mission movement remained small over the next sixty years, sending only about two thousand missionaries before 1870.[5] The most influential missiologist in these years was Rufus Anderson, senior secretary of the ABCFM, who argued that the point of missions was to convert foreign people to Christianity not America. Missionaries should plant the seed of the gospel and then go home, leaving the cultivation of the field to the missionized.[6] The AFSC's Message worker in Germany in 1924 and 1925, Thomas Kelly, was to essentially revive Anderson's missiology, but in a liberal rather than evangelical context.

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[3] Alfed G. Scattergood, "Report of the First Meeting of 'The Religious Committee for European Countries,'" March 17, 1922, box AFSC Minutes, 1922 to 1925, AFSC.
[4] Minutes of General Meeting of AFSC, June 1, 1922, box AFSC Minutes, 1922 to 1925, AFSC.
[5] William R. Hutchison, *Errand to the World: American Protestant Thought and Foreign Missions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 45.
[6] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 80.

American Protestant missions abroad were reaching their numerical peak around the same time that the AFSC was feeding millions of children in Germany. The sixteen US missionary societies in the 1860s had mushroomed into over ninety by 1900.[7] US missions claimed 2.3 million converts in foreign fields by 1910, about the time that women began to outnumber men in the mission field.[8] The preponderance of women in missions, historian William Hutchison contends, was largely responsible for the liberalization of American foreign missions. Women were neither ordained nor allowed to preach, so they had little choice but to focus on building schools and hospitals while the male minority evangelized.[9] The Social Gospel's emphasis on environmental rather than individual causes of sin reinforced this gendered turn in missions from evangelism to social service. By the first year of the AFSC's feeding, 1920, building up the Kingdom of God on earth had come to mean material and bodily betterment at least as much as, if not more than, saving souls.

American religious historians have tended to trace the shift in emphasis from evangelism to social service in American Protestant missions after 1900 to three main causes: the predominance of female missionaries, the rise of theological modernism and religious pluralism, and the missionaries' own contact with the missionized. They have also tended to focus, quite naturally, on the traditional mission fields: China, Africa, India, and the Near East (as well as Native American nations domestically). Historians Grant Wacker and William Hutchison see 1932 as the year when the consensus on

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[7] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 91.
[8] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 99.
[9] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 101, 102.

missions shifted decisively in the direction of social service.[10] That year the Nobel-Prize-winning novelist and missionary to China, Pearl S. Buck, gave a provocative speech voicing many of the concerns of the Rockefeller-funded Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry, whose findings Harvard philosopher William Ernest Hocking had summarized and published earlier that year as *Re-Thinking Missions*. The gist of both Buck's and Hocking's (i.e. the Laymen's Inquiry's) arguments was that missionaries should get out of the patronizing paternalistic business of saving souls, many of which were already grounded in great religious traditions, and focus instead on humbly serving the needs of people's bodies, minds, and spirits. Historian Michael G. Thompson, on the other hand, sees 1928 as the turning point. That year the liberal missionary giants Sherwood Eddy and John R. Mott both publicly repudiated America's claims to being a Christian nation, primarily because of the country's racism.[11]

The story of the AFSC's Message work in Germany, however, strongly suggests that 1914 was also a pivotal year, as the start of the Great War was also the start of Americans' astounding investment in international humanitarianism, which Hoover and the American Red Cross (ARC) did so much to stimulate during the war and to sustain into the mid-1920s. This tremendous outpouring of foreign aid transformed foreign

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[10] Grant Wacker, "The Waning of the Missionary Impulse: The Case of Pearl S. Buck," in Daniel H. Bays and Grant Wacker, eds., *The Foreign Missionary Enterprise at Home : Explorations in North American Cultural History*, Religion and American Culture (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2003), 191-205; Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 158-164.

[11] Thompson, *For God and Globe: Christian Internationalism in the United States between the Great War and the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 1, 2.

missions not only because, as Andrew Preston has noted,[12] it channeled so much of the American people's time, money, and energy into purely material relief, but also because the posture of neutrality that relief demanded of humanitarians effectively tied their hands on religious no less than political controversies. Julia Irwin has argued that the American Red Cross during this period oversaw a "secularization of American missionary ideology" from "Christian universalism" to "humanitarian internationalism."[13] And perhaps not coincidentally, the most strenuous critiques of this liberalization of missions came from Germany, where the AFSC performed its most spectacular humanitarianism and first attempted its Message work. German critics called the religious activism of contemporary missions simply *Americanismus*, or "Americanism."[14] So the AFSC's Message work in Germany also places attention on a mission field relatively neglected in the historiography: Europe.

The AFSC's Message Committee wanted to avoid any hint of evangelism in Germany or elsewhere. In this it was not representative of even Philadelphia Quakers, let alone American Quakers as a whole. The Orthodox branch of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting—the branch most closely associated with the AFSC—issued a pronouncement on evangelism the same month Scattergood wrote his report. The Yearly Meeting's "Report of the Committee on Christian Labor in Foreign Lands" expressed the "supreme conviction that Christianity is a universal and an essentially missionary religion, and that in so far as Quakerism realizes its early designation as 'primitive Christianity revived,' it,

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[12] Andrew Preston, *Sword of the Spirit, Shield of Faith: Religion in American War and Diplomacy* (New York: Anchor Books, 2012), 267.
[13] Irwin, *Making the World Safe: The American Red Cross and a Nation's Humanitarian Awakening* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9.
[14] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 125.

too, will be driven by its world vision to the ends of the earth, recognizing no barriers of race or nation or class."[15] Orthodox Quakers in Philadelphia still largely believed in the absoluteness and finality of Christianity, and in the absoluteness and finality of that expression of Christianity known as Quakerism.

Was the AFSC's German feeding a missionary or purely humanitarian endeavor? With Quakers it could be hard to tell the difference. A couple of months before the Message Committee first met, one of the AFSC's workers in Germany wrote Philadelphia that "our message must needs be delivered through our hands and feet and not through tongues."[16] Quakers had accepted activism and reform as legitimate aims of mission as early as the eighteenth century.[17] William Hutchison describes the "Quaker style" of mission as including peace, justice, education, and a "type of personal witness that might or might not involve preaching."[18] Quakers' quietism in the eighteenth century—their inwardness and wariness of worldly movements like the evangelicalism of the Great Awakening—together with their distinctive belief that the light of Christ was in some way already present within (though not necessarily innate to) every human being, accounts for their proto-liberal mission practices well before the social-service turn in Protestant missions generally around the turn of the twentieth century.

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[15] "Extracts from the Minutes of the Yearly Meeting of Friends (Orthodox) Held in Philadelphia 1922," March 1922, p. 43, Haverford.
[16] Caroline G. Norment to "Dear ones on the other shore" (AFSC?), January 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Foreign Service, Country: Germany, AFSC.
[17] See Jacalyn Stuckey Welling, "Missions," in Stephen Angell and Ben Pink Dandelion, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Quaker Studies* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 306.
[18] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 33.

Quietists predominated within Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) throughout most of the nineteenth century. Yet the minority of evangelical reformers in the Yearly Meeting waxed in power and influence as the century waned.[19] One such moderate luminary, Rufus Jones, exerted tremendous influence through his editorship of *The American Friend* and his many speaking engagements as a popular professor of philosophy at Haverford College. Many more evangelical reformers could be found among the membership of the venerable Germantown Monthly Meeting in northern Philadelphia. Germantown provided more of the AFSC's staff and volunteers between the world wars—including Scattergood's cousin, Alfred Cope Garrett, whose last name was Scattergood's middle name—than any other single meeting. Alfred Scattergood had resumed worshipping at Germantown upon his return from Germany. In October of 1922 the Meeting minuted that Alfred Cope Garrett and his wife, Eleanor, and a third member of the Meeting, Agnes Tierney, were set to embark for Germany as AFSC "Message" workers.[20] Tierney and the Garretts arrived in Germany in late November, with one of the Garretts' twin sons in tow.

The two Alfreds probably discussed the means and ends of the AFSC's message work before the Garretts left for Germany. They were cousins and members of the same Meeting, and their correspondence gives no indication that they were estranged or disliked one other. In any case, Garrett sat down the day after Christmas, 1922, and wrote his cousin Scattergood, "I should like to write frankly to thee of my present 'working

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[19] Thomas D. Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends, 1800-1907* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988), 171-172.
[20] Germantown Monthly Meeting of Friends, *Minutes: Tenth Month 1916 to Ninth Month 1924*, entry for October 12, 1922, Haverford.

hypothesis.'" The AFSC, wrote Garrett, had conjured into existence a tremendous organizational network for the feeding. "Why should not a similar scope of organization be used to bring to the German people the spiritual bread also?" Surely, Garrett thought, there must be at least a handful of Germans in each feeding district who had more than a passing interest in the faith of the people who had saved their children. Garrett wanted to locate these handfuls, lead them to "convincement" (the traditional Quaker word for conversion), and through them spread Quakerism throughout the land.[21] Germany would become a Quaker nation. Pacifism would rise from the ashes of Prussian militarism. A pacifist bulwark in the center of Europe might pacify the Continent forever.

It was a sweeping vision. It was also not entirely outside the realm of possibility. Between thirty and forty thousand Germans had worked with the AFSC in the years 1920-22 to feed over three million children and mothers in cities and towns where half of Germany lived.[22] President Friedrich Ebert had personally received the Quakers several times to thank them for their relief.[23] What might have become of the fragile, fledgling Weimar Republic had Hoover and the AFSC not banished the specter of mass child starvation from the land? How long could the Socialists have kept Germany's newborn democracy safe from a Communist dictatorship or a Nationalist restoration promising food and order? Individual Germans were even more grateful than the government. The

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[21] Alfred Cope Garret to Alfred Scattergood, December 26, 1922, box Foreign Service 1922, Germany to Mexico, AFSC.
[22] Caroline G. Norment, "News Notes from Germany," January 1922, box General Files 1922, Foreign Service, Country: Germany, AFSC.
[23] See Alfred Scattergood to AFSC, January 3, 1920, box General Administration, Foreign Service: Country – Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC; Caroline G. Norment to "Dear ones on the other shore" (AFSC?), January 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Foreign Service, Country: Germany, AFSC; Der Reichspraesident to Francis R. Bacon, August 1, 1922, box 2, "Bacon Family Papers," Haverford.

Quakers had saved their children without regard for party, class, or creed. Quakers had left their Bibles at home so they could have both hands free for feeding. Alfred Garrett, however, who was also a Bible professor and religious educator in Philadelphia, thought it high time the Quakers send for their Bibles.

Scattergood disagreed—vehemently. He thought Garrett's plan would betray the whole Quaker mission in Germany. He thought the feeding had not even been religious, let alone Quaker, but merely "pacifist."[24] The epistolary debate between the two cousins was only immediately about AFSC policy in Germany. Underneath and animating the policy question was the basic question of what ultimate purpose the AFSC's work in Germany and elsewhere was supposed to serve. The AFSC was pacifist, and Quaker. It was founded to offer a Friendly alternative to war. It did not have a charter or an official mission statement during its great German work—it was not legally incorporated until 1928—but Quaker pacifism was inseparable from the AFSC's history and membership. It made the AFSC's humanitarianism distinctive. The ARA and the Red Cross did emergency relief. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, founded by Quakers in 1915, propagated Christian pacifism. Only the AFSC combined the two. The question was how to do so.

Alfred Cope Garrett, self-proposed Quakerizer of Germany, straddled the two main Protestant camps, the liberal and the evangelical, at a time when it was still possible within mainstream American Protestantism to be both, before the modernist-fundamentalist split of the 1920s. Garrett's autobiography, *One Mystic* (1945), turns on

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[24] Alfred Scattergood to Alfred Garrett, January 22, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

his various mystical experiences, which he believed were the surest ground of Christian faith.[25] Yet he was also a Bible teacher who believed every experience, even the mystical kind, should be tested by the Bible; he never once uses the non-biblical terms "Inner Light" or "Light Within" when speaking of his religious experiences in his autobiography. And clearly he embraced forthright evangelism. He accused his cousin Scattergood and the rest of the AFSC of abandoning Quakerism in favor of mere relief. They had sacrificed their Quaker witness on the altar of neutrality. Fox and early Friends had "shaken the countryside for ten miles round" with their proclamation that Christ indeed had come again, not physically but spiritually, as the Light within; and this Light, when turned to, gave a person a new spirit which took away the *occasion*—the *root cause*—of *all* wars. Scattergood and company had betrayed that legacy, Garrett wrote in early February of 1923, and with it the best hope for peace in their time.[26]

And so Alfred Scattergood began 1923 startled, troubled, and, yes, more than a little hurt.

The Opportunity

A year earlier, at the start of 1922, the AFSC had handed all district operations over to the *Deutsche Zentralauschuss fur Auslandhilfe* (DZA) (German Central Office for Foreign Aid). Only a handful of American Friends stayed in Germany, mostly to act as

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[25] Alfred Cope Garrett, *One Mystic: An Autobiographical Sketch* (Philadelphia[?]: Harris & Partridge, 1945).
[26] Alfred Garrett to Alfred Scattergood, February 15, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

guarantors for American donors.[27] The AFSC had no desire to pauperize Germany—to make the country dependent on foreign aid. The AFSC decided at the very beginning of the feeding that as soon as the Germans were able to feed themselves, it would leave.[28] On August 1, 1922, the AFSC removed all personnel from Germany except for a single representative in Berlin. The *Quakerspeisung*—"Quaker-feeding"—was over. Or so everyone thought.

Then in mid-January 1923 the French occupied the Ruhr, that part of Germany bordering France and surrounding the Rhine River. The German government had been protesting the unfairness and impossibility of the reparations the Treaty of Versailles required it to pay in order to compensate France and England for the Great War; the treaty's "war-guilt clause" blamed Germany alone for the war. France wanted to compel Germany to pay, and it wanted ultimately to ensure its own security by wiping Germany off the political map. It would accomplish the former by expropriating Germany's vast coal reserves in a section of the Rhineland's Ruhr Valley called the Saarland, and the latter by precipitating a revolt or retaliation that would allow France to occupy Germany as a whole, after which France would dismantle the country a little over fifty years after Bismarck had unified it.[29]

In this crisis the German government turned to, among others, the American Quakers. It needed food. It also wanted neutral arbitrators with sympathetic connections

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[27] See Caroline G. Norment to "Dear ones on the other shore" (AFSC?), January 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Foreign Service, Country: Germany, AFSC.
[28] Alfred Scattergood to Wilbur K. Thomas, March 31, 1920, box General Administration 1920, Foreign Service: Country – Germany (Letters to Philadelphia), AFSC.
[29] Nicholas Roosevelt, "The Ruhr Question," *Foreign Affairs* 4:1 (Oct 1925): accessed online July 28, 2015, at https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/germany/1925-10-01/ruhr-occupation.

in France: the AFSC had cultivated a great amount of goodwill in France through its relief and reconstruction there during and just after the war. The AFSC's man in Berlin, Gilbert MacMaster, was in touch with the German government and with the US ambassador to Germany, Alanson B. Houghton. He pled with Philadelphia in February to intervene. He saw the French occupation as a kind of *kairos*, a God-given moment in which the AFSC could act decisively to alter the course of history.[30]

Yet the AFSC was slow to act. For one, it did not want unnecessarily to reinforce Germany's dependence on foreign aid. It wanted to see whether the DZA could handle the emergency itself. Secondly, the AFSC was leery that appealing to France on Germany's behalf would violate the AFSC's neutrality. Taking sides would endorse and justify the conflict while vitiating the AFSC's ability to mediate it. The AFSC would help France and Germany find common ground (it did not specify what that might be), but it would not represent the one to the other.[31] No doubt institutional exhaustion and inertia after having just completed nearly three years of fundraising and feeding played their part.

The AFSC instead sent two men into the Rhineland in March to investigate conditions. One was Homer Morris, a former director of the feeding in the Berlin district. The other was J. Henry Scattergood, Alfred's brother. After only a couple of weeks in the Rhineland, J. Henry Scattergood determined that the AFSC need not intervene. The DZA had the feeding under control, and the Germans in the occupied areas were handling the

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[30] MacMaster to Wilbur K. Thomas, February 9, February 21, and February 26, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Germany, AFSC.
[31] Alfred Garrett Scattergood to Caroline G. Norment, February 23, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Germany, AFSC.

occupation admirably. Remarkably, the Germans had chosen passive resistance. They simply refused to cooperate with the French in any way. They would not run the trains or extract the coal.[32] The labor leader guiding the passive resistance at the Krupp factory in Essen had studied at Woodbrooke, the Quaker school and retreat center in England.[33] The French army threw thousands of workers, police officers, and government officials into prison for refusing to work or make others work. The Quakers did intervene in the prisons. Homer Morris and two English Quakers visited several of the political prisons and found that many of the political prisoners were being treated like common criminals. They successfully petitioned General Degoutte, commander of the French occupying forces, to let the Red Cross and the prisoners' families bring them food.[34]

J. Henry Scattergood sailed back to the US in April. He promptly embarked on a barnstorming tour of the country, telling anyone who would listen that the Allied nations needed to revise the formula for reparations in order to ease Germany's burden. Henry Scattergood felt permitted to step so close to the line separating neutrality from partisanship because he had directed the AFSC's relief and reconstruction of France. He was France's friend, he protested, and had her best interests at heart. Like Hoover and many other liberal internationalists before him, Scattergood argued that destabilizing

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[32] J. Henry Scattergood to Mrs. J. Henry Scattergood, March 30, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Germany, AFSC.
[33] Homer L. Morris to Murray S. Kenworthy, April 26, 1923, box General Files 1923: Personnel to Purchasing and Supplies, AFSC.
[34] Morris to Kenworthy, April 26, 1923, box General Files 1923: Personnel to Purchasing and Supplies, AFSC.

Germany politically or economically would only increase the threat from Central Europe to France's national security.[35]

With the country's existential vulnerability in early 1923, one senses that Alfred Garrett's plan to "Quakerize" it might have been within the realm of possibility (and desirability, one might say in hindsight). Germany already owed the Quakers an immense debt for the mass feeding. But had Quakerization, or even Christianization, been the point of the feeding? Some evidence suggests it was. The AFSC could sound like a missionary society when it appealed to Friends churches in the Midwest. Just after the AFSC set up its office in Berlin, one of the staff in Philadelphia drafted a letter to Quaker pastors, declaring "that all who love the Christ will be glad to help in this work." The AFSC's representatives in Berlin, the draft continued, "went under a deep sense of responsibility…not only to feed the hungry and clothe the naked, but to carry the true spiritual message of the Christ and His spirit of love." If Friends failed to respond to the desperate need in Central and Eastern Europe, "how in the future can our religious message have any meaning to these peoples?"[36]

Often, however, the AFSC emphasized ethical and social motivations to the exclusion of evangelism. "The basis of the work is fundamentally religious," explained a publicity bulletin issued by the AFSC's office in Berlin in August of 1920: the feeding was an attempt "to apply to the present world situation the essential elements of

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[35] See the reprints, notes, and news clippings of J. Henry Scattergood's lectures in the folder marked "AFSC Publicity/Speakers 1923," box General Files 1923: Personnel to Purchasing and Supplies, AFSC.

[36] "Suggestions for a letter to Friends' pastors," January 12, 1920, box General Administration 1920, Publicity (Austria, Letters to Germany, Articles from German Publications), AFSC.

Christianity."[37] In another fundraising letter late in1920, Thomas made the biblical mandate behind the feeding explicit by quoting Jesus in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Germany's starving children were "God's little children and inasmuch as we do it for one of the least of these, 'YE DO IT UNTO ME'" (caps his).[38] In a similar letter just before the feeding in Germany began, Thomas cast the feeding as strictly humanitarian: "our only desire is to save the lives of as many of these little suffering ones over there as we can."[39] Scattergood confessed in a letter to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox) just two months into the feeding, "We are constantly forced to remind ourselves that our task is fundamentally a religious one."[40]

Given the evident ambivalence of the AFSC toward the religious intent of its humanitarian work, let alone evangelism, it is little wonder that Alfred Garrett's letter came as such a shock to Scattergood in early 1923. Garrett estimated that the feeding had involved 20,000 German workers, 500,000 parents, and one million children (the actual numbers in each case were probably 1.5 to 3 times this much). Ten AFSC workers should be able to canvass all of the German workers in person or by mail within a few months, compiling the "names & addresses of those in whom some seed of Quakerism had taken root." If only two thousand such were found it would still be worthwhile. These two

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[37] AFSC, "Berlin Bulletin No. 1, August 1920," box AFSC Serials, Countries: Germany: Berlin Bulletin 1920-22, AFSC.
[38] Wilbur K. Thomas to "Dear Friend," November 24, 1920, box General Administration 1920, Publicity (Austria, Letters to Germany, Articles from German Publications), AFSC.
[39] Wilbur K. Thomas to "Dear Friend," February 11, 1920, box General Administration 1920, Publicity (Austria, Letters to Germany, Articles from German Publications), AFSC.
[40] April 28, 1920, box General Administration 1920, Publicity (Austria, Letters to Germany, Articles from German Publications), AFSC.

thousand would then hold meetings and classes for the children they had and the children's parents. Garrett envisioned the formation of a sort of *Quakerjugend*; it would not march lock-step toward war as the next generation of youth was to do, but wait expectantly on the Lord in peace. "If this were done," he effused, "I should expect in 25 yrs. to see the largest Yearly Meeting in the world in Germany, surrounded by a 'wider fellowship' of 100,000's of sympathizers, who together would leaven Germany and Central Europe with good-will, peace, & international brotherhood."[41]

The Opposition

Scattergood, "perturbed," tried to talk his cousin down.[42] First of all, he wrote Garrett near the end of January 1923, the point of the feeding had never been to convert the fed. "I never felt that that [the child-feeding] was so much of a phase of Quaker work as it was a piece of pacifist work." It was an expression of "friendship and Christian good will to those who had been called enemies."[43] Orthodox Quakerism's conflation of pacifism and Christianity was within the next decade to come to be shared by most of American Protestantism. Yet Quaker pacifism was always a principled rather than pragmatic testimony, one exercised for its own sake and not for any hoped-for result, such as adding to the membership of the Society of Friends.

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[41] Garrett to Scattergood, December 26, 1922, box Foreign Service 1922, Germany to Mexico, AFSC.
[42] Scattergood to Caroline G. Norment, February 23, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Germany, AFSC.
[43] Scattergood to Garrett, January 22, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

Second of all, the AFSC had insisted all along that the food came with absolutely no strings attached—political or religious. If the Germans tried to get up a Quaker organization on their own, then the AFSC's Message workers should by all means help them. "But if we attempt to 'cash in' or capitalize the child-feeding for making a Quaker organization in Germany, those who went there first are pretty sure to be thought of as liars." Not only would Scattergood's and others' reputations suffer, but so would any hope of Quakerism taking root in the country: why would Germans join a group that had just lied to them?[44] So Scattergood objected to Garrett's scheme on two counts: it would spoil the goodwill built up between Germany and the United States as a result of the feeding, and it would be self-defeating in terms of growing the Society of Friends.

Garrett found Scattergood's arguments 'for the opposition' the best he had heard so far—better than those he had heard at a German Field Committee meeting held in Berlin in early January.[45] Garrett's fellow Message worker and Germantown member, Agnes Tierney, wrote Scattergood a report of that meeting the day after it was held. The British representatives, Tierney reported, met Garrett's frustration over the lack of evangelism with the claim that "not 5% of those who were interested in Friends during the feeding period had maintained any outward interest in Friends or their meetings for worship." They had found that "to 'missionize' or push is not wise." A German representative, according to Tierney, also rebuffed Garrett, saying that Germans would

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[44] Scattergood to Garrett, January 22, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.
[45] Garrett to Scattergood, February 15, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

not gather in meetings for worship unless the meetings were a "natural outcome of the practical work being done together" with the British and Americans.[46]

This resistance, Tierney reported, left Garrett "depressed." Yet he remained adamant. He answered the German Friend by arguing that he, his wife, and Tierney "were not merely emissaries of the AFSC but of our Yearly Meeting & Monthly Meeting as well, and he felt they would expect us to do genuinely religious work." He also reminded the German Field Committee "that they represented only a small group of Friends of one way of thinking; that in our Western states there was the largest group of Friends in the world"—that is, evangelical, Holiness Friends—"and that they had a very different point of view"—namely, that to win souls for Christ was paramount. Garrett charged that this "evangelizing spirit" was "entirely absent" among the Field Committee. As a result, he believed, many Germans thought of Quakerism as simply a religion of 'deeds and love' and not as the gospel of salvation from sin through Christ. Tierney admired Garrett's fervor, but offered him up to his cousin Scattergood as a cautionary tale. When "sending out further messengers," she wrote, "the goodwill, sympathy and friendship must be emphasized more than the verbal religious message."[47]

Garrett, in his riposte to Scattergood about a month after this meeting, wondered how everyone at the AFSC would feel about his "verbal religious message" if the word "Christianity" were substituted for the word "Quakerism." For Quakerism, he insisted, "means Christianity and nothing else." If it does not, he said, "I am done with it. But it

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[46] Agnes L. Tierney to Scattergood, January 10, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.
[47] Tierney to Scattergood, January 10, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

does." And it, he believed, was "the simple, spiritual, practical Christianity of the first era—primitive Christianity applied to the needs of the 20th century." In 1923, the Social Gospel could still blend seamlessly with evangelicalism within the thought of a single American Protestant. Who if not the Quakers, Garrett wanted to know, would bring this primitive Christianity to the German people? "Here is the chance of all our history—a whole nation opening to our message, and needing it; and yet we will not carry it!" Garrett grew invidious. "I am grieved to think how different this is from the time when England opened to the message—those early Friends were tremendous workers—some died in a few years purely from the heart-breaking efforts they put forth." They put truth before tact. "They preached, they gathered meetings, they organized them—it was a vehement forced propaganda—in season, out of season, without regard to the feelings of the people." But now Garrett and other Message workers "must consider the peculiar feelings of the German people, etc. It seems hopeless."[48] One can almost hear the last gasp of liberal Protestant evangelism in Garrett's passionate pleas to his cousin in Philadelphia.

A week after Garrett wrote this last letter, he was recorded a minister by Germantown Monthly Meeting. What must Scattergood have been thinking as his Meeting minuted that "a gift in the ministry" had been conferred upon his cousin Garrett by none other than Christ, "the Head of the Church"?[49] Who was he to stand in the way of one of Christ's own chosen emissaries? In his response to Garrett's response, Scattergood

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[48] Garrett to Scattergood, February 15, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.
[49] Germantown Monthly Meeting of Friends, *Minutes: Tenth Month 1916 to Ninth Month 1924*, entry for February 23, 1923, Haverford.

humbly admitted "how foolish I feel and how incompetent I am to talk to thee, with all thy knowledge and experience in spiritual things."[50] Still, Scattergood was a leader of a humanitarian organization charged with maintaining neutrality in religion as well as politics, and a liberal sensitive to the cultural-imperialistic implications of an American trying to convert the heart of the former Holy Roman Empire to its own religion.

The union of church and state in Germany began with the Reformation in the sixteenth century. The religious conflicts of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) were ended by the Peace of Westphalia, which established the principle *cuius regio eius religio*—"whose region, his religion." Protestant territorial states developed alongside Catholic, ecclesiastical, and free imperial city-states. In Protestant states like Prussia the sovereign functioned ex officio as the highest bishop, or Summepiskopus. When Germany unified in 1871 under Prussian leadership, the Evangelical (i.e. Protestant) Church became the de facto German church; at least until the end of the Great War, the word for "Protestant" in Germany was synonymous with the word for "German." After the war the Weimar Constitution effected only a "limping separation" of church and state. There would freedom of religion in the Republic, but Christian religious instruction would still be a required subject in state schools, and the state would support religious schools and institutions financially.[51] A German historical sociologist has recently estimated that about 95% of Germans in the early 1920s were officially affiliated with

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[50] Scattergood to Garrett, March 20, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.

[51] Simone Laessig and Rainer Praetorius, "Religion: Belief and Power," in Christoph Muach and Kiran Klaus Patel, eds., *The United States and Germany during the Twentieth Century: Competition and Convergence* (Washington, D.C. and Cambridge, UK: German Historical Institute and Cambridge University Press, 2010), 33-34, 37.

either the Catholic or the Protestant Church in Germany.[52] So in some ways Germany was quite literally more of a Christian nation than the United States. Alfred Garrett must have been among those American social Christians who considered the war damning evidence that global Christianity had failed, and American Christians needed to revive it.[53]

In 1922, Heinrich Frick, a professor at the University of Giessen in Germany, had found nothing so revealing of American cultural imperialism as the fact that Americans were now fanning out across Continental Europe trying to "convert" the very people whose forebears had given them Christianity in the first place.[54] Whether Scattergood was familiar with Frick's argument, he answered Garrett near the end of March 1923 that the Germans "would not understand a group from our country going to Christianize them, because they probably feel (and pretty rightly) that we are no more Christian in this country than they are, nor do they feel the need of being Christianized." This reflexive criticism of American Christianity was to grow ever more pronounced within the AFSC over the coming decade. But Scattergood also took Garrett's comparisons between the AFSC and early Friends personally. "It hurts me, Alfred, to seem to be on the object, so to speak, to some of thy suggestions." He objected to the comparison itself. "The people in England at that time were much more intent on the Bible and preaching and religious

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[52] See Fig. 4 in Volkhard Krech, "Secularization, Re-Enchantment, or Something in between? Methodical Considerations and Empirical Observations Concerning a Controversial Historical Idea," in Marion Eggert and Lucian Hoelscher, eds., *Religion and Secularity: Transformations and Transfers of Religious Discourses in Europe and Asia*, Dynamics in the History of Religions, Vol. 4 (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill NV, 2013), 88.

[53] Cara Burnidge, *A Peaceful Conquest: Woodrow Wilson, Religion, and the New World Order* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016), 62.

[54] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 138.

questions, especially questions of dogma, than I think is now the case in Germany."[55] Whether the example of early Friends was immediately applicable to the modern world was one of the questions that lay at the heart of the AFSC's debate over evangelism.

The other question was historical: what exactly was the example of the early Friends? Here the debate lay not between the cousins Alfred, but between evangelical Quakerism, which Garrett wished to represent, and liberal Quakerism, whose most influential exponent was Rufus Jones—chairman of the AFSC in 1923 and the intellectual leader of American Quakerism. As theological modernism precipitated a split between evangelical-fundamentalists and liberals in almost every major American denomination between the world wars, so American Quakerism, still trying to heal from its various schisms in the previous century, was itself beginning to fray along similar lines in 1923. The figurehead, if not the founder, of liberal Quakerism was Rufus Jones.

In 1897 Jones had traveled to England, where, under the influence of John Wilhelm Rowntree and other English Quakers, he embraced a modernist agenda for the Society of Friends. Fired with "a new vision of Quakerism," Jones collaborated with Rowntree on a series of histories that departed from the prevailing Quaker historiography of the time, which envisioned early Friends not as evangelical "missionaries" or "proto-pastors."[56] Jones and Rowntree recast the first Quakers as capacious mystics. More recent historiography has found that Quakerism most likely began as an eschatological and

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[55] Scattergood to Garrett, March 20, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service: Country – Germany, AFSC.
[56] Hamm, *Transformation of American Quakerism*, 148; Pink Dandelion, *An Introduction to Quakerism* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 2.

evangelical sect with universalist tendencies.[57] Jones and Rowntree, however, saw in early Friends a mystical brotherhood that revived direct experience of God in Puritan England. This mystical re-interpretation of Quakerism allowed Jones to sidestep doctrinal debates and to adapt Quakerism to the latest developments in science and psychology.

Garrett and Jones both defined mysticism as the direct and immediate experience of God. Both acknowledged a deep debt to William James's discussion of mysticism in his *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902). Both studied at James's institution: Garrett, four years Jones's junior, earned a doctorate in English from Harvard in 1892; Jones, a decade later, completed a one-year MA in philosophy while on sabbatical from Haverford. Like Jones, Garrett was a lifelong teacher. He taught at Harvard before overwork broke his health in 1898 and forced him to retreat to his hometown of Philadelphia, where he was Jones's colleague at Haverford from 1905 to 1914, teaching Biblical Literature. In 1914 he retired from the academy and dedicated the rest of his life to religious education, in particular the Sunday School movement, within his Yearly Meeting and among the Protestant churches of Philadelphia generally. Garrett even seems at times in his autobiography to accept Jones and Rowntree's modernist-mystical vision of Quaker history and identity, as when he commends the Friends' Summer School

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[57] For instance, Rosemary Moore, *The Light in Their Consciences: Early Quakers in Britain, 1646-1666* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2000), 66, italics added. "During 1654, the Quaker proclamation shifted away from the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth, toward emphasizing their belief that the Kingdom was to an extent *already realized* among Quakers." These Quakers believed that "they, the only true Saints, had a special destiny *to lead the spiritual transformation of the world*, as the necessary preliminary to the coming of the 'new earth' that they still hoped for."

Movement in Britain at the turn of the century for bringing "intellect and modern scholarship into its [Quakerism's] two-century-old mysticism."[58]

Yet Garrett's interpretations of his own mystical experiences grew increasingly evangelical or particularistic over his lifetime rather than liberal or universalistic. He did not count his conversion experiences—feeling the "Divine Love," believing in Jesus, asking and receiving "divine forgiveness"—as mystical. They did not involve a "sense-perception" of God.[59] His first genuinely mystical experience occurred in his late teens. As he was walking alone along a lake, "the universal light of life seemed to be centering in my heart." He met with "none other than the Holy Spirit of God." Yet "the most important fact" about this experience, he thought, was that "this spirit was…quite different from me." This was no Transcendentalist or pantheistic experience. "There could be no further thought of any 'inner light' or 'spirit' as my own, as any part of my own nature, or born with me."[60] Here Garrett refutes, however implicitly, Rufus Jones's concept of the "conjunct self"—that God and man are inextricably bound up with one another—and upholds the traditionally Orthodox position that the Inner Light was entirely supernatural.[61]

Garrett might have "met with God" beside that lake, but he had yet to meet with Christ—that is, he had yet to have a particularly Christian mystical experience. As Garrett was leaving Harvard, though, Christ was making ready to come to him. Soon after Garrett arrived back in Philadelphia, as he was sitting in worship in Germantown

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[58] Garrett, *One Mystic*, ix, 27, 52, 69, 55-56, 71.
[59] Garrett, *One Mystic*, 5, 17, 18.
[60] Garrett, *One Mystic*, 20.
[61] Rufus Jones, *Social Law in the Spiritual World: Studies in Human and Divine Inter-Relationship* (Philadelphia: John C. Winston Co., 1904), 19.

Meeting one Sunday morning (with his cousin Scattergood nearby, one presumes), he suddenly realized that someone was standing in front of him "in a dim brown cowl, no face…visible." The impression this figure made upon him "was overwhelming, almost heartbreaking; it was the impression of an immeasurable, all-penetrating overwhelming *love*, proceeding, radiating like secret fire, from this person to me." It must be Christ, he thought. Significantly, "there was no light…owing to my sins…nor was there any voice or word for me." Garrett then realized the brown cowl was actually sackcloth: the Son of Man had come "grieving at my sins."[62] This overwhelming sense of sinfulness and the need for forgiveness clearly separates Garrett's mysticism from Jones's, and helps explain why Garrett might have pleaded with his cousin to be allowed to carry the gospel to the German people, whether they had asked for it or not.

Explicitly with Scattergood and implicitly with Jones, Garrett was essentially pleading the evangelical case of Western and Midwestern Quakerism. Before Rufus Jones started to win liberal and moderate evangelical American Quakers over to his interpretation of Quakerism as a mystical leaven within Christianity, the Holiness revival of the 1860s-80s had swept up thousands of Quakers in the Midwest. These Holiness Friends found Fox and the early Quakers' perfectionism reflected in the Wesleyan doctrine of the "second birth." The first birth, a baptism by water, justified the sinner, while the second, a baptism by the Holy Spirit, sanctified or perfected the believer. Quietist doctrine had insisted justification and sanctification were inseparable—only after a long battle to rid oneself of sin was one fit to stand in the presence of God—and evangelicals had feared the potentially antinomian implications of perfection. Holiness

[62] Garrett, *One Mystic*, 54.

