A QUESTION OF CONSCIENCE: BRITISH AND CANADIAN QUAKERS AND THEIR SOCIALIST AND PARLIAMENTARY ALLIES FACE THE GREAT WAR

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Abstract

A study of Quakerism in Britain and Canada during the Great War revealed that service for others prompted the actions of the majority of Quakers in both countries. British Quakers worked among enemy aliens in Britain and some Quakers went overseas to perform ambulance work both in the firing zone and behind the Allied lines. When the battle moved on, Quakers helped the civilian population by rebuilding shattered homes and by supplying agricultural necessities.

When conscription was introduced into Britain in 1916, many Quakers still put service for others before a total withdrawal from any contact with war. They worked on mine-sweeping operations or with army medical corps. Others accepted agricultural of forestry work and other work designated as alternate service. Some Quakers decided to enlist and abandoned the Quaker peace testimony altogether.

It was argued in this study that Quaker participation in the international peace movement of the nineteenth century and in the political life of the nation were signs that the quietist period of the Society of Friends was at an end and that this had been brought about by the influence of evangelicalism and by the growth of Quaker business interests. Quakers began to send out missionaries and to send aid to war-torn areas of the world. This led to a different Quaker approach to war for Quakers became more involved in activities which took them towards closer contact with arms and fighting. Many Quakers

still maintained that war was wrong in all circumstances, but by 1914 the association with aid for stricken areas had become so much a part of Quaker life that it seemed natural for many young Quakers to take their place as ambulance workers at the Front.

Yet for other Quakers the peace testimony of the Society of Friends was something which they could not violate. When conscription came, they refused to perform any work under the military or civil authorities, for they argued that doing such work forced others into the war zone. Further, they argued that the Government had made provision for absolute exemption for conscientious objectors, but that many objectors had been refused this exemption.

Quakers were a minority among the absolutist objectors in Britain, for most absolutists were socialists. Many socialists objected to the war because of a belief in the brotherhood of man. Others were out to embarrass the Government by refusing to perform military or civilian service. All these socialists believed that the war was the product of capitalism; and for capitalism they would not fight. The only work in which they said they could engage was work for peace.

Amont the Quaker absolutists were many who held both Quaker and Socialist views. These men were members of the Socialist-Quaker Society, a society which sought to acquaint Quakers with the doctrine of socialism. This was not an easy task, for many Quakers were industrialists or businessmen who could not be expected to welcome socialism. By frugal living and inter-marriage, Quaker families had built up large business

concerns and although there were profit sharing and welfare schemes in many Quaker factories, it was not the intention of the Quaker employer to give control of his business to his employees.

An examination of The Ploughshare, the Socialist-Quaker monthly, showed that Socialist-Quakers linked war with capitalism. They felt that unless economic reform was instituted which would remove the inequality between man and man and between nationa and nation, then the germs of war would always be present in the world. Guild socialism, they believed, would remove the cause of friction between employer and employee and thus remove one of the basic causes of strife within society.

Socialist-Quakers claimed that they had something significant to say about war and peace which other purely religious pacifists were incapable of saying. They wanted to change Society by social reconstruction. To attribute war to vague terms such as greed of lust was not sufficient for them. They felt that war could be examined rationally and they tried to convince other Quakers that this should be done. Economic inequality was the root cause for most of the world's ailments, argued the Socialist-Quakers, and they never failed to express this forcibly in their writings.

Within the Society of Friends, the Socialist-Quakers acted as a left-wing minority. Yet despite the smallness of their number, they exerted a great influence in the peace movement during the war. They served on the Friends Service Committee and on the national executive of the No-conscription Fellowship. The lives and wartime activities of some of these men were examined in this study. In the life of Corder Catchpool was seen the transition of

a Quaker from the alternativist to the absolutist position and the life of Stephen Hobhouse showed the conversion of a man to Quakerism and his part in the Quaker movement during the war. Both men were active in social work before the war and it was the belief that socialism could remove social ills which attracted them to the socialist movement. They rejected the fatalistic tendencies of many religious believers and sought to change society rather than to prepare for the next world.

Conscientious objection would not have been an important issue in Britain if conscription had not been introduced in 1916. It was found that opposition to conscription was provided by a mixture of Liberals, I.L.P. members and some other Labour representatives. Numerically, Liberals were the stronger of the component parts of the anti-war group. Before the advent of conscription there were signs that conscription would be strongly opposed, for Britain had a fear of a standing Army dating back to the seventeenth century.

However, the opposition to conscription dwindled away as first the Irish Nationalists withdrew their support and then Labour members became almost equally divided for and against the measure. Officially the Labour Party supported a defensive war and many Labour members expressed a concern for voluntarism while accepting conscription as a necessary evil in the cause of victory. Many Liberals, including some in the Cabinet, were not happy about the introduction of conscription, but the majority of these did not vote against conscription. This left a hard core of just under 40 members who consistently opposed conscription. These 40 were too few to block conscription, but some of the Liberal M.P.s who were also Quakers, did

secure a wider conscience clause for conscientious objectors. The amended clause allowed tribunals to grant exemptions on the understanding that the exempted objector performed some work of national importance.

After conscription became a fact, the M.P.s who had opposed conscription interested themselves in the treatment of conscientious objectors by tribunals; and as objectors were taken into the Army questions concerning their whereabouts and treatment were raised in Parliament. Again, the anti-war group was too small to effect a great deal, but by continually raising such questions they ensured that the problems of conscientious objectors were kept before the country. Yet the Government was able to bring in extensions to the original Military Service Bill and was able to disfranchise many conscientious objectors.

In Canada, it was found that Quakers showed the same concern for service to others as did British Quakers. However, Canadian Quakers made their greatest contribution to the British and American Quaker ambulance and reconstruction units by sending money and clothing to Europe. Some men did go to Europe with these units, but there do not appear to have been many Quakers of military age in Canada who had to decide whether to give service or remain in Canada.

Only two cases of Quakers being sent to jail because of a conscientious objection to war were found by the author. Both of these men came from Ontario. The experiences of one of these objectors, George Mabley, was examined in this study. It is possible that there were others in western Canada.

The lack of a substantial body of socialists in Canada allowed the Canadian Government to institute into its 1917 Military Service Bill a conscience clause which stipulated that exemptions on grounds of a conscientious objection to war would only be given to the members of religious groups whose tenets contained an objection to war. In practise the Government decided which of these groups had such tenets.

Most of Canada's Quakers were attached to agriculture in some way and hence there do not appear to have been strong advocates of Ploughshare politics in Canada. For industrialization, which had brought many of the problems British Socialist-Quakers sought to solve, was not at an advanced stage in Canada.

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Introduction

> Socialists, with occasional temporary aberrations always have something special to say about war and peace, something which differs from what mere Pacifists have to say. The latter deplore the outbreak of war but do not always understand it. Socialists also deplore war, but they understand its prime causes. [1]

> The Quaker is not primarily concerned with the question whether war pays or does not pay for the people engaged in it; whether it succeeds in its aim or does not succeed. The Quaker flatly insists that it is absolutely and eternally wrong morally, that Christianity and war are utterly incompatible---(because)---there is something of God in every person---man and God belong together, are meant for each other and that beings like us are potential sons of God. [2]

A conscientious objection to war was held by some members of every known religious group in Britain during the Great War. Quakers, Christadelphians, Unitarians, Plymouth Brethren, Comgregationalists, International Bible Students, Adventists all provided some members of the conscientious objectors movement. There were also objectors who belonged to the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church, while others called themselves Tolstoyans and others Theosophists. With the multitude of religious groups in Britain it will be apparent that this is not an exhaustive list. However, it is of sufficient length to show the variety of religious opinion which could produce a conscientious objection to war.

1. The Ploughshare, Vol.2,No. 7 (New Series), August, 1917.p.195.

2. Rufus M. Jones, "The Quaker Peace Position," Survey, April 1915, pp. 22-23.

Yet despite this wealth of religious opinion, the majority of Britain's conscientious objectors at this period were socialists. David Boulton argues that 'roughly three-quarters' of the conscientious objectors of the Great War fall into this category. [3]

Being a socialist did not, of course, bar a man from holding a religious position also; and although there were many atheists and agnostics in the British socialist movement, there were also many who held strong Christian views. The ties between nonconformity and socialism were strong. A glance at Philip Snowden's Autobiography is sufficient to show this. He maintains that the early socialist movement in Britain 'derived its inspiration far more from the Sermon on the Mount than on the teachings of the economists.' Snowden uses religious language to describe Ben Tillet and Tom Man, 'and other fiery evangelists of the new gospel.' [4]

3. Boulton, David. Objection Overruled. London: MacGibbon and Key. 1967. p. 12. However, he gives no source here for this assertion. The only statistical survey of conscientious objectors available for the present study appears in Graham, John. Conscription and Conscience. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1922. p. 352. This shows that out of a total of 6,261 objectors who were known to suffer imprisonment, 1,191 were socialists and 279 were Quakers. Graham is quoting from the No-Conscription Fellowship's Souvenier, 1919. Further statistics used by Boulton and Graham are those compiled by the Conscientious Objectors Information Bureau in 1921. These show that there were probably 16,100 'genuine conscientious objectors who faced the Tribunals or otherwise refused to join in the war.' Graham, p. 348.

4. Two labour leaders who came to prominence in the Trade Union movement in the last quarter of the nineteenth century

He also pointed out that many 'Nonconformist local preachers were attracted to the movement by the ethical appeal of socialism.' And, in a less serious vein, Snowden tells of a working man, Johnny Coe, who told Fred Bramley, a future Secretary of the Trades Union Congress, that at the end of his speeches he must 'put a bit of "Come to Jesus" in like Philip does.' [5]

The main body of this study is concerned with a group which was formed for the specific purpose of bringing socialism and Christianity together. Within the Christian world a certain form of Christianity was advocated and correspondingly amongst the differing shades of socialist opinion, a particular type of socialism was favoured. The former was Quakerism, the latter, guild-socialism. Calling itself the Socialist Quaker Society, this body sought to bring socialism to the Society of Friends. [6] It was not necessary to be a Quaker to be a member of S.Q.S., but a statement issued in The Ploughshare, the Society's journal, referred to its members as acknowledging 'the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. [7]

5. Philip Snowden, An Autobiography. Vol. 1:(1864-1919).(London: Ivor Nicholson and Watson, 1934),pp. 63-94. Hereafter referred to as Snowden. For a fuller treatment of this subject VIDE. Stephen Mayor, The Churches and the Labour Movement. (London: Independent Press, 1967).

6. Hereafter referred to as the S.Q.S..

7. Vide. Section three of this study. Mrs. Nellie Best was one socialist member of the S.Q.S., who was not a Quaker. The Ploughshare, Vol. 1., No.2 (March, 1916). p.65.