Quakers swept aside such misgivings along with many other Quaker distinctives, like pacifism, in their zeal to win souls for Christ.[63]

By 1920 American Quakerism had divided roughly into three different but not entirely separate camps. Hicksites and moderate Orthodox, concentrated on the East Coast, had mostly adopted Jones's modernism and mystical interpretation of Quakerism. They emphasized the Inner Light and social service. Evangelical Orthodox, concentrated in the Midwest, had mostly adopted the Holiness doctrines and what came to be called fundamentalism. They emphasized the Bible and evangelism. (Many Monthly Meetings in the Midwest had also adopted a pastoral, or "programmed," style of worship and congregational organization that nearly eliminated the traditional Quaker silence from worship and, for the first time in Quaker history, placed a paid pastor at the head of the meeting.) Finally, pockets of Quietist, or Conservative, Friends in North Carolina, New England, and Ohio maintained the "hedges" of eighteenth-century Quakerism into the twentieth.

Soon after arriving back in Philadelphia, Garrett discovered that he was out of step with his own Yearly Meeting—or as he would have put it, his Yearly Meeting was out of step with him and most other American Quakers. And not just with most American Quakers, but with the founder of Quakerism himself, George Fox. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox)—and what applied to the Orthodox applied perforce to the Hicksites—seemed to "fail to be in accord with the New Testament, as I then saw it (I might be mistaken)." Garrett agreed that the Holy Spirit, as it moved in and among Friends, especially during worship, was "of higher importance even than the New

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[63] Hamm, *Transformation of American Quakerism*, 6, 75, 85-91.

Testament." This was central to Fox's teaching. Yet Garrett wished to remind his fellow Philadelphians that Fox also taught that the Holy Spirit gave forth the Scriptures. So "if a man's sense of divine guidance seriously differed from the Bible, it must be…mistaken." This grounding in biblical authority, Garrett thought, fundamentally distinguished Quakerism from mysticism.[64]

The logical consequence of this typically evangelical Quaker thinking was that no stricture against evangelism could possibly be divinely inspired, since, for example, Jesus himself had charged his disciples to "make disciples of all nations" at the end of the Gospel of Matthew—the Great Commission. What Garrett must have thought of Rufus Jones's signal contribution to a lesser commission, of lay religious leaders investigating American Protestant missions in the early 1930s, is not hard to imagine. Jones served with leaders from each of the mainline denominations on John D. Rockefeller Jr.'s Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry in 1930-31. "No student of the deeper problems of life," Jones had written in 1928 in a paper on missions that brought him to Rockefeller's attention, "can fail to see that the greatest rival of Christianity in the world today is not Mohammedanism or Buddhism or Hinduism or Confucianism but a world-wide secular way of life and interpretation of the nature of things."[65] The final report of the Laymen's Inquiry in 1932 reiterated Jones's argument, concluding, in William Hutchison's words, that the missionary's "new and overwhelming challenge" was "a corrosive secularization."[66] The missionary's task, then, was not to convert the heathen—let alone

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[64] Garrett, *One Mystic*, 53.
[65] Quoted in Elizabeth Gray Vining, *Friend of Life: The Biography of Rufus Jones* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1958), 227.
[66] Hutchison, *Errand to the World*, 161.

convert other Christians to one's chosen denomination—but to reinforce whatever religion or spirituality was at hand against the onslaught of secularism.

Though it is hard to say for sure, it seems likely that Jones's long tenure as Chairman and Honorary Chairman of the AFSC was crucial in extending the reach of his theological liberalism to missions. Though he apparently never weighed in on the debate between Scattergood and Garrett, the religious neutrality demanded by the AFSC's humanitarianism was likely already in 1923 pushing Jones leftward on missions.

The Deferential Option

The deferential approach to foreign missions that the Laymen's Inquiry was to prescribe almost a decade later was the approach the AFSC finally adopted in Germany. The AFSC would not foist Quakerism upon the German people, but endeavor upon a true partnership with them—a relationship of equals, in which the Message workers of the AFSC were to find that to receive was as blessed as to give. And what they received, in the end, was not the windfall of Quaker converts Alfred Garrett had envisioned, but a summons to turn its face toward America, where social and economic injustice was teeming just outside the AFSC's front door.

The Message worker who implemented the AFSC's deferential approach to Germany was Thomas Kelly. In addition to guiding the Student Club at the Friends' Centre in Berlin over the course of the 1924-25 schoolyear, Kelly served as American Quakerism's ambassador to the inchoate German Quaker movement as it prepared to form its own, autonomous Yearly Meeting. In this supporting role Kelly "traveled in the ministry," as Quakers put it, visiting and providing moral and spiritual counsel to

individuals and groups who ran the gamut from convinced Friends to the merely curious. As a moralist, Kelly gave several talks on the evils of alcohol and the virtues of prohibition. As spiritual guide, he spoke often about the true spiritual worship Quakers practiced in their meetings on the basis of silence. It was in this latter capacity that Kelly was to meet with the great German scholar of religion Rudolf Otto, author of *The Idea of the Holy* (1917) and hatcher of a scheme for world peace through interreligious understanding.

Though Kelly had something of Garrett's fire for evangelism, he, like many liberal American missionaries at this time, believed that actions could be relied upon to communicate the Christian spirit. When he heard near the end of October that a schoolteacher outside Berlin had lamented to the Reichspraesident, Friedrich Ebert, that his pupils knew next to nothing about the people who had been feeding them over the past five years, Kelly was untroubled. "I feel we are right," he wrote AFSC executive secretary Wilbur Thomas, "in not taking any steps actively to spread mere accounts of Quaker history, but rather to depend upon the message of love contained in acts to show the conception of Friends." He thought the legacy of the feeding would of its own right slowly but surely communicate the Quaker "spirit of love" directly to the hearts of the German people.[67] Here was the Message worker Scattergood had wanted Garrett to be.

The influence of the Social Gospel on Kelly's Message work is unmistakable. On successive nights in September he extolled Prohibition and then spoke of the "need of

[67] October 26, 1924, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

people to take the plan of Jesus in earnest."[68] In early November he attended the first meeting of Religious Socialists in Germany, where he was pleasantly surprised to hear some of the speakers insist that Christ meant for his followers to establish the Kingdom of God "upon this earth"—surprised because "much of the teaching here is that the Kingdom of God belongs in Heaven only."[69] This was an allusion to the neo-orthodox theology of Karl Barth, the young Swiss theologian who sought to reaffirm God's absolute sovereignty, and humanity's sinfulness, in the face of liberalism's post-millennialist optimism. In the wake of the Great War, Barth's dim view of human progress made sense. In Germany, Kelly lamented, "One finds so much pessimism regarding the possibility of the Kingdom of God really in any degree coming upon this earth." In contrast, Kelly told a group in the town of Stadthagen that taking up the cross of Christ today "implies the optimism of God in thinking of setting up a Kingdom of Heaven among men."[70]

One formidable German intellectual who still shared this optimism in the mid-1920s was the great scholar of religion Rudolf Otto, professor at Marburg. Otto shared with Barth a concept of God as "wholly other," but with Kelly and other liberal Quakers he shared an emphasis on experience in the religious life. Otto's famous term for the simultaneously terrifying and fascinating experience of God was "the numinous." The relationship between the numinous and the mystical must have appealed to Quakers like

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[68] Kelly to Thomas, October 17, 1924, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[69] Kelly to Thomas, November 10, 1924, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[70] Kelly to Thomas, February 28, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

Rufus Jones, whom Otto had met on a trip to the United States in the fall of 1924, and Thomas Kelly.[71] In late February of 1925, Otto heard from a German Quaker acquaintance of his that the British and American Friends were thinking of maintaining embassies, or "Centers of Good-Will," in Germany and in Europe generally. Otto himself, it turned out, had been thinking of a plan to bring people of all faiths together across the globe in the universal "spirit of Good-Will." So he asked his acquaintance if he could speak with one of these foreign Quakers. Kelly visited him in Marburg in early March of 1925.

Otto told Kelly that Quakers should be natural leaders of an international movement of "good will" because of their belief in the universality of the Inner Light. Quakers, he said, see in all religions "a certain degree of divine illumination." Kelly was sympathetic to Otto's idea, but found it visionary and unrealistic. He explained that the Anglo-American Quakers' idea of Good-Will Centers was limited to maintaining the friendly relations with Europe that the feedings had established. Otto's grand scheme, he thought, was premature. The great scholar reminded Kelly that "Friends have so often stood for ideas that were at first far ahead of the day in which they were first promulgated." This was true enough. Yet as the debate over Alfred Garrett's own visionary scheme revealed, the AFSC and its British counterpart were chary of anything that smacked of spiritual imperialism. Kelly had to leave Otto "rather disappointed."[72]

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[71] Kelly to Thomas, March 9, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

[72] Kelly to Thomas, March 9, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

But Kelly's tepid reception of Otto's advances was of a piece with the AFSC's intentionally self-effacing approach to the missionary enterprise generally.

Kelly wrote often and eloquently about the necessity of mutuality in Message, or missionary, work. "It would be most unfortunate," he exclaimed to Wilbur Thomas in November of 1924, "if anyone should feel that we were in the position of missionaries to a lower race, as though we were superior and needed to reach into the depth and lift a fallen brother!" That such a sentiment had to be repudiated indicates just how far below the religious and civilizational standards of Western Christendom many American Protestants thought the Germans had fallen. Yet Kelly felt more and more that "we must simply work side by side with them, learning from them as well as hoping that they may learn from us."[73] In early December he wrote Thomas, "We are not in Germany…solely to give from England and America that which we have to give Germany. We are also to attempt to give back to England and America that which we receive from Germany."[74] And in early July of 1925, as German Quakers were preparing to found their own Yearly Meeting four weeks later, Kelly wrote, in a vein nicely representative of liberal missiology, "The main thing is that they [Anglo-American Friends] should not attempt to lead, or take a leading part in this, but should be ready to cooperate as often as the way opens to them." The idea, he said, was not to work "upon," but "with" the Germans—a

[73] Kelly to Thomas, November 14, 1924, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[74] Kelly to Thomas, December 4, 1924, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

pithy anticipation of Rufus Jones and the recommendation of the Laymen's Inquiry in Hocking's *Re-Thinking Missions*.[75]

By the end of July, Kelly felt he had witnessed the realization of that ideal for which American Protestant missionaries, both liberal and conservative, yearned: a genuinely native church, "a growth truly springing out of German natures,…and not a mere reproduction or imitation" of Anglo-American Quakerism. About 200 German Quakers and Friends of the Friends (non-Friends in fellowship with German Quakers) gathered in Eisenach over the last weekend of July to found the Germany Yearly Meeting of the Society of Friends. Kelly also attended; true to his conviction that foreign Quakers should not attempt to lead, he apparently said nothing during the three days' conference and observed only. On Friday morning, July 24, he listened as a leading German Friend and well-known author, Alfons Paquet, opened the conference with a stirring call to national purpose and sacrifice. Paquet spoke of "the need of a new national task for Germany," based not on the "old ideals" of militarism, but on the "Quaker message" of peace.[76]

Paquet affirmed the German people's "growing conviction that they, as a nation, had a mission to perform." Yet he wanted that mission to conform to Quakerism rather than to militarism or imperialism. Paquet expected resistance from those clinging to the old ideals. "If we see hatred preached, there we must lift our voices, regardless of consequences. If persecution accept it, if prisons, that is only what the first Quakers

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[75] Kelly to Thomas, July 2, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.
[76] Kelly to Thomas, July 27, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

experienced, if death, that, too has come to others before us!" With Paquet's "remarkable" call ringing in his ears, Kelly found his "passing doubts quieted," his "waverings…in my estimate of the real spiritual power" of German Quakerism stilled. And Kelly was not sure but that pacifists in a country still enthralled with martial glory might not need such "strength enough to endure persecution."[77]

Indeed, the rough Austrian beast who was to vex Paquet's dream to nightmare was even then starting to slouch his political way to Berlin, his path paved with hopes for national vindication through military might. His hour come round at last, he was to bring the "old ideals" back into power with a vengeance—only this time buttressed by a murderous claim to biologically superior blood. The American Quakers were to be on hand to try to prevent the terrorization of Germany's Jews as they had the starvation of its children. They would not let their pacifist principles keep them from working with a brutal government if it meant human lives could be saved.

Before Kelly had embarked for Germany the previous summer, he attended a meeting of the AFSC's Message Committee in Philadelphia in early June, 1924. As he listened to the proceedings, he said, he "felt as if he were on the bank of a stream, looking to see the direction of the current." If so, he would have seen the current flowing toward Germany but with a boulder set in the middle and throwing part of the stream back in the direction of its source. Caroline G. Norment, a former Message worker in Germany herself, wondered aloud if "perhaps the work abroad and changing conditions at home have

[77] Kelly to Thomas, July 27, 1925, box General Files 1924 & 1925, Foreign Service: Germany (Letters From/To), AFSC.

sufficiently cleared our vision for us to see certain concrete problems here in a new light."[78] Norment asked two questions in particular which were increasingly to preoccupy the AFSC.

First, Norment asked, could the AFSC "hope to be of real use as peacemakers in Europe…while there are traditional, recognized, and unconquered antagonisms among us?" Second and more pointedly, "Can we expect as a Society to comprehend the social and political changes and struggles which are going on in Europe unless we…try to work out our testimony on these points in practice?" The crucial rhetorical corollary to this second question: "Are they [these points] fundamental to our testimony, or is our stand on…peace something divorced from social and political systems?"[79]

A woman, Carolena Wood, had involved the AFSC in its greatest humanitarian endeavor, the child-feeding in Germany. Caroline Norment, reflecting on that endeavor, articulated the self-critical questions that were already driving the AFSC to redress economic injustice in its own country. A third woman, Luella Jones, who sat quietly recording the minutes of that Message Committee meeting during which Thomas Kelly watched Caroline Norment swim against the current, had already lived the poignancy of

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[78] AFSC, Minutes of the Message Committee Meeting, June 11, 1924, box AFSC Minutes 1922 to 1925, AFSC.

[79] AFSC, Minutes of the Message Committee Meeting, June 11, 1924, box AFSC Minutes 1922 to 1925, AFSC. Some feminist moral psychologists, starting in the 1980s, marked the "ethics of care" as distinctly feminine and the "ethics of justice" as distinctly masculine, yet it was a woman who first within the AFSC asked the hardheaded question about the systemic relationship between peace and justice. See Nel Noddings, *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Annette Baier, "Hume: The Woman's Moral Theorist?" in Eva Feder Kittay and Diana Meyers, eds., *Women and Moral Theory* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 1987); and Sara Ruddick, *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989).

these questions in her own work with the AFSC, among hungry coalminers in the low mountains of West Virginia.

"There is never peace in West Virginia

because there is never justice."

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones, 1925[1]

3: Quakers and Labor

The German feeding led directly to relief work at home. Exactly one month after the *Quakerspeisung* started in Germany, the AFSC appointed a Committee on Home Service Work. It was up and running two months later. Five workers were in the field: one at a Native American school in Tunessasa, NY, another at the Kansas State Reformatory, two at Sleighton Farm in Pennsylvania, and one keeping the books at the AFSC. The following January, one of the returned German workers called the attention of the Home Service Committee to the needs of the unemployed in the United States over the coming winter. The AFSC did nothing; it was consumed with the German feeding and with similar operations in Russia and Poland. At a general meeting of the AFSC in July 1921, "it was felt that the office had not given sufficient attention" to home service, and "the Secretary was encouraged to secure someone to take special charge of that department."[2]

That "someone" ended up being a young Kansan by the name of Clarence Pickett.[3] Highly educated, Pickett was also unassuming and pragmatic, humane and kind, with a hangdog face and slightly buck teeth. Like almost all of the AFSC's paid staff

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[1] Quoted in James Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills: West Virginia's Coal Miners and Their Battle for Freedom* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2015), 307.
[2] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, March 25, 1920; May 27, 1920; January 27, 1921; and July 28, 1921, AFSC.
[3] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, September 22, 1921, AFSC.

between the wars, he was native-born, white, and middle-class, having taught at Earlham, a Quaker college in Indiana, before coming to the AFSC in 1922 as its Home Service secretary. In 1921, AFSC staff members were almost all from either Philadelphia or the state of New York. None of them was from the Midwest. The narrow demographics of the AFSC's paid staff reflected the split that arose among American Quakers during the nineteenth century between the modernists and liberals of the Northeast, who largely remained pacifist, and the evangelicals of the Midwest, many of whom did not. In fact, the umbrella organization of Midwestern Quakers, the Five Years Meeting (it met once every five years), felt that the AFSC was "trespassing upon its fields."[4] Midwestern Quakers had their own mission boards, foreign and domestic—and in the evangelical mold of Christian missions. That is, for them the root of human suffering was the individual's separation from God, and so they sought to win souls for Christ as they redressed social ills. Though the Home Service Committee's minutes do not say as much, the AFSC probably hired Pickett at least in part to help heal this breach between itself and the Five Years Meeting.

Hiring Pickett did not signal that the AFSC was abandoning pacifist humanitarianism and its concomitant neutrality in matters of religion and politics. In January of 1922, as the AFSC was yielding control of the German feeding to the DZA (German Central Office for Foreign Aid), the Home Service Committee heard an appeal from one of its members on behalf of striking miners in West Virginia. The strikers and their families needed food and shelter. The coal companies had evicted many of them from their company-owned houses; they were now living in tents. The Home Service

[4] AFSC Home Service Committee Minutes, September 21, 1921, AFSC.

Committee brought the matter before the general meeting of the AFSC, which referred it warmly to the Executive Board.[5]

Yet intervention was stalled by the politics of neutrality. Several months passed before in April the Executive Board acknowledged that though the strikers' children were suffering from lack of food, "The situation is difficult for the AFSC on account of the fact that any work that is undertaken will be considered as partisan work by the American Red Cross and the mine owners." Still, humanitarian concerns should transcend the conflict. "The AFSC felt that as its purpose is to relieve suffering, it might be possible to maintain our neutrality and still be of service."[6] As of June 1, funds for West Virginia still "had not materialized." The general meeting of the AFSC attributed the lack of contributions to the "anxiety" some Friends felt about appearing to side with the strikers, though three weeks later the Executive Board decided the AFSC should help striking miners and their families in Pennsylvania as well.[7]

Since at least Reinhold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* in 1932, American historians and scholars of religion have tended to treat Social Gospel churches and organizations' efforts on economic justice with ambivalence, condescension, or even charges of hypocrisy.[8] The latest trend in the historiography is to credit the creation of social Christianity to the workers themselves, and to cast the traditional lineup of Social Gospel ministers and lay leaders as simply reacting to the theological ferment "from

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[5] AFSC Home Service Committee Minutes, January 25, 1922, and AFSC General Meeting Minutes, January 26, 1922, AFSC.
[6] AFSC Executive Board Minutes, April 6, 1922, AFSC.
[7] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, September 21, 1922; AFSC Executive Board Minutes, June 19, 1922, AFSC.
[8] For more on Niebuhr's *Moral Man*, see Chapter 4.

below." Historians Heath Carter and Janine Giordano Drake are at the vanguard of this trend with their work on radical working-class religion and socialism during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era.[9] Labor historian Ken Fones-Wolf anticipated this trend with *Trade Union Gospel* (1989), a book especially apropos to the AFSC as it deals with working-class religion in Philadelphia around the turn of the twentieth century. He argues that Philadelphia's Protestant social reformers mostly helped working people advance their cause, especially in getting pro-labor laws passed, even as they—like the Quakers—abhorred labor's more radical tactics like strikes.[10] This argument, that the Social Gospel simultaneously hindered and helped the cause of labor—with the latter tacitly conflated with the cause of justice—is essentially the judgment of cultural historian Jackson Lears in *Rebirth of a Nation* (2009), his recent survey of American history from Reconstruction to the end of the Great War.[11]

Starting with Liston Pope's *Millhands and Preachers* (1942), on the Gastonia textile strike of 1929, the overarching narrative of the scholarship on social Christianity has been that sentimentality, class or cultural prejudices, and captivity to wealthy church members ultimately prevented middle-class Protestants from connecting the coming of

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[9] Carter, *Union Made: Working People and the Rise of Social Christianity in Chicago* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015); Giordano Drake, "Between Religion and Politics: The Working Class Religious Left, 1880-1920" (PhD diss, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014).

[10] Fones-Wolf, *Trade Union Gospel: Christianity and Labor in Industrial Philadelphia, 1865-1915* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989), 120, 165, 182, 193. This book neglects the Quakers.

[11] Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of Modern America, 1877-1920* (New York: Harper Perennial, 2009), 195-200.

the Kingdom of God with economic justice for the working class.[12] The class makeup of Orthodox Quakerism in Philadelphia, from which the early AFSC drew most of its leadership, fits this narrative nicely. A 1920 census conducted by the Orthodox Yearly Meeting found only 2.5 percent of respondents identifying themselves as working class ("wage earners"). More than 25 percent, on the other hand, either owned or managed a business or worked on salary. Teachers, farmers, and professionals accounted for another fifth of the respondents, while the remaining 50 percent were homemakers or "persons living on income," including an undisclosed number of "gentlemen."[13] The Yearly Meeting did establish a Committee on Social and Industrial Problems in 1917, a sort of rough equivalent of the Industrial Department of the Federal Council of Churches, which the Yearly Meeting never joined. But the efforts of this committee over the next decade succeeded only in awakening a few individual Quaker capitalists to their responsibility for their workers' welfare.[14]

The following story of AFSC's relief of miners and millhands in southern Appalachia does not so much recast this narrative as dramatically reveal some of its inherent complexity and pathos. It is more tragedy than satire. Staying neutral in the midst of conflict could be agonizing: the woman who led the AFSC's relief of miners in southwestern West Virginia nearly broke physically and emotionally under the strain of having not to appear to favor the miners' side as she watched them suffering at the hands

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[12] Pope, *Millhands and Preachers: A Study of Gastonia*, Yale Studies in Religious Education (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942).
[13] These figures are from Thomas F. Rzeznik, *Church and Estate: Religion and Wealth in Industrial-Era Philadelphia* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2013), 175.
[14] Rzeznik, *Church and Estate*, 173-177.

of the owners and operators. Six years later the AFSC relieved hundreds of striking millhands in the North Carolina piedmont because the mill owners and officials would not let the millhands' only supporters with any power—radical organizations from up North—into their company towns. The pro-labor groups desperately needed the AFSC to remain neutral; they needed the AFSC to keep their striking comrades alive and well. Not only in military warfare could neutrality mean the difference between life and death. From the angle of this chapter, then, one particular Social Gospel agency's neutrality in the midst of industrial conflict looks like compassion and courage rather than hypocrisy and cowardice.

The leadership of the AFSC recognized that industrial conflict at home would severely test the organization's neutrality. A Red Cross official had written AFSC executive secretary Wilbur Thomas in February that "it is our policy to leave the responsibility of relieving conditions due to unemployment where it rightfully belongs, namely, with the State and local authorities."[15] Near the end of June, Thomas assured the president of the American Red Cross, John Barton Payne, that the AFSC sought to feed and clothe women and children only, with need alone determining whom the AFSC would help, and all this "without discussing any of the issues involved in the present controversy in the coal industry."[16] Payne was satisfied. He wrote Thomas on July 1 that "your proposed action meets my hearty approval. Service to humanity is the watch-word,

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[15] Starr Cadwallader to Wilbur Thomas, February 22, 1922, box General Files 1922, Administration to Finance, AFSC.
[16] Thomas to Payne, June 29, 1922, box General Files 1922, Administration to Finance, AFSC.

and this does not involve taking sides in a controversy but does involve service to those who need service."[17]

In the end, the AFSC agreed that what it called "industrial warfare" should be no more allowed to starve innocent women and children at home than military warfare should be allowed to do so abroad.[18] When the National Information Bureau wrote Thomas in June asking if the AFSC was now adopting a policy of "relief and indirect conciliation in labor disputes," Thomas answered no.[19] "Our primary interest," Thomas replied, "is not to settle the strike or necessarily bring about better understanding between the two groups involved, but to see that all disputes should be settled" peaceably and without starving innocent women and children.[20] The AFSC used its work in Germany to justify its intervention in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. "On the back of every food card, issued to the most needy of German children," the AFSC explained in a press release, "was a statement which read like this: 'This food is…distributed through the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), who for a period of 250 years have held that love and goodwill and not war and hatred would bring about better world conditions.' The AFSC has now decided…to undertake work among the needy families in the [Eastern] coal regions in the same spirit."[21] The AFSC had staked its claim as a protector of

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[17] Payne to Thomas, July 1, 1922, box General Files 1922, Administration to Finance, AFSC.
[18] Minutes of a Meeting of the AFSC Executive Board and the Home Service Committee, April 20, 1922, AFSC.
[19] Geddes Smith (Acting Director) to Thomas, June 16, 1922, box General Files 1922, Administration to Finance, AFSC.
[20] Thomas to Geddes Smith, June 20, 1922, box General Files 1922, Administration to Finance, AFSC.
[21] "Home Service Work of the American Friends Service Committee Philadelphia PA," box General Files 1922, Home Service Section, AFSC.

innocents in Germany, and was now compelled by the force of its own logic to protect human life in its own country. "The same principle which guided us in carrying relief to German and Russian children," Thomas declared, "impels us to enter this new field."[22]

But this was a different kind of war in a different kind of field. For one, this war was still being fought. In Germany the AFSC had fed women and children after the war was over and after the Allies had lifted their naval blockade. Also, the AFSC workers in Germany had an ocean between them and their strongest critics in the United States. AFSC workers in the Eastern coal fields of the United States, on the other hand, would be working in the very midst of a still-raging industrial war, face to face with the combatants—company managers, union organizers, strikers, strike breakers—on both sides. "Here was a war at home," wrote the AFSC's chief field worker in West Virginia, Luella Jones. "While the two factions were fighting over the question of labor organizations the families were in dire need. Could we go in as neutrals and give them help?"[23]

The relief of this war's innocent victims required an even more strenuous practice of neutrality than had Germany. It strained that practice to the point of breaking.

The Case of Cadbury v. Thomas

The labor strife of 1919 spread to the coalfields late in the year. The United Mine Workers of America (UMW), founded in 1890, had by the end of the Great War

[22] Quoted in report by Luella Jones on relief work in West Virginia coalfields, n.d. [probably May, 1923], box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[23] Report by Luella Jones, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.

thoroughly unionized the Central Competitive Field—Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The coal industry boomed during the war as demand for cheap energy soared. Also, the temporary centralization of industry in the United States after the country entered the war in 1917 proved a boon to the UMW and other labor unions, as the Wilson administration promised protection of unions in return for uninterrupted work. The UMW had entered the war with a stronghold in Kanawha County in southeastern West Virginia on the border with Kentucky. By war's end the union in West Virginia had added over twenty-five thousand members to its hard core in Kanawha.[24]

With the "return to normalcy" after the war, demand collapsed, setting off a chain reaction of falling prices and sinking wages. The labor truce shattered in 1919: a wave of strikes involving over four million workers in every major industry stoked fears of the spread of bolshevism after the Russian Revolution—the first Red Scare—and threw labor and capital back into pitched battle. In West Virginia the state legislature passed laws banning the flying of the Red flag under penalty of a hefty fine and one to five years in prison, and creating a new state police force, or constabulary, expressly to guard the state against Bolsheviks and anarchists.[25]

The UMW's contract with owners and operators in the Central Competitive Field expired in the summer of 1919. The coal owners and operators rejected the union's demands. Two thousand union delegates gathered in Cleveland in early September for the UMW's annual convention and showed growing enthusiasm for the nationalization of the industry. This was a bridge too far for the acting president of the UMW at the time, John

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[24] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 182.
[25] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 181-182.

L. Lewis, a Republican of conservative political instincts who was at the start of a forty-year career in labor leadership that was to include founding the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the mid-1930s and presiding over the country's most powerful labor union, the UMW, from 1919 until 1959. The rank-and-file also demanded a 60 percent raise in wages, a six-hour day, a five-day week, time and a half for overtime, and double time for Sunday and holiday shifts—or they would strike. Lewis reluctantly brought the matter to a vote before the assembly in Cleveland, which unanimously approved a resolution to shut down the nation's mines on November 1. For the next five weeks Lewis and the UMW's executive board tried to hammer out a deal with the country's mine operators, to no avail. In late October, Lewis and the board issued the call to strike.[26]

President Wilson, losing all patience as winter loomed, went to court to seek an injunction—against the strikers. On November 8, a federal judge, invoking the wartime Lever Act on price controls, declared the strike illegal for forcing prices up and named eighty-four union officials nationwide as legally liable for damages. Lewis, furious at Wilson for betraying his promise not to use the Lever Act against workers, nonetheless ordered the strikers back to work. "We are Americans," he said, "we cannot fight the government." The miners refused to obey, as he knew they would. Wilson put a hundred thousand federal troops at the mine owners' disposal, but the strike persisted. In early December, Wilson ordered the Secretary of Labor and the Attorney General to reach a compromise with the UMW. Lewis agreed to an immediate 14 percent increase in wages and promises of an additional increase once a federal coal commission had time to

[26] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 189-190, 194.

investigate the industry. Coal was quickly becoming a "sick" industry: a surplus of workers were producing a surplus of supply out of all proportion with peacetime demand. The coal commission would make recommendations on how to adjust hours, wages, prices, and production so that the mines could somehow remain profitable. Lewis declared victory and the miners were mollified enough to go back to work.[27]

A month later, at the end of January, 1920, Lewis launched a UMW organizing offensive in the nonunion fields in southern West Virginia. Two months later the coal commission recommended a stunning 27 percent increase in wages for UMW members. Nonunion operators in southern West Virginia responded by firing and evicting anyone who joined the UMW and insisting that their miners sign "yellow dog contracts," which barred them from joining the union. The UMW succeeded anyway in organizing hundreds of men. The operators refused to negotiate with the union, so the local UMW leader called a general strike in July of 1920. Two months later the Wilson administration deployed federal troops to protect strikebreakers in the area, but the strikers persisted. Come Christmas they were living in tent colonies when Mary Harris "Mother" Jones arrived bearing gifts; the "miner's angel" had been a part of the UMW's struggle in West Virginia since 1902.[28]

In May of 1921, violence erupted between strikers and deputies along the border with Kentucky. The "Three Days Battle" left an untold number of men dead or wounded on each side. Over the summer several more union partisans were gunned down. Mother Jones led a delegation to the governor in August suggesting how he might avert an all-out

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[27] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 194-195.
[28] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 195, 202, 203, 205, 214, 217, 220, 4.

war. He ignored them, prompting hundreds of union miners in Kanawha County to walk out and stand in armed solidarity with their brethren across county lines. Within days a makeshift army of eight thousand men were under the command of miners (some in uniform) with combat experience in the Spanish-American and Great wars—the largest civil insurrection in the United States since the Civil War. The governor asked President Harding for federal troops. Harding had "battle planes" deployed to southern West Virginia to drop leaflets ordering the miners to disperse. On August 31, the miners joined in open combat with local and state law enforcement. On September 2, planes dropped gas and shrapnel bombs on the miners—the first time American citizens had been bombed on their own soil by their fellow citizens. Harding now deployed federal troops. The miners willingly surrendered, thinking that "Uncle Sam" would protect their constitutional rights, but the troops soon left, leaving the state to its own devices again.[29]

Though the AFSC decided in the spring of 1922 to feed the children of the still-striking miners, Quakers generally denounced strikes as unethical; the strike, they argued, was a weapon—economic rather than military, but still a weapon—designed to force employers to act against their will. The ethics of labor tactics were to split the pacifist left in the coming decade. The Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), a pacifist organization founded in England and in America by Quakers in 1915, served as a sort of clearinghouse for debates between pacifists over what measure of coercion, if any, was ethically permissible in labor's fight with capital. Radical, revolutionary pacifists like Quaker A. J. Muste and former Presbyterian minister Norman Thomas of the Socialist Party of

[29] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 229, 251, 253, 255, 260, 262, 273, 274, 278, 282, 284.

America were willing to experiment with nonviolent direct action in the cause of economic justice. Meanwhile, liberal pacifists like the young Henry Joel Cadbury, world-renowned Lucan scholar and co-founder of the AFSC, insisted that pacifism was primarily an objection to coercion in any form, whether economic or military; pacifists protested war so strenuously only because killing was the most destructive form of coercion. Eventually this debate was to force Reinhold Niebuhr, future McCarthyite J. B. Matthews, and others out of the FOR in 1934 when they affirmed that they would condone a controlled season of violence if it might establish a more just economic order.[30]

This intra-pacifist debate found its classic expression in the opening pages of the May 1920 issue of *The World Tomorrow*, the unofficial journal of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the most influential pacifist periodical in the 1920s.[31] Cadbury represented the prosecution, while Norman Thomas defended the strike. Cadbury was now a professor of New Testament at Andover Theological Seminary after resigning from Haverford in 1918 in the face of student, faculty, and alumni backlash against an angry letter he wrote the *Philadelphia Inquirer* in October of that year protesting the anti-German sentiment in the country. In *The World Tomorrow* he argued that the strike was analogous to the Allied naval blockade of Germany and Austria-Hungary during the war, causing suffering the AFSC was just then beginning to alleviate with the *Quakerspeisung*. Thomas, a rising star in the Socialist Party (he was to be the party's nominee for President six times between 1928 and 1948), strongly disagreed.

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[30] See Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 112-145.
[31] III:5 (May 1920): 1-5.

The editors at *The World Tomorrow* introduced the Cadbury-Thomas exchange with two caveats meant to shield each side from undue criticism: "to support the right to strike is not to approve of the wisdom or justice of every strike, and…to oppose strikes as unethical is not to argue that it is ethical to try to prevent them by legal coercion." With that said, the editors gave the floor to Cadbury. The gentlemanly scholar wrote his piece as a letter to a fictitious "Fellow Reconciler" who was supposed to be representative of pacifists like Thomas who supported the right to strike. Cadbury was "convinced" that his friend had opposed the war on principled rather than pragmatic or humanitarian grounds—that is, not because the war was a capitalist mechanism for generating profits or even because it was violent, but because "compulsion was not God's way nor the method he wished men to use." However noble the end, coercive means were unjustifiable; Cadbury wished to persuade his friend that strikes were coercive.

Though the analogy of the strike to war is imperfect, Cadbury admitted, both have as their ultimate aim involuntary concession; killing is only war's means to that end. And it is not enough to counter that the striker is passive while the soldier is active: conscientious objection during the war proved that "positive and negative form the most superficial of moral tests." The better analogy, Cadbury insists, is that between the blockade and the strike. Both use economic pressure, and both are negative (i.e., passive). Pacifists at first favored the blockade as an ethical substitute for war. Yet the consequences—death and disease—appalled them into opposition. Soon, Cadbury warned, a massive strike, possibly for an unjust cause, might likewise "reveal [the strike's] hideous and murderous power upon innocent men, women, and children." The threatened strike of the Triple Alliance in Britain, for instance, "could have done more

injury to the general public on that Island in a few weeks than did eighteen months of Germany's submarine warfare." In closing, Cadbury invoked the "history of Quakerism," which had convinced him of the importance of a group of people, however small, calling something "evil" a hundred years before it was universally condemned.

The tone of Thomas's rebuttal, as Cadbury's biographer has noted, suggests that Cadbury's unequivocal condemnation of the strike surprised and dismayed the Socialist, coming as it did from an AFSC leader with "mildly socialist leanings."[32] Thomas answered that the American economic structure itself "rests on the compulsion to which you object." Cadbury had used Thomas's own words from a previous issue of the journal against him: "We [at *The World Tomorrow*] believe that the difficulty of pointing to an immediate and obviously practical method of securing a given end does not justify us in approving a method which is in itself morally indefensible." Thomas acknowledged authorship of those words, but wished now to qualify it by adding that one can refuse to act "only in the clearest cases of moral obliquity." If no course of action clearly promised justice, then neutrality was ethically permissible. Otherwise, one was complicit in injustice. Imagine yourself a worker, Thomas said. If your fellow workers were to strike, you could say you sympathize but refuse to take part in the conflict. But if you laid down your tools, you would effectively be on strike; and if you went to work, you would effectively be a strikebreaker. You are "inevitably a partner on one side or the other." Neutrality was not an option.

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[32] Margaret Hope Bacon, *Let This Life Speak: A Life of Henry Joel Cadbury* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), 57.

Cadbury was to become intimately familiar with the living and working conditions of Appalachian coalminers a little more than a decade after this exchange with Norman Thomas. In the meantime he apparently shed his opposition to the strike and came to condone it. It is impossible to say exactly when and why he changed his mind. Perhaps his continuing contact with AFSC volunteers who had worked in the "field" was decisive—men and women like Luella Jones, who, a year and a half before she quietly transcribed what Thomas Kelly and Caroline Norment had to say during a meeting of the Message Committee in June of 1924, almost abandoned neutrality as she came face to face with the miners' misery in the latter half of 1922.

The Radicalization and Neutralization of Luella Jones

Who Luella Jones was is hard to know. The only documentary trace she left behind appears to be the batch of letters and memos she wrote while on assignment with the AFSC in West Virginia in 1922. From these emerge the only certainties about her biography. In 1922 she was a middle-aged Quaker social worker from Iowa and a member of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) in Iowa City. When she signed up with the AFSC she was teaching at George School, a private preparatory school in Pennsylvania outside Philadelphia.[33]

She entered a fraught situation in Kanawha County, West Virginia. The state's mine owners and industrialists had just months before founded the American Constitutional Association (ACA) in order to refute the findings of outside "agitators,"

[33] See Luella Jones to Marion Longshore, July 4, July 14, and December 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

including investigators from "so-called social and relief committees." Then the state's unionized mines had announced that they had to cut wages to compete with nonunion mines. The UMW orchestrated a statewide strike starting April 1.[34] Luella Jones arrived three months later. She sent her first field report to Philadelphia from Charleston, West Virginia, on the Fourth of July, 1922. She and another AFSC volunteer were waiting for Frieda Burkle, the nutritionist who designed most of the menus for the AFSC's German work to send them the menu for West Virginia.[35]

Ten days later Jones confessed to her friend at AFSC headquarters, Marion Longshore, "Some of these children make me want to be a kidnapper." Jones and her partner had set up a feeding center in Charleston, and expected to move soon to a smaller town outside the city that was closer to the coal camps. One of the "regulars" in Charleston was a curly-headed eight-year-old girl who had no dress that fit her. One day she showed up in a dress big enough to swallow her whole. "She kept one hand clutching the front to keep it on." The next day she wore a dress so small it left "the whole of her little back" exposed. "She is a shy little creature." She also topped the list, it seems, of the children Jones would have liked to spirit away to a better life.[36] The lack of knowledge

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[34] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 293, 200.
[35] Jones to Longshore, July 4, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC. According to the AFSC's personnel files, Frieda Burkle, upon emigrating to the United States from Germany, boarded for eight years with my great-grandfather in Worcester, Massachusetts.
[36] Jones to Longshore, July 14, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

about child nutrition, the lack of food and proper housing and clothing, the heat—"why they are not all dead" was more than Jones could understand.[37]

Jones had seen miners' wives feed their babies Coca-Cola and castor oil. She wanted to educate the children's parents, especially the mothers. "The people are lamentably ignorant," she wrote on July 28. Less than a month into the work, she was full of ideas about what the AFSC should do. Before her co-workers left at the end of the summer, she wanted the AFSC to send a team of social workers into West Virginia to weigh the infants the AFSC was feeding, to remind the mothers of "the necessity of greater care." She wanted the AFSC also to conduct "intelligence tests" in the mining camps, together with a survey of the school system and a social survey that included statistics of infant mortality. "I could get enough material here to get a Ph.D. degree." For her own part, Jones planned to organize mothers' clubs to study childcare bulletins from the United States Children's Bureau.[38] So began a litany of plans and recommendations Jones was to make over the next six months.

Neutrality did not come easy to Luella Jones. "We come as neutrals," Jones's field director assured a local leader in central West Virginia near the end of July, "and do not wish to take part in any discussion of the present industrial situation."[39] The next day, though, after offering Philadelphia her own ideas for the work, Jones wrote with a touch of impatience, "We are still neutral, but I must say that I am disgusted to see the way our

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[37] Jones to Miss Moore, July 22, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[38] Jones to Miss Moore, July 28, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[39] Richard Cadbury to Mr. Massey, July 27, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

government has failed to see the situation or to help toward a peaceful settlement." She clearly sympathized with the miners, and framed the conflict in their terms: "It is a fight to see whether miners shall form unions, and the president [i.e., Harding] runs true to form in favor of the capitalists." Still she traded in some of the baser stereotypes of white folk in Appalachia as alien to progressive American middle-class society. "The miners are ignorant and improvident, but they are also very human in other ways."[40]

A week later, about the time that the UMW won a return to the old pay scale and called off the strike, she drew up mock "indictments" against both the miners and the operators in a letter to Philadelphia.[41] Charges against the former included "blind fidelity to the unions," "reckless buying when times are good," and "ignorant and illiterate." The miners were slow to raise their own standard of living and insisted that wages keep pace with the cost of living, even though living in company towns was more expensive than it was elsewhere. Yet the charges against the operators included squeezing miners and their families into company houses that were too small—"the miner has no chance to improve his living conditions"—and forcing mining families to shop at company stores, where prices were 15 to 20 percent higher than in the nearby cities of Charleston and Huntington. Most damning, the operators had "failed to observe industrial ethics until forced to do so by the formation of unions."[42] Jones was a judicious observer.

The last in her list of charges against the miners was that they had "low standards about the use of tobacco and liquor. (Men frequently spend money for self-indulgence

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[40] Jones to Miss Moore, July 28, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[41] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 301.
[42] Jones to Miss Moore, August 5, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

when family is in need.)"[43] It was a series of close encounters in November and December with one hard-drinking miner in particular that was to open Jones's eyes to the miners' full humanity and to how inhumanely the operators were treating them. This was a kind of conversion experience that nearly radicalized her.

Historian Dan McKanan has described American radicalism as a quasi-religious tradition built on such "prophetic encounters" as Luella Jones experienced over the fall of 1922 in Kanawha County. McKanan calls these encounters "prophetic" because their place within radicalism is analogous to that of revelation within the traditions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. "When human beings encounter one another deeply, in the midst of their struggles for freedom and equality and community," writes McKanan, "prophetic power is unleashed. This is power to denounce, to condemn those who would 'grind the face of the poor into the dust,' in the words of Isaiah," as well as the "power to *announce*—to proclaim God's Kingdom that will be realized here on earth."[44] Jones's letters from West Virginia coal country reveal a woman whose pent-up prophetic power threatened to overwhelm her resolve to remain neutral in the midst of an industrial war whose victims, day after day, she was encountering deeply.

On August 8, though, she could still assure Mr. J. Stump, the anti-union operator at Eskdale, that "we have no axes to grind except to help the children through this hard time and promote friendliness and goodwill."[45] A few days later she wrote the president

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[43] Jones to Miss Moore, August 5, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[44] Dan McKanan, *Prophetic Encounters: Religion and the American Radical Tradition* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2011), 3, emphasis his.
[45] Jones to Stump, August 8, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

of the West Virginia WCTU with another scathing indictment of the miners. Mrs. J. Walter Barnes had responded to Jones's request for clothes for a Mrs. Akers and child with assurances that she would have some sent right away. Mrs. Barnes then took the occasion to lament Mr. Akers's dissoluteness. "Personally I have no patience with any one who will permit himself to be that destitute for I know positively that there is no necessity for it." As far as she was concerned, it was the result of drunkenness and sloth.[46] Jones agreed, and added ignorance to the list of sins. "The social worker soon learns that there are many people [who] are simple minded as children." She knew from her social work in cities that "our slum families" have little chance of ever improving their lot. But whether this was due to "lack of opportunity" or to "lack of ability"—well, she had not yet "studied that out."[47] Jones was too keen a social observer to rely uncritically on moralistic explanations of poverty.

Yet the flowing of alcohol in the hills of coal country raised her prohibitionist hackles. "Moonshine is so common about us that people do not take the trouble to hide it from us or any one." By the end of August, she and the AFSC had set up feeding centers in five different coal camps in southeastern West Virginia: Eskdale, Cabin Creek, Dry Branch, Ronda, and Sharon.[48] In each of these centers local coalminers' wives and daughters cooked the food. One of Jones's "most helpful" volunteers was the sister of a

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[46] Mrs. J. Walter Barnes to Jones, August 11, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[47] Jones to Mrs. J. Walter Barnes, August 12, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[48] Jones to Stump, August 8, 1922, and Jones to Elizabeth Perkins, August 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

moonshiner. The woman's other brother was a Federal Prohibition officer.[49] "Now what is one to do?" Jones asked Mrs. Barnes, throwing up her hands.[50] Yet women and children were as innocent of their husbands' and fathers' drinking as they were of their striking, Jones insisted. On the autumn solstice she wrote another member of the state WCTU, "We meet many people who are reluctant to help out" because they denied the miners' right to organize. She was "sure," however, "that you must feel with us that the innocent should not be made to suffer for industrial wars."[51] Prohibitionist progressives had made the domestic abuse of women and children a casus belli in their fight against alcohol. Now the protection of innocents demanded that temperance advocates like Jones and her correspondent shield women and children from the ravages of industrial conflict.

Also on September 21, she wrote a friend that a judge had ruled that any miners living in company housing were trespassing if they refused to work for the owner of the house, the company.[52] Yet most of the companies in southern West Virginia insisted their men sign "yellow-dog contracts," forbidding them from joining the union. Many of the men found this unacceptable. "They are stubbornly loyal to the organization which has meant so much to them in the past," Jones explained, "and for which they have endured so long." They would rather risk eviction and life in a tent colony than desert the union. "You and I might question the wisdom of such unswerving loyalty, but not so the miner.

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[49] Jones to Elizabeth Perkins, August 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[50] Jones to Mrs. J. Walter Barnes, August 12, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[51] Jones to Mrs. V. E. Mohler, September 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[52] Jones to W. B. "Bart" Baulkins, September 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

One might as well try to make him give up his religion."[53] It was at this point, as another standoff between miners and law enforcement loomed, that Jones's only remaining coworker in the field left for home. She was now solely responsible for the AFSC's relief in West Virginia—though Philadelphia allocated her $1200 to hire a nurse from the Kanawha County Public Health Association.[54]

Jones reported in early October that a miner's wife who was pregnant and about to "enter confinement" (for delivering her baby) was among those miners, and their wives and children, who lived in dread with the knowledge that camp guards would evict them from their houses any day. The woman had had a baby a year earlier and spent several weeks in the hospital after the delivery. The doctors had thought another pregnancy could be fatal, so they had tried to persuade her to let them remove her reproductive organs. She had "put them off" with the "excuse" that she wanted to visit her family first, and never went back. Now she faced the same ordeal all over again. "You and I would at once go [to] the hospital and get the best treatment possible," Jones wrote her female correspondent, "but you see these women are like children. They don't like to leave home, or can't find some one to care for the younger children. There is always some excuse."[55] Jones still stood on the other side of what sociologist Arlie Russell Hochschild would call an "empathy wall," a mound of middle-class prejudices blocking her from

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[53] Jones to Miss F. B. Williams, September 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[54] Longshore to Jones, September 29, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[55] Jones to Elizabeth Perkins, August 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

stepping emotionally and imaginatively into the shoes of a destitute, soon-to-be-homeless miner's wife.[56]

Then Jones stepped into a coalmine. "Today I accomplished my longing (sic) desire of visiting a mine," she wrote the AFSC on October 17. Her first prophetic encounter in West Virginia was with a dark tunnel and the men inside it. That morning she and four other women had climbed inside an empty coal car and ridden up an incline of 1100 feet to the mouth or "portal" of a tunnel so low they had to stoop to enter it—and stay stooped as they walked the 2700 feet to the mine itself. They entered the mine, where the men were working, and their guides showed them the "whole operation" of cutting the coal from the face of the mine and loading it into carts.[57]

Jones would have seen grueling and dangerous work, with the threat of violent death hovering. As the Kanawha mines were unionized, Jones would have seen men working with simple tools rather than with machines.[58] There were two kinds of mines in West Virginia: "drift mines," which stayed pretty well perpendicular, and "slope mines," which declined gradually into the earth.[59] The men wore "bank clothes" (overalls for working the coal banks) and cloth caps fitted with small oil lamps. At dawn the payroll clerk handed out brass checks to each miner and his "buddy" to attach to their carts of coal. Then the men climbed to the portal and disappeared into the mine. There they worked by the "room and pillar" method. Every three or four hundred feet, corridors off

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[56] Hochschild, *Strangers in Their Own Land: Anger and Mourning on the American Right* (New York: The New Press, 2016), 5.
[57] Jones to Longshore, October 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[58] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 197.
[59] The following description of bituminous mining is from Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 56-61.

the main passageway led to "rooms"; in each room a pair of miners worked the coal face, taking care to leave large pillars of coal standing to keep the ceiling from caving in. As she watched the men work, Jones might have noticed the light from their headlamps playing upon the walls, illuminating a phantasmagoria of ancient fish skeletons and remains of tropical plants.

To actually mine the coal, first a miner literally undermined (cut under) the coal face with his pick, then he drilled a small hole in the top of the face and shoved a small powder cartridge into the hole. He then lit the fuse and scampered out of the room with his buddy. A well-executed blast could dislodge a ton or more of coal and bring it tumbling down for the two men to break up with their picks—backbreaking work aggravated by the closeness of the room. After the men loaded the coal onto a cart, they attached one of their brass checks to the side of it so they could collect their forty-nine cents per ton and pushed the cart out into the main tunnel, where mules or a small locomotive pulled it out of the mine to the weigh station and then to the tipple. A bad blast, however, could ignite coal dust or gas in the room and send a burst of fire into the main tunnel, burning or suffocating any mules who happened to be passing by, and their drivers. Worse, a bad blast could ignite an invisible cloud of methane and carbon dioxide called "firedamp" and send fire "raging through mine shafts with hurricane force."[60]

Luella Jones left the mine a changed woman. "I am very much subdued tonight as a consequence of what I have seen. I am sure the men deserve all they get for mining. I am more than ever impressed with the benefits which the union has earned in getting safe conditions for the workers. I am more than usually impressed with the kindliness and the

[60] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 57.

humanness of these men. *I have hardly looked at the men* in our camps—I can call very few of them by name though the faces are familiar….But they have known me all summer, and now that *I begin to look at them* I find I must take them into account as a member of the families. Nothing could have been more thoughtful and courteous than the treatment we had. I feel like weeping to think what a little pimple I am to be representing the Society of Friends" (emphasis added).[61] Jones walked into the belly of the mountain and was politically reborn. She now *saw* the miners.

That evening she wrote a priest she had befriended at St. John's Episcopal Church in Charleston, "These people are getting into my heart more every day. I think I shall soon feel acclimated and consider myself a thorough West Virginian."[62] She also wrote Wilbur Thomas at the AFSC, with a renewed list of indictments—this time, however, all against the operators, with not a word against the miners. The operators charged exorbitant rent, left houses in disrepair, forced miners and their families to shop at company stores, promised clubhouses (with showers and reading rooms) they never built. Adding insult to injury, "the local Red Cross whom the miners helped so freely [during the war] turns its back on them, refuses to give them any aid whatever." Now the AFSC's own aid was running out. But Jones "never felt less inclined to leave the field. It is

[61] Jones to Longshore, October 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[62] Jones to Rev. A. N. Slayton, October 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

unthinkable."[63] She was no longer neutral. As she wrote a local acquaintance the next day, "I am all for the miners now."[64]

Partiality exacted a price from Luella Jones. "I have been so distressed over things," Jones wrote near the end of October, "that I can't get them off my mind." The company doctor at the Ronda coal camp had moved out, and no new doctor had moved in. "I found the women most distressed over the situation. I was distressed and indignant for them." She almost broke down sobbing when they begged her for help. The toll was physical as well. "I could hardly sleep last night and I have had a nervous headache today because of things."[65] Life in Appalachian coal country was primitive and taxing enough already. "I have to carry water for washing, heat the water down in the kitchen, and we have an out-door toilet, none too clean." But when she visited the miners' ramshackle houses, "I get down on my knees and ask to be made more willing to endure hardships." She even wished sometimes she could go without food just to see what it was like to be really hungry. She could handle rugged material conditions. "I was born on the frontier in a real pioneer family. I can go unmanicured for some time without feeling very much ashamed."[66]

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[63] Jones to Thomas, October 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[64] Jones to Miss Daugherty, October 18, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[65] Jones to Gladys Winfield, October 27, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[66] Jones to Longshore, November 26, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

It was the emotional burden that had her feeling on the verge of "getting hysterical."[67] She appealed on behalf of the people at Ronda to the owner-operator of the camp, John L. Dickinson. The Kanawha County Public Health Nursing Association, distrusting the Quakers as outsiders, had rejected the AFSC's own offer of $1200 for a public nurse, so Dickinson offered to pay for one himself—but to visit the families of his non-union men only. When he heard that many of the sick folk at Ronda were strikers, "he had no interest at all" in their plight.[68] Jones was outraged but remained politic. She wrote Dickinson to thank him for his "moral support." She then apologized for her apparent partiality. "I hope you do not misunderstand me when I appear to confine my visits at the present time to the homes of the strikers. I haven't the time or facilities to carry out too big a program just now. As Christ said, 'The sick need the physician.'" What she considered her speaking out against their eviction consisted only of an oblique reference to their "good intellects" and capacity for "Christian citizenship."[69] She was holding her sympathies close.

Just before Thanksgiving, a miner-preacher walked twenty miles to where Luella Jones was staying to ask for food and clothes for his daughter who was crippled and had pneumonia. He said both the Red Cross and the Salvation Army had "turned them down last year," presumably because they were among the strikers. Dickinson still refused to

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[67] Jones to Gladys Winfield, October 27, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[68] Jones to Longshore, November 1, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[69] Jones to John L. Dickinson, October 29, 1922, and Jones to Richard Cadbury, November 12, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

pay for a nurse for the strikers at either Paint Creek or Ronda.[70] Jones thought she might move to Paint Creek so she could "hover over our little group of Union families" herself.[71] On December 5 she visited a tuberculosis patient, a little boy, at Ronda. "I could give but little help for he will die within a few days." She then called at another "T.B. home," with about a dozen children and a mother who was dying with consumption. Jones said she had found a "nice home" for the baby of the family that past summer, "but the selfish indulgent things would not give him up." The mother had nursed him until Jones made her stop. "Now he has something dreadful wrong with him. He coughed and strangled yesterday when I was there." She almost lost her composure and fled. "I wanted to sit down and squall for earnest…when I got out in God's sunshine again."[72] Luella Jones was buckling under the strain.

Then on December 12, at the end of the letter to Wilbur Thomas in which she delivered her pessimistic verdict on the AFSC's effect on labor relations in Kanawha County, she added a postscript. "Tomorrow, I expect to do something which I think would take me a week to justify in your mind." She was going to state police headquarters to intercede on behalf of a moonshiner. The man, a Mr. Bass, was a down-and-out miner who could not find work anywhere. Over the past two years, his daughter had died; after several weeks of "the most devoted care," the daughter's baby had died; and meanwhile Mr. Bass's brother had died. To help pay for his brother's funeral, he

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[70] Jones to Thomas, November 24, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[71] Jones to Longshore, November 26, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[72] Jones to Longshore, December 6, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

borrowed some money. Now his creditors wanted to collect, and he took to making moonshine. "He set the mash in his own home for another man who cannot afford to run risks." Mr. Bass now sat in jail under a $1000 bond. He was "almost desperate." Jones knew his only crime was to be a miner in West Virginia. "I wish we could transport him to a place where he could have a chance. If he is a crook he is the squarest, most straight-from-the-shoulder, straight-in-the-eye one I have ever seen." She must have had a prophetic encounter with him. "Some of these days I am going to turn into a radical."[73]

Jones knew she had overstepped, in spirit at least, the bounds of the AFSC's relief work. Writing to the Episcopal priest in Charleston a couple of days later, she asked him to tell her if she was "getting radical or critical in an objectionable way." This was after she had confessed to him that apologists for West Virginia made her "vindictive."[74] Then she wrote her friend Marion Longshore at the AFSC that she was "getting out of perspective," "impatient and rabid." She thought a visit to Philadelphia "will cool me off a bit." And: "I really am tired too."[75] She also wrote Mr. Bass that day. "I have to tell you that I did not get time to call at the office of the State Police last Wednesday as I told you I would do. The reason is that I had several other pressing errands which took longer than I had expected." She assured him that she really was concerned. "I know you are in a desperate situation. If there is any thing at all that I can do to help you out, I shall surely

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[73] Jones to Thomas, December 12, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[74] Jones to Rev. A. N. Slayton, December 14, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[75] Jones to Longshore, December 14, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

do it."[76] Interceding with the state police on his behalf, however, was apparently no longer among the things she would "surely do."

Jones had discovered that humanitarianism and radicalism were incompatible. Relief work had put her in situations full of terrible need and raw injustice, situations ripe for "prophetic encounters." As a Quaker, Jones might have understood these experiences as revelations of the Light within every human being. She had "answered" that of God in each of these people fighting for the right to organize, and often merely to live. And the Light within each of these people had responded. Yet she was constrained by the very nature of relief work from, in fact, doing "any thing at all" to help them out. As she herself had noted, "When we first came here in July we found that we had to meet considerable prejudice because we were confused with the newspaper men who had come here and 'exposed' conditions in the coal camps." That the conditions these journalists had described "were exactly true" did not mean that she and the other AFSC workers were free to denounce them. "One must be gentle when he tells West Virginians so." If the AFSC was to be allowed to feed and clothe the families of striking and union miners in company-owned and guarded camps, it had to keep quiet. And even still some locals were to remain convinced that the Quakers were socialists.[77] Simply put, Jones could not be both a radical and a humanitarian at the same time. She had to choose.

Before traveling to Philadelphia for the New Year's holiday, Jones received a request for bedclothes from a Mrs. John Challis, a striking miner's wife among those

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[76] Jones to Mr. Bass, December 14, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[77] Jones to Thomas, October 25, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

evicted from company housing and now living in a tent colony. "I am sorry to say that our tents are not very nice to live in," Mrs. Challis wrote, "there is no floors in them." Mrs. Challis did "not think this will be a very merry Christmas for us people."[78] Jones had just visited that miner-preacher who had walked twenty miles to ask for food and clothes for his daughter who was crippled and sick with pneumonia. The little girl had wrapped her "scrawny little arms" around Jones's neck and "said over and over, 'I love Miss Jones. This is my Miss Jones!'"[79] The day after Christmas—the same day Alfred Cope Garrett wrote his cousin Scattergood with his plan to "Quakerize" Germany—Jones wrote her local nurse friend, "What does thee think of me for a good shepherd for leaving my sheep just at Christmas time?"[80] That day after Christmas she also wrote personal letters to seven local miners and their wives. Aching need surrounded her and called to her even as she was trying to tear herself away for a couple of weeks.

From Jones's perspective, as well as that of the AFSC's leadership, the trip to Philadelphia proved to be just what the doctor ordered—it "cured" her, as she put it. "The experiment of sending me home for another torch (sic) has worked fine," Jones wrote her priest friend in Charleston on December 29. "My equilibrium is restored, and the call of the work in West Virginia is taking better proportions in my mind." If radicalism erupts from transformative, "prophetic encounters," humanitarian neutrality rests on "equilibrium." Jones wrote that she had realized that she was "getting too one-sided to be

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[78] Mrs. John Challis to Jones, December 21, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[79] Jones to Longshore, December 17, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[80] Jones to Gladys Winfield, December 26, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

a good representative of Friends, that I needed to get a better vision of both sides of the industrial questions so that I might keep a better balance." Significantly, Jones thought neutrality was a Quaker principle, and not simply a pragmatic posture necessary to deliver emergency aid.[81]

One way to read this is that, given Jones's partiality for the miners' side, the AFSC home office must have re-tutored her in the relative merits of the owner-operators' position. Capital's claim on a Quaker's sympathy was to balance that of labor. Under the political pressures of relief work, the Quaker emphasis on the sense of unity in the Spirit became not merely a posture, but an ideology of absolute neutrality. Jones made the ideological retraining sound almost clinical. "Nobody seemed alarmed, I guess they thought close supervision for a week or ten days might cure me." She was to return to the field for three months—but this time with a minder. "I am also to have a companion for a few weeks. That will make my own work easier and give me a chance to get wrong ideas out of my system before they do harm." Wilbur Thomas in particular, together with Jones's friend Marion Longshore, wished to preserve the results of the ideological-correction therapy Jones had undergone while in Philadelphia.[82]

Another, more charitable way to read Jones's time in Philadelphia is that Thomas and Longshore reminded her of what was at stake: people's lives. If Jones were to alienate the owners and operators, they would banish her from their towns and camps, and some of the miners and their wives and children would likely die of hunger or cold as

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[81] Jones to Rev. Slayton, December 29, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.
[82] Jones to Rev. A. N. Slayton, December 29, 1922, box General Files 1922, Home Service Section (PA Child Welfare Unit-Reports) to AFSC Policy, AFSC.

a result. The "harm" her "wrong ideas" could inflict was not just on her own spirit, but also on the physical lives of other people—the very people she cared so much about that she would be forced to abandon them. Thomas and Longshore helped save her the agony of betraying these people.

Jones returned to West Virginia in January of 1923 seemingly a model of humanitarian neutrality. She and her "companion," a friend from George School, scrupulously avoided any appearance of favoring the strikers.[83] They would not bring food and clothing into the tent colonies. "In so much as the tent plan was a maneuver on the part of the UMW to hold the territory for the union…we did not feel that we could so directly plan into their hands in that partisan way."[84] While Jones's interpretation of the UMW's motives behind the tent colonies might not have been accurate, her understanding of how the miners and operators would have perceived the AFSC's humanitarian intervention in them most likely was. As she wrote with uncharacteristic but institutionally proper detachment in her final report of the AFSC's relief work in Kanawha County, "It has been the policy of the Service Committee to observe a neutral attitude toward the political factions where help is being given. Our work is to serve humanity, and to help bind up the wounds irrespective of issues at stake between those responsible for the conditions."[85] Jones gave every indication of having been neutralized.

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[83] Jones to Mr. Doan, February 15, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[84] Jones to William C. Biddle, May 19, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[85] Report by Luella Jones on relief work in West Virginia coalfields, n.d. [probably May, 1923], box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.

Yet behind this veneer of emotional distance and detachment, she was still, if not "all," then mostly "for the miners." Grippe and neuralgia forced her to retire from the field halfway through her second deployment, near the end of February 1923, but at least until May of that year she maintained her epistolary solidarity.[86] She wrote the president of the UMW, John L. Lewis, near the end of March to request the union's statistics on employment and wages in the bituminous (soft) coalfields. "We [the AFSC] are much interested in the miners' problems and want to help them in any way possible."[87] In the beginning of May she wrote Lewis again with some pointed questions. "Isn't it true that an acceptance of the 1917 wage scale as offered during the time of unemployment, connoted an abandonment of the organization?" In other words, had the UMW not betrayed its members? "I am frequently asked to speak to small audiences," she continued, "in which I am pleased to present the miners' viewpoint." It seems she wanted to protect the miners from the predations of union and company alike.[88]

Yet she was out of it now—the field, the relief work, the heat of the industrial conflict. She took up a clerical position with the AFSC immediately or soon after leaving West Virginia for good in February. Her whirlwind odyssey of radicalization and neutralization ended with one last letter to her nurse friend outside Charleston. "I hope Rhoda," the preacher's sick and crippled daughter who just before Christmas had hugged

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[86] Jones to Thomas, February 1, 1923, and Jones to Gladyn Winfield, February 7, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[87] Jones to John L. Lewis, March 24, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[88] Jones to John L. Lewis, May 5, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.

Jones's neck, "has been taken to the hospital by this time."[89] And with that, Luella Jones's singular documentary voice went silent.

Of Muste and the Mills in Marion

Despite the AFSC's avowed intention to inject a spirit of goodwill into the coalfields, Jones could not believe that the AFSC had "greatly softened the heart of any employer toward his union workers."[90] Subsequent events bore this judgment out. A year after Jones and the AFSC left Kanawha County, in late 1924, the county operators demanded that the union accept a 38 percent cut on tonnage rates. The ensuing strike proved to be the last in the area until the New Deal guaranteed union recognition and the right to organize and strike in 1933. By September of 1925 all of the Kanawha strikers had either signed "yellow dog" contracts or, having lost their jobs to strikebreakers, moved away. The operators had not only broken the strike in Kanwha. They had broken the union in West Virginia.[91]

Four years later, the AFSC again inserted itself into the middle of an industrial conflict over union recognition in Appalachia. Unlike its relief of miners in West Virginia six years earlier, though, its relief of millhands in Marion, North Carolina, was to mark the beginning of its general shift from conservative toleration to progressive endorsement of labor unions, and its embrace of state intervention in the economy to secure justice for the dispossessed. Like coal, the textile industry grew "sick" in the 1920s because of

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[89] Jones to Gladys Winfield, May 25, 1923, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[90] Jones to Wilbur Thomas, December 12, 1922, box General Files 1923, Foreign Service (Country: Syria to Home Service), AFSC.
[91] Green, *The Devil is Here in These Hills*, 306-307.

overexpansion during the Great War. Prices dipped precipitously after 1924, and textile mills cut wages accordingly.[92] Southern chambers of commerce since the Civil War had lured capital into the Piedmont by advertising "cheap and contented labor." Tens of thousands of mountaineers and farmhands had flocked to the relative prosperity and luxury of company-owned cotton-mill towns around the turn of the twentieth century. The world war only accelerated this migration.[93]

Southern industrial labor's fabled docility was always something of a myth, but nothing prepared the mill owners for the rebellion they faced when they introduced the "stretch-out" in 1929. The "stretch-out" (or "speed-up," as it was known in the North) was a system in which each individual textile worker literally stretched his or her body out to operate more spindles at one time. Southern mill owners brought "efficiency experts" to measure just how many spindles each worker could sustainably operate six days a week for—in the case of the Marion mills—12 hours and 20 minutes every day. In March of that year, between 17,000 and 18,000 millhands in textile factories all over the Piedmont from Elizabethton, Tennessee, to Greenville, South Carolina, walked out in protest over this Taylorist "innovation" that amounted to nothing less than a mechanization of the workers' very muscles and bones. But when management refused to recognize the workers' unions, what started as a strike primarily against the "stretch-out" quickly became a battle for the millhand's right to organize and bargain collectively.[94]

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[92] Leilah Danielson, *American Gandhi: A. J. Muste and the History of Radicalism in the Twentieth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 123.
[93] Tom Tippett, *When Southern Labor Stirs* (New York: Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, 1931), 5-6, 9, 14.
[94] Tippett, *When Southern Labor Stirs*, 1, 23, 34.

Spearheading the union movement in the South in the late 1920s was A. J. Muste, the most influential radical labor activist in the country in 1929. He was also a Quaker, a member of the Providence Friends Meeting in Rhode Island, though he was born and raised a Dutch Calvinist and, unlike most liberal Friends in the twentieth century, never entirely shook the doctrine of total depravity. He never leaned with the full weight of his hope upon the broken reed of humanity. Historian Leilah Danielson has recently rendered a vivid picture of Muste's working-class childhood in the furniture-making district of Grand Rapids, Michigan, where his parents emigrated from the Netherlands in 1891 when Abraham Johannes was six. The Mustes fatefully decided to join the more assimilationist branch of the Dutch Reformed Church in the United States. A. J. slipped through this crack in the ethnic door and made his way to seminary just outside New York City. There he spread his arms wide to American society and culture. But for all his love of art and popular culture and city life, he remained wary of human frailty. Paradoxically, this wariness led him not to adopt Christian realism and just-war theory, but to leave the ministry in protest over his Reformed church's acquiescence in Wilson's "war to end all wars." He soon joined Providence Friends Meeting (while remaining all his life a member also of the Presbyterian Church in the USA) and in the 1920s became one of the United States' most charismatic pacifists, labor leaders, and preachers and practitioners of nonviolence.[95]

Since 1921 Muste had chaired Brookwood Labor College, a school for workers' education in upstate New York, making it a seedbed of labor progressivism. Battered by both the right and the left wings of labor in the late 1920s, Muste issued a sixteen-point

[95] Danielson, *American Gandhi*, 22, 23, 27, 39, 58, 59, 60.

"Challenge to Progressives" in February 1929 that charted a course between the business conservativism of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and the antidemocratic Marxism of the Communist Party. Appearing in the widely circulated periodical *Labor Age* the month before the textile walkout in the South, Muste's "Challenge" demanded (among other things) aggressive organization of non-union workers, resistance to antilabor laws, the formation of a political labor party, and working-class internationalism. Muste had some words of exhortation for his fellow pacifists as well. In *The World Tomorrow* in 1928 and at the annual convention of the FOR in 1929, Muste chided organized pacifists for facilely criticizing workers who resorted to violence in their struggles against management. Muste thought pacifists had no right to judge until they had first walked a mile in labor's shoes; they should be decrying the moral abuses of capitalism and its rulers instead. "In a world built on violence," Muste insisted, "one must be a revolutionary before one can be a pacifist."[96] So Muste was far to the left of his own denomination's service committee, the AFSC, many of whose board members sat among the ranks of capitalism's ruling class.[97]

At Brookwood's second annual summer textile institute, in 1928, Muste had urged the executive board of the AFL-affiliated United Textile Workers (UTW) to organize the mills in the South. A Brookwood alumnus, Alfred Hoffman, had shown this might be possible when he signed up some six hundred millhands in Henderson, North Carolina, for the UTW in 1927. Hoffman arrived in Elizabethton, Tennessee, shortly after

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[96] Danielson, *American Gandhi*, 121, 117-8, 103.
[97] Clarence E. Pickett, *For More than Bread: An Autobiographical Account of Twenty-Two Years' Work with the American Friends Service Committee* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), 4, 6-7.

the rayon workers there spontaneously walked off the job in March of 1929. In April, Hoffman moved on to Marion, North Carolina, where workers at R. W. Baldwin's Marion Manufacturing Company were trying organize. Two other "Musteites"—Brookwood's extension director and another Brookwood alumnus—soon joined Hoffman. They helped two Marion textile workers organize their fellow millhands. Baldwin responded to a public meeting of the workers in June by firing twenty-two of them who had joined the union and taunting them with an offer of fifty dollars each if they could "pull a strike." He had to eat his words when they walked out of the mill on July 11.[98]

The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, co-founded in 1926 by Muste and a student at Brookwood, carried the workers until the middle of September, when an AFL official came to Marion and negotiated a settlement with Baldwin. The millhands accepted lower wages for fewer hours and a promise from Baldwin that he would not discriminate against union members. Muste predicted that Baldwin would immediately violate the agreement. He was right. As soon as the strikers returned to work, Baldwin started evicting union members from his company-owned millhouses. Early on October 2, 1929, the night shift at the mill decided to renew the strike, and as they gathered outside the mill gates to intercept the incoming day-shift and inform them of their decision, the sheriff and his deputies dispersed the picket line with tear gas and then shot dozens of the picketers in the back as they fled. Three workers died instantly; another three died the next day. Baldwin quipped that "the sheriff and his men were good marksmen." The speakers at the funeral for the six men included Muste, who eulogized

[98] Danielson, *American Gandhi*, 105, 123, 134.

the men as "good soldiers" and "martyrs" whom the state executed for siding "with the common people"—just like Jesus.[99]

Another speaker at the funeral, James Myers, was soon to get the AFSC involved in Marion. James Myers led the Industrial Department of the Federal Council of Churches (FCC) in 1929. Born to a clergyman in upstate New York in 1882, Myers worked in real estate before being ordained by the Presbyterian Church in 1915; his flock, like Muste's, forced him from the ministry in 1918 because of his pacifism. Myers then took a job as executive secretary of the employee representation board at a chemical factory in upstate New York. He proceeded to help the workers secure a reduction of hours without a reduction in pay, vacations for all, health and unemployment insurance, a savings plan, and pensions and profit-sharing. On the strength of this success, the FCC hired Myers as its industrial secretary in 1925. Myers, like Muste, was a labor partisan. At the AFL's annual convention in Detroit in 1926, Myers declared that unions supported goals for which "Jesus Christ stood" even "if His churches do not."[100] Myers was almost as far to the left of the AFSC on labor relations as Muste.