While there are works dealing with the socialist objector and the Quaker objector during the Great War, it will be argued in the present work that there is a need for a study which examines a group of people who were connected with both socialism and Quakerism. In Graham's work on the subject of conscientious objection, socialists play a little part in the movement, although numerically they were stronger than the Quakers. This does not constitute a criticism of this book, for it was his intention to deal with the Quaker position, a position with which he was personally involved. Boulton, on the other hand, concentrates largely upon the socialists in the movement. If a Socialist-Quaker appears in the former work he is referred to as a Quaker; if in the latter it is probably as a christian-pacifist. In his introduction, for example, Boulton refers to Alfred Salter as expressing the 'uncompromising Christian faith' on conscientious objection. He follows this by saying that some men held both the socialist and the Christian faiths. In Salter he had a perfect example of this type of conscientious objector, yet nowhere is it mentioned that Salter was a Quaker nor that he had been a founder member of the Bermondsey Independent Labour Party. [8]

Neither of the two works cited above used The Ploughshare and to the author's knowledge this journal has not been used in any published work upon conscientious objection. Yet it will be maintained

8. Hereafter referred to as the I.L.P.

that Socialist-Quakers held many opinions not shared by large sections of the Quaker movement and that this was also true for their socialist opinions amongst other socialists. This study, then, will largely concern itself with the opinions of those who held to both the socialist and Quaker tenets in a time of war and how these opinions agreed or clashed with the Quaker movement, the socialist movement, or both. For although they were part of both movements, on occasions Socialist-Quakers deserve to stand alone.

The first chapter of Part One deals briefly with the peace testimony held by the Society of Friends and an examination of some of the historical background of this testimony. [9] It is hoped that this will show the gradual change in Quakerism from its position as a non-political, quietist movement, to a body which was represented in British politics and also in international affairs; to a body, in fact, which had lost much of its distinctiveness in manner, dress and language. It was possible to pass a Quaker in the street in 1914 and not know him for a member of that body. A continuation of this argument leads to the theory that for many members of the Society of Friends this new 'worldliness' led to compromises wi-h the ancient Quaker peace testimony. Chapter two seeks to show in which direction compromise took some members of the Society. Specific instances are given of the actions of a birthright Quaker and socialist convert,

9. The term Quaker or member of the Society of Friends is used without distinction in this study. Quaker has perhaps received more usage in Britain than in North America, although the Canadian Society still calls itself The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

Corder Catchpool and the decision making which the war brought to a Socialist-Quaker objector: his acceptance and finally his rejection of ambulance work.

In Chapter three some of the connections between Quakerism and socialism are examined prior to the formation of the S.Q.S. This is followed by a glance at the problems of bringing socialism to the Society of Friends. A Society, which as The Ploughshare argued, was largely composed of wealthy people. By showing the S.Q.S. theory of war causation, it is believed that some insight will be gained into problems aroused by an attempted union of socialism and Quakerism.

After this, the study deals, in Chapter four, mainly with the position adopted by the S.Q.S. towards conscription, a measure introduced into Britain in 1916. Socialist-Quakers, it will be noted, took a very strict line upon conscription and were 'absolutist' in outlook. This was in agreement with the Friends Service Committee, a body of young Quakers to which reference will be made later. Some indication of the varieties of conscientious objection is shown in the following lengthy, though important quotation from a speech made by Lord Sydenham in the Lords on 4 May, 1916. It shows quite clearly the wide spectrum of objection and of the place in this spectrum of the absolutist or 'those who would do nothing which they thought would release other men for combatant service.'

> The extreme objector would consent to serve in a civil hospital, but if three or four soldiers were put into it he would decline to do anything... Some would work at munitions, whilst others thought

> the making of munitions equivalent to combatant work. Even members of the Society of Friends did not see eye to eye. Again some objectors would do most things provided the work was not under military authority. Others, a quite considerable class, would do no work on Saturday, unless it was work of mercy, and they would not do work of mercy under orders. There were also many who would do nothing they thought would release other men for combatant service. In some cases the objectors were much more political than religious. It was unnecessary to say that in some cases the conscientious objection arose after the war; indeed, there have been cases of men who voluntarily attested and subsequently developed conscientious objections. [10]

The experiences of two absolutist conscientious objectors are then examined. One Stephen Hobhouse was a Quaker convert and also a socialist, the affiliations of the other, Corder Catchpool have already been noted. This part of the study shows the lives of two literate men confined in jail because of a conscientious objection to war. It also shows their different upbringings in relation to their conscientious objection; their attitudes to war, the army and prison.

In Chapter five a look is taken at the attitudes expressed in The Ploughshare concerning the problem of obtaining a negotiated peace and of maintaining peace once it was established. These thoughts, it will be seen, were intricately connected with Socialist-Quaker economic theory. The intention here is to show once again a section of the Society of Friends involving itself in the practical aspects of national and international life.

10. The C.O.'s Hansard, Vol. 1(Retrospective Series,No.5), October, 1916. This was a weekly reprint of the offical parliamentary reports on matters concerning the conscientious objector. It was published by the No-Conscription Fellowship.

Chapter Six deals with the activities of the Socialist-Quakers in a wider organization: the No-Conscription Fellowship.[11] This body contained all types of conscientious objector, but it was largely composed of members of the I.L.P. Some members of the S.Q.S. had seats on the executive of the N-C.F., but as will be indicated, the opinions of socialists and Socialist-Quakers did not always coincide.

Conscription and the passage of the Military Service Bill through parliament forms the basis of Chapter one of Part Two. From an examination of published works on this subject, it seems that there is some confusion as to which M.P.'s supported or did not support conscription. It is hoped that this chapter will in some way help to clarify this situation. Again, the attitudes of socialists and Quakers have been pointed out on conscription and and conscientious objection, for the latter would not have been a major issue in Britain, but for the introduction of the former. Particularly important in this section are the attitudes of the Quakers who sat as Liberal M.P.'s in the House of Commons.

Following closely the pattern set in Chapter one, the second Chapter of Part Two centres on parliament after the passing of the Military Service Bill. It seeks to show some of the problems presented by the introduction of conscription, including those presented by its extension shortly after the first Bill became law.

11. Hereafter referred to as the N-C.F.

Also dealt with are the outcries against the vagaries of the tribunals set up to grant or refuse exemptions and the ill-treatment of conscientious objectors. Questions concerning individual objectors formed a large part of the anti-war party's involvement in parliamentary aspects of conscientious objection, but many of these cases have been ignored by this study, for it is felt that they are adequately covered in published works. However, one important case of ill-treatment has received attention, for it was one of the very few cases in which the government did admit that ill-treatment of an objector had taken place. This section also attempts to follow the controversy over the disfranchisement of conscientious objectors. Finally, the performances of some prospective pacifist parlimentary candidates are examined and also the fate of some M.P.'s who formed part of the anti-war group.

Part three is an attempt to view conscientious objection in a Canadian setting and it deals specifically with Canadian Quakers, although some reference is made to non-Quaker groups and to socialists. There has been work done on the conscientious movement in Quebec, but apart from a valuable chapter in Dorland's book on Canadian Quakers, the author has found little else which considers the rest of Canada. [12] This section of the study is very much of an exploratory nature and does not claim to be anything more. However, enough information has been uncovered to show that there is material for an examination of the subject of conscientious

12. Arthur G. Dorland, A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada. (Toronto; MacMillan Co. of Canada, 1927), pp. 308-329

objection in Canada and that this could include other religious groups besides the Quakers and some of Canada's early socialists. It is hoped that someone will explore this material.

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

THE QUAKER PEACE TESTIMONY IN TRANSITION

Quakerism was a small though significant element in British society during the Great War. Of all the pacifist groups in Britain, the Quakers were those most closely linked with anti-war testimony in the minds of the British public. Peace and peaceful ways had been associated with the Society of Friends since the seventeenth century. George Fox, the founder of the movement, recorded in his journal for 1651 that he was jailed for refusing to become a soldier. He wrote:

> So Worcester fight came on and Justice Bennet sent the constables to press me for a soldier, seeing I would not accept of a command. I told them I was brought off from outward wars...After a while at night the constables fetched me up again and brought me before the Commissioners, and told them I was dead to it. [13]

A Declaration from the harmless and innocent people of God called Quakers, against all plotters and fighters in the world... (which was) presented to the king in 1660 (January, 1661) demonstrated the early beliefs of Quakers towards peace and the basis upon which later Quakers built their peace testimony: [14]

> Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace and ensue it and to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and welfare and doing that which tends to the peace of all. We know that wars and fightings proceed from the lusts of men (as Jas. iv 1-3). [15]

13. John L. Nickalls, ed., (Cambridge: University Press, 1952) The Journal of George Fox p. 67.

14. New calendar date, 1661

15. Nickalls, op.cit. 399.

> All bloody principles and practices, we, as to our own particulars, do utterly deny, with all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the world...And as for the kingdoms of this world, we cannot covet them much less can we fight for them. 16

The Declaration explained why Quakers adopted their particular attitudes towards wars and fighting. They were based upon the New Testament:

> And he that hath commanded us that we shall not swear at all(Matt.v.34), hath also commanded us that we shall not kill(Matt.v.21), so that we can neither kill men, nor swear for nor against them. And this is both our principle and practice and hath been from the beginning, so that if we suffer, as suspected to take up arms or make war against any, it is without any ground from us. 17

The Declaration was written specifically to outline the Quaker position in an England torn by civil strife, but the statements contained in it provided guidance for many generations of Quakers.

While anxious to show by example their pacific principles, English Quakers, except for a brief period in which William Penn was prominent, took little part in the affairs of State nor sought to spread their opinions by political means. The eighteenth and early nineteenth century was a period of quietism when Quakers shunned participation in English or foreign politics. However, in the second half of the nineteenth century, peace deputations were sent out from

16. Ibid. p. 399-400

17. Ibid. p. 401

England carrying the message of peace. In 1856 such deputations carried a Plea on behalf of liberty of conscience. And while in Berlin, a Quaker deputation tried to alleviate the sufferings of those put into prison because of their objection to conscription. Two years earlier, a mission had been sent to St. Petersburg in an attempt to prevent the outbreak of the Crimean War. The mission obtained an audience with the Czar and the Empress, but did not prevent the war. Quaker delegations appear to have had marked success in securing meetings with heads of state. In 1854 a peace mission on its way through Europe had spoken with nine such men.

When the Boer War began English Quakers addressed themselves to the Marquis of Salisbury in an effort to move him to conclude a peaceful settlement. They were humble in approach, pointing out that they recognized

> the many difficulties which have beset the Queen's Government and which still tend to hinder a satisfactory settlement; but they recall with gratitude the successful efforts of the Marquis of Salisbury and his colleagues to secure the blessings of peace on former occasions, when the obstacles have seemed no less formidable. [18]

Greater identification with the problems of domestic and international politics led English Quakers to seek practical ways in which to express their peace testimony. As well as the peace missions sent throughout Europe, Quakers also came to advocate arbitration in international disputes and also to give much thought

18. Robert O. Byrd, Quaker Ways in Foreign Policy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), p. 141.

to the possibility of disarmament. Another practical measure to spring out of this new attitude to world affairs was the relief work undertaken by English Quakers after the Crimean and Franco-Prussian wars. After the latter war, personnel as well as material were sent for the first time to war-torn areas. Relief work became an integral part of Quaker peace work in the second half of the nineteenth century. Eventually the work spread to other troubled areas, particularly eastern Europe, South Africa and India.