Another labor partisan, Norman Thomas, with whom AFSC co-founder Henry Cadbury had debated the ethics of the strike in 1920, made the initial call to the AFSC after the strikers' funeral. Thomas was chairman of the Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief in 1929, while Cadbury, having since shed his opposition to strikes, was now chairman of the AFSC. Thomas appealed to AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett to administer relief to the more than nine hundred millhands and their families

[99] Danielson, *American Gandhi*, 135-136.
[100] Elizabeth and Ken Fones-Wolf, "Lending a Hand to Labor: James Myers and the Federal Council of Churches, 1926-1947," *Church History* 68:1 (March 1999), 63-64, 66.

whom Baldwin, bringing in nonunion labor to work the mills, refused to rehire and let live in his company town in Marion. Thomas, as Pickett remembers it, appealed to the AFSC because he and the Emergency Committee were too closely identified with labor for Baldwin to let them continue to relieve the strikers, who were fast becoming permanently unemployed and were pariahs in their local churches, which depended on the mill for survival. Pickett, the AFSC's inaugural Home Service secretary, had only very recently replaced Wilbur K. Thomas as executive secretary of the AFSC. Pickett had no idea where the AFSC could find the money for such a project.[101]

Then on October 18, James Myers attended a meeting of the AFSC's Executive Board and presented an official request from the FCC: the Social Service Commission of the FCC would raise the money for food and clothes if the AFSC would hire the personnel to distribute the aid, as well as cover all overhead expenses. The relief program was to run through what was to become the first Depression winter, from December 1, 1929, to March 1, 1930, at a cost of $1000 a week. Pickett recalled that some of the AFSC's board members, having had "sad experiences in difficult negotiations with their own laborers," were "a little suspicious of trade unions."[102] Yet Myers "felt very strongly that Friends are the only organization which could enter this field and administer relief impartially and be received by all groups."[103] Again it is significant that it was Friends generally, and not the AFSC in particular, whose neutrality and impartiality were so

[101] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 3-5, 15.
[102] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 4, 6-7.
[103] Minutes of the AFSC Executive Board, October 17, 1929, AFSC.

vaunted. Myers's endorsement spoke, in Pickett's words, to the AFSC's embodiment of Friends'—the liberal variety, anyway—"redemptive faith in the oneness of humanity."[104]

Many Friends in the North Carolina piedmont, however, were not so sanguine about humanity's oneness. Nor were they as taken as James Myers and Norman Thomas with the AFSC's neutrality. Pickett first approached a Monthly Meeting in the Piedmont town of High Point about releasing its minister for the winter to oversee the project in Marion. The response was cool. A sympathetic Friend reported that the minister at High Point did not feel free "to leave his work," and that even if he did, he probably would not for the AFSC. The minister, however, had "great respect" for the FCC—what he thought of the AFSC the Friend did not say. Regardless, the Meeting probably would not release him anyway; it was firmly on the side of the mills. "Some of our North Carolina Friends are not as socially minded as are some other Friends," Pickett's contact wrote. "They are leaders in the manufacturing and financial development of this section and have somewhat the attitude on industrial questions which is more or less general in the South." He hastened to say that they would probably approve the work if they had a chance to see it in action.[105] This was not just a Southern prejudice, however, as the initial resistance from some on the AFSC's Executive Board shows.

The minister whom Pickett ended up recruiting, Hugh Moore of Winston-Salem, was to prove controversial not with his own Meeting but with Muste. Near the end of January 1930, almost two months into the AFSC's relief project in Marion, Muste wrote Pickett from Brookwood that he had received a clipping of a story in a Marion paper of

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[104] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 10.
[105] Samuel L Haworth to Pickett, October 29, 1929, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.

January 16. It reported that the AFSC's commissary in Marion, on "Nigger Ridge"—"a name," Pickett later remarked, "which indicates the general spiritual and cultural level at that time in that place"[106]—had been burglarized a few days ago, for the second time. The implication was that a striker or group of strikers had broken in and stolen food. The story quotes Hugh Moore as saying "that inasmuch as the work done there [at the commissary] is in the nature of charity," he had thought it unnecessary to guard it. The story also quotes Moore on how satisfied he was with the mill officials' "cooperation" with the AFSC's relief, and with their responsiveness, especially R. W. Baldwin's, to the AFSC's efforts at reconciling millhands and management.[107]

Muste found this more than he could stomach (just as the AFSC's public praise of the Nazis in similar terms almost a decade later was to prove more than some German-Jewish immigrants could bear). He told Pickett that he was "not unaware of the difficulties confronting relief workers in the best of circumstances," and that he understood also that they cannot breach the principles of impartiality and neutrality: "they cannot pursue a policy of feeding hungry strikers while letting hungry strike breakers starve, or a policy of not being respectable and friendly in personal relation with employers, business people, etc."[108] As Muste himself had written in the journal *The Family* two years before, "The only way the relief agency can avoid taking sides is by not seeing any 'sides'—that is not its business—but by doing its job of relieving acute

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[106] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 11.
[107] A. J. Muste to Pickett, January 30, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.
[108] Muste to Pickett, January 30, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.

suffering."[109] He acknowledged what anthropologists have since called a "humanitarian space," an ethical zone in which relief workers may save lives and relieve suffering without having to answer the question of who or what was the cause of the suffering.[110]

But it seemed to Muste that Hugh Moore was, in fact, seeing sides—and even taking one of them implicitly. What else could Moore be doing, Muste wanted to know, when he called the AFSC's relief to the strikers "charity" and extolled the mill officials' reasonableness? To speak of "charity" in the context of a deadly strike, Muste charged, was to patronize and wrongly impugn the characters of men and families who "even in the desperate conditions which prevail(ed)" in Marion, were not "merely shiftless or sponging on the kindness of others." Even if they were, it would be no fault of their own, but rather "the result of years of living under the hideous conditions which have prevailed there and of the months of strike experience characterized among other things by the most outrageous callousness and injustice on the part of Mr. Baldwin." Given the manifest injustice the millhands had suffered and continued to suffer, talk of "charity" seemed to Muste "to be the most odious form of condescension and 'charity' and as far as possible from the charity of the New Testament." Having thrown down the social-gospel gauntlet by questioning the AFSC's Christian-primitivist bona fides, Muste tried feebly to soften the challenge by saying that "the papers" had probably taken Moore's words out of

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[109] Muste, "The Policy of Relief Agencies in Strikes," *The Family* 8:10 (Feb 1928), 342.
[110] See Ilana Feldman, "The Quaker Way: Ethical Labor and Humanitarian Relief," *American Ethnologist* 34:4 (Nov 2007), 701.

context. But Pickett took Muste's letter for what it was: a slap in the face from a fellow Friend.[111]

Pickett responded in kind. He conceded that Moore might have conferred with mill officials and openly welcomed any good-faith gestures on their part to improve "conditions in the community." But Pickett did not believe that this meant Moore had in any way "sold out to the interest of the owners of the mills." And it was simply a fact that some of the people on relief in Marion were "ne'er-do-wells," looking to take advantage of the AFSC's generosity; and if they happened to be Union men, and Moore had to be "rather severe" with them, it was simply "inevitable" that "this is interpreted as being hostile to the union." As far as Pickett knew, neither Moore nor anyone else at the AFSC had actually called the relief work "charity." The AFSC had tried to handle the strikers' personal lives with discretion and "not to even push them to accept work which they felt would perjure their responsibilities to the Union," something Muste had explicitly admonished relief agencies not to do. The AFSC had fulfilled its obligations as a neutral relief agency. The "interests" of the union (the United Textile Workers) were the union's concern, not the AFSC's.[112]

One senses just below the surface of this heated exchange a simmering frustration on each man's part with the other's Quaker witness. Muste was a radical, a social progressive of industrial working-class background who identified with the cause of labor. Pickett was a religious liberal of rural and agrarian background who assumed the

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[111] Muste to Pickett, January 30, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.

[112] Pickett to Muste, January 31, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC. For Muste on not forcing strikers to work, see his "The Policy of Relief Agencies in Strikes," op. cit., 342.

posture of neutrality not only as the head of a humanitarian organization, but also as a convert to the middle-class Social Gospel, whose prophets and followers sought to remain above the fray of industrial conflict so they could curb and mediate between the refined greed of capital and the uncouth disorderliness of labor.[113] Muste's leadership of Brookwood and Pickett's of the AFSC might have intensified, but did not create, their divergent Quaker social witnesses. Muste's "humanitarian space" made no room for Pickett's vision of peace-loving Quakers mediating between the equally just demands (and equally sinful desires) of capital and labor. Justice for Muste lay unequivocally on the side of labor, while Pickett had his "respect for the sense of responsibility among employers… enhanced" when he raised some relief money from among Northern textile owners—one of whom went so far as to buy the Marion mill from Baldwin and improve the mill's working and living conditions.[114]

Muste wrote Pickett twice more. On March 20 he relayed a complaint that Moore was putting former strikers "through a pretty rough third degree" as he cut them off of food and clothing relief. The strike had failed, as the mills brought in nonunion labor to work the spindles, and the union was in the process of moving fifty union families to jobs and homes outside of Marion, with the relief program covering expenses. About fifty permanently unemployed families remained, headed by widows, or by men who had been

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[113] See, especially, Donald A. Meyer, *The Protestant Search for Political Realism, 1919-1941*, 2nd ed (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988 [1960]), 109-110, and Heath Carter, "Social Gospels Thrived outside the Church," *Church History* 84:1 (March 2015): 199-202.

[114] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 13.

wounded in the violence in October.[115] Pickett replied that Moore and his assistant had "deliberately" taken a "hard-boiled attitude toward the work" in order to ensure that the remaining relief was going to those families that had no prospect of working or moving.[116]

Muste fired one last shot, in mid-May, when he forwarded Pickett extracts from a letter from a representative of the Women's Trade Union League in Philadelphia. She had visited Marion, had purportedly watched Moore deny a dollar to a striker who had been shot through the eye and wanted to see an oculist, and had heard Moore's assistant denounce "union agitation" and someone else say that Moore himself "had advised people to throw away their union books or words to that effect." Without further comment, Muste signed the letter "Sincerely yours." Somebody, either Pickett or his secretary, wrote "unanswered" across the top of Pickett's copy of the letter and underscored it.[117]

Muste might have been disappointed—even dismayed—by the AFSC's performance in Marion, but it had at least given the organization a keener interest in labor problems, if not increased sympathy for the labor cause. "Perhaps not least of all," Pickett later recalled, "this emergency work in Marion had helped a new secretary functioning within the framework of what might have become a sectarian committee to push his own horizons and those of the Committee further out…and to form contact with the hot vein

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[115] Muste to Pickett, March 20, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.
[116] Pickett to Muste, March 24, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.
[117] Muste to Pickett, May 16, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.

of human pressures that are called into play in the operation of our industrial structure."[118] Specifically, the Marion program gave the AFSC the idea of "rehabilitating" out-of-work mountain folk, providing them alternative employment. Muste and Myers suggested that the AFSC try putting the people left behind in Marion to work making rugs, and then working with North Carolina Friends to develop a market for them.[119] The AFSC entertained the idea but apparently never tried it in Marion.[120] But as the next chapter shows, in 1931 the AFSC was to reenter the Appalachian industrial arena of bituminous (soft) coal, but this time with "rehabilitation" at the top of its agenda right next to "relief."

In the spring of 1930, just after the Marion work had closed, Pickett visited the Soviet Union. He disliked much of what he saw. The official atheism of the country troubled him, of course. The "transfer of concern for one's neighbors…into a function of the impersonal over-all state" reflected what happens "when suffering comes and religion fails." Pickett wondered if Americans were also losing their sense of responsibility for their neighbors. The churches in Marion had largely ignored the mill workers, even if churches nationwide, through the FCC in particular, had contributed admirably to their survival. Pickett could see that the dawning of what today is called globalization—"a mill distributes…to the four corners of the world"—had attenuated local responsibility. "I could see that sudden mass dislocations of workers, the need for regularized provision for

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[118] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 16.
[119] See Muste to Pickett, March 20, 1930, and Pickett to Muste, March 24, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), AFSC.
[120] See Pickett to Muste, March 24, 1930, box General Files 1929, Home Service (Relief Work) to Peace Section (Conferences), and AFSC General Meeting Minutes, March 27, 1930, AFSC.

people caught in such catastrophes, might of necessity call for state action." If so, the church must meet a "double challenge." It must minister to those in distress even as it sought to rouse the state to responsible action.[121] The AFSC, especially Pickett himself, tried to meet this double challenge when it returned to the Appalachian coalfields at an old friend's behest.

[121] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 17-18.

If you go to Harlan County
There ain't no neutral there.
You'll either be a union man
Or a thug for J. H. Blair.

Which side are you on?
Which side are you on?

Florence Reece, "Which Side Are You On?" (1931)

4: A Quaker New Deal—New Deal Quakers

On Saturday, May 2, 1931, Bryn Mawr College outside Philadelphia held a ceremony honoring the peace and justice work of Jane Addams, founder of Hull House and a longtime collaborator with the AFSC. Addams had traveled under AFSC auspices to Germany in 1919 with her partner, Dr. Alice Hamilton, and Carolena Wood, and the three women had the discovered mass undernourishment and near starvation of millions of German children that prompted the AFSC's feeding. Rufus Jones, who led the AFSC's negotiations with fellow Quaker Herbert Hoover—then chief of the American Relief Administration—for the AFSC to administer American Relief Administration funds and foodstuffs in Germany, was also at the ceremony honoring Addams. Jones was Honorary Chairman of the AFSC in 1931, and was entering his fourth decade of teaching philosophy at Haverford College, the all-male Quaker school just down the road from the all-women's Bryn Mawr.[1]

[1] Clarence E. Pickett, *For More than Bread: An Autobiographical Account of Twenty-Two Years' Work with the American Friends Service Committee* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), 19.

On the speakers' program that day was Grace Abbott, Chief of the U.S. Children's Bureau. Hoover, now President of the United States, had authorized Abbott to put a bug in Jones's ear at Bryn Mawr about the possibility of the AFSC feeding the children of unemployed and striking miners in the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains of southern Appalachia.[2] Abbott cornered Jones during the reception following the celebration. "A person of unusual charm," she had Jones convinced by the end of the day that the AFSC was the one for the job. Hoover had $225,000 left over from the ARA's European Children's Fund he was willing to turn over to the AFSC.[3] The American Red Cross (ARC) had fed over a million drought-stricken Southerners at Hoover's behest in 1930-31, but had apparently pleaded that the coal crisis resulted from systemic adjustments rather than from a disaster or emergency: it was a human-made crisis that called for a years-long response that lay outside the ARC's purview.[4] Also, the industrial conflict in some of the most depressed coal fields was too politically charged for the official voluntary agency of the U.S. government to get involved directly.[5]

The following Monday, May 4, Jones came into AFSC headquarters in Center City Philadelphia brimming with enthusiasm about the new opportunity. The AFSC's

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[2] Though the Appalachian Regional Commission now considers this region not to be in the southern subregion of Appalachia (http://www.arc.gov/research/MapsofAppalachia.asp?MAP_ ID=31), the AFSC at the time referred to it as "southern Appalachia."

[3] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 19, 21.

[4] Nan Elizabeth Woodruff, *As Rare as Rain: Federal Relief in the Great Southern Drought of 1930-31* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1985); "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting to discuss the proposition to undertake work in the bituminous coal fields of West Virginia and adjoining areas," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC. Hereafter "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting".

[5] Woodruff, *As Rare as Rain*, 175.

Board of Directors approved the idea after meeting in Philadelphia on May 13 with Abbott and Fred C. Croxton, head of the President's Emergency Committee for Employment (reorganized as the President's Organization on Unemployment Relief in August of 1931).[6] Several leading members of the AFSC, including Jones, then met with Hoover himself in the White House a couple of weeks later. Hoover reiterated his commitment to handing over $225,000, and secured what turned out to be a spurious pledge from the ARC for a matching grant. In the end the ARC reneged and the AFSC had to match Hoover's money on its own.[7]

The Great Depression and the New Deal precipitated a decisive cession of control over welfare from all parts of the voluntary sector to the federal and state governments.[8] But the abdication of voluntary responsibility for the "least of these" was especially poignant for churches and religious institutions. One of the fundamental commandments Jesus had given his disciples, after all, was to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. Recent scholarship in American religious history, in its search for the roots of modern conservatism, has focused on evangelical and Pentecostal churches' eventual reaction against this encroachment of the state on their traditional territory.[9] Historian Alison Collis Greene, for instance, in her book on religion and relief in the Mississippi Delta

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[6] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1931, AFSC.
[7] Woodruff, *As Rare as Rain*, 175; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 21.
[8] See esp. Andrew J. F. Morris, *The Limits of Voluntarism: Charity and Welfare from the New Deal through the Great Society* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-34.

[9] See esp. Kevin Kruse, *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America* (New York: Basic Books, 2015); Matthew Avery Sutton, *American Apocalypse: A History of Modern Evangelicalism* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 2014); Darren Dochuk, *From Bible Belt to Sunbelt: Plain-Folk Religion, Grassroots Politics, and the Rise of Evangelical Conservatism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2011).

during the New Deal, *No Depression in Heaven* (2016), marks three distinct stages in the transfer of poor relief from the church to the state. First, southern church leaders, overwhelmed by the need surrounding them, begged the federal government to intervene, and initially hailed the New Deal as a triumph. But soon they complained that Roosevelt was cutting them out of the welfare business entirely, depriving them of local clout and of the chance to fulfill certain of their essential Christian duties. By the end of the Depression decade, conservative southern churches' feelings of alienation had grown into open resentment of Roosevelt and the welfare state.[10]

The history of the AFSC's relief and rehabilitation programs in the southern Appalachian coalfields shifts the focus from conservative social Christians' reaction against, to liberal Social Gospelers' embrace of, state intervention in welfare. It also shows how the leaders of a religious tradition with a deep commitment to voluntarism, some of whom still bore the scars of the federal state's coercive handling of conscientious objectors during the Great War, yielded to that very state when faced with the overwhelming suffering and dislocation of the Great Depression—all the while trying to maintain strict voluntarism in their own direct dealings with warring social factions like labor and capital. Finally, this history lends further credence to what some scholars were already arguing as early as 1937: that the churches' response to the Great Depression accelerated the trend toward secularization in American religion, especially in Protestantism, which the forces of consumerism and economic boosterism had initiated in

[10] Greene, *No Depression in Heaven: Religion and the Great Depression in the Mississippi Delta* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

the mid-1920s.[11] The AFSC—whether its leadership or its field staff—emphasized no overtly religious or spiritual motivation or aim for its Appalachian work in the early 1930s. Its "Review of Motives Underlying Activities" in 1931 identified only two: "to relieve suffering and to provide food for the children," and "to study the problems of the coal camps" in order to "develop…projects of rehabilitation among unemployed miners."[12] To paraphrase H. Richard Niebuhr, the kingdom the AFSC's Quakers wished to establish, it would seem, had become wholly of this earth.[13]

The creative energy Hoover unleashed by authorizing and funding the AFSC's work in Appalachia eventually swept Pickett into the halls of Congress in January 1933 to testify before the Senate subcommittee writing the bill that was to create the Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA) during Roosevelt's first Hundred Days.[14] The material and psychological benefits the AFSC's experiments in rehabilitation were already bestowing on coal miners and their families emboldened Pickett to press the committee to set aside money in the bill for work-relief, in addition to the dole.[15] Because of pressure from Pickett and other relief leaders and social workers, the final bill did just that, and when FERA expired in May 1935, its direct successor, the Works Progress

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[11] See Samuel C. Kincheloe, *Research Memorandum on Religion in the Depression* (New York: Social Science Research Council, 1937), 45-58; and Robert T. Handy, "The American Religious Depression, 1925-1935," *Church History* 29:1 (March 1960): 3–16.
[12] "Memorandum on Observations in Bituminous Coal Fields," box General Files 1931: Admin. To Coal Relief Section (Admin.), AFSC.
[13] *The Kingdom of God in America* (Hamden, CT: The Shoe String Press, 1956 [reprint of Harper & Brothers, 1937]), x.
[14] Michele Landis Dauber, *The Sympathetic State: Disaster Relief and the Origins of the American Welfare State* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 86.
[15] Pickett, Journal: Jan-Dec 1933, box Articles & Speeches: Undated & 1914-1949, "Clarence Pickett Papers," AFSC.

Administration, put millions of Americans back to work in all areas of the economy.[16] So Hoover's voluntarism, the point on which liberals and progressives at the time and ever after have criticized Hoover most harshly, appears to have helped give birth through Pickett and the AFSC, among others, to the New Deal's emphasis on work-relief.[17]

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[16] For the consensus among social workers at the time that work-relief was psychologically preferable to the dole, see William W. Bremer, "Along the 'American Way': The New Deal's Work Relief Programs for the Unemployed," *The Journal of American History* 62:3 (Dec 1975): 636-652.

[17] This is less an argument for the essential continuity between Hoover and Roosevelt than a dynamic view of how the decisive break between the two came about. William E. Leuchtenberg, representing the liberal school of Hoover historiography, writes in his short biography of Hoover, *Herbert Hoover* (New York: Times Books, 2009), "Only unwittingly—by revealing the inadequacy of his voluntaristic approach—was Hoover the progenitor of FDR's enlargement of federal authority." The story of the AFSC in Appalachia also finds Hoover "unwittingly" begetting key New Deal programs, yet shows how one of the very voluntary agencies Hoover enabled and empowered helped place the responsibility for supplying the inadequacies of the "voluntaristic approach" on the shoulders of the federal government. It positively relates Hoover's voluntaristic approach to Roosevelt's more coercive one. It helps redeem Hoover from charges of laissez-faire do-nothingism without denying that fundamental differences in philosophy and policy rendered Hoover's approach to the Depression far less adequate than Roosevelt's. Such redemptive work is still necessary. Hoover had the reputation among New Deal liberals for the rest of the twentieth century, and still has it among many today, of a hidebound conservative without adequate sympathy for the suffering caused by the Crash of October 1929 and the ensuing economic depression. This is mostly because his "associative state"—reliant on private structures galvanized, endorsed, coordinated, and even partially funded by public means—was followed immediately by Franklin Roosevelt's radical re-envisioning of the role of the federal government in caring directly for the needs of the destitute and unemployed. Hoover's reputation has suffered by comparison. Yet Hoover was more creative than any previous president in his positive use of the federal state to reverse the tide of economic depression and meet the needs of those Americans who were drowning in it. He could be just as flinty and megalomaniacal in the face of isolationist threats to what he considered the true, humane spirit of "American individualism" as he was in the face of what he saw as socialistic threats to private initiative. His heroic feeding of millions of Belgians and French during the Great War, and of Germans, Poles, and Russians afterward should preclude any image of Hoover as a hard and unfeeling man—even if in the years after World War I anti-bolshevism might have moved him as much as compassion. It might also come as a surprise to many that as Commerce Secretary in the Harding and Coolidge Administrations of the 1920s he was organized labor's greatest advocate. His partnership

Yet Hoover's philosophy precluded the granting of federal funds to the AFSC for its Appalachian program. Matching Hoover's contribution of leftover ARA monies daunted the executive secretary of the AFSC, Clarence Pickett. In the spring of 1931he had been the executive secretary of the AFSC for only two years. When he started in 1929 his predecessor told him that the AFSC's annual budget was about $100,000; that yearly income was shrinking; and that overhead expenses were likely to keep consuming an ever increasing proportion of the budget. How could the AFSC possibly hope to raise additionally twice the amount of its annual budget in the midst of the Depression? The worry proved mostly for naught: the AFSC was able to raise almost $175,000 in cash and contributions in kind over the 1931-2 schoolyear, to give it a total of $400,000 for its first year of work in Appalachia.[18] Ironically, given the ARC's broken promise of matching funds, the AFSC's fundraising success probably owed as much to the American culture of giving born of the ARC's Great-War fund drives as to the persuasiveness of its own appeals.[19]

The AFSC fed over 33,000 miners' children one meal every weekday during the 1931-32 schoolyear, and gave milk to almost 8,000 preschoolers and around 1,000 nursing and expectant mothers. Feedings typically occurred at the schools with local women cooking and serving the food under the supervision of two or three AFSC personnel. The AFSC deployed fifty-five of its own volunteer field staff—only their

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with the AFSC in southern Appalachia helps to sharpen the more historically accurate image of him as a progressive and an unusually creative president.

[18] Coal Committee of the AFSC, "Report of the Child Relief Work in the Bituminous Coal Fields by the American Friends Service Committee: September 1, 1931-August 31, 1932," Haverford, 13. Hereafter "Report of the Child Relief Work, 1931-2".

[19] See Olivier Zunz, *Philanthropy in America: A History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011), 44-75.

expenses paid—to forty-one counties in six states. Most were concentrated in southern West Virginia and eastern Kentucky, while a handful worked in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Illinois.[20] In 1932-33 the AFSC fed about 30,000 children in West Virginia and Kentucky, and in 1933-34, the last year of direct relief, it fed about 13,000 children in Kentucky only.[21] From the first, the AFSC looked not just to relieve the miners, but also to "rehabilitate" them. This meant retraining and eventually relocating them, together with starting family and community gardens, building libraries and nursery schools, forming women's sewing circles, and apprenticing former miners at Crown Mine near Morgantown, WV, to a furniture maker from the Alleghenies named Bud Godlove.[22] In these endeavors the AFSC benefited from the successful experience of British Quakers in reviving handicraft industries among unemployed Welsh miners.[23]

The AFSC's Appalachian program lasted three years altogether, from 1931 to 1934, before ceding all activities to local and state governing and voluntary bodies. For the second year, Kentucky and West Virginia assigned the AFSC money granted them through Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation. In the third year, Kentucky assigned the AFSC money from FDR's Federal Emergency Relief Administration.[24] Clarence Pickett lobbied state governments between 1931 and 1934 to create their own relief and rehabilitation programs on the model of the AFSC's, even in the midst of

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[20] Coal Committee of the AFSC, "Report of the Child Relief Work in the Bituminous Coal Fields," Haverford, 3.
[21] AFSC, "Annual Report 1933," AFSC, 16; AFSC, "Annual Report 1934," AFSC, 15. All AFSC Annual Reports are available online at http://afsc.org/archives/sampler#AN.
[22] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 30-35.
[23] "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC.
[24] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 37.

unprecedented budget shortfalls. He knew the AFSC could not possibly sustain its program on such a vast scale for more than a couple of years. He and the rest of the AFSC wanted to spur states and counties to assume responsibility for caring for their own residents. Several soon did just that, most notably in Kentucky and Pennsylvania; and some even hired AFSC field staff to stay on the job and help administer these new programs.

Yet the AFSC did not intervene in Appalachia unbidden or paternalistically. The cry for help arose from within Appalachia, not from without. Dr. William E. Brooks, pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Morgantown, WV, and chairman of the Monongalia County Welfare Board, had worked with several faculty members from the University of West Virginia to form the Council of Social Agencies in Morgantown. This group had been the most influential of many from within Appalachia to appeal to Grace Abbott and the U.S. Children's Bureau. Abbott then turned to Fred C. Croxton of the President's Emergency Committee for Employment, and the two of them went to Hoover with the idea of asking the AFSC to bring relief. At the AFSC, Pickett understood that Morgantown, for one, "could not be expected to carry the entire burden of relief for thousands of miners brought into the county by coal companies…owned almost entirely by outside capital."[25] Yet knowing also that only government could command the resources necessary for wide-spread and enduring relief, Pickett led the AFSC in trying gently but persistently to lay the burden back on state and local governments.

Then in 1933 Pickett found himself in government—at the federal level. Roosevelt appointed Pickett to help run the new Subsistence Homesteads Division of the

[25] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 26, 25.

Department of the Interior. Roosevelt conceived of subsistence homesteads as unemployment relief cum labor-market correction: permanently unemployed workers could grow enough of their own food on a subsistence homestead that they would need only part-time employment instead of full-time.[26] Under Director Milburn L. Wilson, Pickett was allocated a small part of the division's $25 million budget for building four subsistence homesteads in mining country— starting with "Arthurdale" in West Virginia, where on a joint visit in November 1933 Pickett and Eleanor Roosevelt solidified what was to be a lifelong friendship.[27]

So the AFSC's Appalachian program was in some concrete ways a Quaker New Deal for southern Appalachia.

Rebuilding "Civilization" in Appalachia

The AFSC saw its work in Appalachia as not just relief and rehabilitation, but above all as an intervention in the collapse of civilization in southern Appalachia. The AFSC's delegation explained to Hoover during its visit to the White House that "there must be combined with the relief work some…way of life to help solve the breakdown of civilization at some point." What was more, this industrial collapse was "on the borderline of the South." Unless the AFSC modeled the Quaker "way of life" in this

[26] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 44.
[27] The other three homesteads Pickett had charge of were Tygart Valley in West Virginia, Norvelt in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania, and Cumberland in Crossville, Tennessee.

region where racial and class conflict intensified each other, "there is a prospect of terrific conflicts there."[28]

Before committing to the work the AFSC held a general meeting around the first of June with Joseph Willits, a Philadelphia Quaker and a member of the President's Emergency Committee for Employment who had studied the coal industry through the Industrial Research Department he founded in 1921 as dean of Penn's Wharton School of Business.[29] Willits sounded the alarm: "One cannot exaggerate the desperateness of the West Virginia situation." The root cause was economic: coal production far outstripped demand. The wartime needs of the nation had stimulated production far beyond what the peacetime market could support. "We can produce fully 900 million tons of coal and need 500 million." Prices had plummeted 75% to below the cost of labor at some mines, dragging wages down with them. The United Mine Workers had recently signed a contract at 30 cents an hour for loaders, who worked only four days a week at most and often only two. "That is," Willits explained, "we are literally living on flesh." He was unequivocal that the AFSC should intervene. "It is not the time to say whose duty it is but to recognize that the people are starving."[30] He affirmed the AFSC in its intuition that it should concentrate relief in a handful of the most desperate areas as a "demonstration" of what state and local bodies could do.[31]

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[28] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1931, AFSC.
[29] See https://www.law.upenn.edu/alumni/alumnijournal/Fall2000/dean/feature/sidebar2.html and http://rockefeller100.org/biography/show/joseph-h--willits.
[30] "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC.
[31] "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC.

The AFSC had already proposed near the end of May 1931 that "a few most difficult points be picked out first to begin and the work be extended from those points as funds and personnel permit."[32] It wanted to fly the banner of industrial peace by feeding hungry miners' children on the front lines of the coal wars just as it had flown the flag of world peace by feeding German children after the Great War.[33] One of the AFSC's German workers noted, however, that Appalachia would prove more difficult to relieve than postwar Germany: "In Germany we had their efficient organization to help us. There were some terminal facilities."[34] Such infrastructure was lacking in Appalachia. As Pickett reminded his staff about six months into the work, "we must remember that European countries are 50 years ahead of us in experience."[35] Yet after the meeting with Willits the AFSC forged ahead, quickly determining that the front lines—the "most difficult points"—were in West Virginia and Kentucky. It split the most depressed coal fields of the two states into seven districts. Districts 1 through 4 covered five counties in West Virginia

and had their respective headquarters in Morgantown, Charleston, Logan, and Williamson. Districts 5 through 7 covered five counties in Kentucky, where the epicenter of the AFSC's work—the place where the AFSC's neutrality was to prove most indispensable—was Harlan County.[36]

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[32] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1931, AFSC.
[33] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, May 28, 1931, AFSC.
[34] "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC.
[35] Minutes of Field Conference of Coal Field Workers, April 2-4, 1932, box AFSC Minutes 1929-1932, AFSC. Hereafter Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932.
[36] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, November 19, 1931, AFSC.

The AFSC's Coal Committee laid out the "principles" of the work at its first meeting in early June. The first two principles concerned finding two or three of the "most needy locations"— expanded into the seven districts above by the end of the calendar year, and ten by the end of the 1931-2 schoolyear—and preserving the AFSC's autonomy as it cooperated with the U.S. Children's Bureau, the President's Emergency Committee for Employment, and state governors and public welfare departments. The third principle was that the AFSC try to make its "centers" of work little cities on a hill—that is, "pilot projects" that states, counties, coal operators, local voluntary associations, and unions might copy to take up relief and rehabilitation on an adequate scale. Principles five and six stressed the priority of rehabilitation, in a "limited number of centers."[37]

Principles four and seven neatly captured the tension inherent in the AFSC's pacifist humanitarianism—its program of relief for the purpose of making peace. The fourth principle was neutrality: "We shall attempt to be unbiased in the treatment of local unions in their relations with each other, in the relations between organized labor and the operators, and in the relations of organized labor to the forces of the State." The seventh principle was the right, if not the duty, to be prophetic: "If in the course of our work we discover situations which we feel need publicity and which indicate weak spots in our social order, we reserve the right to speak out concerning them."[38] Harlan County in Kentucky was to bring these two principles into stark relief. The AFSC intentionally put men and women there who would not "speak out," because speaking out would have

[37] "Suggested Principles Governing the Proposed Work of the American Friends Service Committee in the Bituminous Coal Regions," AFSC Coal Committee Minutes, June 9, 1931, AFSC. Hereafter "Suggested Principles". For the ten districts see Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932, AFSC.
[38] "Suggested Principles," AFSC.

shown a bias against either the miners and the unions—John L. Lewis's mighty United Mine Workers of America, the West Virginia Mine Workers, and the communist National Miners' Union—or the coal operators and local officials. Any such outspoken bias probably would have scuttled the AFSC's relief work in Harlan: whichever side the AFSC spoke out against in the midst of that quasi civil war would probably have ridden the AFSC out of the county on a rail, if not worse. Not to mention that the "difficulty" with the Appalachian program in general was "speaking out boldly" when one is working with the government in any way.[39]

Complicating matters further was the division within the AFSC between, on the one hand, the more liberal men and women, concentrated in the ad-hoc staff and volunteers, who often sympathized with labor and its right to organize and strike, and on the other, the mostly conservative, mostly male leadership, many of whom were industrial executives in Philadelphia. The field director of the Coal Committee, in charge of rehabilitation, was Homer L. Morris, a white liberal professor of economics at Fisk. The overall director of the Coal Committee, in charge of personnel and relief, was Bernard G. Waring, an executive and founder of the Yarnall-Waring Company, manufacturer of steam-power parts in Philadelphia.[40] Yet if Morris and Waring ever sparred themselves, no trace of it remains in the documentary record. Waring found other ways to check pro-labor sympathy within the AFSC, especially concerning Harlan County.

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[39] "Notes on the Special Service Committee Meeting," box General Files 1931, Coal Relief Section Friends Relief Unit-Dist. VI to Finance, AFSC.
[40] See http://www.workshopoftheworld.com/chestnut_hill/yarnall.html.

Finally, on August 5, with the Coal Committee formed, initial locations chosen, and Hoover's financial gift confirmed, Rufus Jones wrote a press release announcing the AFSC's Appalachian program. He stressed that the AFSC had "accepted the call with the understanding that the work of the Friends will in no sense relieve local communities of the responsibility of assisting in the work of caring for those who need help."[41] The AFSC served its first daily supplementary meal on Monday, September 28, 1931, in the schools of five school districts in Kanawha County, West Virginia. Two days later, one thousand children in the public schools of Monongalia County, WV, ate their first Quaker meal. The AFSC initially thought it would feed only about 25,000 children over the 1931-2 school year.[42] That number almost doubled by the spring. The AFSC soon found that while it would have the logistical cooperation of county agencies, bank failures had "rendered impossible…any financial cooperation."[43] Federal grants and voluntary gifts would have to carry the day in the coal counties.

As in Germany, the AFSC used need alone to determine who got fed. An annual report to AFSC members and contributors stated that "Friends gave relief to the needy" in Appalachia "irrespective of race or [labor] affiliations." Theoretically, operators' children were just as eligible as miners': all a child had to do to qualify for the feeding was weigh in at 10% under "normal" weight. AFSC field personnel enlisted local doctors for the weighing, if available, but often had to weigh the children themselves. The children were weighed again in the spring. Based on a sample of 1,312 children, "the results were very

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[41] Minutes of a Joint Meeting of Board of Directors and Coal Committee of AFSC, August 5, 1931, AFSC.
[42] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, September 24, 1931, AFSC.
[43] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, November 19, 1931, AFSC.

gratifying." The children weighed 2%-8% more than they had in the fall. School attendance also increased over 1931-2—up 10% over the year before in Mingo County, WV, for instance. And the children were better students. "Easier discipline, happier dispositions and an amazingly improved ability to concentrate were reported in most schools."[44] The AFSC had every reason to trumpet its program's successes, especially in a report to its own members and donors. Yet the states' and localities' repeated invitations to return and allocations of their public monies to the AFSC indicate that the Quaker program was adequately meeting a desperate need.

Thank-you letters from the children at a school in Draper in Harlan County, KY, strengthen this impression—even if, as it seems, the children were prompted and coached by their principal, Mrs. Roberts.[45] The two AFSC workers in Harlan, Paul Hund and Mary Cook, visited the school on Good Friday, March 25, 1932, and distributed clothes to the children.[46] The Tuesday after Easter Mrs. Roberts sat her children down and had them write individual thank-you letters to "Mr. Hund" and "Miss Cook." All of the children thanked them for bringing clothes. Betty Jo "was certainly glad to get my dress stockings and bloomers. I wore them part of the day Easter Sunday….I thank you for our nice new lunch. I believe I am gaining a little. I forgot to thank you the day you were here."[47] All of them thanked Hund and Cook for the daily hot lunch; one specified that he liked the "soup and coca and cracked wheat and milk," much the same menu as the

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[44] AFSC Coal Committee, "Report of the Child Relief Work, 1931-2," Haverford, 5.
[45] Ivamae Collins to Mary Cook, March 29, 1932, box General Files 1932, Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC.
[46] George Edd Kelly to Paul Hund, March 29, 1932, box General Files 1932, Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC.
[47] Betty Jo to Mary Cook, March 29, 1932, box General Files 1932, Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC.

AFSC had served in Germany.[48] And almost all of them insisted that they were "gaining" or "growing fast."

The children offhandedly mixed the tragic with the everyday. Reba Baker "was certainly glad to get those nice new clothes. My mother and father is dead and I sure did appreciate them." George Edd Kelly thanked Mr. Hund for the clothes—"My father is dead and will appreciate them"—and wanted to thank Mr. Hund also "for the soap you gave me. I am gaining a hole [*sic*] lot and I have been eating at the lunch room." The soap Hund and Cook brought to the school

proved popular. Montine Gump wrote, "We enjoy the soap. We wash with it when we go up to the lunch room. I like my soap. it sure does get me clean." Bevlyn Cowan wrote that her father "hasn't been working. I liked the soap very much." Shirley Ball "sure was glad to get the soap you gave us. My father is dead and I live with my uncle. We had a very nice Easter." "Yours friend, Cleda Johnson" wrote Miss Cook precisely as follows: "My mother is dead and I sure was glad to get those new clothes….I am in the fourth grade and I am eleven year old. My sweater and skirt just fit me. My dady and grandma said it was make just for me it fited me so good. I wish you would come back in again. I thank you and Mr. Hund very much for you sure have ben very good to the Draper Children." And Irene Mullins wrote simply, "I sure appreciate all you gave me."[49] The gratitude was palpable.

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[48] Charles Birchfield to Paul Hund, March 29, 1932, box General Files 1932, Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC.

[49] Reba Baker to Mary Cook, George Edd Kelly to Paul Hund, Montine Gump to Mary Cook, Bevlyn Cowan to Paul Hund, Shirley Ball to Mary Cook, Cleda Johnson to Mary Cook, and Irene Mullins to Mary Cook, March 29, 1932, box General Files 1932, Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC.

As grateful as the children in Harlan and elsewhere were for the clothes and food—and soap—their parents must have been equally if not more thankful. Starting alongside relief for the children was rehabilitation for the parents. Alice O. Davis, stationed in Morgantown, WV, built a mile and a half of road by the middle of November 1931. She got local coal mine operators to donate their refuse slag from the mines, then fifteen out-of-work miners whom she paid in old clothing used the slag to build the road.[50] By the end of January 1932 field director Homer L. Morris had managed to get both the operators and the Council for Social Agencies in Morgantown to agree to rehabilitation plans that included establishing shops for carpentry, cobbling, and sewing. Morris had also persuaded the University of West Virginia in Morgantown to cover half of the eight-month salary of a temporary Director of Gardening and Recreation for the local coal fields.[51] The land-grant colleges and universities formed one of the three major "nodes" in what historian Olivier Zunz has called the "matrix of inquiry" that was born of private philanthropy and public funding in the last quarter of the nineteenth century.[52] The cooperation of West Virginia's land-grant university in Morgantown made the city and its environs the most fertile ground for the AFSC's rehabilitation projects.

The common belief in America at the time was "once a miner, always a miner"—that miners, in other words, were incapable of rehabilitation. The AFSC had to prove conventional wisdom wrong. Rehabilitation was a major topic of discussion and debate at the AFSC's Field Conference of Coal Field Workers held over the weekend of April 2-4,

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[50] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, November 19, 1931, AFSC.
[51] Coal Committee Minutes, January 28, 1932, AFSC.
[52] Zunz, *Why the American Century?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 12. The other two nodes were research universities and industrial laboratories. Later, the military formed a fourth node.

1932, at the Mountaineer Hotel in Williamson, Mingo County, WV. During the Sunday night session the ten districts reported having started a total of forty-one sewing groups with almost 1,000 women. Clarence Pickett said he and Fred Croxton of the President's Office on Unemployment Relief (formerly the President's Emergency Committee for Employment) planned to meet on April 15 with a group of operators in Washington, D.C., to clear the way for the AFSC to ask foundations for funds to help move permanently unemployed miners and their families onto farms and into factories. Yet the most promising field projects were already underway at Morgantown.[53]

Pickett had recruited to Morgantown a married couple, Bill and Ruth Simkin, both students of his from his time teaching at Earlham College, a Quaker school in Indiana. Pickett had presided at their wedding. The Simkins were teaching school in Brooklyn when Pickett came calling.[54] He wanted them to live with, in, and among the miners as the couple developed rehabilitation projects. They agreed. In the spring of 1932 they left their jobs and apartment in Brooklyn and moved into a house at Crown Mine outside Morgantown. "In going into this community," they told the Field Conference, "it is our firm conviction that we should not attempt to tell these people how to live and how to develop these projects but rather that we should attempt to coordinate the latent ability already existing there." Crown Mine had closed late the previous spring and had little prospect of reopening; most of the sixty families still there were living entirely on adult relief from the County, and child relief from the AFSC. The carpentry, cobbler, and

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[53] Coal Relief Section of AFSC, "Rehabilitation in the Soft-Coal Fields," Haverford, 5; Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932, AFSC.
[54] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 31.

sewing shops Homer Morris mentioned in his report in January were up and running by the time the Simkins arrived.[55]

The Simkins presented two "contemplated" projects to the conference, one for women and one for men. The one for women was a weaving cooperative under the direction of a Mrs. Scott in the town of Elkins; the AFSC would buy two or three handlooms and then later add others made at the carpentry shop. The project for the men was a chair factory under the direction of a man named Bud Godlove, "an old German hill country farmer" from "the wilds" of the Monongahela National Forest. Godlove had been recommended to Pickett and the Simkins by a WV State Extension Forester named Tom Skuce during a meeting at the University of West Virginia in mid-March. The day after the meeting, Skuce took Bill Simkin to Monongahela to meet Godlove. Simkin was taken with what he saw and heard. "He has been making old hickory chairs all his life from patterns handed down through four or five generations," he told the Field Conference, "and is a real craftsman. His shop contains a few simple machines made almost entirely with his own hands." Homer Morris visited a few days later and saw chairs made by Godlove's family as far back as 1760 and still in use. Godlove did not write down any of the dimensions and designs, but carried them all in his head or marked them with pins on measuring sticks. Though he had never been more than fifty miles from his home, his own sons had shown little interest in carrying on the family tradition,

[55] Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932, AFSC; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 31.

and so he welcomed the chance to pass his knowledge and skills down to the unemployed miners at Crown Mine.[56]

Godlove's shop became the AFSC's most successful rehabilitation project. It "flourished beyond our dreams," remembered Pickett. It started with seventeen men and soon outgrew its building at Crown Mine. Within a year it moved to an old junk shop near the Monongahela River in Morgantown, where it joined the women's weaving collective and other crafts associations to form the Mountaineer Craftsmen's Cooperative Association. By 1933 the MCCA employed about fifty men and women. The men fashioned chairs, tables, stools, bookcases, cabinets, and other woodwork. The women operated handlooms to weave rugs, "fine pattern pieces," and other woven articles. A Quaker woman named Edith Maul almost singlehandedly developed a market for the MCCA's products. In early 1933 she loaded a truck with MCCA handicrafts and drove from one Quaker meeting to another drumming up interest all over the country, especially in New England and the Mid-Atlantic. From 1933 through 1936 the MCCA sold $43,000 worth of furniture alone.[57]

"But the true value," thought Pickett, "was human rather than economic." Already by the end of 1933 income from sales was almost enough for the MCCA's men and women to be self-supporting. "It has brought back hope and dignity to life," declared a pamphlet the AFSC published in 1933 on its various "experiments" in rehabilitation.[58]

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[56] Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932, AFSC; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 32-3. "Godlove" is an Anglicization of the German "Gottlieb."
[57] Coal Relief Section of AFSC, "Rehabilitation in the Soft-Coal Fields," Haverford, 5; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 34-5.
[58] Coal Relief Section, "Rehabilitation in the Soft-Coal Fields," Haverford, 5; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 35.

What the men and women themselves thought is only available secondhand. One miner, according to the Simkins, felt that the AFSC's rehabilitation work was "the finest thing that has come into my life."[59] It is reasonable to believe with the AFSC that such self-supporting work as the MCCA offered restored "a creative and joyous life to many people" whom unemployment and relief would otherwise have "demoralized." But whether the Simkins and others opened up "possibilities for the influx of the spirit of love into a situation where bitterness" was growing is impossible to know.[60]

At the AFSC's Second Annual Field Conference, in January 1933, the AFSC's man in Kentucky, Arthur Gamble, presented a back-to-the-land experiment in the town of Pineville. Under Gamble's direction the AFSC had found a mining family suitable for relocation to a farmstead. Murphy Baker and his family had recently moved onto a fifteen-acre plot of tillable land owned by the AFSC. The AFSC was paying off the mortgage at $1.25 a day in exchange for Baker's working the land, and was giving Baker and his family $2 a week in maintenance until crops came in. The AFSC saw this as an experiment in subsistence homesteading. It envisioned colonies of homesteads populated by unemployed and underemployed miners and their families.[61]

President-elect and New York governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt had the same vision. It was part of a national trend of coping with hard times "by reverting to more

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[59] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, September 22, 1932, AFSC.
[60] Coal Relief Section, "Rehabilitation in the Soft-Coal Fields," Haverford, 6; Minutes of Field Conference, April 2-4, 1932, AFSC.
[61] Minutes of Conference of AFSC Workers, Logan, WV, January 21-22, 1933, AFSC.

primitive forms of economic and social organization."[62] This included the AFSC's and others' experiments with barter and scrip, or alternate forms of currency.[63] During his first "Hundred Days" Roosevelt created the Subsistence Homesteads Division within the Department of the Interior with a $25 million appropriation authorized by Congress under the National Industrial Recovery Act. FDR, Interior Secretary Harold Ickes, and Division Director M. L. Wilson looked immediately to the AFSC, and to Clarence Pickett in particular, for leadership on homesteading in the soft-coal fields. Pickett agreed to become Wilson's assistant. On August 22, 1933, he was affirmed as Chief of the Section for Stranded Mining and Industrial Populations "and began work."[64] He continued as executive secretary of the AFSC: the Committee generously released him for three or four days a week so he could do his government job.[65]

Pickett was accustomed to walking some of the halls of power by 1933. He and several of the AFSC's field staff continually wrote and personally lobbied townships, counties, and states—Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and West Virginia in particular—to

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[62] Ellis W. Hawley, *The Great War and the Search for a Modern Order: A History of the American People and Their Institutions, 1917-1933*, Second ed., (New York St. Martin's Press, 1992), 193.
[63] Minutes of Conference of AFSC Workers, Logan, WV, January 21-22, 1933, AFSC.
[64] Pickett, Journal: Jan-Dec 1933, box Articles & Speeches: Undated & 1914-1949, "Clarence Pickett Papers," AFSC. Quakers generally do not take oaths of office, yet see Pickett's letter to David Day about the permissibility of Day's attaching a note of conscientious objection to the latter's own "oath of office," October 18, 1933, box General Files 1933: Admin to Coal Relief Section (Comms and Orgs of the State of Kentucky), AFSC.
[65] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 44.

assume direct responsibility for the suffering in their midst.[66] "We felt then," Pickett later wrote, "and I still feel, a justness in this growing sense that the chief function of the state should be the welfare of its whole citizenry." More and more "the state" responded. For just two examples, Logan County in West Virginia took over the Friends Health Service started by the AFSC and local mine operators, and in the fall of 1932 Kentucky Commissioner of Public Health Arthur P. McCormack persuaded the state's governor to continue relief along the lines established by the AFSC. "Was this the birth of the Welfare State in our midst?" Pickett wondered.[67]

Yet a shrinking tax base and a belief in balanced budgets severely limited what states, counties, and municipalities could, or would, do. As historian James T. Patterson concludes, "The truth was that state remedies could not alone heal the national sickness."[68] So Pickett testified twice before Congress that the federal government should get directly involved. In January 1932 he appeared before the Senate Finance Committee in support of the La Follette-Costigan bill that would have provided $750 million in direct federal aid to the unemployed had the bill not been defeated.[69] In January 1933, Pickett appeared before a Senate subcommittee also headed by Senators La Follette (R-WI) and Costigan (D-CO) in support of a bill they were writing to appropriate $500

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[66] See three separate mentions of such lobbying in Pickett, *For More Than Bread*, 21, 30, 36; see also Minutes of AFSC Board of Directors Meetings, September 7 and November 2, 1932, AFSC.

[67] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 36; Pickett to Winifred A. Wildman, October 25, 1932, box General Files 1932: Administration to Coal Relief Section (Admin-Legal Agreement), AFSC; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 30.

[68] James T. Patterson, *The New Deal and the States: Federalism in Transition* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 49. For budget shortfalls and governors' budget-balancing, see 26, 39, 42, 46-7.

[69] Costigan to Pickett, January 16, 1932, box General Files 1932: Coal Relief Section (Comms and Orgs—State of Kentucky) to (Friends Relief Unit Dist. I), AFSC.

million from Hoover's Reconstruction Finance Corporation to make federal grants to the states for unemployment relief. Pickett wrote in his journal after testifying, "The appalling fact of constant decline of morale of millions of families is startling. Our social deficit is appalling. I talked to both Senators following the hearing requesting them to provide in their bill for some funds to be spent for rehabilitation…to keep people permanently off of relief, and they agreed to make this change."[70] The bill was signed into law by Roosevelt in May 1933 as the Federal Emergency Relief Act, and perhaps at least in part because of Pickett's testimony, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration created unskilled government jobs in addition to a public dole.

Pickett's apparently influential testimony before the Senate subcommittee in January 1933, along with the AFSC's identical operations in Kentucky under RFC funds one year and then under FERA funds the next, draws some of the sting from historian David M. Kennedy's rebuke of Hoover as stymied by "pettifogging timidity."[71] Hoover's voluntary associates became New Deal officials precisely because of the work Hoover recruited them to do. When Pickett joined the National Recovery Administration's Subsistence Homesteads Division in the Department of the Interior in August 1933, he was one in a long line of AFSC personnel whom government at different levels hired directly from and because of their relief and rehabilitation work in Appalachia. Arthur Gamble and his wife, Aida, were "taken over" in fall 1932 by Letcher County in Kentucky as directors in charge of relief; Edith Lindley, Robert Milkey, and a couple

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[70] Pickett, Journal: Jan-Dec 1933, box Articles & Speeches: Undated & 1914-1949, "Clarence Pickett Papers," AFSC; Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 44.
[71] David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear, The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 144, 176.

with the last name Mott joined the Gambles in eastern Kentucky in 1934, with Lindley in Bell County.[72] Errol D. Peckham was taken on by Cambria County in Pennsylvania, also in fall 1932, to explore the use of abandoned farms for rehabilitation in Cambria and Clearfield Counties; David Day and Bill Ryerly joined him in Pennsylvania in 1934 in Westmoreland County.[73] And Monongalia County appointed Alice O. Davis director of its FERA program in the summer of 1933.

Davis's tenure had an intriguing denouement. She and her associate in Monongalia not only built that road from mine slag, they also distributed food and clothing, built a communal outdoor oven for baking bread, started a nursery school, designed a sewage system to clean up one of the local streams, and founded a maternity clinic.[74] Yet the county court somehow forced Davis to resign in 1935 because, it declared, she was taking a job away from a West Virginian and it was rumored that she was "an agent of Soviet Communism."[75] The latter charge makes more sense when one learns that Davis helped the AFSC feed children in Russia in the mid-1920s, and that her

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[72] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, October 27, 1932, AFSC; Wray Hoffman to Winifred Wildman, July 6, 1934, box General Admin 1934: Coal Relief Section: MCCA to Projects, Letcher Co., KY, AFSC; Bernard G. Waring to Mary F. Wait, December 14, 1934, box General Admin 1934: Coal Relief Section: Comms and Orgs, Elonhirst Found. to Friendly Advisors Program, AFSC.

[73] AFSC General Meeting Minutes, December 1, 1932, AFSC; Waring to Wait, December 14, 1934, AFSC.

[74] Pickett, *For More Than Bread*, 23; Waring to Wait, December 14, 1934, AFSC.

[75] Jerry Bruce Thomas, *An Appalachian New Deal: West Virginia in the Great Depression* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1998), 132; W.E. Brooks to Mrs. Roosevelt, November 25, 1935, quoted in Thomas, *An Appalachian New Deal*, 133.

associate in Monongalia County was a Russian woman by the very Russian-sounding name of Nadia Danilevsky.[76]

Eleanor Roosevelt invited Davis and Danilevsky to the White House for a couple of days as consolation for their expulsion from Appalachia.[77] Soon after her husband's inauguration, Mrs. Roosevelt had written the AFSC that she would like to see for herself how families lived in the soft-coal fields. Pickett had arranged for her to join him for a tour of the Morgantown area with Davis and Danilevsky, during which the three Quakers had persuaded the First Lady that Monongalia County was the right place for the first subsistence homestead. The First Lady had then convinced her husband of it as well. In late fall 1933 Pickett had given Mrs. Roosevelt a tour of Arthurdale, "their" subsistence homestead outside Morgantown.[78] By the end of 1933 she had taken him firmly into her confidence, finding him "without vanity or personal ambition," and he ironically was able to exert some influence over the President through his friendship with her.[79]

Through Pickett in particular, the AFSC became so entangled with the first Roosevelt Administration that at the time one could well be forgiven for assuming that the AFSC was a federal arm of the New Deal. Which is exactly what James Hall Jr. of

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[76] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 23.
[77] Thomas, *An Appalachian New Deal*, 133.
[78] Lawrence McK. Miller, *Witness for Humanity: A Biography of Clarence E. Pickett* (Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill Publications, 1999), 134; Pickett, Wednesday, Nov. 22, 1933, Journal: Jan-Dec 1933, box Articles & Speeches: Undated & 1914-1949, "Clarence Pickett Papers," AFSC.
[79] The quotation is by Eleanor Roosevelt's biographer Tamara K. Haraven, *Eleanor Roosevelt: An American Conscience* (Chicago: Quadrangle, 1968), 53, in Miller, *Witness for Humanity*, 135. For Pickett's influence, see Elizabeth Marsh to Douglas V. Steere, May 24, 1934, box General Admin 1934: Administration to Coal Relief Section (Comms and Orgs: Commonwealth of PA), and Pickett's journal entries for 2/29/36 and 6/26/36, boxes Clarence Pickett's Journal, 1912-1936 (Jan.-June) and Articles & Speeches: Undated & 1914-1949, "Clarence Pickett Papers," AFSC.

Neon, Letcher County, KY, did when he wrote Roosevelt in August 1933. "Dear President," Hall began, "In behalf of the 'American Friends Service Committee,' we are so pleased with their work that we hardly know where (sic) to let them leave us or not." As president of The Whippoorwill Valley Club, Hall had been asked by the club's members "to write a 'Thank You Letter' to you and thank you for sending such good and kind people down here to entertain us mountaineers of Ky. Mr. Roosevelt please for our sake and others send these people down this winter to stay with us." Hall tried to cut a deal with the President. "If you send these people back this winter we will form an 'American Pioneer Club' and we will come and pay you a visit so you can see what kind of boys are up here in these old hills of Ky."[80]

The White House forwarded the letter to Ickes's office at Interior. Ickes's personal assistant wrote Hall in early September that it had "been ascertained" that the AFSC had "no connection with the Federal Government," and that he was sending Hall's letter to the AFSC in Philadelphia.[81] Pickett's concurrent public and private appointments at Interior and at the AFSC apparently required even Ickes's secretary to "ascertain" whether the AFSC was itself connected with the federal government. This was an astonishing about-face for a religious group whose memories of the federal government's coercive and even physically violent treatment of their members during wartime were still fresh, and whose most famous testimony, pacifism, was fundamentally at odds with a state apparatus that included a Department of War. While the AFSC's relief and

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[80] James Hall Jr. to Franklin Roosevelt, August 23, 1933, box General Files 1933: Admin to Coal Relief Section (Comms and Orgs of the State of Kentucky), AFSC.
[81] Harry Slattery to James Hall Jr., September 8, 1933, box General Files 1933: Admin to Coal Relief Section (Comms and Orgs of the State of Kentucky), AFSC.

rehabilitation projects were delivering a Quaker New Deal to the people of southern Appalachia's coalfields, they were also making secular New Dealers out of the Quakers themselves.

"Which Side Are You On?"

Still, the Quakers of the AFSC remained consistent in their refusal to take sides in the industrial warfare that continued to erupt in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio. Before reentering the still bitterly divided coalfields of West Virginia in 1931, AFSC chairman Henry Cadbury received a strongly worded letter from the executive secretary of the radical League for Industrial Democracy. Andrew J. Biemiller struck at the heart of the AFSC's humanitarian policies of impartiality and neutrality. With a somewhat disingenuous use of the first person, Biemiller wrote, "We must not attempt to feed scab and striker alike, for to do so would be to deny the validity of the ideal for which [the strikers] are fighting, which is to them more real than hunger." He claimed that "some of the more intelligent labor leaders" had castigated the League "from this angle" for enlisting the AFSC to feed textile workers in Marion. A. J. Muste's "right hand man," Tom Tippett, apparently felt that "we did almost as much harm as good in Marion because of failure to understand the principles of the union." If the AFSC was now willing to "go in as allies of the workers, then I think we can perform a great task." But if not, "then I should be heartily opposed to the Service Committee undertaking any work in the bituminous coal fields."[82]

[82] Biemiller to Cadbury, June 2, 1931, box General Files 1931: Admin. To Coal Relief Section (Admin.), AFSC.

The League's leadership in 1931 included not only Norman Thomas and John Dewey, but also Agnes L. Tierney, who had traveled to Germany with the Garretts as a Message worker in 1922-23.[83] That a Quaker who used to work with the AFSC was now on the Executive Committee of a Socialist organization indicates how the last few years of depression and industrial strife had started pushing many liberal Quakers leftward politically. In fact, new notes of class consciousness and of uncertainty about the wisdom of neutrality were beginning to creep into the AFSC's own internal discussions. On opening night of the AFSC's Third Annual Field Workers' Conference, held in January 1934 in Washington, D.C., Bill Simkin said that he had found himself confronted with "an intimate twist" in the "problem of social justice" in West Virginia when his pregnant wife received prenatal and hospital care far superior to what "hundreds of thousands of miners' wives" could ever hope to get. He gently reminded his fellow workers that they were in the "very delicate business of attempting to help under-privileged people solve their difficulties," and admonished them to "check up on themselves" to be sure that their privilege was not keeping them from dealing fairly with these people. He finished his short remarks by praising the resilience of the miners and their families even as he found it discouraging that they were making "so little protest." Simkin's sensitivity to privilege and class stands out from the rest of the recorded remarks from the conference. When "the question of a Christian technique to be used in bringing about social change was

[83] See the letterhead on Biemiller to Cadbury, June 2, 1931, AFSC.

raised" the next day, for instance, "it was thoughtfully considered, but no one seemed ready to advance a definite answer—or partial answer."[84]

Yet this hint of uncertainty, so notably absent from the AFSC's organizational discussions during the 1920s, suggests that in the midst of the Great Depression the AFSC was beginning to question whether neutrality was, after all, the proper "Christian technique" for effecting social change. Not only were economic and political events pushing them to rethink their policy, but also events within the world of American pacifism itself. Christian Realists, inspired by Swiss theologian Karl Barth's neo-orthodoxy, were reasserting the traditional Christian doctrine of original sin. Though theirs was more an empirical than a theological argument, the Realists held that human beings had a measure of innate selfishness they could never entirely transcend. In 1932, Reinhold Niebuhr, still a pacifist and one of the leaders of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), published a study in social ethics called *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. This book went off like a bombshell in the hands of liberal social Christians in America (as Barth's *Epistle to the Romans* had in the hands of European liberals in 1918). It argued with force and clarity that because of humanity's incorrigible selfishness, which was only magnified in social groups, no amount of love and goodwill could ever usher in the Kingdom of God on earth. The only thing human beings could hope to achieve in this world was a just society—and human nature was such that even this would require coercion.[85]

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[84] Report of Third Annual Field Workers' Conference, box General Admin 1934: Coal Relief Section Comms and Orgs Elonhirst Found. to Friendly Advisors Program, AFSC.
[85] Niebuhr, *Moral Man and Immoral Society: A Study in Social Ethics* (New York: Scribner's, 1932).

Niebuhr's trenchant social analysis prompted the AFSC near the end of 1932 to host an open discussion on whether coercion was necessary to social change. John Nevin Sayre, himself a prominent leader of the FOR, opened the meeting by stating "his conviction that coercion is a bad method, and one that quickly becomes a bad habit with those who use it." He thought the AFSC should continue to experiment with moral suasion. The rest of those present agreed that persuasion "should at least be tried." They also categorically repudiated violence, believing that the "conviction of a truth, backed with the effective testimony of a life that has developed an enormous capacity for suffering when necessary, is all-powerful to effect social change."[86] So the AFSC in 1932 came down decisively on the side of persuasion as the proper method of generating social change.

This persistent faith in the power of conversion, moral or spiritual, to right social and economic wrongs was still the dominant note in the AFSC's social ethics a little over a year later when the field workers gathered in Washington, D.C. As one field worker put it during that conference in January 1934, creating "an atmosphere of goodwill to all classes" was the Christian technique for generating social change. The following night, more secular concerns occupied the attendees' attention. Reflecting the AFSC's entwinement with the federal government in 1934, a panel featuring Grace Abbott of the Children's Bureau, Arthur Morgan of the Tennessee Valley Authority, and FERA administrator Harry Hopkins discussed "relief, rehabilitation, recreation, and education" in the coalfields with James Myers of the Federal Council of Churches and Bernard G.

[86] Minutes of the Meeting of the Home Service Section of the AFSC, November 30, 1932, AFSC.

Waring of the AFSC.[87] It fell to Henry Cadbury, who closed the conference the next afternoon with a rousing speech, to try finally to find the overtly religious meaning of what the AFSC was doing in the Depression.

"If there is any tradition in the AFSC to speak of whereby to make the work you are doing pointed," Cadbury said to those assembled, "it is the tradition of experiment." This was nothing other than "the fine old Quaker tradition of waiting for the spirit…or light to come, and then of following the heavenly vision." The AFSC, like William Penn, had undertaken a Holy Experiment, "translating into action the ideals of the life of Christ into the channels of divine love." Cadbury found the coal work putting him in mind of the child-feeding in Germany and Russia. Whether abroad or at home, "relief is not the entire story; it is a joy to see how the light dawns for those worked with as the meaning of the work dawns upon them." The AFSC was planting "seeds of kindness and goodwill" that would "produce a crop of kindness and international good will." In words one could hardly understand as anything other than a theological caution against socialism, Cadbury reminded his listeners that the "Quaker conception—the recognition of something of God in every man" can occur only between individuals. "The light within most often is a reflected light—light reflected from man to man. There is no wholesale way of dealing with this reflected light. It cannot be part of a big organization, headed up far away; it is through single, acting, independent units this light must shine."[88]

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[87] Report of Third Annual Field Workers' Conference, box General Admin 1934: Coal Relief Section Comms and Orgs Elonhirst Found. to Friendly Advisors Program, AFSC.
[88] Report of Third Annual Field Workers' Conference, box General Admin 1934: Coal Relief Section Comms and Orgs Elonhirst Found. to Friendly Advisors Program, AFSC.

The Quakers of the AFSC might be forgiven for thinking in 1934 that it was time they reap the harvest of peace they had sown as seeds of kindness and goodwill since 1917. They had fed millions of children and thousands of men and women, at home and abroad, most spectacularly in Germany. Yet other men had sown other seeds, especially in Germany, and in 1934 those seeds were already springing up a black and blighted crop.

Just after the AFSC's Third Annual Field Workers' Conference adjourned in D.C., Adolf Hitler celebrated his first anniversary as German Chancellor, in Berlin. Riding to power on a wave of Depression-fueled anger toward Socialists, Communists, and Jews, Hitler wasted no time delivering on his promises to exact revenge on the people he and his followers blamed and still bitterly resented for the country's humiliation in 1918 and 1919. In April 1933, as the AFSC was wrapping up its second year of feeding in Appalachia, Hitler and the Nazis called for a national one-day boycott of Jewish businesses and passed a law that expelled Jews and Communists from the civil service, including state universities. Two years later, in September 1935, the Nazis promulgated the Nuremberg Laws, which stripped ethnic Jews of citizenship and prohibited Aryans from marrying non-Aryans (i.e., those with Jewish, Roma, or black ancestry). With Berlin hosting the international community at the Olympic Games in 1936, the Nazis briefly eased its persecution of Jews. But by 1938 it had escalated again to lethal pitch.

All the while, British and American Quakers staffed a small office in Berlin. Established during the *Quakerspeisung*, the International Centre housed one British, one American, and one German Quaker representative and a small administrative staff. The

center's American representative from 1933 through 1935 was Gilbert L. MacMaster, the AFSC's man in Berlin during the Ruhr crisis in 1923. He and the British representative, Corder Catchpool, tried to leverage the Quaker feeding in order to get certain prisoners released from jail or from concentration camps. Given the limits of what the two men could accomplish, these had to be special cases, either of persons with direct ties to Quakers or of renowned individuals like the German pacifist, journalist, and Nobel Peace Prize-winner Carl von Ossietzky.[89] Also, select individual cases were all the AFSC and its British counterpart could financially afford to take on.

Then on October 27, 1938, the Nazis forcibly expelled about 17,000 Jews of Polish descent, loading them in boxcars and dumping them at the Polish border. The Polish border authorities at first refused them entrance, and for several weeks they languished in a no-man's-land between Germany and Poland. Two of these Polish Jews were the parents of Herschel Grynszpan, who in 1936 had gone to Paris to live with his uncle. On November 7, 1938, the seventeen-year-old Grynszpan walked into the German embassy in Paris and, under the pretext of delivering an important document, shot and killed Ernst vom Rath, a junior embassy official.

Ensuing events in Germany were to prompt the AFSC to undertake its most daring mission yet.

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[89] Achim von Borries, *Quiet Helpers: Quaker Service in Postwar Germany*, trans. John and Cathy Cary and Hildegard Wright (London, UK, and Philadelphia: Quaker Home Service and the AFSC, 2000), 32. See also Hans A. Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997)

"We do not ask who is to blame…"

Rufus M. Jones, 1938

5: Mission to the Gestapo

Berlin. Monday, December 19, 1938, a little over a month since Kristallnacht, the "Night of Broken Glass." Three American Quakers are sitting in a room inside the Gestapa, the headquarters of the Gestapo. They have just met with SS Major Kurt Lischka and SS Colonel Erich Ehrlinger. Unbeknownst to the Quakers, Lischka organized the arrest of the 30,000-35,000 Jews thrown into concentration camps in the days and weeks after Kristallnacht. In the years to come Lischka and Ehrlinger will be responsible for mass murder in Occupied France (Lischka) and in the Baltic States and Belarus (Ehrlinger).

But just now they have left the room to discuss with Reinhard Heydrich, chief of the Gestapo, the Quakers' proposal to help expedite the emigration of Germany's Jews. The three Quakers bow their heads and enter upon a time of deep, quiet meditation and prayer—"the only Quaker meeting ever held in the Gestapo," the leader of the group, Rufus Jones, later wrote. It proves to have been "rightly ordered," as Lischka and Ehrlinger soon walk back in and grant everything the Quakers have asked. Jones wants the agreement in writing. They refuse. "What will be the evidence then?" Jones asks. "Every word…that has been spoken in this room," Lischka says, "has been recorded by a mechanism and this decision will be in the record." Now doubly glad for "the period of hush and quiet" they just kept, the three Americans are told the Gestapo will telegraph that very night to every police station in Germany "that the Quakers are given full

permission to investigate the sufferings of Jews and to bring such relief as they see necessary."[1] Three days later the Friends leave for America, perhaps with George Fox's words of three centuries earlier in their minds: "I…saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness."[2]

The AFSC's mission to the Gestapo dramatically reveals how the organization's cultivation of absolute neutrality over its first twenty years enabled a small group of American Quaker pacifists to negotiate with the Nazis, the most hardened regime in the Western world, at a time when even the US government had cut off formal diplomatic relations with the Third Reich.[3] It shows that a group of idealistic pacifists were at times even more intimately involved in US foreign affairs than the hardheaded Christian Realists, whom historian Heather Warren has justly touted for their achievement in interesting and educating millions of mainline American Protestants in the realities of US foreign relations in the 1930s.[4] The Quakers of the AFSC, unlike either the Fellowship of Reconciliation or the Realists' Theological Discussion Group, might not have worked out a penetrating analysis of the role of racism and nationalism in geopolitical power

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[1] Rufus Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo," a pamphlet reprinted from *The American Friend* of July 10, 1947 (no publication information), https://www.afsc.org/sites/afsc.civicactions.net/files/documents/Our_Day_in_the_German_Gestapo_by_Rufus_Jones.pdf.

[2] *The Journal of George Fox*, edited by John L. Nickalls (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge, 1952), quoted in *Early Prophetic Openings of George Fox* (Philadelphia: The Tract Association of Friends, 1962), 18-19.

[3] See below for details on Roosevelt's official diplomatic reaction to Kristallnacht.

[4] Heather A. Warren, *Theologians of a New World Order: Reinhold Niebuhr and the Christian Realists, 1920-1948* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

relations.[5] But when the Nazis' brutal policy of forced Jewish emigration put hundreds of thousands of human lives at stake, it was not Reinhold Niebuhr, A. J. Muste, or Henry P. Van Dusen who shook hands with Heydrich's lieutenants inside the Gestapa as the "Hangman" looked on, but Rufus M. Jones. Finally, the mission shows the AFSC operating as a purely emergency humanitarian agency, practicing what humanitarian historian and political scientist Michael Barnett calls "the politics of bare life."[6] This was no Social Gospel endeavor with a long view to establishing the Kingdom of God on earth, but a rescue mission in which the immediate preservation of physical life was the only end.

It was precisely Jones's idealism about human nature that both enabled him to believe the mission might work and also persuaded the Gestapo that they had nothing to fear in allowing him and his two companions to walk right into the heart of the Gestapo's operations. These Quakers could be handled. Jones published a brief memoir of the meeting with the Gestapo in 1947, nine years after the events. "Our Day in the German Gestapo" has been the authoritative account of the Quakers' extraordinary mission ever since. The mission to the Gestapo remains one of the signature moments from the AFSC's first thirty years. Still emblazoned on a historical marker outside the AFSC's main office in Philadelphia is the December 5, 1938, headline from the front page of the *Philadelphia Record*: "FRIENDS' SOCIETY SENDS MISSION TO INTERCEDE FOR

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[5] See Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and Michael G. Thompson, *For God and Globe: Christian Internationalism in the United States between the Great War and the Cold War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2015).
[6] Barnett, *Empire of Humanity: A History of Humanitarianism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 33.