The nineteenth century produced a wealth of international organizations, and organizations for peace were not lacking. In America, a peace society was formed in 1814. This was quickly followed by the formation of a similar body in Britain a year later. Religion formed the basis of this body; an adherence to Christianity being required of all members. Quakers played an important part in the British Society, for they were the main suppliers of its funds and its chief propagandists.

It was in London, in 1843, that the first international Peace Congress gathered. This meeting was followed by others in Brussels, Paris and Frankfurt. From 1851 to 1889 no conferences were held; but when they did resume, in 1889, they continued unbroken until 1914. Quaker interest in arbitration has already been noted and the Workmen's Peace Association, which afterwards became the International Arbitration League (1870), and the International Arbitration and Peace Association (1888) were largely organized and financed by Quakers.

In contrast to the British pacifist movement which had a strong religious basis, the Continental peace bodies were, for the

most part, political and juridicial in character. One of the main reasons for this situation was the lack of Quakers in the Continental movement and their predominance in the British movement. For Quakerism was essentially an Anglo-Saxon doctrine and had few followers on the Continent. However, with the new interest taken in politics by Quakers in the nineteenth century and the loss of many adherents to organized religion in Britain, pacifist elements in Britain were weakened somewhat. It was believed that if peace was to be attained, it would be attained through international political agreements.

It is clear from this brief outline of Quaker participation in the peace movements of the nineteenth century that Quakerism was no longer content to remain aloof from the practical issues involved in securing peace at an international level. The main reason for this change in attitude was perhaps due to evangelicalism. This movement had a marked influence upon the Quaker movement, not only in Britain, but also in North America. [19] It freed Quakerism from its parochialism and allowed Quakers to send their message abroad. Quaker missionaries appeared for the first time. There was, then, an increased awareness of the world at large, which led Quakers to think of their tenets in international terms. The peace crusades to the governing heads of Europe was a practical way of spreading the Quaker peace message. It is true that this was not the first

19. Vide. Part 3, Chapter I

time that Quakers had thought about peace in international terms. William Penn had suggested a 'League of Nations', but in the nineteenth century, theorizing was turned into action. Increased communications between various parts of the world also helped to sharpen Quaker awareness of the wider world.

One important step for Quakers was their entry into Parliament. This had been precluded by a literal interpretation of a passage from the New Testament: "But I say unto you, Swear not at all." 20

When after the Reform Bill of 1832, it became possible for Quakers to make an affirmation of loyalty to the crown, instead of swearing loyalty, as had been required of all M.P.'s before this date, Quakers began to take part in the parliamentary life of Britain. Joseph Pease was the first Quaker to take his place in the newly reformed parliament (1832-3). He was followed by other Quakers, notably by that most famous of all nineteenth century Quaker M.P.'s, John Bright. During the conscription crisis in Britain in 1916, there were four Quaker M.P.'s in the House of Commons, all attached to the Liberal Party.

Although the main body of Quaker members did not object to the increased activity of Quakers in the life of the nation, it must be pointed out that some Quakers did not like this trend and fought it wherever possible. John Bright, for example, met opposition from

20. Matt. V. 34.

his own family when it was known that he was to enter politics. And apolitical feelings were not confined to the nineteenth century. Certain Quakers during the Great War thought that the movement should not involve itself with political matters.

By 1914, however, Quakers had nearly a century of contact with local, national and international politics and this contact could not be ignored when war broke out. The old Quaker philosophy of withdrawal from all things connected with war could not stand, except amongst a minority, for it had been eroded by war relief work and a greater involvement in society. When war came in 1914 these two factors called for further compromise. Many Quakers wished to be involved with the war as long as any service they performed was in accord with their consciences. Withdrawal from the conflict was only for the few.

CHAPTER II

FROM AMBULANCE WORKER TO ABSOLUTIST

In August, 1914, Quakers in Britain were faced with war. They had played a major part in the international peace movement which had failed to prevent war and now they had to decide the position they would adopt towards the war. For some Quakers the decision was not too difficult. Relief work had, during the nineteenth century, become an accepted form of Quaker service in war-time. Although it was unthinkable for the majority of Quakers of military age to enlist, it was not unthinkable that they should serve on relief or on ambulance work. Such service meant having some contact with the military, but it did not involve fighting. Other Quakers believed that any involvement with a military machine was wrong. They pointed out that ambulance workers might not be required to fire a rifle, but that they had to swear an oath, wear a uniform and work in close co-operation with the military authorities. [21] It was also stressed that they money saved by the use of voluntary helpers could be used for other military purposes. So powerful was the opposition to ambulance work in the early stages of the war that the Friends Ambulance Unit, a Unit founded by Quakers, but whose membership was not confined to members of that group, was not officially recognized by the Society of Friends. [22]

21. Vide. Part 3, Chapter 4, for information on another voluntary ambulance unit which contained some Quakers: The First British Ambulance Unit for Italy.

22. This unit is hereafter referred to as the F.A.U.

Yet, the F.A.U. was closely associated with the Society of Friends and in the public mind the Unit was considered to be an organ of that Society. This caused many problems for Quakers as the war progressed.

For this study, an important member of the F.A.U. was Thomas Corder Pettifor Catchpool. He was born into a family which had many generations of contact with the Society of Friends. His birthplace was Leicester in 1883. Catchpool received his early education at Guernsey High School until at fifteen years of age he went to the Quaker Co-educational School at Sidcot. The final two years of his schooling were spent at Bootham School (1900-1902), the famous Quaker school in York. When his school-days ended, Catchpool became an apprentice engineer at the Great Eastern Railway Works at Stratford in London. It was during this period that he became interested in social questions. He read the works of Robert Blatchford and helped in the formation of an Adult School at the Bedford Institute in East London. Politics interested Catchpool greatly and in 1910 he supported the candidature of C.F.G. Masterman and other Liberals. Shortly after this he became attracted to the policies of the I.L.P. and decided to join the party. After this decision he voted socialist for the rest of his life.

At about the same time as his conversion to socialism, Catchpool helped his brother at Balliol House hostel for men, a hostel attached to Toynbee Hall Settlement at Whitechapel. A friend and fellow Quaker, T.E. Harvey, was the new warden of the Hall. Service for others played an important part in Catchpool's life and after much thought he made up his mind to become a doctor. Unfortunately,

he had a nervous breakdown, in 1911, which prevented him from continuing with his studies. On his recovery he returned to engineering work at a cotton mill in Darwen, Lancashire.

Catchpool was on holiday in Switzerland when war broke out, but after some delay he gradually made his way back to a Channel port and eventually arrived back in Britain. On his way through France he saw the troop movements towards the battle front. The British Army passed him on its way to Mons. He saw all this activity caused by war and he wanted to help. As his earlier life indicates he had a deep concern for others and he felt that he must do something to aid his fellow men in the great conflict they faced. In 1916, he wrote to a friend concerning his feelings upon the outbreak of war:

> When the present war broke out, the horror of it seemed at times more than I could bear. Believing that war is contrary to the will of God, as revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and that it is possible to live in a spirit of love that takes away the occasion of all war, I was unable to enlist or bear arms, either for offence or defence. Within a few days, however, I had experienced a call to take up ambulance work, should the way open. There was a cry for voluntary helpers; I believed there might be great opportunities for service, rendered in the spirit of the Prince of Peace, in tending the wounded and dying, amongst whom I saw moving the figure of Him I strive to follow. [23]

There is here perhaps a strong connection between Catchpool's desire to become a doctor and the new work he was about to undertake with the F.A.U. It was to serve others that he had earlier sought

23. Corder Catchpool, On Two Fronts (Letters of a Conscientious Objector) 3rd ed.; London: George Allen and Unwin, 1940, p. 20.

to change his profession. Now he felt that he had a call to serve in a medical unit.

Neither his letters nor the work of his biographer show in any detail that at this period Catchpool questioned the close connection between the F.A.U. and the military authorities. [24] However, his letters are edited, which may account for the lack of information on this point. Being a man given to thought, as his letters clearly show, it is difficult to imagine that Catchpool did not spend time considering the important step he was taking and how it affected the Quaker principles of peace which he had known since childhood. If he did weigh heavily the step he was taking, once resolved on his course of action, he appears to have entered into some aspects of contact with the army in a sense of adventure and high spirits. In one of his letters from the Front he tells of the last minute preparations before leaving for France. He wrote:

> Finally to the outfitters in Regent Street, to pack my person into khaki! Then paraded and marched thirty strong to Charing Cross, chanting the inevitable "Tipperary".

In the same letter Catchpool remarks without comment that the ship on which they sailed to France was "crammed with cordite and 12-in shells for the monitors." [25]

24. W. R. Hughes Indomitable Friend (Life of Corder Catchpool 1883-1952). (London: Housmans, 1964).

25. Catchpool, op. cit. pp. 22-23 Letter dated 9 November 1914.

On arrival in France, the F.A.U. was faced with a vast number of men who needed immediate aid. Catchpool threw himself whole-heartedly into the work, although he was conscious that he was far from being an expert dresser. His knowledge of French seems to have been better than most in the Unit and when the flow of wounded became less this allowed him to make contacts with the local population; for Catchpool often went on shopping expeditions for the Unit. He indicates in his letters that he used these visits to spread the message of peace. But he did not confine himself to civilians:

> Both amongst civilians and soldiers (wounded and otherwise) I find very large opportunity for spreading peace principles; I tell them how I hate war. This is a new idea to most of them, except the mothers who have boys at the Front. They generally agree in word if not in fact.

Later in the letter he wrote of his feelings when seeing a wounded German soldier being taunted by other soldiers. He told them:

> I don't reckon a man as any enemy any longer when he is wounded. It is not poor devils (sic:"pauvres diables") like you and me and the wounded Germans yonder who make wars: it is the diplomats, the war lords, the rulers. [26]

He felt that most of those he spoke to took his point, but he was aware that what he was saying was dangerous in the extreme and it surprised him that he should be able to express his Quaker principles so near to the Front. But he even discussed peace with the French officers with whom he came in contact telling them that

26. Ibid. p. 29. Letter dated 15 November, 1914

> Il y a beaucoup de monde en Angleterre qui me feraient volontiers fussille pour ce que de vous dire. [27]

These officers listened, but Catchpool was not always convinced that they took him seriously. He felt that they listened with the ears of men who thought his position curious, noble perhaps, but none-the-less somewhat odd:

> "You are Utopiste, very beautiful, but quite impossible," say the French. [28]

Even in the midst of great elation, Catchpool often felt that the people around him did not understand his views. He wrote: "And do you know, I sometimes feel as though I were on the brink of converting all this Hospital staff to Quakerism." But he added shortly afterwards: "Whether I am considered a harmless maniac or not, no doubt that I get on well with the doctors." [29]

It is difficult to believe that Catchpool expected a different reaction from the French officers he came into contact with, some of whom were no doubt professional soldiers. To them Catchpool dreamed beautiful dreams, but they had a terrible war before them which, if it produced dreams at all, produced nightmares.