GERMAN JEWS." Yet almost every historical account of American efforts to rescue Germany's Jews before World War II ignores the AFSC's meeting with the Gestapo, and none presents it from the Gestapo's point of view.[7] This chapter tells the story from both the Quakers' and the Nazis' point of view, while arguing that the AFSC's distinctively liberal Quaker belief in the universal Light of Christ cut two ways in this episode.

On one hand, the core liberal Quaker conviction that all human beings are essentially one through the inner Light of Christ was crucial in spurring the AFSC to act as the Nazis terrorized Germany's Jews and non-Aryans. Unlike so many in the international community at the time, the AFSC refused to deflect responsibility for this suffering by insisting it was "someone else's business," to quote Holocaust historian Michael Marrus.[8] Instead, the AFSC probably did more than any other American Christian organization to help Germany's Jews and non-Aryans during the Holocaust.[9] But on the other hand, the liberal Quaker belief in the Light's universality and

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[7] For example, none of these mentions it: Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970); David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1985 [1968]); Richard Breitman and Allan J. Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press, 2013). Hans A. Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997), does not provide the Gestapo's point of view.

[8] Marrus, "International Bystanders to the Holocaust and Humanitarian Intervention," in Richard Ashby Wilson and Richard D. Brown, eds., *Humanitarianism and Suffering: The Mobilization of Empathy* (New York: Cambridge, 2009), 170.

[9] See Haim Genizi, *American Apathy: The Plight of Christian Refugees from Nazism* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1983), 172-214, esp. 214; and William E. Nawyn, *American Protestantism's Response Germany's Jews and Refugees, 1933-1941* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Research Press, 1981), 107-136, esp. 134.

invincibility might have kept the AFSC's delegation, and Rufus Jones in particular, from being able fully to fathom the utter-ness of the Nazis' depravity.[10]

Jones was seventy-five years old when he led the AFSC's delegation to Berlin in 1938. He was also an inveterate optimist who believed in the essential goodness of every human being. He thought the Quakers' message of love and goodwill had "softened" the hearts of Lischka and Ehrlinger.[11] Back in the United States in early 1939, Jones was publicly optimistic—sometimes cautiously so, sometimes not—that the Nazis would cooperate with the AFSC to help Germany's Jews emigrate peacefully. Jones soon received a letter, however, from a recent German Jewish immigrant who found his optimism troubling. This young immigrant, writing on behalf of his classmates at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, reminded Jones that most Americans at the time clung to the belief that Kristallnacht was an aberration perpetrated by a radical minority, over whom the moderate majority in the Nazi party was already regaining the upper hand inside the government.[12] Jones's cheery public statements, the young man and his friends feared, were liable to strengthen the American people in their dangerous delusion.

The Mission

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[10] For a full discussion of the role of this belief in Quaker approaches to foreign affairs, see Robert O. Byrd, *Quaker Ways in Foreign Policy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 3-64.

[11] Still the best biography of Jones is Elizabeth Gray Vining, *Friend of Life: A Biography of Rufus Jones* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1958).

[12] See Deborah E. Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief: The American Press and the Coming of the Holocaust, 1933-1945* (New York: The Free Press, 1986), 103; and Michaela Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy: The American Debate on Nazism, 1933-1945* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 42.

One reason Jones later gave for the Nazis' apparent willingness to cooperate with the Quakers was the AFSC's child-feeding program in Germany after the Great War.[13] By saving over five million German children and thousands of nursing and expectant mothers from starvation, the AFSC had generated a tremendous amount of gratitude and goodwill in the country for Quakers in general, and for American Quakers in particular.[14] The AFSC did not hesitate to trade on this humanitarian capital in their dealings with the Gestapo. When the Nazi pogrom against the Jews exploded with Kristallnacht on the night of November 9-10, 1938, the AFSC's man in Berlin was Howard Elkinton, whose wife, Katharine, while not on staff, was an indispensable co-worker at the International Centre, or "Quakerburo." Before Berlin, Howard Elkinton, like so many AFSC staff, had until recently been a Quaker business executive in Philadelphia: he had helped run the family quartz company.

Elkinton experienced the terror in Germany at secondhand. Two weeks after Kristallnacht, he wrote the AFSC office in Philadelphia about a beloved German Quaker physician of twenty years who now "shuddered in his second floor terrified of another SA visit."[15] The physician was the Elkintons' landlord, Dr. Gottstein, and he was right to be terrified. Sometime between the end of November and Christmas the SA (the thuggish Nazi "Brownshirts" or "Storm Troopers") came for him again. He had patients he had promised to see that day; he asked the SA men if he could keep those appointments. They

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[13] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."
[14] Michael Steven Seadle, "Quakerism in Germany: The Pacifist Response to Hitler" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1977), 2.
[15] Howard Elkinton to AFSC Executive Secretary Clarence Pickett, November 24, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.

agreed, provided he return home at a designated hour. He went to his office, saw his patients, and was home in time to become one of the 35,000 Jews rounded up during November and December and hauled off to a concentration camp for a "hair-cut"—and a few days or weeks of terror—before being released against promises to leave the country as soon possible and never come back.[16]

Elkinton wrote Philadelphia wondering "why the world should be so dreadfully accommodating [on immigration]. It may be horrible for the Jews but apparently the only thing that will awaken Germans to do what Germans have to do if a solution is to stick thru the century, is to witness a slaughter of a fraction of their own people….Thee understands me, of course, I shall gladly do all I can to prosper the work of Friends but I wonder sometimes whether in our humanity we may not be rushing into this situation a little head-long, furnished as apparently we are with Jewish money."[17] The "Jewish money" was $10,000 of Sears magnate Julius Rosenwald's—more than half of the AFSC's budget for refugee transit as of the end of 1938.[18] Elkinton was almost certainly not an anti-Semite, but a pessimist. He suspected, for instance, that the Jones delegation's "rushing into this situation head-long" would do more harm than good.

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[16] Elkinton to Anne H. Martin, n.d., box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.

[17] Elkinton to Pickett, November 24, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC. Many Philadelphia Quakers at the time still used "thee" and "thou" instead of "you," a tradition the early Quakers in England started as a witness to their belief in the essential equality of all people: "thee" and "thou" were originally the informal second-person pronouns while "you" was formal.

[18] See "Receipts" on page marked "American Friends Service Committee Transit Funds: Schedule of Funds for Refugees, December 31, 1938," in "Report of Treasurer of American Friends Service Committee, Year Ended December 31, 1938," box AFSC Minutes 1938, AFSC.

Within three weeks of the pogrom the AFSC had appointed a group of Quaker emissaries to Berlin. A few days after Kristallnacht, Jones and Clarence Pickett, the executive secretary of the AFSC, traveled to Washington to meet with Hans Dieckhoff, Germany's ambassador to the United States. The two Quakers wanted to know whether the AFSC might be allowed to set up feeding centers for the Jews, especially since the SA had destroyed the ones the Jews had been running themselves. Jones and Pickett returned to Philadelphia to await word, but permission never came. The November general meeting of the AFSC then called for a delegation of leading American Friends to be sent directly to the Nazi government in Berlin. The AFSC Executive Board immediately appointed Jones, Philadelphia manufacturer D. Robert Yarnall, and Quaker-school headmaster George Walton. The three men left for Germany at once, with Jones as "chairman." They bade farewell to the AFSC before embarking on the *S. S. Queen Mary* on December 2. "There must be no illusions in our mind about this venture of ours," Jones remembered saying. Crossing oceans is easy, but "whether we can influence minds or soften hearts or make spiritual forces seem real—that remains to be seen."[19]

Two days later a reporter with the *Philadelphia Record* rang Jones mid-ocean via radio-telephone and asked him why the three Friends were sailing for Germany. Jones later insisted he divulged nothing.[20] The AFSC wanted to approach the Nazis secretly; it feared the Nazis would not let themselves be seen negotiating with a group of pacifists. Whether or not it was Jones who let something slip, on Monday, December 5, the *Record* blew the Quakers' cover with its front page headline: "FRIENDS' SOCIETY SENDS

[19] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."
[20] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."

MISSION TO INTERCEDE FOR GERMAN JEWS"; "Dr. Jones Reveals Aim in Ship-to-Shore Phone Talk." The aim Jones had supposedly revealed was "to intervene personally with Chancellor Adolf Hitler on behalf of the persecuted Jewish and other minority groups in Germany."[21] Given that the *Record*'s editor, Julius David Stern, was Jewish, some Friends back in Philadelphia called the leak "the worst crime in newspaper history."[22] Some London papers picked up the story and it soon fell into the hands of Joseph Goebbels, Hitler's Minister of Propaganda and Education, who mocked the Friends in his newspaper, *Der Angriff* ("The Attack"), as "The Three Wise Men" coming to "save" Germany.[23]

Even before the three Quakers had left the United States, Elkinton had feared the Nazis would feel patronized by the Jones delegation. "It is a wee bit like a delegation of Germans visiting Washington to importune the Pres. to cancel or alter the US Immigration Law."[24] He was right about the Nazis. Goebbels said he hoped the three Friends would "make themselves known when they are here. Then we will know, you see, when to begin to quake—quake duly before the Quakers from the U.S.A." These "wise men," Goebbels continued, had heard terrible things about Germans who "relieve poor Jewish millionaires of a little of their money." If only the Quakers were content with making observations—but no, they have plans for "curing us." Goebbels could not help but "laugh, even if in this case it is ever so honorable a sect."[25] So even Goebbels felt

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[21] *Philadelphia Record*, December 5, 1938, front page.
[22] "Friends' Service," *Time*, December 19, 1938, 32 (25): 33.
[23] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."
[24] Elkinton to Pickett, November 28, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[25] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 286.

obliged to genuflect before the AFSC's child-feeding of the early 1920s. The "three wise men" were to prove wise enough to leverage this humanitarian legacy of the AFSC's.

Arriving in Paris the evening of December 7, Jones, Yarnall, and Walton took an overnight train to Berlin, arriving in the capital of the Reich the evening of the 8th. They started the next day by visiting a new Quaker office in Berlin, where they watched two Jewish women interview about 30 non-Aryans wishing to emigrate. Then they went to the Quakerburo proper and met with the Elkintons, the British representative in Berlin, J. Roger Carter, and some German and Dutch Friends. They learned that 30,000 Jews are now in concentration camps following the round-up spurred by Kristallnacht—"ghettoization for the rest," noted Jones's second-in-command, Yarnall. After lunch they visited the prominent Jewish leader Dr. Wilfred Israel, who tells them a "worse catastrophe" than Kristallnacht looms for the Jews. The three men then visited the US Embassy and got advice on how to set up interviews with important Nazi officials. They finished the day with another meeting with the Elkintons and others at the Quakerburo, at which they decide that "speedy emigration on a large scale" was now more important than relief. Jones is asked to draw up a statement for use in interviews. All to bed, exhausted.[26]

Over breakfast the next morning (the 10th), they learned of Lord Baldwin's appeal in Britain for refugees—"could not be more timely for us," thinks Yarnall. They headed to the German Foreign Office with Howard Elkinton. Ambassador Dieckhoff, having been recently recalled from the United States, blatantly ignored his acquaintance Elkinton

[26] Yarnall, "Factual Notes on Trip to Germany," box 112, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford.

in the hall. The American Quakers were denied an audience with anyone. They returned to the Quakerburo in the early afternoon "dejected." Yarnall then met with the head of Berlin's Central Jewish Organization, Dr. Cora Berliner, who says the deadline for evacuation is around February 1—if Dr. Israel's unspecified "catastrophe" was to be averted. She suggests the AFSC build a huge concentration camp in the United States where the Friends can hold all qualified German Jewish and non-Aryan emigres until their US visa number comes up.[27]

The next day was a Sunday. Meeting for worship and rest.[28]

Monday, December 12. The three Friends went back to the US Embassy and saw US Consul General Raymond Geist; Roosevelt had recalled the US ambassador to Germany, Hugh R. Wilson, ostensibly for consultation. Geist approved the Jones delegation's aims but asked for a definite plan, "as they [Nazi officials] would want something very specific." He tells the Quakers an interview with Hitler or Goebbels is out of the question, but not so Heydrich. After dinner the three Friends "perfect" the plan suggested by Dr. Berliner: the AFSC was to take the lead "as a neutral agency" to arrange with the Nazi authorities for the migration of "all the Jews who are in a condition to go."[29]

That night Jones got a call from a Quakerburo representative who had gone to London to clear the AFSC's actions with Myron C. Taylor, the US representative to, and Vice Chairman of, the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees (ICR). The ICR had been the chief result of the international Evian Conference on Refugees that Roosevelt

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[27] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[28] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[29] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford; Vining, *Friend of Life*, 287.

had convened in Switzerland the past July.[30] Taylor was "not happy" that the Quakers had bypassed the ICR and were negotiating with the Nazis on their own.[31] Everyone at the Quarkerburo agreed that Jones should catch the noon train to London the next day and smooth things over with Taylor.[32]

Jones arrived in London on the 14th. He saw Taylor and George Rublee, a Washington, D.C. lawyer and director of the ICR. Taylor and Rublee tell Jones that the President of the Reichsbank was also in London. The improbably named Dr. Hjalmar Horace Greeley Schacht wanted to discuss with the ICR his proposed fund for supporting German Jewish emigres. Taylor thought the Quakers' visit to Berlin might have "hastened" Schacht's visit to London. Jones succeeded in getting Taylor and Rublee's blessing, and leaves London on the 16th with the promise of an appointment with Schacht in Berlin. He caught a bad cold on the icy train back to Berlin, which was in the throes of its worst winter storm in decades. "We shall likely see Goering though that is not certain," he wrote Pickett, referring to the commander-in-chief of the Luftwaffe and Hitler's deputy. As soon as Jones got to Berlin he went to bed with a hot water bottle, and stayed in bed all of Sunday the 17th.[33]

While Jones was in London, Yarnall and Walton had a "most impressive interview" with an official at the German Foreign Office. He assured the two Quakers that the Germans would not let the Jews starve, and then asks, "Have you seen the Gestapo?" "No." "Well, then I shall make an appointment for you." He called the

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[30] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[31] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 287.
[32] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[33] Vining, *Friend of Life*, 288.

Gestapa, the headquarters of the Gestapo, and an appointment seemed to be made or at least promised. Turning back to the two Quakers, the official complained, "We have no colonies, nowhere to send the Jews, while there are many outside places where they can be sent in addition to Palestine, which is too small." He said he knew that Germany could not eradicate them completely, "but putting pressure on is only [sic] way we can get any action." He dismissed the ICR: "Let them present a sensible plan and we will listen willingly." For his part, he would have liked to see a Jewish state of fifteen million carved out of South Africa. Yarnall and Walton obligingly offered the services of the AFSC in helping to raise money for the creation of such a state. "No! let the wealthy Jews in America raise their own money—don't you Quakers do that."[34]

Monday, December 19, and the promised meeting with the Gestapo still had not materialized. The three Friends went to see Dr. Geist at the US Embassy, who tried calling the Gestapa himself. Unsatisfied, he announced that he must go to the Gestapa in person and rushed out to catch a taxi. Less than half an hour later, he called the Quakers and hurriedly told them to join him right away.[35] They dived into a taxi amidst the driving snow and rode to the huge Gestapa buildings just a couple of blocks away. Six armed and black-shirted soldiers escorted the three pacifists to the great iron doors at the entrance to the main building. The gray-black maw opened and let the three Quakers in. They each got a ticket upon entering—not for getting in, but for getting out.[36]

They walked through seven corridors, each one leading into an open square, and then climbed five flights of stairs to a room where Geist was waiting. "I have done it," he

[34] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford, underscoring his.
[35] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[36] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."

said. "Two chief officers of the Gestapo have been delegated to hear your plans and to get a decision on your project." The Americans could see through a window into the adjoining room where Gestapo chief Reinhard Heydrich stood.[37] The "Hangman" had been in charge of Dachau before Himmler made him his right-hand man at the SS (the elite Nazi "Blackshirts") and gave him the Gestapo. The Quakers needed his cooperation.

But first they had to win over the two officers in front of them, Lischka and Ehrlinger. Jones presented a written statement of the Quakers' aims, and the two officers read it. Jones was to write later in his memoir of the meeting that the statement "*reached* them" and had "a softening effect on their faces, which needed to be softened."[38] Yarnall noted nothing about the men's reaction. The three Friends and the two Nazis then discussed the outlines of the Quaker plan. Lischka and Ehrlinger found the plan vague. The Quakers explained that uncertainty of funds and of visa quotas prevented them from formulating anything more definite as yet. Finally they asked for permission to help with relief through existing Jewish organizations, and to work with the ICR on plans to hasten emigration.[39]

Yarnall recorded only Lischka leaving the room to talk with Heydrich, and noted nothing about an impromptu meeting for worship as the Americans waited for the Hangman's nod of approval. Nor did Yarnall record Lischka and Ehrlinger's almost certain lie that every word spoken in that room had been captured by some recording device. Yet he did have Lischka returning with Heydrich's "COMPLETE AUTHORITY TO PROCEED." Specifically, the Gestapo were to allow two Quaker representatives to

[37] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."
[38] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo," italics his.
[39] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.

move freely about the Reich in order to assess the need for relief and the feasibility of mass migration.[40] The promised "telegraph…to every police station in Germany" communicating this permission was almost certainly never sent, as even Jones himself later conceded.[41] If it was, it has been lost. Instead, memos from late January 1939, between the Gestapa and Adolf Eichmann in Vienna, express something much less than blanket permission for the Quakers to proceed as they wished.

The day after meeting with the Gestapo the three Quakers had their promised appointment with Reichsbank president Dr. Schacht. Walton described him as a man "of big mind and heart—one of the great men of his generation—who regardless of pride, holds on to do a hard job."[42] Schacht calculated that of the 600,000 Jews in the Reich, which now included Austria, 200,000 would never get out, 150,000 were "effectives" (men of working age and ability), and 250,000 were women and children. If the United States and other countries could take 50,000 of the "effectives" per year over the next three years, "it would settle the problem." The pressure on those left behind would ease, and all of the women and children would soon be able to join their husbands and fathers. Schacht wanted to finance the migration by having foreign Jews match a German Jewish fund of 1.5 billion Marks by investing directly in the German economy. Schacht's plan was never implemented. "Be quick," he warned the Quakers, "for nobody knows what happens in this country tomorrow."[43] Hitler dismissed him one month later.[44]

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[40] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford, caps and underscoring his.
[41] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo," italics his.
[42] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[43] Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.
[44] Breitman and Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews*, 151.

The next day (the 21st), the delegation's last in Berlin, the three Friends stopped by the US Embassy to thank Geist and his assistant for their help, and then addressed reporters from the United Press Association and the Associated Press. The Gestapo's copy of the interview must have pleased them. Yarnall acted as spokesman and "refused to discuss results." Yet he did express his gratitude "to the German authorities, who have expressed their readiness to cooperate" and acted with such "courtesy" as the Quakers "had hardly imagined possible."[45] After the interview, the three American Friends had one last conference with Dr. Berliner. She informed them that of the 35,000 Jewish men put in concentration camps after Kristallnacht, probably 1500 have died from the cold. Many of those released have frostbite on their hands and feet. Yarnall noted after packing that night, "This has been the coldest week in Berlin in 80 years—we well-nigh perish." The next morning Jones, Yarnall, and Walton caught the 9:20 train out of Berlin.

The Myth

Just after the New Year German radio and newspapers picked up this story out of Philadelphia: "Members of the American Quakers have returned to the U.S.A from a one-month stay in Germany. They issued a statement that the German government has empowered their organization to set up an aid service in Germany for non-Aryans, [and that] negotiations between the German authorities and the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees over the evacuation of approximately 150,000 Jews are taking a peaceable

[45] Anonymous, "United Press Info," R58/6026, Bundesarchiv, Berlin [hereafter BA]. All quotations from BA documents are the author's translations.

turn."[46] A similar story in the *New York Herald Tribune* (Paris edition) added that the Quakers found the "recent pogrom…very unpopular with the majority of the German people."[47] This last pronouncement was too much for Howard Elkinton. He struck off a letter to AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett, calling these indiscretions "disturbing" and "embarrassing." They unjustly raised hopes, flooded the already overwhelmed Quaker offices in Berlin and Vienna with even more unanswerable requests for help, and further strained relations between Geist and the German Foreign Office.[48] Geist was in a rage and had taken sick. Elkinton suspected he was just lying low until the whole thing blew over.[49]

Geist's assistant, however, got Elkinton and his British partner at the Quakerburo, J. Roger Carter, an appointment with the ICR's Rublee for the morning of January 12. Rublee was in Berlin to try to work out a deal with Schacht and Goering. Goering, as Plenipotentiary of the Four Year Plan, was systematically confiscating Jewish property and wealth—i.e., robbing the country's Jews—so Germany could rearm. Elkinton urged Rublee to consider building "distribution camps" in neighboring countries outside the Reich. Rublee demurred. So Elkinton suggested concentrating all of the Jews in one district inside Germany. This would satisfy the Nazis in their quest to "CLEAN Germany" (make it *Judenrein*), as well as better protect the Jews themselves. It could also provide a bargaining chip in future armistice negotiations. Rublee did not like that

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[46] "Radio report," Nr. 30024, January 5, 1939, R58/6026, BA.
[47] January 5, 1939, copied in Elkinton to Pickett, January 11, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.
[48] Elkinton to Pickett, January 11, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.
[49] Elkinton to Pickett, January 15, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.

idea either. In fact, Rublee seemed to have no idea of his own, or how many people should be involved.[50] Though Rublee did eventually reach an agreement with the Nazi government based on a version of Schacht's plan, the ICR ultimately accomplished little before the war. The Nazis' avarice for Jewish wealth made emigration a long and tortuous process, and the Evian nations' were reluctant to accept refugees. Then Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and rendered the agreement a dead letter.[51]

Meanwhile, Elkinton was trying to get people like his former landlord, Dr. Gottstein, out of the country. Gottstein had been released but had been given until the end of February to leave the country. Elkinton was in correspondence with the Danish government about receiving Gottstein and others. Any notion Jones and others might have had about the Gestapo facilitating Elkinton's efforts was an illusion.

Just a few days after Elkinton's interview with Rublee, Adolf Eichmann paid his own visit to the massive buildings of the Gestapa. (One imagines he needed no ticket to get out.) He reported that, prompted by the Jones delegation's purported understanding with the Gestapo, the Quakers in Vienna had "likewise tried to intervene in emigration" there. What should he do? Before answering, the Gestapo prepared an internal memo on the meeting of December 19. According to oral communication from Ehrlinger (why not just check the record?), he and Lischka had made clear to the three American Quakers that the establishment of an independent AFSC emigration office was "out of the

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[50] Elkinton to Pickett, January 15, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.

[51] Saul Friedlander, *Nazi Germany and the Jews, Vol. I: The Years of Persecution, 1933-1939* (New York: HarperCollins, 1997), 315-16. See also Henry L. Feingold, *The Politics of Rescue: The Roosevelt Administration and the Holocaust, 1938-1945* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970), 49-68.

question," but that the AFSC should feel "free" to send as much money as it wanted to the central Jewish organizations in Germany and Austria—whose coffers, of course, the Nazis ultimately controlled. Any documents the AFSC needed could be obtained from German offices and agencies.[52] That was it.

So on January 25 the Gestapo telegraphed Eichmann the gist of Ehrlinger's oral report, and instructed Eichmann to "prevent a direct involvement of the 'Society of Friends' in…emigration." Rather than the Quakers having "complete authority to proceed," it was Eichmann who was "to proceed in the general way" (of systematic expulsion).[53] Eichmann wired back the next day asking the Gestapo to examine whether the "Society" should be "dissolved throughout the entire Reich," since its local activity represented a "considerable disruption" of his "work."[54] Most of the Gestapo's actual response of the same day has apparently not survived, but a prefatory "Note" agrees with Eichmann that the Quakers' intervention in the "Jewish Question" is "entirely undesired and must be eliminated." A general "ban" of the Society is "aspired to," but awaits the "right moment."[55] The legacy of the child-feeding mercifully kept that moment from ever arriving, and allowed Jones to persist in his belief that the Quakers held a "favored position" in Germany.[56]

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[52] Anonymous, "Re: Emigration aid of American Quakers—for Non-Aryan Christians," R58/6026, BA.
[53] Anonymous, "Re: Emigration aid of American Quakers," R58/6026, BA.
[54] "To the Chief of the SS Berlin, Department II 122," January 26, 1939, R58/6026, BA.
[55] This undated, anonymous, and obscurely labeled document bears the number "039" in the upper-right hand corner. Immediately following the "Note" are the first three lines of the Gestapo's response to Eichmann on January 26, 1939. R58/6026, BA.
[56] Jones to Herbert Hoover, January 5, 1940, box 58, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford.

As Eichmann and the Gestapa were agreeing to cut the Quakers out of any direct involvement in emigration, Jones received a letter from a German Jewish student at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio. Writing on school letterhead, on behalf of his class, Ernest M. Lorge asked Jones to excuse him "for taking the liberty of writing to you." His "Jewish Social Studies" professor, himself a pacifist and a contributor to the AFSC, had read his class the Associated Press's report of Jones's visit to Germany. Lorge quotes Jones as saying that he (Jones) could not "speak too highly of the German government's help," and that his "visit was very effective."

A discussion had arisen among Lorge and his fellow students. While they appreciated Jones's "kind and generous efforts" to help the German Jews, they could not find any "tangible concessions" from the Nazis that would justify praising the German government so. The Nazis had always wanted the Jews gone, and they had always welcomed influxes of foreign currency. So, Lorge and his classmates wanted to know, just what "concrete concessions" had the Nazis made? "Please do not misunderstand us," Lorge continued. He and his classmates considered it "marvelous" that the AFSC, a non-Jewish organization, wanted to help the students' "poor brethren" in Germany. "You have inspired us with hope and have make [sic] us realize that we are not quite alone." Still, they wanted hard proof that Jones had actually swayed the Nazis with his "lofty and highly spiritual ideals."

At this point in the letter, Lorge stops speaking for his class and starts speaking for himself. He had fled Germany himself two years ago; his parents were still there. He had eaten the daily Quaker meal after the Great War. "I know what it meant to us children, when we received a warm breakfast at school." The children had no idea who

the Quakers were; they imagined that Quakers were quasi-mythical beings "like good fairies." Yet Lorge could not now abide Jones's cheery comments. They left the impression that "things are not so bad in Germany after all." This only abetted Nazi propaganda (and though Lorge did not say as much, it could only have further frustrated the "professional pessimists" of the press in their campaign to educate the American people about the Third Reich).[57] Lorge had seen his "cultured country" of birth turn into "a field of uncivilized cruel actions." He could not bear it—could not survive it—if his country of adoption were also to devolve into barbarism. "No, it is not hate of Germany, but love for America and—frankly speaking—self-protection, which makes [me] to cry out against your one-sided…report."

Two of Lorge's former teachers had died in concentration camps. He enclosed letters containing firsthand reports of two other cases: another of his teachers had lost his feet to frostbite in a concentration camp, and a despairing Jewish couple he knew in Mainz had asphyxiated themselves with gas. In his "exceeding grief" he begged Jones to "please warn the good people of America not to do things like those done in Germany." He asks Jones not to reveal any names, and closes, appropriately enough, by thanking him for his "goodness."[58] If Jones responded, his response has not survived.

The Mission's Statement

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[57] Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy*, 71-2.

[58] Ernest M. Lorge to Rufus Jones, January 21, 1939, box 40, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford. For a short biography of Lorge and the immediate context of the letter, see W.J. Dorman, "A Letter from Ernst M. Lorge to Rufus M. Jones, January 24 [sic], 1939," unpublished manuscript, 1986, box 40, "Rufus M. Jones Papers, 1860-1997," Haverford.

Lorge could afford to condemn the Nazis in a private letter mailed within the United States. The AFSC, on the other hand, could not afford to do or say anything that the Nazis could possibly interpret as criticism. It had to remain neutral. The statement Jones handed to Lischka and Ehrlinger inside the Gestapa assured them of the AFSC's neutrality.

> We have come to Germany at this present time to see whether there might be any service which American Quakers could render, and to use every opportunity open to us to understand the present situation….
>
> We came to Germany in the time of the blockade; organized and directed the feeding of German children, reaching at the peak no less than a million two hundred thousand children per day….After the different revolutions in Austria we gave relief to the families of those who suffered most in these collisions, always having permission from the existing government to do so. And at the time of the "Anschluss" we were distributing food to a number of Nazi families.
>
> In all this work we have kept entirely free of party lines or party spirit. We have not used any propaganda, or aimed to make converts to our own views. We have simply, quietly and in a friendly spirit endeavored to make life possible for those who were suffering. *We do not ask who is to blame for the trouble which may exist or what has produced the sad situation. Our task is to support and save life and to suffer with those who are suffering.*
>
> We have come now in the same spirit as in the past and we believe that all Germans who remember the past and who are familiar with our ways and methods and spirit will know that *we do not come to judge or to criticize or to push ourselves in, but to inquire in the most friendly manner whether there is anything we can do to promote life and human welfare and to relieve suffering.* (italics added) [59]

The imperative to remain neutral further explains why Jones cast the Nazis in the most positive light possible. Outside the AFSC, US neutrality in foreign affairs was favored by most Americans in the 1930s even after Kristallnacht; Congress had legislated it in the Neutrality Acts of 1935, 1936, and 1937; and it was the diplomatic posture of the

[59] "Statement used by Quaker Commission in Interviews with German Officials, December, 1938," in Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford.

US ambassador to Germany immediately before the Night of Broken Glass.[60] Neutrality is also integral to humanitarianism itself, as it enables humanitarian agencies to bring relief into politically volatile situations. Yet additionally, for many if not most inside the AFSC at the time, the liberal Quaker conviction that all human beings are essentially one through the universal Light of Christ made neutrality a Christian ethical imperative.

The legacy of the child-feeding born of this conviction continued to shield the Quakers from Nazi repression. "If until now the sect has not been persecuted more sharply," reads an internal Gestapo report from August 1939, "it is because of the service the Quakers rendered between 1916 and 1923 in alleviating the distress in Germany."[61] Yet "philanthropy disgust[ed]" Nazi leaders. They thought the Quaker feeding "ought never to have been necessary," and were careful to distinguish between "sympathy" for Germany itself and for humanity in general.[62] So the Gestapo never had any intention of letting the AFSC open an independent emigration office, or of letting any Jews or non-Aryans leave Germany without fleecing them first. They almost certainly never telegraphed permission all over the Reich, and just as certainly lied about the agreement being in some sort of record.[63]

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[60] Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy*, 76; Mayer, *FDR's Ambassadors and the Diplomacy of Crisis*, 53-57.

[61] Anonymous, "Report of Mark Brandenburg [a Nazi district in Berlin] of NSDAP," R 58/5478, BA.

[62] George Walton's notes on interview with Reichsbank president Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, in Yarnall, "Factual Notes," Haverford; Anonymous, "Quaker sect," Gestapo report, November 2, 1937, R 58/6026, BA.

[63] Neither Ulrich Temple, archivist at Topographie des Terrors, the Gestapo museum in Berlin (personal conversation at museum, August 19, 2015), nor one of Germany's leading historians of the Gestapo, Michael Stolle, of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (email exchange, August 29 and September 3, 2015), has ever heard of hidden recording devices in the offices of the Gestapa.

Besides, German Jews and non-Aryans had almost nowhere to go. The AFSC hoped to deploy American Quakers throughout Germany and build holding camps in the United States or along the Reich's borders where German Jews could await visas from the United States. The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee contributed $100,000 toward the plan.[64] But the United States lacked the political will to admit any more than the yearly quota of Germans—27,370 once Roosevelt combined the German and Austrian quotas after the *Anschluss*—despite Clarence Pickett and the Non-Sectarian Committee for German Refugee Children's efforts to get the Wagner-Rogers Bill passed in 1939, which would have allowed twenty thousand German children to enter the country outside the quota.[65] So the handful of Quaker Ambassadors who shuttled across the Continent in 1939 before the Nazis invaded Poland could only distribute about $18,000 worth of food and aid.[66]

Ultimately, the AFSC had to settle for being one of a handful of organizations in Berlin waiting for non-Aryans to come to them for help in emigrating. One handled non-Aryan Catholics, another Jews, another Protestants, and the Quakers those who identified as none of the above—the *Konfessionlos*. The numbers are murky, but the Quakers helped over 1,200 *Konfessionlos* non-Aryans escape Germany before the war, and about

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[64] Paul Baerwald to Pickett, January 25, 1939, box General Files 1939, Coms + Orgs.: Amer. Handicraft Council to Spanish Child Welfare Association, AFSC.
[65] See Breitman and Lichtman, *FDR and the Jews*, 102, 143-160; and David S. Wyman, *Paper Walls: America and the Refugee Crisis 1938-1941* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1985 [1968]), 75-98.
[66] William C. Eves III, "Summary of Financial Reports, American Friends Commissioners, to September 1, 1939," box General Files 1939, Coms + Orgs.: Amer. Handicraft Council to Spanish Child Welfare Association, AFSC.

4,500 mostly Catholic non-Aryan converts escape Austria.[67] These efforts were more than significant—they were heroic. In addition to those whom the AFSC helped escape, it advised and counseled thousands more, not only in Berlin, but also in Vienna, Geneva, Rome, Lisbon, Paris, and Marseilles. They also worked with Jewish and Catholic authorities in Germany and Austria to select the "non-guaranteed" (unsponsored) third of the 10,000 children who rode out of the Reich on the British "*Kindertransport*" to London between December 2, 1938, and September 1, 1939.[68] And the Jones delegation potentially risked life and limb on behalf of a plan to rescue Germany's Jews. They were hardly to blame if the plan never had a chance of succeeding.

Yet even at the time their praise of the Nazis was, to borrow Elkinton's words, disturbing and embarrassing. The politics of neutrality probably demanded something of the kind. Still, it is hard to imagine Jones and Yarnall giving the Nazis such fulsome benefit of the doubt—to some extent, in Jones's case, even after the horrors of the Holocaust became known—without their liberal Quaker faith in the Light. Jones never forgot the "gentleness" with which Lischka and Ehrlinger helped the three Quakers into their coats and shook their hands as they left. He wrote in 1947 that it "made me feel then, and now in retrospect, that something unique had happened in their inside selves." He believed a "miracle" had been "wrought by the way of love."[69] Yet any Jews and non-

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[67] The former figure is from Hans A. Schmitt, who acknowledges it is almost certainly too low, *Quakers and Nazis: Inner Light in Outer Darkness* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1997), 121. The latter figure is from Giles MacDonogh, *1938: Hitler's Gamble* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 89.
[68] Vera K. Fast, *Children's Exodus: A History of the Kindertransport* (London, UK: I.B. Tauris, 2011), 22-23; MacDonogh, *1938: Hitler's Gamble*, 89.
[69] Jones, "Our Day in the German Gestapo."

Aryans whom the Quakers helped escape the country did not escape the confiscation of their money and property, or the destruction of their social and cultural lives.

Neutrality did not sit well with everyone at the AFSC. Elkinton's immediate predecessor in Berlin was a former professor of German at Brown University named Albert Martin. While representing the AFSC in Berlin, Martin wrote Philadelphia a letter in late 1937 denouncing "the paralysis of the [AFSC's] moral judgment and…moral will." Specifically, Martin wanted done with neutrality. In the letter, Martin divided the world between those who believed in the use of violence and those who did not. He called the latter the "world 'Society of Friends,'" and imagined its German constituency pleading with the AFSC: "we can only feel disappointment and despair when we see you yielding to this element that terrorizes over us now, and being deceived by it, when we see you extending invitations to it and granting it…cooperation…or when we see you resorting to mealy words and spineless acts when you ought to stand up to this element and point out to it the lies and cruelties it constantly uses." If only the AFSC would openly declare its loyalties, Martin imagines them saying, and stand with us, we could endure any measure of suffering.