Elation and despondency show themselves throughout the letters Catchpool wrote while in the F.A.U. He did not give way to despondency easily, for many of the letters show a man with a simple, warm, good-hearted humour. However, overwork amid the carnage of war proved stronger than this humour at certain periods of his service

27. Ibid. p. 64, 23 March, 1915.

28. Ibid. p. 57 Letter dated 8th March 1915.

29. Ibid. p. 60 Letter dated 21 March 1915.

overseas. Catchpool was an adventurous man and it seems clear that his adventurous spirit played some part in his acceptance of ambulance work. [30] In part, he seems to have had romantic illusions about such work, for from his position at the Front, shortly before Christmas, 1914, he wrote:

> All the glamour, if ever there were any; all the romance, if war has romance; almost all the interest - has worn off long ago. We are just grimly working out a purpose. [31]

A month earlier he had been anxious to get to the Front. On 15 November he had written:

> I was given to understand yesterday that I should probably be required to go to the front today. But I warched the motor go off at 5 A.M.; and had received no definite instructions. It took me all day to swallow down the resentful lump of disappointment that would keep rising. [32]

Catchpool, then, was a man of action. He wanted to be where the danger was. His strong attachment to Quaker beliefs would not allow him to become a soldier, but he was moved to share the sufferings of those who did fight and thus he felt the need to be where the danger was greatest, both for himself and for the fighting men; for where the fighting was thickest, there he could be of the most help to the wounded and dying.

Occasionally his adventurousness led him into conflict with his beliefs. He recalled that one day while standing by a soixante Quinze which was firing at the German lines:

30. Catchpool remained adventurous to the end of his life. He was killed in a climbing accident in the Alps when in his sixty-ninth year (1952).

31. Catchpool op. cit. p. 40, December 1914.

32. Ibid. p. 31 15 November, 1914

> The officer in charge invited me to pull this cord and it was only the second impulse of thought that stayed the first impulse of interest and excitement. The horror of what I came near to doing haunted me for days. [33]

In 1916, Catchpool decided to leave the F.A.U. There seems to have been three main reasons why he took this step. Firstly, there was his promotion to adjutant of the Unit which took him, to a large degree, out of actual ambulance work and made him a bureaucrat. He did not accept the change easily and chafed at the paper work which kept him from active service. He lamented on 3 December, 1915:

> The whole war is organized like a huge business now, and even if movements occured to upset the regularity and system of our present existence, I should be hopelessly fixed administratively in the H. Q. offices, and not executively labouring close in the wake of the combatants.

Catchpool added later,

> What can one say about eternal interviews with officials, settlings of disputes, payments of bills? Talk of sacrifice! I made mine when I put these stripes on my arm, and took a seat in the central office - not when I drove my ambulance under shell and rifle fire up to the trenches. [34]

His mind turned to the possibility of service elsewhere. Serbia was on his mind. He felt that there, the need for an ambulance unit similar to the F.A.U. must be great and that he could once more work close to the stricken population. Another thought which pushed itself into his mind was that he should return to England and make a stand against conscription.

33. Ibid. p. 58. 8 March, 1915

34. Ibid. p. 82. 3 December, 1915

The second reason for Catchpool's decision to leave the F.A.U. was because of another decision: the Friends Service Committee renounced the F.A.U. This Committee had been formed in 1915 with the object of strengthening opposition to conscription and to supply information to those likely to be affected by compulsory military service. All those on the committee were of military age and it adopted an absolutist attitude to the Military Service Bill. Catchpool put great store by the decision of these young men to oppose conscription. Later he became a member of the Committee himself.

Catchpool's third reason for leaving the Unit and returning to Britain was, in many ways, connected with the first. Gone were the days of disorganization which had marked the first year of the war. Within this disorganization, the F.A.U. could still feel that it was working alone. Contact with the Army (French or British) could not be avoided, for some co-operation was necessary if any useful work was to be done. But, during this period, the F.A.U. did not feel that it was being led by a military authority. As the armies settled down to the tactics of trench warfare all this changed. There was time to organize. The medical units of the armies became more efficient and although the F.A.U. was still needed, it was not as free to frame its own policy as in the early period of the war. Army discipline crept into the Unit. Conscription ensured that this trend was increased. On 26 March 1916 Catchpool wrote that parades were to be made two mornings per week at 6 A.M. He

noted that this had caused a great deal of discussion as "to whether such things are not 'pure militariness' without any adequate ulterior end." [35]

Although Catchpool felt keenly the changes and sympathised with others in the F.A.U. who talked of resignation, he was not quick to act, for as the adjutant of the Unit he had a position of responsibility which was not to be thrown lightly aside. His position was a difficult one to maintain. The members of the F.A.U. who resented the increased military connections were often forced into the position of 'rebels' by those who believed that the Unit could still operate in good faith with Quaker principles. There were also non-Quaker members within the Unit who were satisfied with service which did not require them to use weapons. It was, therefore, very trying for Catchpool to remain one of the chief officers of the Unit while his sympathies lay with those who were considered 'rebels by the majority of its members. Carefully considering his position, Catchpool decided that his way was the rebel way. In May, 1916 he wrote:

> Rather sadly ... It has been dawning on me gradually that the continuance of our work does in fact depend upon the sinking of our freedom of expression. The Conscription Act has meant a gradual tightening of the screw of military discipline, and I cannot help feeling now that we are in effect a conscript-unit - with a more sympathetic control immediately above, to be sure, but the iron hand luring in the background. [36]

35. Ibid. p. 91 26 March 1916

36. Ibid. p. 95 14 May, 1916

Before writing this, Catchpool had written another letter, a letter which contained his resignation as adjutant of the Unit. He then returned to England. His 'absolute' exemption, granted by the War Office after the introduction of conscription, was withdrawn. While waiting for officialdom to call him before a tribunal, Catchpool worked as the chairman of a group studying international relations and reconstruction at Woodbrooke Settlement, Birmingham.

The resignation of Corder Catchpool from the F.A.U. caused much comment in the Quaker press, for he had been an important member of that Unit. Especially relevant to this study were the comments made by The Ploughshare, a publication of the Quaker-socialist society. The journal agreed with Catchpool that conscription had completely altered the position of the F.A.U. within the Quaker movement. It pointed out that many tribunals set up to determine those who could obtain exemption from military service had decided that the only objection which Quakers had to war was that they would not kill. This led some tribunal members to assert that the men in the F.A.U. represented the genuine objectors within the Society of Friends. The Ploughshare went on to say that some members, aware of the confusion in the minds of tribunal members and the general public concerning the purpose of the F.A.U., had produced a memorial which stated that the Unit sought 'to relieve human suffering and to realize human fellowship.' It did not represent "a standard of association with the military system." [37] However, publication of the memorial proved impossible, for while

37. The Ploughshare Vol. 1 (New Series) No. 7 (August, 1916) p. 227. Hereafter referred to as The Ploughshare - it being understood that all volumes used in this study are of the new series.

they remained members of the F.A.U., men were not able to make such statements. This led to the resignation of some members.

Here, then, was the main argument produced by those who held the absolutist position against conscientious objectors serving in the F.A.U. If men accepted this service it tended to weaken the position of those who sought the absolute exemption which could be obtained under the Military Service Act. For most objectors, though, the possibility of absolute exemption was very remote, for the wording of the exemption clause allowed for a wide interpretation by tribunals. The Ploughshare was calling for solidarity amongst objectors. If all rejected such service as that represented by the F.A.U., then there was a better chance of obtaining absolute exemption. If some objectors served with the F.A.U. and some refused such service, there was division and hence weakness.

CHAPTER III

QUAKERS AND SOCIALIST-QUAKERS

As the first section of this study sought to show, Quakers were the cornerstone of the pacifist movement in Britain during the nineteenth century. But during the Great War socialist objectors outnumbered those of the Society of Friends. Socialist opposition to war was expressed in many ways. There were socialists who certainly did not object to all war. To them life itself was a war, a class struggle which they would resolve by revolutionary methods if necessary. Their opposition was based upon the solidarity of worker against capitalist. War, then, for these men could not be taken to be wrong in all cases. They considered, however, that the Great War was a capitalist war and refused to fight in it. From this extreme position there were intermediate stages until the official attitude of the Labour Party was reached; a defensive war was being fought which should be supported. They were willing to do this and even to support the introduction of conscription. [38]

It is clear that given the traditional Quaker attitude of objection to all wars and the objection of socialists to certain wars, there were certain to be differences of opinion between the two main groups which objected to military service during the War. This being so, an examination of the S.Q.S. proves rewarding, for it shows the differences and agreements between Quakers and socialists.

38. Vide. Part 2, Chapter 1

And it also reveals that the Quaker body itself was far from being in complete agreement about the war and about military service.

The Ploughshare, the journal produced by the Socialist-Quakers, has already been mentioned. In volume one the basis of the Society was set but in language which sought to unite the religious and marxist elements within the Society. It stated that:

> THE SOCIALIST QUAKER SOCIETY consists of members of the Society of Friends and of others closely connected therewith. Its members, acknowledging "the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" as an immediate guide in each individual, feel that this implies a Universal Brotherhood, such as cannot in any true sense be realised under the present competitive system of industry. They therefore hold that the means of production, distribution, and exchange should be collectively owned. [39]

After this introduction the aims of the Society were given. These were to explain to the Society of Friends what was meant by socialism; how socialism could solve the problems of society; and finally, the important part which Quakers could play in spreading the socialist doctrine.

When the Socialist-Quakers spoke of socialism they meant Guild socialism. This is clear from their programme of reconstruction. Guild socialism was not new in the twentieth century, its germs had been present in the Owenism of the 1830's. Basically this type of socialism was concerned with the control of industry by the workers engaged in that industry. Its implications went much further than this, for from this basis was produced a theory

39. The Ploughshare Vol. 1, No. 1 (February, 1916) p. 35.

of government on a national scale. Democracy was the prop of this theory; a democracy which, with certain reservations, was to operate at all levels and in all situations. Unlike revolutionary or parliamentary socialists, guild socialists feared the power of the state and far from wanting to add to its powers, they felt that there should be checks on this power. The machinery of Government, considered by the guildsmen to be the State was, in effect, to be one among several large guilds which would operate in a society committed to guild socialism.

It was, in many ways, natural that Quakers should show an interest in guild socialism. At many points in Quaker history, members of the Society of Friends had shown interest in the worth of labour as opposed to capital. The Ploughshare pointed to these connections in a series of pen portraits of men who had influenced Quaker thinking in this direction. In an article concerning Gerard Winstanley, the seventeenth century Digger, L.H. Wedmore claimed that Winstanley "was destined .... to strike his share deeper and make his furrow longer than the Fenny Drayton shoemaker Fox." He explained this by saying that

> George Fox's slender competency was a bar to his understanding that economic problem of life the pressure of which Winstanley was compelled to feel. Had it been otherwise, the present 'Ploughshare' need not have seen the light. 40

40. The Ploughshare Vol. 1 No. 2 (March 1916) p. 52

Winstanley's basic idea was that there should be a common sharing of the land of England and with this idea before him, he began 'digging' the common land in Surrey so that all men might share the land which was the property of all. 41

Another man who received attention from the Socialist-Quaker journal was John Bellers, a Quaker, who had lived in the latter half of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century. Bellers appears to have been a merchant of small means, a lord of the manor and a Fellow of the Royal Society. Despite his wealth, Bellers showed an interest in the welfare of the poor, claimed M. O'Brian Harris, who wrote a short article on him in The Ploughshare. The author asserted:

> Like the Socialist-Quakers of today, he felt it his duty to rouse Friends to their responsibility for the poor of the nation, the state of the poor being his chief pre-occupation. 42

Beller's thoughts on Labour influenced Robert Owen, for the former wished to make "Labour and not Money the standard to value all Necessaries." Bellers also had thoughts upon education which tended in the same direction as Owens and pre-dated them. In his work Quakers in Commerce, Paul H. Emden asserts that Francis Place told Owen that Bellers had produced Owen's social programme a hundred years before Owen. 43 Emden also claims that Owen always

41. Winstanley was not strictly a Quaker, although he shared their views on religious life, believing in "the Indwelling Light of Reason...the one needful guide of human conduct." From Winstanley's "Truth Lifting up its Head above Scandals." Quoted in The Ploughshare, Ibid. p. 54.

42. The Ploughshare, Vol. 1. No. 9 (October, 1916), p. 272.

43. Paul H. Emden, Quakers in Commerce: A Record of Business Achievement. (London: Sampson Low, Marston and Co. Ltd., 1939).

recognized his debt to Bellers. Marx also read Beller's work calling him "a veritable phenomenon in the history of political economy". There is, then, a connection between the Socialist-Quakers of the twentieth century and their Guild Socialism (in effect a mixture of co-operatism and Unionism) through Owen and Bellers.

Despite the undoubted connections between Quakerism and concern for the poor, the Socialist-Quaker Society had set itself no mean task when it attempted to enlist the aid of the Society of Friends in spreading the socialist doctrine. Many of the Society were actively engaged in capitalism and were not to be expected to welcome a movement which sought to attack the basis of society as they knew it. Quakers had a reputation for being philanthropic. They took an active interest in social questions, but many of them were very much a part of the Establishment and did not wish to see society changed in accordance with socialist principles.

During the eighteenth century, denied access to politics and to a university education by the Test Act (1673), Quakers had turned their energies to the quiet pursuits of trade. Many had amassed great fortunes through shipping, banking and in other areas of trade as both merchants and manufacturers. By frugal living and by hard work these Quaker business men built up fortunes which they kept within their families and within a close Quaker circle by inter-marriage with other Quaker families.

Stephen Hobhouse has recorded his impressions of some wealthy Quaker families which he visited at the beginning of the twentieth century. He was disturbed by some of the things he saw:

> One expected more simple living and self-sacrifice among folk who professed the idea of Quaker Christianity and equality before God. Thus in the great mansion built for himself by Sir George Reckitt (of the familiar Reckitt's Blue advertisement for the weekly wash) the visitor had a marble bathroom to himself, and servants abounded. Yet he and Lady Reckitt were naturally simple and pious people, attending devotedly the dingy Quaker Meeting House in a Hull slum. [44]

There were many other wealthy Quaker families, the Frys, Cadbury's, Rowntrees, and the Clarks provide good examples. All were very active in social alleviation, but all nevertheless tied to the capitalist system.

In the minds of the Socialist-Quakers capitalism was closely linked with war. However, as W. L. Hare, one of the joint editors of The Ploughshare sought to show, it was one of seven wars being waged in the world. [45] He dealt firstly with the Primal War of the species which he defined as the claim of some to live at the expense of others and pointed to this aspect of life in much of the animal kingdom. Man also participated in this war, but there were those who could look closely at the forces driving men to these ends and who sought to eradicate them. Pacifists, he was saying, wished to raise man above the animal kingdom, to examine why certain actions were made and to dispense with them if they were irrational. Man must not fight man because men had minds which if properly used allowed them to escape from the law of the jungle.

Hare went on to discuss the Class war which, he maintained, was largely responsible for the Sex War and the Commercial War.

44. Stephen Hobhouse, Forty Years and an Epilogue (London: James Clark, 1951), p. 132.

45. The Ploughshare, Vol. 1 (February, 1916) pp. 1-3.

The basis of the Class war was the urge to possess, said Hare, and had been a marked feature of man's existence since pre-historic times. He felt that the Sex war was an economic battle between male and female. It was being increased by the growing numbers of women who were taking the industrial positions vacated by men who had joined the army. When these men returned to civilian life, he predicted, there would take place a fierce conflict between men in need of work and women with new privileges who would use every means to safeguard these privileges. When women eventually received the vote they would possess another weapon with which to wage the Sex war.

It is not clear from this short discussion of the Sex war how this economic conflict was to be resolved. Were women to be excluded from industry, or was industry to be run in such a way that there were to be equal opportunities and renumeration for both men and women? Hare did not say. Quakers made no distinction between men and women in the Meeting house, but perhaps this Socialist-Quaker thought that women had no place in factories, or it seems, in politics.

Hare saw the Commercial War as an outcome of the conflict between wage-earners and capitalists. The result, he claimed, was that employers in Britain banded together to protect 'British Trade'. Hare went straight from this point to link 'British Trade', 'German Trade' and 'French Trade' with the Great War, although he did say that Commercial War had preceded the War. He wrote:

> Every day of blood and fire proves to us that this Military War of today is based upon and waged for - no fine phrases - victories of a very material kind. In our future issues we shall bring forward facts as will leave the sceptics dumb. 46

Hare did not guide his readers carefully through the various steps of his argument, but presumably what he meant was that in Britain employers united to protect themselves against the workers. After this the Employers of one nation felt that they had to group together against the employers of another nation or nations and that it was from the resulting conflict that wars occured. Protection, then, was one of the evils which caused wars. In a longer article he might have gone on to say that the workers were the dupes who actually fought the employer's battles. Without employers and without protection there would be no wars, for what had the workers to fear from each other and where was the need of protection with a united proletariat. Countries and nationalism would disappear.

The Great War was treated by Hare as the fifth of his seven wars. He linked military war with the primal war, saying that The Ploughshare stood against all war "as an outworn instrument of barbarism". It was possible for men to live in peace with one-another if they would live "justly". Christ's message was more important than British Trade or British Prestige, Hare continued, and because of this the magazine would not concern itself with victory or ways of obtaining it. Instead Socialist-Quakers would play their part in the sixth war, the war against war.

46. Ibid. p. 2.

Hare described the seventh war as the Real Armageddon. Its aims were the "complete regeneration and unification of humanity". This war was not fought "between the Kingdoms of the earth but against them all". Hare insisted that the battle was becoming clear to many and that for those who saw the issues clearly there could be no hesitation about the part they must play "in lesser wars here below".

In the first issue of The Ploughshare the editors had promised to substantiate the statements they had made concerning the war with "facts as will leave the sceptics dumb". Sceptics there certainly were within the Society of Friends as well as outside it. Ploughshare opinion had been expressed at the 1915 Yearly Meeting and this opinion had caused dissension. It was decided to form a committee, to be called the War and Social Order Committee, whose purpose was to examine the relationship between war and the social order. Sub-committees were formed to investigate specific problems; armaments, trade struggle, regulation and control of industry. A glance at the names associated with these committees shows that they were Ploughshare inspired. W. L. Hare, Robert O. Mennell and H. L. Wilson all subscribed to the Quaker-socialist viewpoint. In addition to these three committees there was a Service Committee which was composed of representatives from the Men's Service Committee and the Women's Service Committee, the Central Education Committee and the Young Friend's Committee. The ground to be broken by this latter committee was fraught with danger, for its sub-committees were set to discover how Quakers should live

and what they should do with their money. Firstly, there was a committee on investment which was to search out the possibilities of a permanent board to collect statistics upon "non-military" or more positively "sociological investment". Using these statistics, the board would give advice upon investment for the "best moral purpose". Secondly, there was a simplification sub-committee which was to advise those who felt that their lives were too ostentatious and wished to change this state of affairs. Thirdly, there was an experimental sub-committee to investigate whether it was advisable for the Society of Friends to secure a simpler and richer life through association with similar groups to themselves.

At a conference held at Jordan's Hostel, April 7, 1916, the work of all the committees was discussed. The results were inconclusive. From the Origins of War Committee came reports on Racial Antagonism; War and Property; the Class war; Modern Industrialism and the Causation of Wars; and Illustrations of Trade Rivalry leading to war. After a discussion of the problem of war and social order, the concensus of opinion was:

> We could not show that the present social order has its <u>inevitable</u> outcome in war, yet the converse seems true, at least of modern wars, that they have their origin in the social system in which we all too readily aquiesce. [47]

The Control Sub-Committee advocated that the worker needed "a larger share in the control of his work and life". Guild socialism was discussed. It was argued that Quaker employers could set an example to other employers, but that "a pooling of Quaker

47. <u>The Ploughshare</u> Vol. 1, No. 4 (May 1916) p. 128.

industrial interests did not seem exactly practicable at the present moment". 48

There was no report from the committee on competition. It was stated that there was some disagreement about the attitude to be taken towards competition. Although some members thought that competition was, in itself, evil, others felt that this was not so. Disagreement was also apparent in the findings of the Simplification Sub-Committee. The Committee being unable to arrive at a standard scale of living for everyone. It was suggested that young people should be brought up to lead a simple life before they became imbued with ideas of increasing expenditure as their incomes increased; for the contention was that:

> the root of the War Spirit lies very near the determination to retain for our own disposal such things as we have in excess of our fellows. 49

Community living was reported upon by the Experiment Sub-Committee. The Doukhobor way of life was examined, it being suggested that conscientious objectors might be brought together in a like manner.

From this examination of the Quaker-socialist Society; its aims ambitions and impact upon other Quakers, certain conclusions present themselves. The Society of Friends, as a whole, did not welcome these ideas, for most of its members were, as The Plough-share pointed out 'wealthy people'. Quakers were often charged with accumulating wealth for their own use and in many instances these

48. Ibid. p. 128.

49. Ibid. p. 129.

charges were justified. Problems connected with Quaker acquisition of wealth did not emerge with the Quaker-socialists. Balked by the Test Act which closed politics and a university education to Quakers and by their own tenet which forbade them to swear an oath, Quakers had early become associated with business. There grew up among these early Quakers the belief that it was not a sin to acquire and that, in fact, they had a duty to be successful. Idleness and a lack of initiative were not to be lauded; hard work was. But money had to be earned in the right way and spent in the right way. This meant that prices were to be fair and that money earned was to be put to good use. The former, led to Quaker use of 'the fair price', the latter to the philanthropic activities of the Quakers.