Martin saw the leadership of such people as both the "terrific opportunity" and the "terrific responsibility" of Friends worldwide and of the AFSC in particular. If the AFSC was to lead them, "we can not honestly remain neutral whatever our political governments may decree." The AFSC and Quakers everywhere had to boycott Italian, Japanese, and German goods, and encourage tourist embargos of these countries. To the objection that such an uncompromising stance would injure Quakers' chances to mediate later, Martin asked, "Mediate with whom? With the military caste in Japan or with Hitler

in Germany? They will never listen to us. We must prepare to mediate with the decent elements in these countries. And we shall never have any influence as mediators if we have ever compromised or catered to the ruffians."[70] A few months later a contributor to the AFSC put Martin's point more bluntly: the AFSC should stop "hob-nobbing with…the fascists" and start helping to bring the "criminals" to justice.[71]

Neutrality did not go unchallenged within the AFSC. But the policy held firm. For all of Martin's saber-rattling, in the end he neither did nor said anything publicly that jeopardized the Quakers' position in Germany. When his term of service expired in August of 1938, the AFSC replaced him with someone more willing to compromise and cater to his so-called ruffians.[72]

Meaning

For all of Howard Elkinton's realism about the visits of Jones and Rublee—"there is absolutely no practical deflection from the determination to erase the Jew[s] and ostracize those who have to do with them"—he was himself more than willing, and quite able, to play the politics of humanitarian neutrality.[73] He was keen, for instance, to befriend the Nazis and give at least some of them the benefit of the doubt. Before Kristallnacht he went to a party where he met some impressive young Nazi couples who had spent time in

[70] Martin to AFSC, December 5, 1937, excerpted in *Archives of the Holocaust: An International Collection of Selected Documents, Vol. 2: American Friends Service Committee, 1932-1939*, Part 1, Jack Sutters, ed. (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990), 311-13, underscoring his.
[71] Edith E. Hill to AFSC, March 30, 1938, box General Files 1938: General to Foreign Service (Czechoslovakia), AFSC.
[72] Schmitt, *Quakers and Nazis*, 116.
[73] Elkinton to Pickett, March 6, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.

the United States. He found it "refreshing to meet persons of that cut" and hoped "to follow up this contact."[74] Two things in particular kept him from cultivating such contacts. One was the language barrier. The other was helping the very people these desired contacts were repressing, especially after the Night of Broken Glass. "The very worst part about it," Howard complained of the spike in visitors after Kristallnacht, "is it is so corrosive and diverting from the 'embassy' phases of our job. I feel almost at fault in not having made more NAZI friends but maybe this will come….It really requires good Deutsch."[75]

The Quakerburo had two purposes: to promote goodwill between Anglo-Americans and Germany and to nurture the young German Quaker movement. But non-Aryans wanted out of Germany. They needed help getting visas. They knew the Quakers would not turn them away. The Quakers had saved Germany's children; they would save its Jews. And so the Quakerburo was flooded with requests for help. Howard's wife, Katharine, was doing "a land-office-business" in getting non-Aryan women placed in England as maids and nurses. "Our ambition is that each child born in England have at least five mid-wives!"[76]

Howard Elkinton's attempt at evenhandedness in post-Kristallnacht Germany is remarkable. He was "anxious" that the Nazis "not think the Quakerburo is a meddling

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[74] Howard Elkinton to J. Passmore Elkinton, September 17, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[75] Elkinton to Pickett, November 28, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[76] Elkinton to Anne Martin, February 28, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.

post."[77] He wanted badly to find something the Quakers could do that would have the "hearty approval" of the Nazi government—"hard to find," he added parenthetically. He entertained a request from the German Foreign Office that Quakers visit the Sudetenland and "give a 'neutral' report that would off-set the 'slanderous atrocities spread by the Jews.'"[78] Was Elkinton among the majority of Americans who thought that the persecution of Jews in Europe was at least partly the Jews' own fault, not least through their perceived power over the liberal international press?[79]

Regardless, he worked round the clock to organize non-Aryan relief in Berlin. He was so exhausted during the Jones delegation's visit that for the first time in years he lost his temper—a potentially traumatic experience for a pacifist who worships mostly in silence.[80] His letters to Philadelphia portray himself and the British representative at the Quakerburo, J. Roger Carter, as the ones who finally convinced the Protestants in Berlin to set up a relief office.[81] So by the end of 1938 a relatively efficient system of non-Aryan aid was established in Berlin. The Quakers handled all "mixed-race" (*mischlinge*) non-Aryan couples and families whose male head of household identified as neither Christian nor Jewish.[82]

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[77] Howard Elkinton to J. Passmore Elkinton, September 4, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[78] Elkinton to Pickett, November 24, 1938, AFSC.
[79] See Hoenicke Moore, *Know Your Enemy*, 73; Lipstadt, *Beyond Belief*, 42-48; and Mayer, *FDR's Ambassadors and the Diplomacy of Crisis*, 54.
[80] Elkinton to Pickett, December 21, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[81] Elkinton to Pickett, December 21, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: France to Refugee Services (Staff and Volunteers), AFSC.
[82] J. Roger Carter to Dr. Otto Hirsh, June 21, 1939, box General Files 1939, Foreign Service: Germany, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, AFSC.

It is tempting to be cynical about Elkinton's trying to cozy up with the Nazis. But his words and actions, like those of Jones, Yarnall, and Walton, almost certainly flowed from something more than self-interest, or the politics of neutrality. His faith would have impressed upon him the conviction that every Nazi bore the Light, or "that of God," within. The Light just had to be appealed to—to be "answered," as the Quakers say—consistently and lovingly, and eventually it would respond. Jones saw the Gestapo's supposed permission in December 1938 as such a response. Though Elkinton's correspondence from Berlin contains no confession that he was in fact answering that of God in the Nazis, his lifelong Quakerism makes it probable that this was what he was doing.

The Quakers did not discriminate with their food. Nor did they discriminate with their love. The AFSC's mission to the Gestapo brings into stark relief the tragic choice humanitarians often have to make: relief over justice. As a contributor wrote the AFSC in 1938, "Do you believe that one can be neutral in dealing with criminals? It would seem that the most effective way to relieve the distress would be to first curb the criminals who cause the misery."[83] If the AFSC had heeded this contributor's, or Albert Martin's, advice and protested the Nazi government's treatment of Germany's Jews, American Friends might not have been able to save a single person from that treatment, let alone six thousand. Instead, the AFSC chose neutrality and accommodation. As a result, while Friends were hardly alone in underestimating the Nazis' evil, they were almost entirely

[83] Hill to AFSC, March 30, 1938, box General Files 1938: General to Foreign Service (Czechoslovakia), AFSC.

alone among *Auslander*, "foreigners," in being willing and able to work in Germany to rescue people from it.

People like Dr. Gottstein and his wife, whom Howard Elkinton helped escape to Britain in the spring of 1939.[84]

[84] Katherine W. Elkinton to family, April 25-27, 1939, box 7, "Elkinton, Waring Family Papers," Haverford.

"The straightest road to the social gospel

runs through profound mystical experience."

Thomas R. Kelly, 1927

6: The Totalitarian Claims of Christ

A few months before Kristallnacht, in late June of 1938, near the end of his tenure as the ASFC's representative in Berlin, Albert Martin met with leading Friends in London to promote his idea of cultivating relationships with the peace-loving people of Germany before the Hitler regime toppled, which Martin thought imminent. While the London Friends apparently found Martin's plan "too political," an American Friend from Philadelphia who was also in the audience found Martin's plan eminently Quakerly.[1]

Thomas Kelly was in London on his way to Berlin for the summer. He was travelling under the auspices of the AFSC, with money from a donor who had specified that his or her gift be used by an American Friend to bring the Quaker message of peace and goodwill to German non-Quakers especially, though the chosen Friend was free to visit with German Quakers as well.[2] Germany Yearly Meeting had invited Kelly to give its annual Richard Cary Lecture (named after the American Friend who had died in Germany in 1933 while representing the AFSC in Berlin) at the Yearly Meeting in early August, in the spa town of Bad Pyrmont just west of Berlin. Kelly, who had been present

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[1] Thomas Kelly to Clarence Pickett "and/or" Barbara Cary, June 29, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.

[2] Kelly to Gilbert L. MacMaster, May 10, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.

at the birth of the Yearly Meeting in 1925, accepted the invitation, with some reluctance, and was in London at the time of Martin's presentation, preparing his lecture with the help of the books in the library at Friends House, the headquarters, so to speak, of British Quakerism.[3]

Kelly had only recently recovered from a suicidal depression. After he and his wife left Germany in August 1925, Kelly, who already had a doctorate in philosophy from Hartford Theological Seminary, taught for five years at Earlham College in Richmond, Indiana, where his daughter, Lois, was born. Having grown up an enthusiastic evangelical Quaker, Kelly now chafed under what he saw as evangelical Quakerism's provincialism and insularity.[4] He yearned for the cosmopolitanism of the East Coast, and began to covet a Harvard PhD, which he saw as his ticket back East. So he took two years' leave of absence from Earlham to study as a postdoctoral student under Alfred North Whitehead and Clarence I. Lewis at Harvard.

American religious historian Leigh Schmidt vividly describes Kelly's growing academic obsession in the early 1930s in the only sustained scholarly account of Kelly's life and work. Kelly, writes Schmidt, "became determined (almost maniacally so)," to get Harvard's imprimatur. [5] The Harvard faculty hesitated to give Kelly the chance to earn another doctorate in philosophy, so Kelly returned to his teaching post at Earlham College in Indiana, "out of money and a little shamefaced," as Schmidt puts it. In 1934

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[3] Kelly to Clarence Pickett, May 30, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country – Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[4] Kelly to Harold Peterson, [n.d.] 1928, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Quaker Collection, Haverford College, Haverford, PA [hereafter: Haverford].
[5] Schmidt, *Restless Souls: The Making of American Spirituality* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2005), 241.

Kelly accepted a job offer from the University of Hawaii, to start in fall 1935; "in coldly calculating terms," writes Schmidt, "he called it an opportunity 'to be used now, to be exhausted and then left, if possible.'" He worked feverishly to finish his Harvard dissertation before leaving Indiana. Yet completion did not satisfy him; he wanted it published. So he borrowed against his life insurance to pay Princeton University Press the permission costs. His wife began to worry about what she called his "selfishly acquisitive" attitude toward academia.[6]

While in Hawaii, Kelly accepted a post in Rufus Jones's philosophy department at Haverford. Kelly wrote with satisfaction that it was "one of the slickest small men's colleges in the East, with blisteringly high standards."[7] Craving the academic recognition a Harvard doctorate would bring him, he fatefully insisted on traveling to Harvard in the fall of 1937 to give an oral defense of his already-published dissertation. "He completely froze" before his examiners, Schmidt writes. "In what, by all accounts, was a bewildering display of incoherence and blankness, Kelly failed the oral and was denied any chance of sitting for the degree again." Kelly fell into despair. His wife feared for his life, and friend and Haverford colleague Douglas Steere kept vigil with Kelly. But Steere was Phi Beta Kappa, a Harvard Ph.D., and a Rhodes Scholar; "so," Schmidt wryly notes, "it is hard to know how Kelly could have taken too much heart in his presence at this moment of crisis."[8]

Then something happened. No record of the next few months survives—Schmidt glosses, "Only after several weeks did Kelly reemerge from the dense fog of shame and

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[6] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 242.
[7] Kelly quoted in Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 243.
[8] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 243.

despair"—but Kelly mentioned the upheaval they wrought in his life in a letter to his wife from France later that summer of 1938. He talked about a sense of "Presence" that he did not seek in those months but that "sought me."[9] The "Hound of heaven" was baying at his heels, had been for years. His shattering disappointment had stopped him dead in his tracks long enough for it finally to overtake him.[10] He had been a major depressive most of his adult life, having suffered at least two crippling bouts of depression before breaking down near the end of 1937. A cause, or at least a compounding factor, of his psychological fragility was the sudden death of his father when he was only four years old. The economic pressures of the Great Depression might have intensified his obsessive desire for academic recognition in the 1930s, and the financial stability such recognition promised. After his dreams dissolved over the course of a few hours one fall day in the halls of Harvard, he thought about taking his own life. Then he found a great light shining into his darkness, he said, dispelling his anxiety and despair.[11]

Mystics and mysticism present a peculiar difficulty to the historian because of their claim to timelessness. As Schmidt puts it, referring to the book of devotional essays that was the major fruit of Kelly's breakdown and recovery, "Devotional books and their admirers are always prone to minimizing cultural context, to the downplaying of time and place in order to lay claim to the eternal." Kelly and his book, *A Testament of Devotion* (1941), were no different. Rufus Jones and *The Christian Century*, the mainline periodical of choice, immediately hailed the book as a contemporary devotional classic.

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[9] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[10] Thomas R. Kelly, *A Testament of Devotion* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), 51.
[11] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.

Schmidt argues that this had the effect of "diverting attention from the present in order to establish capital-P Presence, a theological ploy (or affirmation) designed to lift devotional books—and spirituality generally—above the limits of culture and history." But he thinks "Kelly's little book is better read with his immediate world left in rather than out."[12]

This chapter tests Schmidt's hypothesis by placing Kelly in the context—the "immediate world"—of the wider pacifist-realist debate within US Christianity in the late 1930s (rather than in Schmidt's narrower confines of the development of American "seeker" spirituality within American Quakerism in the first half of the twentieth century). The pacifist-realist debate was essentially an extension of the Social Gospel-Christian Realist debate that began in earnest with Reinhold Niebuhr's *Moral Man and Immoral Society* in 1932. Just as the Social Gospel had become the accepted theology of liberal, mainline Protestantism by 1920, pacifism had become a widely accepted corollary of that theology by the mid-1930s. The Social Gospel held that human beings could and should enact Jesus' teachings and way of life to establish the Kingdom of God on earth, and one of Jesus' teachings was to "resist not evil" but instead "turn the other cheek." With the rise of fascism in Germany and Italy, the Realists were to find pacifism just as hopelessly idealistic about human nature and history as they had found the Social Gospel when the Great Depression threatened to ignite the revolutionary class warfare which communism had predicted and sought to hasten. Since US involvement in World War II turned to some extent on the Realists gaining the upper hand in the pacifist-realist debate, American religious historians tend quite rightly to use the debate as a framing device for the history of US Christianity in the 1930s.

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[12] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 252, 253.

This chapter, however, focuses on a liberal Protestant response to the deepening international crisis of the 1930s that was not entirely beholden to either the Social Gospelers or the Realists. The following pages argue that Thomas Kelly followed a "fourth way" in American Protestantism at the time, calling on his fellow Quakers, and on the AFSC in particular, to provide mystical and spiritual rather than merely material relief to the victims of war and political repression. His way was not realism, evangelicalism, or liberalism, but an ethical mysticism that combined elements of all three. With the Christian Realists, Kelly acknowledged the inevitability of evil and suffering, but he proposed spiritual rather than political or military means of addressing them. Like an evangelical, he called for conversion, but not to any doctrine. Like a good liberal, he wanted the individual free, but only so she could be enslaved by God. He was a realistic mystical evangelical, who knew that the suffering and evil he was to witness in Germany over the summer of 1938 could never be entirely eradicated, whether by politics or Christian conversion or material aid, and who thought that a trans-religious experience of God dwelling at the root of one's being was the only protection one had against dying spiritually before one's body died.

Leigh Schmidt has identified ethical mysticism as the "galvanizing concern" of liberal Protestant acolytes of mysticism around the turn of the twentieth century.[13] These men and women—William James, Rufus Jones, and Evelyn Underhill being the most prominent—inherited and expanded upon an American discourse surrounding mysticism that the Transcendentalists initiated. When the Transcendental Club took up "the question

[13] Leigh Eric Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 71:2 (June 2003): 293.

of Mysticism" in May 1838, they were inquiring into a behavior that intellectual and religious elites over the preceding century had generally stigmatized as animal, irrational, even sexualized, exhibited by heretical "enthusiasts" and sects like the Quakers. Only a handful of Anglican divines had defended mysticism as one of the last, but flawed, refuges of pure, inward religion.[14] In the hands of Emerson, Bronson Alcott, and Margaret Fuller, mysticism was to reach its apotheosis: it was the universal ground and source of all true religion and spirituality, or in Alcott's words, "the sacred spark that has lighted the piety and illuminated the philosophy of all places and times."[15]

Noticeably absent from Alcott's definition was any mention of social action, or ethics. As Octavius Frothingham cautioned in 1861, "We love the mystics for their inward, not for their outward life."[16] The effort to rehabilitate mysticism as inherently ethical began with Francis Peabody, Plummer Professor of Christian Morals at Harvard from 1886 to 1912, who focused on the "fusion of mystic communion with ethical passion."[17] William James, in his Gifford Lectures of 1901-02, made ethical fruits the test of all religious experience, including mysticism.[18] Rufus Jones, Thomas Kelly's mentor, followed James in valorizing the ethical activism of "affirmation mystics" over the political and social quietism of "negation mystics."[19] "Time and again," Leigh Schmidt concludes, "social-gospel Protestants were adamant about the inseparability of mysticism

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[14] Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 284, 279, 281, 282, 285.
[15] Quoted in Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 288.
[16] Quoted in Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 288.
[17] Quoted in Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 292.
[18] Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 292.
[19] See esp. Rufus M. Jones, *Social Law in the Spiritual World Studies in Human and Divine Inter-Relationship* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1904), 152-153.

and political activism."[20] The "ethical" in ethical mysticism was intended to prevent individual religious experience from devolving into solipsism, a charge that cultural critics have consistently leveled at modern mysticism's offspring, "spirituality," since at least the 1960s. But in the 1920s and 30s, Thomas Kelly found his social-gospel peers ignoring the second element. The case of the AFSC in chapter four of this dissertation supports his observation: the Social Gospel by the 1930s almost entirely neglected the "gospel" in favor of the "social," or at least defined the "gospel" as exclusively "social."

Kelly's call for Philadelphia Quakers to reinvest in overtly spiritual aid to the victims of brutal political repression implied that the AFSC had abandoned the mysticism of its Quaker heritage. For Kelly, this was tantamount to saying that the AFSC was in danger of apostatizing. In March of 1939, he stood in front of the AFSC leadership and his fellow Philadelphia Quakers and explicitly indicted the "Nietzchean" super-humanism of "these social gospel days."[21] The lecture Kelly delivered that day was nothing less than a prophetic warning worthy of the Hebrew prophets, calling down God's judgment on those Quakers who lived in comfort in Philadelphia and London as the rest of the world was starting to burn. Indeed, a close look at Kelly, which this chapter provides, might help correct what historian David Hollinger sees as the scholarship's neglect of "the intensity and range of the self-critique carried out by the intellectual

[20] Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 293.
[21] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 65.

leadership of mainstream liberal Protestantism" in the middle decades of the twentieth century.[22]

The Quaker and the Rabbi

Besides prophetic critique, another of the fruits of Kelly's self-proclaimed transformation in early 1938 was a remarkable gift for describing the inner life of Christian faith. Some of his richest devotional writing was published by Harper & Brothers in 1941 as *A Testament of Devotion*. As noted above, it quickly entered the unofficial canon of the classics of Christian devotion. Already in the 1950s a church in Los Angeles included a stained-glass portrait of Kelly among its "heroes of the Faith"—minus, one presumes, the unfiltered Camels he liked to smoke.[23] In 1964 Kelly appeared alongside Rufus Jones as well as John Donne and Martin Luther in a popular collection of Protestant devotional literature introduced by W. H. Auden.[24] And in 1978 church historian E. Glenn Hinson selected portions of Kelly's text for *The Doubleday Devotional Classics*.[25] One of the chapters in *A Testament of Devotion* formed the basis of the essay Kelly was expanding into his Richard Cary Lecture at Friends House in London in June 1938.

Six weeks after leaving London for Germany, Kelly handed a copy of his lecture, "The Eternal Presence and Temporal Guidance," to a young Polish-born rabbi in

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[22] David A. Hollinger, "After Cloven Tongues of Fire: Ecumenical Protestantism and the Modern American Encounter with Diversity," *The Journal of American History* 98:1 (June 2011): 23.
[23] Mary Kelly Farquhar and T. Canby Jones, *Thomas R. Kelly: A Sketch of His Life* (Wilmington, OH: Wilmington College, 1962), 18. The Los Angeles church is Westwood Community Methodist Church.
[24] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 252.
[25] *The Doubleday Devotional Classics: Vol. III*, ed. E. Glenn Hinson (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978).

Frankfurt-am-Main named Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972). Heschel was to become in the 1950s perhaps the greatest and most widely read Jewish religious thinker of the twentieth century in the United States. Not just his fellow Jews but also Protestants and Catholics eagerly read Heschel's *The Sabbath* (1951), *Man's Quest for God* (1954), *God in Search of Man* (1955), and his masterwork, *The Prophets* (1962). Still today, Americans of all faiths, and even those who identify as "spiritual but not religious," find in Heschel a congenial spiritual guide. After fleeing the Nazis for London in 1939, Heschel emigrated to the United States in 1940 and taught briefly at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati before moving to New York in 1946, where he spent the rest of his life on the faculty of Jewish Theological Seminary. His mother and two of his sisters had been unable to get out of Poland, and died in the Holocaust; a third sister had escaped to New York. In 1965, Heschel's fame reached its height when he took his mystical theology literally "into the street" (to borrow a phrase from Octavius Frothingham) and marched arm-in-arm next to Martin Luther King Jr. in Selma.[26]

When Kelly met Heschel in August of 1938, Heschel had been teaching at Martin Buber's Judischer Lehrhaus in Frankfurt for about a year and a half, while also traveling around to small towns giving lectures on various religious topics of general interest.[27] Having published his dissertation, which was to provide the basis for his later book *The Prophets*, Heschel was in the midst of a book of essays on prayer when Kelly arrived in

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[26] Albert J. Raboteau, *American Prophets: Seven Religious Radicals and Their Struggle for Social and Political Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 6, 7, 15; Frothingham quoted in Schmidt, "The Making of Modern 'Mysticism'," 292.
[27] Edward K. Kaplan and Samuel H. Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel: Prophetic Witness* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 246, 250.

Frankfurt with what proved to be the beginnings of a similar project.[28] The mutual acquaintance who connected the two men was Rudolf Schlosser, a leading Friend in Germany Yearly Meeting who had heard Heschel deliver an address on the gathering European storm, "Search for a Meaning," to a mostly Quaker audience in February 1938. "It happens in our time," Heschel had begun his talk, "that the peoples are forging their sickles into swords and their scythes into spears." War was coming. "Our lot is that we must face the world." Evil confronts a human being "so that he may realize his own guilt," and creates a tension between suffering and the yearning for deliverance that may evoke prayer, which in turn imparts the strength to endure or resist.[29] Schlosser was so moved that he distributed hundreds of printed copies of Heschel's talk in Germany.[30] Whether Kelly read it, in March 1939 he was to remind his own mostly Quaker audience, in Philadelphia rather than Frankfurt, that "holy obedience must walk in this world…stained with sorrow's travail."[31]

On May 12, 1938, not long after Heschel's talk, Germany invaded Austria. The next day, as Martin Buber and his wife were leaving Frankfurt for good for Palestine, the Anschluss (Germany's annexation of Austria) was completed. All Austrians were now German subjects, including Heschel's brother and two of his sisters and their families. Nazis and other thugs badly beat one of Heschel's nephews, as well as one of his brothers-in-law, the rabbi of Kopitzhinitz, who nevertheless refused to emigrate.[32] Heschel visited his mother and his other sisters in Warsaw near the end of April, writing

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[28] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 259.
[29] Quoted in Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 260-261.
[30] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 262.
[31] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 67-68.
[32] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 262, 263.

Buber that Poland was suffering an "epidemic of despair."[33] Over the summer he turned toward the United States as his last best hope for escape, applying to teach at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati (which counted among its students a young German Jewish émigré, Ernest M. Lorge, who was to become Rufus Jones's most poignant critic after the AFSC's mission to the Gestapo). Heschel had just returned the week before from another trip to Warsaw when he and Thomas Kelly met in Frankfurt in August.[34]

Upon hearing Kelly's lecture at Bad Pyrmont, Rudolf Schlosser decided that Kelly and Heschel must meet. He was right, if Kelly's report of the meeting is any indication.[35] Kelly thought Heschel a "peach" and a "dear," and Heschel, leafing through Kelly's lecture, immediately found common ground with him in their mutual emphasis on the "objective" basis of religious experience, founded on the meeting of the human soul with an Other, God. Heschel, in turn, gave Kelly copies of his biography of Maimonides and his published dissertation on the prophets.[36] Then Heschel, Kelly, Schlosser, and a prominent German author and pacifist (Alfons Paquet) spent an evening together in Frankfurt plumbing the depths of the meaning of "suffering." Kelly and Heschel pursued the subject into the early hours of the morning, long after the other two had gone to bed. The conversation led Kelly to find the mystical intersecting with the

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[33] Quoted in Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 266.
[34] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 270, 271.
[35] In response to an inquiry, an archivist at the Rubenstein Library at Duke University, the repository for Heschel's papers, found no letters to or from Kelly, or any items related to the AFSC, in Heschel's papers.
[36] Kelly to Barbara Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country – Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC; Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.

political in the ground of the German Jews' suffering.[37] Schmidt has called Kelly's identification with Heschel's spirituality "naïve."[38] If so, it was the naiveté that lies the other side of sophistication. What Heschel helped Kelly realize, it seems, was that only an absolute commitment to the Eternal could withstand the pressures of the temporal. Otherwise one caved under suffering, and either succumbed to bitterness and despair, or committed suicide, as many of Heschel's acquaintances had done (and Kelly had contemplated doing).[39]

"Totalitarian are the claims of Christ," Kelly was to write in early 1941.[40] The irony of such a statement issuing in part from Kelly's conversation with a Jewish rabbi diminishes once Kelly's Christology is better understood. Kelly's Christ was not the Christ of the ecumenists of the late 1930s, whom historian Mark Thomas Edwards has called "God's totalitarians."[41] The ecumenical movement of the 1930s called for loyalty to a global Church that transcended the idols of the Nazis and of the Communists—transcended, that is, nation and class. Kelly's Christ was neither a church nor an institution-builder. Neither was he the exclusive atonement for sin. He was more mystical than either the ecumenists or evangelicals would have had him. He was the Eternal rooted in the soul of every human being. Or in more traditional Quaker language, which Kelly also used, he was the Light Within, which lighteth every human being who comes into

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[37] Kelly to Barbara Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country – Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC; Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[38] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 248.
[39] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 70.
[40] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 49.
[41] Edwards, *The Right of the Protestant Left: God's Totalitarianism* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

the world. And only by cleaving without reservation to this Light Within could anyone, Jew or Gentile, hope to survive his share of suffering with soul intact.

Neutrality was anathema to such "holy obedience," as Kelly came to call this absolute submission to God's immediately accessible will. It is no surprise, then, that Kelly warmed to Albert Martin's proposal. While Kelly himself emphasized the spiritual grounding of Quaker political concerns, his totalitarian mysticism had clear political implications. His "holy obedience" was the traditional Quaker testimony of "integrity" clothed in the political garb of the 1930s. Quakers had always insisted that a person could not keep his faith separate from his politics; the Light in one's conscience did not flicker on and off as one passed under the lintel of the meeting-house door. Yet Kelly looked around at the Quaker meetings of his day and saw nowhere the world-shaking witness of a George Fox or a John Woolman or a Lucretia Mott. "Secularism," as he understood it—worldly service crowding out mystical experience, to the detriment of both—had doused the flames of the Quaker faith. He meant to rekindle the fire.[42]

"Quakers and Symbolism"

Near the end of Haverford's spring semester in 1938, Kelly wrote the great British Quaker pacifist Corder Catchpool in London to see if the latter, as a former representative in Berlin of the Friends Service Council (the AFSC's British counterpart), had any non-Quaker contacts in Germany Kelly should visit. With a flourish he assured Catchpool that

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[42] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 102; Kelly, *The Eternal Promise: A Sequel to* A Testament of Devotion, ed. Richard M. Kelly (Richmond, IN: Friends United Press, 2006 [1966]), 26.

"it is on behalf of Truth that the summer is projected."[43] The early Friends, as Kelly well knew, had called each other "Publishers of Truth" and "Friends of Truth" (hence the "Religious Society of Friends"). Like Alfred Cope Garrett in 1922-3 with his scheme to Quakerize Germany, Kelly was harkening back to those early Friends who had "traveled in the ministry" both in England and across the waters to publish and propagate the "Truth" of the Quaker message.

A second talk Kelly had prepared for his trip to Germany was a little essay on "Quakers and Symbolism." He had written it in early 1938 and presented it at Green Street Meeting, just south of the Germantown neighborhood in northern Philadelphia that Garrett and Scattergood and other early AFSC workers in Germany called home.[44] The first Friends, he wrote, eschewed baptism and communion because they found that "the Bread of life is at hand," that Christ was actually come again as the Light within their own consciences. "When we are in the presence of the Father," Kelly continued in the loose Trinitarian language of Quaker theology, "we no longer need his photograph. We enjoy the Father Himself." The first Friends also discarded creedalism, because with the immediate indwelling of the Spirit comes continuing revelation. "For the Spirit's working…is ever leading us into new vistas of truth."[45] So Quakers in the waiting-worship or nonprogrammed tradition at least—the vast majority of Quakers in Philadelphia and in the AFSC—had little to do with traditional Christian symbols.

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[43] Kelly to Catchpool, Aril 24, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country – Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[44] Richard M. Kelly's editorial note in Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 25.
[45] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 36.

Yet Kelly found even these Quakers dealing in symbols. Spoken messages still arose from the silence of worship; linguistic symbols were unavoidable, but these were to be kept to a minimum. The only symbolic expression a Quaker could trust "freely and enthusiastically" was that of "*lived behaviors* and *vital concerns*." A single act of charity, justice, or solidarity could be small and even ineffectual in itself, but it symbolized one's wish that all people everywhere would always act so. Such "acted symbols" and "lived words," Kelly said, were the very stuff of the AFSC. After a paternalistic gesture toward African Americans—befriending one had benefit only for the African American—Kelly was inspired. He said that when the AFSC went into the Appalachian coalfields to redress unemployment it touched only a few people, who directly received the benefit. But "over and above" the admittedly limited benefit was the action's "intentional reference to *all*." And it was this universal gesture that opened a "window of Divine Love."[46] In words other than Kelly's, the action symbolized God's desire to embrace not only the school children of Draper whom Paul Hund and Mary Cook gave new clothes on that Good Friday in 1932, but also those children who were too ragged or sick, or both, to even come to school, and who suffered and died in the shadow of some nameless "holler."

No organization, not even Kelly's own AFSC, could save every hungry Appalachian coal miner and his family—let alone the world. But God would that it could. "And that is why such small undertakings as we make are important—far beyond their actual dimensions. They have an aura of the infinite about their heads. Viewed in the small, these undertakings are minute, against the world's sufferings, these little gestures of behavior and acted concern. But they are acted symbols, media of communication of

[46] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 40, 42 (italics his).

the life of the Spirit, through Friends, and spoken to the world. They are lived words, spoken low and haltingly, but they must be spoken and the Spirit must give the increase—and fructify that infinity which is within them."[47] This was a more modest, realistic vision of the AFSC's work than that which had captivated the Wilsonian idealists who had fed Germany in the early 1920s and thereby win that country, and with it the Continent, to the cause of peace. It was also more robustly spiritual or, as Kelly would have said, mystical. For at least a decade he had wished that the "mystical element were more overt" in the AFSC's work.[48]

Germans themselves were partly responsible for Kelly's mystical emphasis. The year he spent in 1924-5 helping to wrap up the childfeeding and doing message work deepened his commitment to Rufus Jones's mystical interpretation of Quakerism. He went to Germany to evangelize, and in a way was himself converted. German Friends, following Rufus Jones in his *Spiritual Reformers of the 14th and 15th Centuries*, insisted that Quakerism "really roots" not in the English Puritanism of the early modern period, but in the German mysticism of the Middle Ages.[49] "It would be most unfortunate," Kelly wrote Philadelphia near the end of 1924, "if anyone should feel that we were in the position of missionaries to a lower race, as though were superior and needed to reach into the depths and lift a fallen brother!" On the contrary, Kelly found that the Germans, still in 1924 a defeated and despised people, "perhaps have the capacity to penetrate further

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[47] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 42.
[48] Kelly to Harold Peterson, [n.d.] 1928, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[49] Kelly to Wilbur K. Thomas, July 2, 1925, box General Files, 1924 & 1925: Foreign Service – Germany (Letters from/to), AFSC.

into the depth of mysticism than some of us from a so called 'practical' nation."[50] Kelly wanted earnestly to develop this capacity in himself.

The first literary fruit of this realization was Kelly's brief but striking essay in 1927, "American Christianity." Here he sounded the notes of reflection and contemplation he had picked up in Germany. He lightly lampooned the American social-gospeler's busy-bodiedness. "But, while we glibly refute those who stand gazing into the Great Beyond, too many of us have failed to gaze into heaven more than a minute or two at a time because we have to hustle out to the garage and get the car in order to attend a special meeting on Christ and the Political situation."[51] If European Christianity needed more activity, American Christianity needed more contemplation—each needed rounding out by the other. European and American alike would discover that "the straightest road to the social gospel runs through profound mystical experience." It is the "paradox of true mysticism," Kelly continued, "that individual experience leads to social passion, that the nonuseful engenders the greatest utility. If we seek a social gospel, we must find it most deeply rooted in the mystic way." The two ways, he concluded, are not really two but one, just as love of God and love of neighbor are the same commandment seen now from heaven, now from earth.[52]

And so when Kelly embarked in love of God and neighbor in the summer of 1938 to sow his mystical seeds of infinity in Germany, he was in a sense merely returning a

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[50] Kelly to Thomas, November 14, 1924, box General Files, 1924 & 1925: Foreign Service – Germany (Letters from/to), AFSC.
[51] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 2. Richard Kelly gives no publication information for "American Christianity" other than that it was probably written between 1926 and 1928. The typescript copy of the essay in box 5 of Kelly's papers at Haverford has the notations "Mar #21" and "ca. 1927" written in the upper right corner of the first page.
[52] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 3.

part of Germany to itself. He arrived in Berlin in early July with two lectures now in hand: the short meditation on Quakers and symbols, and the lengthy text of his Richard Cary Lecture.

"The Eternal Now"

Kelly's visits with German Friends and non-Friends over the next two months were largely informal, punctuated with formal gatherings at which he would read all or part of one of his two lectures. He gave his first talk, on Quakers and symbols, in early July to the group of Friends who gathered at the Quakerburo in Berlin every Sunday. Then he ventured into the towns surrounding Berlin, visiting a group of non-Friends in Guben who were interested in Quakerism. At the train station in Guben "a man, a Jew, a retired stage manager, came to take me to the Hospiz [boarding house]." Then they climbed a hill and "in a tea-beer garden we sat and drank tea till 6, and he told me the story of his life—as so many do."[53] Kelly quickly learned that he could not divulge names and intimate details in his letters; even before Kristallnacht, those he visited could, if identified, be arrested for some wayward remark and disappear forever into a concentration camp.

After dinner, he and the retired stage manager met a group of about a dozen people in a garden outside a famous old railroad car on display in the town. He talked a while and read part of his Cary lecture, which led naturally into a meeting for worship. "And out of the silence came comments from the heart, not just from the head. For these

[53] Kelly to Clarence Pickett, July 22, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.

people want to talk about the love of God and the meaning of suffering, and the integration of life in the midst of a strenuous and difficult environment, and the way to joy and peace in the midst of it all." He admired their endurance and resiliency, and wondered "if we Americans could stand…half as much, as they have." Still, he "felt we were knit together in the same Life that underlies all lives." With perhaps unconscious allusiveness, he found that "hour there in the garden, in the twilight," rich and refreshing.[54]

This is the kind of identification with others' spirituality that Schmidt finds naïve. Yet the identification at least sometimes went both ways. Kelly took the train the next day from Guben to Breslau, and there gave his talk on symbols to a group of thirty to thirty-five Friends and non-Friends. He also spoke of prayer that passes beyond words into silent attitudes of exaltation and inward communion. "Afterward a woman, a Jewess, came to me, with sparkling eyes, for she had, in the last few months, already found this out for herself." This story has a curious coda. The next day, a Sunday, a local Quaker family hosted a gathering after meeting for worship. Both Kelly and the woman from the night before were there, and after everyone else left, she lingered. "Finally she broke down in tears. I asked afterward about her, to see if she was quite normal, and was told that she was an extremely capable woman. I had the feeling that Life was at work in these people, moving more deeply than I, a foreigner, could appreciate."[55] His wondering about a Jewish woman's normalcy because she wept strikes a vaguely troubling note.