In the industries with which they were connected, Quaker employers sought to share with their employees some of the profits made by the industry. Reckitts of Hull had a prosperity sharing scheme and so did Rowntrees of York. Pensions, welfare schemes, old age pension and accident schemes were in operation in many Quaker factories. Yet this was not taking things as far as the Socialist-Quakers wished to go. They wanted control of an industry by its workers, not merely their participation in profit sharing schemes. It is clear then, that as philanthropic as Quaker employers were, they did not wish to see their industries taken away from them. Socialist-Quakers could expect little help from this section of the British Quaker movement in their desire to have Quakers spread the doctrine of socialism.

CHAPTER IV

CONSCRIPTION FORCES DECISION

I

From August 1914 until the introduction of conscription in the Spring of 1916, British Quakers and others who objected to war had, if they wished, plenty of opportunities to involve themselves in relief work. For those who did not consider that ambulance work was work of a military nature the F.A.U. provided one outlet. There was also work of reconstruction in France. With money collected by the War Victims Relief Fund, Friends had set up a centre for this work at Vitry-le-Francois from where they essayed to build wooden houses for the victims of the shelling of both armies. As more funds became available the range of Quaker activities grew. Agricultural machinery was supplied together with some livestock, so that the war torn countryside might yield a little food. Quakers also rant the maternity wing of a hospital. But, again, asiin the case of Corder Catchpool, they occasionally pined for work of a more dangerous nature. In an article for the Contemporary Review, Netta R. Nicholson alluded to this when she wrote:

> Now and again, Mr. X told me, they (Quakers) get a little tired of the absence of danger; they cannot fight, but they understood on coming out that they were to be nearer the shells than the Government allows them to be; yet they do what has fallen to them with as many jests as the men in the trenches and with as much efficiency. [50]

50. The Contemporary Review, September, 1915, p. 369.

Amongst ambulance workers and reconstruction workers, it seems, there were men with a sense of adventure and a willingness to help relieve the sufferings of those nearest the battle zone. These two factors made them chafe at reasonably 'safe' work behind the lines. They could not fight, but they were anxious to show that they were not cowards and that they could perform useful work closer to the battle fields.

For those Friends who did not cross over to the Continent there was other useful work to be done in Britain itself. The Emergency Committee for Relief of Germans, Austrians, Hungarians and Turks in Distress worked to alleviate the problems of aliens in Britain. Often families in need of help had a British mother and an alien father. When the father was interned by the British authorities, he could not provide the necessary funds for the needs of his family. In such cases Quakers supplied what help they could. Some British families employed alien domestics prior to the outbreak of war, but when war came they thought it patriotic to dispense with these servants without paying them their due wages. Interned aliens were given tools and working materials by the Emergency Committee. In so doing, it helped these people to have a worthwhile interest while they were behind barbed wire.

Conscription quickly changed the attitude of many Quakers to these relief measures. In the F.A.U. all the members were not conscientious objectors and some were not members of the Society of Friends. But many who had been content to serve in the Unit

refused to serve under the new conditions, partially brought about by conscription. They felt that the increased power of the Army in the affairs of the Unit together with the tendency of the Government and the general public to consider Unit members as true conscientious objectors while they dismissed those in Britain who went to prison for conscience sake, as rebels, placed them in a position which necessitated resignation from the Unit. For non-Quakers in the F.A.U., conscription demanded that they enlist, perhaps in an army medical unit, or return home and face the consequences of refusal. After conscription was introduced, Quakers could secure exemption to enable them to serve in the F.A.U. In other branches of Quaker relief work exemption was usually obtained if the conscientious objector was willing to go before a tribunal and state his case. Some Quakers would not do this. Stephen Hobhouse, who had been Chairman of the Emergency Committee dealing with aliens, refused to continue this work under the threat of conscription. He felt that it was wrong for a conscientious objector to accept any work or alternative service from a tribunal. The argument he used was that to do such work, however harmless it might seem, would release some other man for the army.

II

The position adopted by Hobhouse was termed absolutist, while that held by those who accepted exemption from combatant service, in order to perform work of 'national importance', was known as the alternativist position. These two opposing viewpoints caused much

confusion in the ranks of conscientious objectors throughout the War. Within the ranks of the Society of Friends there were many supporters of alternative service. Indeed it was two Quaker M.P.'s who had framed the part of the exemption clause which dealt with the widening of the clause to include work of national importance. [51] From its inception the Friends Service Committee was absolutist in outlook. [52] While it always maintained that Quakers had the right to alternative service, it sought to hold them to a strict interpretation of the Quaker peace testimony: non-participation in any activity which might aid the war effort in any way. This was a difficult policy to uphold and was, perhaps of necessity, a minority viewpoint. Where did Quakers hold the line in what did or did not constitute involvement in the war? In a letter to The Times, the secretary of the F.S.C. chose minesweeping to illustrate the Committee's opposition to non-combative service. It was pointed out that:

> A minesweeper who undertook such service in the interests of humanity would start operations on his native coast and be shot on sight...for his pains. It must be obvious...mine sweeping and mine laying in certain areas are but parts of a single scheme and serve equally the purposes and ends of war. [53]

The secretary of the F.S.C. was correct in his assertion that minesweeping was an obvious example of non-combatant work contributing to the war effort, but there were many other positions

51. Vide Part 2, Chapter V.

52. Hereafter referred to as the F.S.C.

53. The Times, January, 12, 1916. p. 9

where the connection between the war and work of national importance could not be pointed to with such certainty. Opponents of the absolutist standpoint often confronted absolutists with the argument that while Britain was at war, no work was completely free of some contribution to the war effort, but that there were areas which allowed conscientious objectors to give service without compromising the Quaker peace testimony. Absolutists used the same argument while reversing the conclusion. Since no work except peace work was 'clean and untainted' conscientious objectors should refuse to perform any work under a system geared to the military machine.

Socialist Quakers advocated the absolutist position. They saw the introduction of alternative service as an attempt to 'divide and conquer'. And further, they believed that to accept such service released someone else to perform combatant service. From Parliament itself, The Ploughshare produced evidence to support the Socialist-Quaker allegation. Sir J. Walton had asked whether conscientious objectors would be allowed to place barbed wire between the trenches; an action, he felt, which would save life, not take it. In reply, Mr. Tennant, the Under-Secretary of State for War, said:

> Members of this corps (N.C.C.) would be organized in units to relieve combatant soldiers for service at the front. [54]

54. H.C. Debates, 5th Series, Vol. LXXX, Col. 1862 (14 March 1916). N.C.C. refers to the Non-Combatant Corps formed shortly after the introduction of conscription. Men in this body could be ordered to work with munitions, but were not required to fire a rifle. It was an outlet for men whose objection was to killing only.

The May 1916 edition of The Ploughshare contained an article on Alternative Service by Clifford Allen, the Chairman and a founder member of the N-C.F. [55] Allen was not a Quaker, but he was early converted to the absolutist position of the F.S.C. and was one of its chief supporters in the N-C.F. He began his argument by attacking the Tribunals set up by the Government to deal with exemptions under the Military Service Act. Allen referred to those conscientious objectors who had been unable to secure the sympathy of the Tribunals. For such men there could be no alternative service even if they were willing to undertake work of this nature. He regretted that 'friends' had put forward the idea of alternative service, a service which divided the C.O. movement while at the same time convincing the public that the Government was granting to 'true' objectors the exemptions they required. Pursuing the same point of division, Allen maintained that the clause concerning alternate service removed for practically all objectors the opportunity of securing absolute exemption. Allen did not give examples of the confused thinking, whether sincere or deliberate, of British Tribunals when faced with the vagaries of the Military Service Act's exemption clause. The Tribunal, a publication of the N-C.F. provided examples in plenty.

In conclusion, Allen contended that conscientious objectors were already engaged in national service. They were working for peace. He asked whether those involved in pronouncements upon

55. Vice. Chapter VI of Part One

national service would admit peace agitation as national service. If not, it became clear that the service to be executed was to aid the military machine.

Clifford Allen's article brought forth a letter from A. Stewart of Glasgow, who felt that although Allen's attitude was the logical one for a conscientious objector to adopt, it was not an attitude which he could support at the moment. He thought that the Government should allow objectors to leave the country if they would not perform work of national importance. This would remove the argument against some objectors that they accepted the security and privileges of Britain without fighting for them. The writer indicated that he was an accountant, a profession, he stated, which aided the war effort. If he could obtain alternate service as a clerk it would be a "small step", but a step which would save his family from having to accept charity. Stewart showed an affinity with Ploughshare economics when he wrote that interest and profits were the real enemies:

> Military Service as such, though short of the Christian ideal, is no sin, the taking of interests and profits is. [56]

Socialist-Quakers believed that capitalist competition was one of the prime factors which produced wars, but they would not have agreed with Stewart concerning alternative service or that military service was not a sin. Stewart, in fact, appears to have been in a confused state when he wrote his letter, for although he

56. The Ploughshare, Vol. 1 No. 5 (June 1916). p. 151.

scorned "interests and profits", he maintained that "he was engaged in assisting the rich to rob the poor" and that he was not prepared, at that time, to abandon his work.

The Ploughshare allowed Stewart's letter to pass without comment, but the letter of another correspondent did not receive the sympathetic answer it was supposed to exact. It was from the managing clerk of a building firm who stated that he had accepted alternative service on a fruit farm. His wife was to take up his old occupation. He asked whether this constituted a gain for the national economy. In curt language the editor replied "A fruit grower has gone to the trenches - a builder's clerk and his wife have gone under military and industrial control." 57

Ploughshare writers were not backward in pointing the finger at those they considered responsible for suggesting alternative service to the Government. Edith J. Wilson, the Assistant Clerk of the London Yearly Meeting, said that it was those "who because of age, sex or both have not to make the decision between the trenches or prison." 58

Older Friends, she continued, thought of jail, conflicts in guard rooms, beatings and the possibility of the death penalty and they decided that they must protect younger Friends from such suffering. She maintained, it was "the tragedy of advancing years that wealth, and honours and position and comfort, gain such a hold upon us." Older Quakers failed to realize that "young men are

57. The Ploughshare, Vol. 1. No. 7 (August, 1916) p. 203

58. Ibid., p. 205

willing to sacrifice all these things and life itself in the pure joy of a quest for truth." 59

Edith Wilson saw alternative service as a compromise between older Quakers and the Government, it was the price of non-interference with the military machine. The result was that many valuable men had been lost to the fight for peace and she regretted that this loss meant that others had to take up the cause and proclaim 'our particular message'.

However, alternative service was defended by a large body of Quakers both young and old. In a letter to The Times, some Quakers gave the reason for their support. Firstly they showed that they were patriotic by pointing out that about three hundred young Quakers were serving in the army while a further four or five hundred were occupied in ambulance or reconstruction work. By giving these figures, the alternativists sought to show that the absolutist policy of the F.S.C. was not the policy of all Quakers. The Society of Friends believed in "freedom of conscience and the liberty of individual action", they said, and they felt that the 'conscience clause' of the Military Service Act provided for these. The writers deplored the attitude of those who refused alternative service, claiming that many who did so were not Quakers.