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[54] Kelly to Clarence Pickett, July 22, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[55] Kelly to Clarence Pickett, July 22, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.

Like Howard Elkinton, Kelly traded in some of the tropes of anti-Semitism that were current in the late 1930s. "The Jews in Germany," Kelly wrote his wife in mid-August, "evidently have, in many cases been rascals, and sharp dealers. But now they have more than atoned for any sins, and those that are wholly innocent are suffering terribly." In other words, the Jews in Germany deserved some of the treatment they had received at the hands of the Nazis, but not all. The Nazis had taken just measures to unjust extremes. But Kelly unequivocally denounced the Nazis' racial theory: that "if one's veins are filled with pure German blood one has in oneself the wine of life, the elixir of divinity. In fact the theory of Blood is an inverted form of the theory of the Inner Light! Pure blood in one's veins is a materialistic Inner Light, that will lead the Germans on to greatness and glory." This was sheer madness. "One pinches oneself and asks, Is this the world or am I insane, that such crazy history should be in the making." He must have taken some satisfaction in working with a "full-blooded" Jew, Hertha Israel, to translate his Richard Cary Lecture into German for the Yearly Meeting.[56]

Kelly's emphasis, in this lecture, on "being found" rounds out Leigh Schmidt's depiction of modern liberal Quakers, especially Kelly, as popularizers of the "seeker spirituality" that came to characterize the growing spiritual-but-not-religious demographic in the United States in the twentieth century.[57] As Kelly told the crowd of German Friends who gathered in Bad Pyrmont that August, "Such men and women must be raised up, heaven-led souls who are not 'seekers' alone, but 'finders,' finders who

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[56] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford, underscoring his.
[57] Schmidt, *Restless Souls*, 230-257.

have been *found* by the Father of all the world's prodigals" (italics his).[58] Echoing the therapeutic religious psychology of William James, Kelly said that those men and women who have been found give over anxiety and feverish activity for "assurance, relaxation, and integration of life." The Social Gospel notwithstanding, they discover that it is not their job to make the world over. Certainly they have their tasks, yet it is not their concern to see that those tasks are completed, but God's. They stop taking themselves too seriously. "For there is a life beyond earnestness to be found. It is the life rooted and grounded in the Presence, the Life which has *been found* by the Almighty. Seek it, seek it. Yet it lies beyond seeking. It arises in *being found*" (italics his).[59]

Once found, though, the erstwhile seeker becomes excruciatingly sensitive to the sufferings of others. This "tendering" of the soul keeps the experience of the "Eternal Presence" from devolving into solipsism. "This is a way fraught with danger, for it is easy to *deduce* human passivity from divine initiative. But the root *experience* of divine Presence contains within it not only a sense of being energized *from* a heavenly Beyond; it contains also a sense of being energized *toward* an earthly world." This is the ground of the Quaker's social concern. "For the Eternal Life and Love are not pocketed in us; they are flooded *through* us into the world."[60] God then works within the boundaries of time and space to "particularize" this "cosmic love" in the individual as her "concerns," the living symbols she and no other is called to enact.[61] The Quaker's social witness, Kelly

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[58] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 7.
[59] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 9.
[60] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 10, italics his.
[61] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 14; Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 108-109.

concluded, is grounded not in "mere humanitarianism" or "pity" or "obedience to Bible commands." It is grounded in experience, "an experience of the Love of God."[62]

Ethical mysticism—immediate contact with God issuing in prescribed social actions. Kelly found in Quakerism an especially effective vehicle for realizing this liberal Protestant ideal of intense individual experience leading not away from, but into the world. What separates Kelly from many other leading proponents of this ideal, including his mentor and fellow Quaker Rufus Jones, is his emphasis on suffering. Before his audience at Bad Pyrmont, he hesitated to speak of suffering. "For I am only in middle years, and for me life has not been hard." Yet he made bold to say that "there is an introduction to suffering which comes with the birth pains of Love. And in such suffering one finds for the first time how deep and profound is the nature and meaning of life. And in such suffering one sees, as if one's eyes were newly opened upon a blinding light, the very Life of the Eternal God Himself." The proper response to such suffering, Kelly presumed to tell the audience with its smattering of Jews who had become Quakers, was not to become "toughened, callous, hard." It was rather to accept from God an "exquisitely *tendered* spirit." And with this spirit one felt the sufferings of others as though they were one's own.[63]

One such tendered spirit, Kelly met just days after giving his lecture. The young rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel invited Kelly to dinner at his house in Frankfurt. "We were drawn to each other," Kelly wrote Richard Cary's widow at the AFSC, "and had a very fine talk." Heschel and his mentor Martin Buber, Kelly explained to Barbara Cary,

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[62] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 110-111.
[63] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 12, 13-14, italics his.

were of the Chassidim—Orthodox and pietistic Eastern European Jews.[64] Heschel was born into a "family of nobility in the Jewish world"; he could trace his family back through generation after generation of Chasidic rabbis to the late fifteenth century.[65] They "are not the cold rationalists we so frequently see," Kelly wrote Barbara Cary, but are deeply religious.[66]

Kelly and Heschel quickly found they shared one central idea in common. Kelly had given Heschel a copy of his Cary Lecture the night before, and Heschel had happened to open it to where Kelly wrote, "those who have been brought back to the Principle within them are exquisitely drawn toward all others who have found the same Principle. The fellowship is not founded upon a common subjective experience, like the fellowship of hay-fever sufferers! It is found upon a common Object, who is known by them all to be the very life with them."[67] "And he too," Kelly wrote Barbara Cary, "lays the final weight of emphasis upon God as objective, and active, the source of all we are apt to call our subjective seeking."[68] Indeed, Heschel had openly objected to his mentor Martin Buber's emphasis upon dialogue between God and humanity, stressing instead that God is ever the "Subject" while human beings are "objects of divine awareness."[69] As Kelly wrote in his Richard Cary Lecture, "The energizing, dynamic center is not in us but in the Divine Presence in which we share. Religion is not *our* concern; it is God's

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[64] Kelly to Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[65] Raboteau, *American Prophets*, 1.
[66] Kelly to Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[67] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 101.
[68] Kelly to Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[69] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 154, 155, 160, 159.

concern."[70] No wonder Kelly immediately felt a deep connection with the young Jewish philosopher.

The parallels between the two men are striking. Both men lost their fathers at an early age to untimely deaths—Kelly when he was four years old and Heschel when he was nine.[71] Both men endured existential crises as they struggled to reconcile their professional identities as academic philosophers with their deeply personal yearnings for intimate and constant communion with God. What Heschel's biographers have written of the Jewish student of philosophy at the University of Berlin in the late 1920s could just as easily be said of the Quaker professor of philosophy at Haverford in the late 1930s. Each man came to realize that "his religious convictions and passion for truth clashed with his academic studies." Both men "faced the crossroads of modern religion: Was God real…or a mental and social construct?" Each man experienced this crossroads not as a crisis of faith but as a "crisis of attentiveness," a cultural rather than a metaphysical "clash." The real danger of modern humanism, they realized, was not that it threatened to disprove the existence of God, but that it diverted one's attention away from God and focused it on one's own self.[72] Just so, Kelly's entire devotional program consisted of constantly and deliberately turning his attention away from himself and fixing it on God.[73] Once each man passed his own crisis of attentiveness and rededicated himself to the "practice of the presence of God" (if one may be forgiven in this context for applying a phrase of Christian origin to a Jew as well as a Quaker), he sooner or later abandoned

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[70] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 96-97.
[71] Raboteau, *American Prophets*, 2.
[72] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 154, 155, 160, 159.
[73] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 35-46.

academic philosophy and made the "study of religious awe" and its awakening in "secularized readers" his life's work.[74]

After dinner the rabbi and the Quaker went to the home of their mutual acquaintance, Rudolf Schlosser. Over cider and seltzer water, Heschel told of his recent visit to Vienna. "In the apartment house he was in," Kelly wrote his wife a few days later, "scarcely a floor had not had its suicide." The conversation turned into a philosophical discussion of suffering and "guilt" (*Schuld*). Kelly does not mention any specifics in his letters home, other than to say that "again we found ourselves on common ground," in "one of the most searching joint probings of the final ground of suffering" he could remember.[75] Heschel's dissertation holds a clue as to what he might have said; in it he wrote that the suffering of the prophets was the very image of the divine pathos, the "anger" and grief of God, "who turns away from His people" in judgment. "That suffering," Heschel continued, "is of such power, of such obvious value, so unique, that still today a calling remains inherent in its idea, that of being present to demonstrate [sympathy with the divine pathos] as a form or as a possibility." In suffering, "the depths of the personal soul…become the place where the comprehension of God flowers."[76] Kelly was to declare in March 1939 that God "enacts in the hearts of those He loves the miracle of willingness to welcome suffering and to know it for what it is—the final seal of His gracious love."[77] With God's affirmation—the Resurrection—immediately on the

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[74] Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 160.
[75] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford; Kelly to Cary, August 18, 1938, box General Files 1938, Foreign Service: Country—Switzerland to Regional Offices – Chicago, AFSC.
[76] Quoted in Kaplan and Dresner, *Abraham Joshua Heschel*, 169.
[77] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 71.

other side of God's rejection—the Cross—sacrificial suffering can have a note of comedy, in the classic sense, in a Christian like Kelly that would seem out of place in an Orthodox Jew like Heschel.

Jew and Gentile, the two men talked until well after midnight. Heschel finally took his leave around one in the morning, and he and Kelly never saw each other again.

"Holy Obedience"

Kelly wrote Heschel just before he left Germany at the end of that summer of 1938. "Many, many times have I remembered the evening which I was privileged to spend in your home." He wished the two of them lived closer so they could "deepen" their friendship; he hoped they would stay in touch through "occasional letters." Yet just then he was writing with a special concern. "You know far better than I how unbelievably great the spiritual need is among your people." Heschel was still conducting weekend seminars or conferences for rabbis, throughout Germany—but the spiritual need was "much greater than anything your religious leaders alone can alleviate." Many of the country's Jews suffered from a "despair which is almost unbearable for those who have no deep religious roots." Kelly recommended a sort of Jewish version of the Quaker 'traveling in the ministry,' in which the Jewish "layman" who had deep religious roots would "take upon himself the burden of the other Jewish people." It seems that Kelly wanted Heschel to find German Jews who would do what Kelly himself had just done under the AFSC, only more constantly and comprehensively.[78]

[78] Kelly to Heschel, September 6, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.

Kelly's own travels in Germany impressed upon him the need for religious depth among the German people generally. Reflecting on the Hitler Youth, he wrote his wife a few days after his visit with Heschel that "the superficiality of the restless person, whom we know so well in America, is being systematically produced. The soul of Germany is being hollowed out, from within. It breaks your heart to see it." The method was militarism. "And the principle of discipline…is taking away every ability to decide for oneself." The result, Kelly said, was that Germans lacked "civil bravery." In uniform they were fearless; out of it they were cowards. Individual conscience cringed before the dictates of the state. "The obedience of the German is as great as ever." Nazism had nearly extinguished the Light in the German's conscience, to paraphrase an early Quaker dictum.[79]

This sounds like the standard liberal critique of fascism. "All right is in the state," Kelly lamented to his wife. "It is not a divided right, as with us."[80] Yet Kelly's ultimate answer to fascism was not the standard liberal insistence upon the rights and responsibilities of the individual—far from it. Kelly answered abject obedience to the state with abject obedience to the will of God, and countered the totalitarian claims of the state with the totalitarian claims of Christ.[81] On his way to this stark formulation of the ethics of mysticism Kelly recast the religious neutrality he had adopted as a message worker for the AFSC in Germany in 1924-5. He could sound like an "old-time evangelist" in his zeal to turn his fellow Philadelphia Quakers away from the materialism

[79] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[80] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[81] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 49.

and secularism he thought infected industrial America as much as it did Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union. "Let me talk very intimately and very earnestly with you about Him who is dearer than life," he wrote in the main Orthodox Quaker organ, *The Friend*, in March 1939. "Do you really want to live your lives, every moment of your lives, in His Presence? Do you long for Him, crave Him? Do you love His Presence? Does every drop of blood in your body love Him?....Have you set yourselves to be His, and *only* His, walking every moment in holy obedience?"[82] Here one hears the holiness Quakerism of his childhood bursting through the seams of his religious modernism.

Yet the seams held. He never returned to the holiness evangelicalism of his upbringing—the belief in the possibility of perfection through a second birth by the Spirit, combined with a belief in the absolute authority of the Bible, the duty to evangelize, the necessity of conversion (the "first birth"), and the atoning power of Jesus' crucifixion.[83] To be sure, the times called for "decided Christians." Yet this decidedness was "not to be confused with the decidedness of the bigot, or the man with a one-string gospel." It had little if anything to do with belief. "True decidedness is not of doctrine, but of life orientation. It is a commitment of life, thoroughly, wholly, in every department and without reserve, to the Inner Guide." This Inner Guide, the Light, was a source of immediate inspiration and continuing revelation that may affirm, deny, or reinterpret any

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[82] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 119.
[83] Richard M. Kelly, "New Lights and Inner Light," *Quaker Religious Thought* 27:3 (July 1995): 44-45; see the (David W) "Bebbington quadrilateral" in Thomas S. Kidd, *The Great Awakening : The Roots of Evangelical Christianity in Colonial America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), xiv.

doctrine or dogma, however cherished or reviled. For Kelly the committed Christian was not one who believed a certain way but one who was, one who lived, a certain way.[84]

The times were too tragic, Kelly told his fellow Quakers, for "double-mindedness." Religious neutrality—a religion that was neither this nor that—had nothing to offer a "distraught world." Kelly had felt the inadequacy of it himself when he was in Germany. "This world…strips off all but the genuine," he wrote his wife that summer.[85] In an article published posthumously in 1941, he told of riding in a limousine in Germany from the home of a former Jewish millionaire, to a nearby train station. Three Jews were with him: two young rabbis and an older, wealthy man. "Today one of those young rabbis is dead, dead solely because of a broken heart, dead because the suffering of his people broke his health." The wealthy man "has been stripped of his wealth and has lain in a concentration camp." The second rabbi, "a mystic who would be profoundly at home in a Quaker meeting, has been sucked into the maelstrom of Poland." Was this second rabbi Heschel, whom the Nazis had deported to Poland in late 1938? Kelly dared not say for fear the man would be identified "and disappear."[86]

In such a world, "no light glib word of hope dare be spoken." One wonders what Kelly thought of Jones's and Yarnall's words of hope after their mission to the Gestapo. "Only if we look long and deeply into the abyss of despair do we dare to speak of hope. Only as we know a deeper ground of uncertainty, that can stand *every* privation and atrocity of which we have read, can stand them as *committed upon ourselves and upon*

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[84] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 4.
[85] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.
[86] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 19-20.

our families, and can still rise radiant and triumphant, dare we speak a word of hope."[87] Many Germans told Kelly over the summer of 1938 that they could stand up to Hitler if they did not have children.[88] Kelly told American Friends upon his return that only the one whom God had utterly invaded and transformed—only the mystic—had any right to speak of divine love and hope to those whose children, as well as themselves, lived under a reign of terror.

Kelly was incisive in his most famous address to Philadelphia Friends, his William Penn Lecture of March 1939, "Holy Obedience." This address was to constitute the centerpiece of Kelly's book *A Testament of Devotion*. The Penn Lectures, sponsored by the Young Friends Movement of Philadelphia, brought both Philadelphia Yearly Meetings (Hicksite and Orthodox) together once a year to be addressed by a prominent liberal Protestant figure. Norman Thomas and Harry F. Ward had given the lecture in the past, as had Rufus Jones. It was a popular occasion: when Kelly looked out over the audience in Arch Street Meeting House that March—the oldest meetinghouse in Philadelphia and the largest one in the world—he would have seen most if not all of the AFSC's leadership looking back at him. "Holy Obedience" does not mention the AFSC by name, but it is hard to imagine Kelly's audience failing to draw the connection between his words and Philadelphia's most famous Quaker institution. "Our religious heroes of these social gospel days sit before a battery of telephones, with full office equipment, with telegraph lines to Washington and London and Tokyo." While this was "desperately needed," such "secular" activity threatened Quakerism's peculiar witness by

[87] Kelly, *The Eternal Promise*, 20.
[88] Kelly to family, August 16, 1938, box 4, "Thomas R. Kelly Papers, 1915-1947," Haverford.

crowding out the silence and worshipful waiting that Quakers in particular were called to cultivate.[89] This crowding out had ethical as well as spiritual consequences.

Kelly opened the address by setting the scenes of two "dramas." One was the "tragic drama" of humanity, "seething, struggling, laboring, dying." The other was the "eternal drama" of "the Hound of Heaven baying relentlessly upon the track of man," the drama of "the lost sheep wandering in the wilderness…while over the hills comes the wiser Shepherd," the drama of the Prodigal Son and of what Rufus Jones had called the "Double Search." Heschel was to call it the drama of "God in search of man." For Kelly, upon the denouement of this "inner drama" rested "the outer pageant of history." He wished to direct his listeners to one "scene" in this inner drama in particular, not where the sheep is looking for—seeking—the shepherd, but "where the Shepherd has found His sheep." It was there that Kelly's listeners could observe the sheep's "absolute and complete and holy obedience to the Voice of the Shepherd." Where this obedience eventually led, Kelly immediately revealed, was to the disownment of the sheep's very self.[90]

Kelly meant nothing less than complete renunciation of self. "If you don't realize the revolutionary explosiveness of this proposal," he told his audience, "you don't understand what I mean." This was not "conventional religion," Kelly said; Jesus had not died for conventional religion, but for religion "as an acute fever." George Fox, John Woolman, Francis of Assissi, the early Friends Isaac and Mary Penington—in these and others, Kelly said, religion had burned as an "acute fever." Such lives were meant to be

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[89] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 65-66, 72.
[90] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 51, 52.

lived "here and now, in industrial America, by you and by me." How could one enter such a life? Either through the passive route of "profound mystical experience," which was terrifying but swift, or through the active way of attrition, subjecting one's will "bit by bit, piecemeal and progressively, to the divine Will." The "fruits" of either, however, were the same: humility, holiness, simplicity, and "entrance into suffering."[91]

Suffering, Kelly thought, was in special need of an advocate in the United States. We welcome "joy and rapture" but "shrink from suffering and can easily call all suffering an evil thing." Kelly indicted the optimism of the Social Gospel as facile. "There is a lusty, adolescent way of thought among us which oversimplifies the question of suffering. It says, 'Let us remove it.'" And some can be removed. But there is always "an inexorable residue." The Germans called this residue "*Schicksal* or Destiny," under which they gathered all of the tragedy and absurdity of life: the "vast forces of nature and disease and the convulsive upheavals of social life which sweep them along…like debris in a raging flood, into an unknown end." Anyone without "the inner certitude of Job," who knew that his "Avenger liveth," would drown.[92] Kelly declaimed,

> One returns from Europe with the sound of weeping in one's ears, in order to say, "Don't be deceived. *You* must face Destiny. Preparation is only possible now. Don't be fooled by your sunny skies. When the rains descend and the floods come and the winds blow and beat upon *your* house, your private dwelling, your own family, your own fair hopes, your own strong muscles, your own body, your own soul itself, then it is well-nigh too late to build a house. You can only go inside what house you have and pray that it is founded upon the Rock. Be not deceived by distance in time or space, or the false security of a bank account and an automobile and good health and willing hands to work. Thousands, perhaps millions as good as you have had all these things and are perishing in body and, worse still, in soul today."

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[91] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 52, 53, 56, 58, 61, 67, 73.
[92] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 67, 68-69; Kelly quotes Job 19:25, "I know that my Avenger liveth."

> …
> Be not fooled by the pleasantness of the Main Line life, and the niceness of Germantown existence, and the quiet coolness of your well-furnished homes. For the plagues of Egypt are upon the world, entering hovel and palace, and there is no escape for you or for me. There is an inexorable amount of suffering in all life, blind, aching, unremovable, not new but only terribly intensified in these days.
>
> One comes back from Europe aghast at having seen how lives as graciously cultured as ours, but rooted only in time and property and reputation, and self-deluded by a mild veneer of religious respectability but unprepared by the amazing life of commitment to the Eternal in holy obedience, are now doomed to hopeless, hopeless despair.[93]

Mysticism, for Kelly, was ultimately the only answer to the world crisis, the only life raft in the flood, the only access to power capable of withstanding unimaginable, inconceivable suffering.

Kelly apparently meant for his ethical mysticism to infuse the pragmatic humanitarianism of the AFSC, not to displace it. As his Haverford colleague Douglas V. Steere put it, Kelly continued to find in the AFSC "a corporate means of expression with which he felt deep unity." Kelly was a driving force behind the AFSC's establishment of a Quaker Center in Shanghai, and he convened a little committee that met often to discuss the "Eastern scene." As chairman of the Fellowship Council he served ex officio on the AFSC's Board of Directors.[94] Yet his language over the last two years of his life grew more and more radical and uncompromising. At the end of 1939 he admonished the Fellowship Council's Executive Committee, which included Rufus Jones and Clarence Pickett, "We should return to the fundamental responsibility of the life and power and

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[93] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 69-70.
[94] Steere, "A Biographical Memoir," in Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 25.

absolute dedication that characterized the early days of our Society."[95] A little over a year later, in early 1941, he was telling an audience at Pendle Hill, a Quaker educational retreat just outside Philadelphia, "Totalitarian are the claims of Christ. No vestige or reservation of 'our' rights can remain." His mystical experiences had led him finally to repudiate the classically liberal principle of autonomy. He tolerated no "compromises between our allegiances" to the world on the one hand and the Light Within on the other.[96]

Kelly's avowed refusal to recognize the claims of the world begs the question of whether the American Quakers who worked in Germany and Appalachia in the 1920s and 30s, from Alfred Scattergood to Alfred Cope Garrett, Rufus Jones to Luella Jones, Carolena Wood to Clarence Pickett, Albert Martin to Howard Elkinton—whether the AFSC, that is, acted out of holy obedience to the Light, or out of calculated compromise with the world? Could the Light itself have demanded compromise? Was neutrality a divine leading, a political ploy, or both? If the Quaker testimony of integrity recognizes no separation between one's inner and outer life, then is it not possible that an experience of the Eternal Presence might impel one to practice, rather than shun, politics—even the politics of neutrality? Kelly himself neither asked nor answered such questions, not explicitly anyway. The project of his last years was constructive and devotional rather than deconstructive or philosophical. He was an evangelist of ethical mysticism, a mysticism that would undergird and infuse worldly activity without ever replacing it. He

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[95] Minutes of the Executive Committee of the Fellowship Council of the AFSC, December 19, 1939, AFSC.
[96] Kelly, *Testament of Devotion*, 49.

argued, and tried to show in his life, that devotional spirituality could be just as much a humanitarian aid as food or clothing.

On Friday, January 17, 1941, a couple of weeks after he proclaimed the divine dictatorship of Christ before his audience at Pendle Hill, Kelly posted a letter to the religious books editor at Harper. In late December, Eugene Exman had written Kelly asking him to send him some of his essays. Kelly sent him "Holy Obedience," "The Eternal Now" (out of which Kelly had built his Richard Cary Lecture), and a third essay, "The Blessed Community." Exman responded favorably: he wanted to meet Kelly and talk about a possible book. Kelly wrote Exman on that chilly, foggy Friday morning that Haverford College was in the midst of its January-term examinations; he was freer than usual and could take the train to New York that coming week. Kelly walked back inside from the mailbox and said to his wife, Lael, "Today will be the greatest day of my life." That night, early in the year that was to see the most infamous day in the country's history, Kelly, 47, suffered a massive heart attack while drying the dishes, and was dead within moments.[97]

[97] Richard M. Kelly, *Thomas Kelly: A Biography* (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), 122.

Epilogue

One week after Japan attacked Pearl Harbor and drew the United States into the Second World War, the AFSC's Board of Directors met in Philadelphia to discuss how the AFSC should prepare for postwar relief in Europe.[1] The most pressing concerns during the war, however, proved to be domestic rather than international. As had been the case for Quaker and other pacifists in the First World War, these domestic concerns turned on conscientious objection and civil liberties.

World War II war brought with it another draft in the United States. But unlike the Selective Service Act of May 1917, the Selective Service Act of September 1940 contained full protections for conscientious objectors. The operative provision read that no person was to be "subject to combatant training…who, by reason of religious training and belief, is conscientiously opposed to participation in war in any form."[2] The Quakers, with the AFSC in the lead, together with the other "historic peace churches" (Church of the Brethren and Mennonites) had preemptively created a system of work camps in the summer of 1940 that after passage of Selective Service in September came to be called Civilian Public Service (CPS). Pacifist leaders arranged with the federal government in late 1940 that if a man's local draft board granted him an exemption based on conscientious objection, it was to assign him, according to his wish, either to noncombatant army training or to a CPS camp. Men choosing a CPS camp were to do "work of national importance," without pay. The work was similar to that of the Civilian

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[1] Minutes of Meeting of AFSC Board of Directors, December 14, 1941, AFSC.
[2] Quoted in Clarence E. Pickett, *For More than Bread: An Autobiographical Account of Twenty-Two Years' Work with the American Friends Service Committee* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1953), 315.

Conservation Corps, consisting of soil conservation, reforestation, and other public works. The peace churches, in exchange for day-to-day control of the camps, were to provide for the men's maintenance as well as for the entire cost of the camps.[3]

For more radical pacifists, serving at a CPS camp seemed like complicity in the organized violence of the state. Many of these radical pacifists were prominent members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR), including the African-American Quaker Bayard Rustin, future co-author of the AFSC's 1955 pamphlet *Speak Truth to Power*. Rustin refused to serve in either the army or CPS; instead, he served a prison sentence in Ashland, Kentucky (where a white inmate beat him because he tried to integrate the prison).[4] The AFSC and the Brethren and Mennonite leadership maintained, however, that the CPS system constituted a significant and sufficient recognition by the US government of US citizens' right to conscientious objection. Until 1944, representatives of the FOR sat on the National Service Board for Religious Objectors, an umbrella agency representing all conscientious objectors. In December of that year the FOR voted to withdraw from the agency because of its members' disapproval of CPS.[5] The AFSC continued operating camps until March 1946; the Mennonites and Brethren, until Selective Service ended a year later.[6]

The AFSC's other major domestic concern during the war was the federal government's treatment of Japanese Americans on the West Coast. After Pearl Harbor,

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[3] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 314, 315, 321.
[4] Joseph Kip Kosek, *Acts of Conscience: Christian Nonviolence and Modern American Democracy* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), 169.
[5] Kosek, *Acts of Conscience*, 168.
[6] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 331.

native-born Americans living along or near the Pacific grew increasingly suspicious of Japanese Americans' loyalty to their adoptive country as it was fighting a war with their ancestral homeland. The US Army established Military Areas One and Two in early 1942—comprising California, Oregon, Washington, and Arizona—and ordered the relocation of all persons of Japanese descent who were residing in those areas. The Army forcibly removed 110,000 Japanese Americans—two-thirds of whom were citizens—from their homes and jobs, and interned them at camps outside Military Areas One and Two in order to evaluate and determine their level of threat to national security. Very few cases of disloyalty were discovered. Once a Japanese American was determined not to be a security threat, the War Relocation Authority introduced her back into society. Sometimes the War Relocation Authority placed her back home along the West Coast, but usually it resettled her elsewhere in the country. The AFSC played an especially significant role in the National Japanese American Student Relocation Council, placing around 4,000 young Japanese-American men and women in more than 600 inland colleges and universities. In 1953, Clarence Pickett, who served as the executive secretary of the AFSC until 1952, called this work one of the most satisfying undertakings of his life.[7]

The AFSC continued to work abroad during the war. The last AFSC representative to be stationed at the Quakerburo in Berlin, Leonard S. Kenworthy, left Germany in the summer of 1941. But during the war the AFSC maintained relief offices

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[7] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 156-159. See also Allan Austin, *From Concentration Camp to Campus: Japanese American Students and World War II* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004).

in France and, with British Friends, even entered the French internment camps Gurs, Rivesalt, and others in order to investigate the conditions in which the camps' German Jewish and other political refugees were living.[8] Ernst Papanek, the Austrian socialist living in exile in France at the time, wrote of the Friends, in his book *Out of the Fire*, "The strength of the Quakers lies in the fact that they…belong to no party. They give help to everyone and therefore exert an influence on everyone."[9] After the war, the AFSC was to give help once again to a despised German nation trying to recover from a horrific conflict largely of its own making.

Unlike after World War I, the AFSC's most significant contribution to the rebuilding of Germany after World War II was not feeding children. In 1947 it worked with British Quakers and other relief organizations to provide a daily supplemental meal to about 250,000 children in the American, British, and French Occupied Zones. But the lion's share of the feeding—over 3 million children in the American and British Zones—was administered by the US government. Secretary of State George Marshall had proposed a plan in early 1947 for a massive government-funded and administered relief and rehabilitation program for Europe, including Germany. The Marshall Plan was to shift the burden of humanitarian assistance from private and semi-private agencies like the AFSC and the American Red Cross onto the US government itself. This freed the AFSC to use its resources and personnel to develop a program of "help toward self-help" in Germany. The AFSC established several Neighborhood Centers in the country,

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[8] Achim von Borries, *Quiet Helpers: Quaker Service in Postwar Germany*, trans. John and Cathy Cary and Hildegard Wright (London, UK, and Philadelphia: Quaker Home Service and the AFSC, 2000), 37.
[9] Quoted in Borries, *Quiet Helpers*, 38.

outfitting them with laundries, sewing rooms, shoe repair shops, "warm rooms," libraries, and social spaces. The AFSC hoped that Germans, after living under dictatorship for more than a decade, would use the centers as spaces where they could experiment with democracy. The AFSC founded or co-founded nine Neighborhood Centers in Germany—two in the American Zone, three each in the French and British Zones, and one in Berlin.[10]

On October 31, 1947, the AFSC learned that it and its British counterpart, the Friends Service Council, had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of Quakers worldwide. The ceremony in Oslo was to take place on December 10. The obvious choice to represent the AFSC at the ceremony, Rufus Jones, was 84 years old at the time and in declining health; he was to die the following June at the age of 85. So instead the AFSC sent Henry Cadbury, who accepted the award in a suit he borrowed from the AFSC's used-clothing warehouse in Philadelphia just for the occasion.[11] Nobel Committee chairman Gunnar Jahn, in his speech of award, praised the Quakers for their "silent help from the nameless to the nameless." He asked, more poignantly than he might have intended, "May we believe that here there is hope of laying a foundation for peace among nations?"[12] Pickett later noted that while Jahn had mentioned in his Nobel speech only the international side of the Quakers' work, it was at home that groups like the AFSC "face their acid tests." It might be "fairly simple," Pickett wrote, for an AFSC worker "to champion the cause of brotherhood" abroad. But "at home…his choices reach into the

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[10] Borries, *Quiet Helpers*, 45-50.
[11] Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 305, 295.
[12] Quoted in Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 307.

jugular vein." It was the willingness to risk one's job and "the regard of [one's] fellow citizens" by striking at injustices at home that proved the sincerity of one's professed love of humanity. "For this reason," Pickett wrote, "we are conscious of the fact that in the final analysis we must be judged primarily in terms of our actions in our own country."[13]

In the seventy years following its Nobel Peace Prize, the AFSC never undertook another domestic feeding project like the one it carried in southern Appalachia during the Great Depression. In the ten years after the end of World War II, the AFSC focused instead on summer internship programs for youth, on peace education, and on interracial relations.[14] The AFSC was not a pioneer in racial and economic justice in those years; it largely continued its Social-Gospel practice of neutrality in social conflicts. But neutrality was not the only vestige of the Social Gospel still alive in the postwar AFSC. Two of the Social Gospel's core tenets—that love alone could create social peace, and that Jesus' life and teachings were applicable and practicable in the modern world—profoundly influenced the AFSC's conception of itself until at least the mid-1950s. The history of the AFSC in the immediate postwar period supports one of the central arguments of American religious historian Chris Evans's forthcoming book, *The Social Gospel in America*, that the Social Gospel did not die in the 1920s, or even in the 1930s, but

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[13] Quoted in Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 307.
[14] See Pickett, *For More than Bread*, 338-398. See also Allan Austin, *Quaker Brotherhood: Interracial Activism and the American Friends Service Committee, 1917-1950* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

survived and has continued to thrive in parts of liberal and progressive religion in the United States down to the present.[15]

Even in that field in which the AFSC was a pioneer, international peace advocacy and education, the continuing influence of the Social Gospel on the organization was evident. Postwar liberal pacifists were convinced that World War II and its aftermath had permanently altered the moral calculus of war. Hiroshima and Nagasaki had shown the awesome, infernal power of the atom bomb, and the dawning of the Cold War threatened the entire human race with nuclear annihilation. The AFSC's most public response to this geopolitical existential crisis was to commission a series of five substantial pamphlets on nonviolence in international relations.[16] The frequent use of the word "nonviolence" in these pamphlets, in place of "pacifism," signaled a shift in the moral attitude, if not the social analysis, of the AFSC.

Two of the authors of the fourth and most famous pamphlet, *Speak Truth to Power*, published in 1955, were former AFSC executive secretary Clarence Pickett and future chairman of the AFSC (and president of Haverford College) Stephen G. Cary. Two of their co-authors were A. J. Muste—Pickett's sometime sparring partner during the AFSC's relief of Marion in 1929—and Bayard Rustin. Rustin's biographer, historian

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[15] Christopher H. Evans, *The Social Gospel in America: A History* (New York: New York University Press, 2017).

[16] Stephen G. Cary, A. J. Muste, Clarence E. Pickett, Bayard Rustin, et al, *Speak Truth to Power: A Quaker Search for an Alternative to Violence. A Study of International Conflict Prepared for the American Friends Service Committee*, ([no publisher information], 1955), iii. https://www.afsc.org/sites/afsc.civicactions.net/files/documents/Speak_Truth_to_ Power.pdf.

John D'Emilio, finds Rustin's "mark…everywhere" in the pamphlet.[17] Indeed, in 1942, Rustin had coined the very phrase that the authors were to use as the pamphlet's title. Both Muste and Rustin were leading members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, which unlike the AFSC was at the leading edge of nonviolent work for racial and economic justice. Not long after the publication of *Speak Truth to Power*, Rustin was to carry the philosophy and method of nonviolence down to Montgomery, Alabama, where a young Baptist minister was leading thousands of his fellow African Americans in a boycott to end racial segregation on the city's public transit system.

Nonviolence for these more radical pacifists meant direct action: the direct confrontation of physical power with what Gandhi had called "soul-force" (*satyagraha*). "We speak to…the idea of Power itself," the authors of *Speak Truth to Power* stated at the outset of their pamphlet. For radical pacifists like Rustin and Muste—and perhaps also for Pickett, Cary, and the AFSC in general by 1955—the object of nonviolence was not to transcend conflict, but to engage in it in such a way as to transform it. The authors held that to practice nonviolence was peaceably to resist injustice with such an overwhelming show of love—demonstrated most powerfully in the willingness to suffer, rather than inflict, injury—that the oppressors and their armed forces would eventually not merely concede, but positively desire, an end to the injustice, together with a fuller realization of human unity. This was not Christian Realism, with its belief that love was politically limited and that social justice depended on coercion. "Our truth," insisted the

[17] John D'Emilio, *Lost Prophet: The Life and Times of Bayard Rustin* (New York: Free Press, 2003), 220.

pamphlet writers, "is…that love endures and overcomes."[18] But neither was this a "politics of neutrality."

The authors were too sanguine about the Friends' own record of directly confronting social and economic injustice: "Quakers have always believed it was necessary to speak truth to power."[19] This dissertation puts the lie to any such claim. The Quakers of the early AFSC often believed it was necessary *not* to speak truth to power, because to do so would have robbed them of the chance to relieve the very suffering that that power had caused. The history of the early AFSC and its great humanitarian projects in Germany and Appalachia thus provides a new way of looking at the attempted neutrality of Social-Gospel Christians and their institutions. Sometimes to save a human life the righteous indignation of prophecy must yield to the politics of neutrality.

[18] Cary et al, *Speak Truth to Power*, iv, v, 35.
[19] Cary et al, *Speak Truth to Power*, 59.

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