59. Ibid; p. 205

For,

> The acknowledgment by the Government of the possibility of a higher claim than its own on the allegiance of British subjects is surely an indication that this war has been undertaken in a different spirit from any previous war, and that the righteousness and justice are principles underlying the action that has been forced upon our country.[60]

Sixteen names, culled from a large area of Britain, were attached to the letter, although it was claimed that the group spoke for "a large body of opinion". It is clear that these men were not only alternativists, but that they believed Britain to be fighting a defensive war and that it was a just war. Britain had been forced to take action, it had played no part in the causes of the war. These ideas were far removed from the outright denial of all war which other Quakers proudly claimed had been the policy of the Society of Friends for hundreds of years.

One of the interesting aspects of this letter, though, is that it shows clearly the wide spectrum of opinion present in the Society. There were men who enlisted, men who accepted non-combatant service, alternate service, ambulance or reconstruction work; men who would not fight, but who supported a just war; and men who held strictly to the letter of the Quaker peace testimony, facing prison rather than compromise this testimony.

Most of the absolutist conscientious objectors were socialists, although the absolutist was to be found amongst both religious

60. The Times, 3 March, 1916. p.9.

and non-religios groups. An article which appeared in The Ploughshare after the cessation of hostilities, pointed out that the absolutist element could be divided into three groups. The divisions were not to be considered in rigid terms, however, for there was movement between the groups which transcended the boundaries depicted in the article. The largest group was the Centre group which felt that those who attacked freedom should be challenged; that labour and democracy should receive just treatment; and that violence should be outlawed, for it was "neither rational, nor effective, nor (according at least to a good proportion of the group) moral". To the right lay those who the author called "good-will-ites". They believed that one should love ones enemies as well as one's friends. Society could be improved, they asserted, if all its component groups were enjoined to help. It was necessary to build upon the good basis existing in society rather than destroy the bad. On the left were the revolutionaries. They were out to attack the injustices of the prevailing economic structure; by argument if possible, but by revolution if necessary.

Despite the obvious differences between the groups there was affinity between them in jail. All chose to remain in prison rather than accept military or alternative service. With time, the mingling of different groups caused them to influence each other. The author noted a movement towards the left. Church of England conscientious objectors swung towards the Quaker viewpoint, while Quakers "ceased to look with any marked disapproval on such agnostics as were at the same time humanitarian." 61

61. The Ploughshare: Vol. 4, No. 6 (July, 1919). p. 173.

He noted also a left-ward swing in political thinking. A feeling that violence was necessary if the violence of capital against labour was to be terminated. But the writer did not subscribe to the necessity of violence. His faith rested with "intellect, work and sympathy which achieve - for good or evil." Militarism must be fought, however, and he advocated an alliance with those who preached violence for this battle. For he was convinced that unless anti-militarists remained united, a further war would break out" within seven or eight years."[62]

This article, written by Leonard Simons, stated his position as a centerist. It produced a response from R.M. Fox, who wrote that he was a leftist and that he had been a Spartacus representative in Wandsworth prison. He agreed with Simons that revolution was the watchword of the 'left', but that it did not find the idea of revolution a pleasant one. An unpleasant one. An unpleasant industrial system had driven the revolutionaries to their conclusions. They could not promise that they would not use arms if a particular situation demanded arms. Fox echoed the plea of Simon's for unity between absolutists, pledging that those on the left were moved by an"intense desire to abolish Militarism everywhere." For militarism, he continued, was the "scientifically organised brain crushing department of the Capitalist system."[63]

Unity should be emphasised in order that capitalism could be defeated. History would decide which 'faction' should triumph.

62. Ibid., p. 173.

63. The Ploughshare. Vol. 4, No. 8 (September, 1919). p. 220.

It will be clear that The Ploughshare embraced views contained in both the first and second of these two groupings. Socialist-Quakers wanted economic changes just as much as the revolutionary group, but they wanted to secure these by non-violent means. It was noted earlier that within the Quaker body itself there were many people who could be called capitalists, but this did not lead to violent antagonism between these people and Socialist-Quakers. The latter sought to convert not to destroy. Guild socialism, which the Socialist-Quakers advocated, was essentially a method of compromise and was to be erected upon the existing structures of co-operatism and trade unionism. These two movements, had, during the late nineteenth century, concerned themselves with adapting to the society in which they found themselves rather than pursuing a revolutionary policy. After the Bolshevik revolution in Russia, The Ploughshare did actually receive letters which called for violence, but its editorial comment remained strictly pacifist in tone.

III

By using the examples of Corder Catchpool and Stephen Hobhouse it is possible to obtain an insight into the opinions and experiences of two absolutists whose attitudes towards conscientious objection and Society were in many ways similar to those of The Ploughshare. Both were Quakers, Catchpool from birth and Hobhouse by conversion. They were also socialists, having been members of the Independent Labour Party for a number of years before the out-

break of war. The early lives of these two men were vastly different, but gradually their paths converged until war and the conscription issue completed the journey

The work of Corder Catchpool in the F.A.U. has already been observed. He was born into a Quaker family whose connections with the Society of Friends could be traced to the middle of the seventeenth century. His father trained as a solicitor, but he never established a practice, the family being sufficiently endowed to make this step unnecessary. After a venture into the hosiery business, which proved unsuccessfuly, the father spent most of his days quietly reading his Bible.

Stephen Hobhouse's background was completely different. He was surrounded by wealth and privilege from birth. A large part of the Hobhouse fortune had been made out of the slave trade in the eighteenth century. This wealth helped to purchase a country house which Stephen's father inherited and which Stephen himself was expected to inherit one day. The father, as the local squire, was very active in local politics and from this base he eventually entered national politics, serving as M.P. for East Somerset in the period 1885-1906. Stephen's mother also had an ancestry which included men of business and Members of Parliament. [64] Hobhouse, then, was born into a family of wealth with a tradition of public service; a family of influence. Even from his birth he was surrounded by this influence. [65]

64. Her grandfather Richard Potter (1778-1843) was M.P. (Radical) for Wigan, Lancs. Together with his brother Sir Thomas Potter he was one of the founders of the Manchester Guardian.

65. Lord Milner was a god-father and Beatrice Webb (his aunt) a god-mother at his Anglican christening.

Hobhouse was educated in keeping with his elevated social position; Eton and Balliol College, Oxford. During his years at Eton and in his early Oxford days there was no sign that one day he would become a Quaker, a Socialist and an absolutist objector. He was a member of the Eton Rifle Volunteers and later he joined the Oxford Rifle Volunteers. As a boy at Eton he had read Blatchford's Merrie England and visited certain slum areas of London where old Etonians had founded a 'school mission'. [66] There was nothing unusual about this, for, at that time, it was quite common for such young men to visit slum areas and take part in educational work amongst the poor. Settlements, such as Toynbee Hall, which Hobhouse visited while at Oxford, were founded by university men.

Hobhouse claims that it was a sixpenny book, picked up hapazardly at a railway station book store which changed his life. The book was A Confession by Leo Tolstoy. [67] After reading the book Hobhouse made certain resolutions which are pertinent to this study: he would not kill a fellow man "whatever the provocation or compulsion"; nor would he give his support for wars, however "just" or defensive they might seem; he would not live as a wealthy landlord, but would seek employment which provided wages more akin to those of the working man; and he would refrain from participation in the services of the Anglican Church.

66. Robert Blatchford; Merrie England (London, Clarian Press (C 1894).

67. This work appears in the Centenary Edition of Tolstoy's Works, ed A. Maude, translation mainly by A. and L. Maude (21 Vols, 1928-37). Oxford University Press, London, H. Milford, Vide. Vol. II (1933).

In practice, it was difficult to follow these decisions to the letter. Military training he did renounce, but the scorning of a few luxuries sufficed, at that period, to fulfil the second resolution. He continued to visit the Anglican Church occasionally, although more and more he found himself as the member of a non-conformist congregation. His rejection of military pursuits led him to read various pieces of Quaker literature, but he soon found that in terms of acquiring property, the Quakers were "far from being Tolstoyans!" [68] Through Joan Fry, the member of a local Somerset Quaker family, Hobhouse was introduced to Maurice Rowntree. [69] In turn, Maurice introduced Stephen to his first Quaker Meeting. But Hobhouse was unimpressed with the Oxford Meeting. It was not until he took a position at the Board of Education that Hobhouse became a regular Quaker attender. At the Hampstead Meeting House he found the Meeting he was searching for. For two and three quarter years he scarcely missed a first day meeting. During this period he worked for the Government, but he found that he could not continue his employment as a Government worker and devote himself to the spiritual and social work in his neighbourhood. This work had gradually taken up most of his non-working hours. Being of a delicate constitution, however, it became impossible for him to continue to work the long hours which were demanded of him. He

68. Hobhouse, op. cit. p. 64

69. Son of Joshua Rowntree, M.P. and Lord Mayor of Scarborough, Yorks.

decided, therefore, to leave the Government's employ. When he resigned on 1 April, 1912, he had worked in the field of educational administration for seven years.

Following his resignation, Hobhouse paid a visit to the United States. The object of the visit was to try and heal the breach in North American Quakerism; a breach which had been partly caused by earlier evangelical British visitors in the nineteenth century. This journey, Hobhouse followed with another. He went to Constantinople to perform relief work amongst armenians in that city and Moslem refugees fleeing there before the Bulgarians, Greeks and Serbs. After eleven months of this work he returned to London.

Hobhouse looked askance at the social conditions of the poor then existing in London. He had seen these conditions before, but this time he decided that he must give up his comfortable existence and live amongst the poor, taking as the model for his new way of life the two-pound per week labourer. His mind made up, Hobhouse secured for himself a flat in a slum tenement and did what he could to aid those around him.

This work was interrupted by the War and Hobhouse began his work for the alleviation of distressed aliens and their familes. With talk of conscription becoming more common, his own family became anxious about the pacifist attitudes expressed by their son. This anxiety led them to try and pull strings in high places so that Hobhouse would be ignored by the Authorities. These tactics only strengthened his resolve. He was more than ever determined to take

his place with other conscientious objectors and publicly declare his objection to war. In August, 1916, Hobhouse was refused absolute exemption under the Military Service Act. An appeal was allowed him, but he did not take advantage of this provision, feeling that only harm could come to the conscientious objection movement if he, with his background of wealth and connections, remained free while others were persecuted.

At his local Tribunal, which he described as being made up mainly of local shopkeepers and tradesmen, he stated the grounds for his objection. They were determined by his being "a disciple of Jesus Christ and ... an advocate of International Socialism." He records that his religious opinions were patiently received, but that he was interrupted by the Tribunal members when he suggested that

> capitalism produced results, for example in Hoxton slums, as terrible in their way as those of war and that the British Empire had been built up by aggressive war. [70]

Hobhouse was offered exemption if he would serve in the F.A.U. He refused to do this. Shortly afterwards he received his notice of call-up, which he ignored. When he failed to appear at his Unit, he was brought before a magistrate as an absentee, fined five pounds and handed over to the Army.

For most conscientious objectors, life in the Army consisted of confinement in the guard room; a monotonous existence only broken by occasional exercise. Hobhouse experienced none of

70. Hobhouse, op. cit. p. 155

the brutal treatment handed out to earlier objectors, for the War Office had strongly denounced this treatment by September, 1916. [71] Most of the conscientious objectors had a little extra cash and if this found its way into the hands of those soldiers in charge of the guard room and exercise area, small favours could be exacted which made life more bearable for those 'deemed to be soldiers'. Hobhouse found that, by this time, the Army had established a regular procedure for objectors. Refusal to take a medical examination or wear a uniform constituted a breach of discipline which warrented a court martial. But, whereas previously men had often been forced into uniforms, he found that now, a refusal to comply with a military order was greeted without fuss by the Army. A charge was made out and a court martial followed.

Hobhouse received six months hard labour, to be served at Wormwood Scrubs. The authorities shuttled conscientious objectors between the army and civil prison. After a court martial came prison. When the sentence was completed the man was sent back to the army, court martialled again and returned to prison. Some conscientious objectors were subjected to this treatment from the Spring of 1916, to the Summer of 1919. Many objectors found the return to army life provided a welcome alternative to prison. Life was not exactly comfortable in the guard rooms of His Majesty's Army, but a sense of freedom prevailed which contrasted strongly with prison life.

71. Ill treatment had not been completely removed, however, as is shown in Part 2. Perhaps Hobhouse's connections saved him from any hint of such treatment.

It was the silence rule which appears to have caused Hobhouse the greatest concern while he was in prison. His second court martial over, he was sent to Exeter prison where he served for eight months. Hobhouse has given a simple though expressive picture of his cell and his life in prison. First, he lost his name and became merely a number to the prison guards; a yellow badge, pinned to his coat proclaimed this number. His prison cell measured seven feet by thirteen. [72] For furniture there was a wooden table, a stool without a back and a bedboard. On entry to the prison, a prisoner given 'hard labour' slept on a plank bed for a two week period. After this he was given his bed-board and ahard mattress which, together with some blankets, had to be stacked against a wall in the daytime. The remaining effects of the cell consisted of a shelf, which housed the few books a prisoner could retain: a pint pot, a blunt knife, a spoon and a salt pot. During the day, some sunlight struggled through a barred window set high in one wall. Certain rules which the prisoner had to obey or face the penalty of solitary confinement, were printed on cards and left in the cell.

The food given to the prisoners consisted largely of porridge made with water, dry bread and salt. Hobhouse wrote that two out of his three daily meals consisted of such fare. He described a typical day in the following manner. A bell awoke him

72. There were exceptions. Bertrand Russell's biographer records that Frank Russell (Earl Russell) bullied the authorities into letting Bertrand have everything he wanted: "His cell was always furnished comfortably with a desk, chair, bed and carpet...he was always well supplied with books and flowers". He had an extra large cell "for which he had to pay 2 s 6 d a week". A fellow convict cleaned his cell. He was allowed to keep his light on until ten at night instead of eight. Quoted from Allan Wood, Bertrand Russell: The Passionate Sceptic (London: George Allen and Unwin 1957) p. 113

at 6:30 A.M. Twenty minutes later he emptied the previous night's slops. This procedure was followed by an hour's work, usually the sewing of mail bags or coal sacks. Next came a breakfast of porridge. The day progressed through exercise period, more sewing (for about four hours), and fifteen to twenty minutes in chapel. Finally came dinner (mostly potatoes) at 4:30 P.M., after which the prisoner was left alone in his cell for fifteen hours. Much of this day was spent under a warden's supervision and apart from the opportunity to sing hymns in the chapel, the prisoner had to remain silent. Sunday was considered by many prisoners to be the worst day of the week, for being a day devoid of work, the prisoners had to spend far more time alone in their cells.

Hobhouse rebelled against the silence rule, for he thought it wrong that prisoners should not be allowed to communicate with each other. [73] In a letter to his wife, he indicated to her and, of course, to the prison authorities who censored all mail, that he had decided to speak aloud (to himself) and to communicate with the other prisoners. He was rewarded for his intended rebelliousness by being placed in solitary confinement. Only through reading and prayer, he recorded, could he keep a grasp of his sanity in such a monotonous, silent existence. A monthly letter was all that was allowed him from home and similarily he was only permitted to write one letter each month to his wife.

In his cell the only other writing permitted the prisoner was upon a slate provided so that he might make notes.

73. Many did find ways to communicate often whispering while hymns were being sung in chapel or by singing messages to the hymn tunes.

In December, 1917, Hobhouse finished his term in prison. It was terminated because of ill-health. His mother and some members of the Commons and Lords were instrumental in obtaining his release and the release of four other objectors.

From the letters written by Corder Catchpool to his mother during his days as an absolutist objector, it is possible to obtain a more detailed picture of the life of an objector both in the Army and in prison. Essentially, however, Catchpool's account is the same as that portrayed by Stephen Hobhouse. Catchpool's story is much longer, though, for he entered the Army in January, 1917 and was not released until April, 1919. During this two and a quarter year period he was court martialed four times and was interned in three prisons: Wormwood Scrubs, Ipswich and Exeter.

Catchpool went into prison with the same sense of adventure that had marked his entry into the F.A.U. He wrote:

> It (prison) is a big adventure and we are keen to set out upon it. It sounds so funny to speak of prison as being in any sense an adventure, but it really is when thought of in the light of that challenge - much more so than going out to the front; for example, the dangers are so much subtler, more insidious, incalculable. The equipment must be so entirely spiritual.[74]

The next day in high spirits he wrote:

> And now en route for Scrubs. Heigho! now for the sustained tussle.[75]

He seemed able to adjust to his contact with the Army without

74. Catchpool, Op. Cit., p. 119. Letter dated 31 January, 1917.

75. Ibid. p. 129. Letter dated 1st February, 1917.

too much difficulty. Perhaps the ambulance work had equipped him to talk to, and mix with soldiers. In the final part of Catchpool's On Two Fronts he writes of his early reception by the Army. As Hobhouse, he found that refusal to obey an order was treated as a mere formality by this time. When asked to wear khaki he replied, "No Sir, I'm sorry to give trouble, but I can't comply." Early members of the Society of Friends would have been shocked if they could have known that eventually members of the movement would respect rank, for one of the objects of the plain language used by Quakers was that all men should be treated as equals. Indeed, Catchpool was not impressed by one of his colleagues who, "omitted the word 'sir' from a conception of principle I suppose." He seemed to feel that conscientious objectors, just because they were not soldiers, should be smarter in manner than soldiers. It filled him with regret that some objectors were not more concilatory to the Army. He wrote: "Some slouch, walk out of step and with hands in pockets." In the same letter he ventured the remark that: "Frankly, I loved the drilling in the Unit F.A.U. preperation days." [76] And in another letter, he commented: "I fancy I should have made a good soldier, but for this tiresome conscience of mine." [77]

Catchpool always sought to be neat and tidy and was proud of the fact that in prison he boasted the cleanest and best kept cell. His attitude to other conscientious objectors is interesting, for while

76. Ibid., pp. 115-116. Letter dated 23 January, 1917.

77. Corder Catchpool, Letters of a Prisoner: For Conscience Sake. (London: George Allen and Urwin, 1941), p. 35.

they were obviously out to obstruct the Army, he was not. They "slouched and walked out of step" with a purpose; to be as unlike soldiers as possible. He, perhaps, wanted to impress upon the Army that military training was not the only means of aquiring the 'smartness and discipline' which the Army put so much store by.

Catchpool's letters show the day to day life of a prisoner who had an eye for detail and who expressed under the most difficult conditions the feelings of a sensitive, literate man confined in jail. Reading proved an outlet for Catchpool as it did for Hobhouse. His book lists of wanted material sent to his mother were long and included works on the German language; History and Historical fiction; Theology; and works in the French language. Most of the letters he wrote from prison included his thoughts on the books he was reading and he was particularly interested in pointing out historical events which illustrated his thoughts. But while much of what he wrote was in a literary vein he did record many incidents in prison life which might have passed unnoticed by a less sensitive mind and pen.

He thought that his life in prison was in many ways similar to that of a monk: conscientious objectors became "temporary Carmelites". Of the absolutist objector he wrote. He was a

> man to whom the sinfulness of war seems so appalling that he must struggle against it, wrestle to deliver the world bound by it, might and main; struggle as never before for anything in his life; hears a call to it; feels that anything less would be to him drifting with the tide - not stemming it. He has to breast it. Exhausting, apparently so useless; ceasless temptation to give up in weariness and to drift into some quiet backwater of Alternative Service - good, useful, interesting, obvious service - victims to be pulled ashore - but yet, for him something less than the utmost struggle against the flood. [78]

78. Ibid., p. 101. Letter dated 16 August, 1918.

In comparing the absolutist with the strictest order of monks, Catchpool was seeking, not only to draw attention to the simplicity and harshness of prison life, but also that the absolutist serving in prison was making a positive and not negative contribution to peace. Just as monks removed themselves from society to pray for the world, so the absolutist was ensuring that somewhere in the world there was a pocket of men with peace in their hearts who would proclaim this peace under whatever circumstances they found themselves.

While he afforded all absolutists these peaceful intentions, Catchpool must have known that there were some of that number whose objections to war were more political than religious and who had not peace, but revolution in their hearts. Certainly they objected to the War, but primarily they objected to it as a capitalist war. Catchpool, however, was a member of the Society of Friends and of the I.L.P. and was therefore in a position to bring some harmony into the conscientious objection movement. His aim, then, was to unify not to disrupt.

His allegiance to the movement, as a whole, was tested on numerous occasions. The period of his life spent in the F.A.U. was continually coming back to haunt him. Catchpool's personal release, his mother informed him in one of her letters, was the subject of much discussion by people interested in securing the freedom of imprisoned objectors. In reply he urged that he did not wish to be given special treatment, nor did he welcome questions about his position being asked in parliament. He told her that when it had been suggested the Philip Snowden should ask such a question on his behalf, he had written to the M.P. asking him not to do this. Parliamentarians such as Trevelyan, Ponsonby and Snowden,

he felt, would be do better to continue agitation for a negotiated peace or to expose secret treaties. Questions about conscientious objectors he considered ill-timed and he did not expect the majority of M.P.'s to be influenced by the few. The most that could be hoped for was that those M.P.'s unsympathetic to the conscientious objection movement would admit that objectors were "honest fanatics". Thus he concluded that more sympathy might be forthcoming if those working on behalf of peace would concentrate on areas which might bring the war to an end. For Catchpool insisted that:

> "The one and only thing I care about is the ending of this awful war." 79

When the Armistice came on November 11, 1918, Catchpool was in Ipswich jail. He was elated by the unexpected news. As soon as the Assistant Chaplain visited him in his cell Catchpool asked him if it would be possible to hold a service of thanksgiving. The service was arranged, but its content disappointed him. He wrote:

> The Church was returning thanks for the great victory of the British Army and Empire whilst my thankfulness was for "Peace on earth, goodwill amongst the nations". 80

The thoughts of absolutists naturally turned to release, but Catchpool felt that in comparison to the ending of the war, the position of conscientious objectors was trivial. Also there was the possibility that conscription might be continued temporarily or even made a permanent aspect of British life. It did not do to raise hopes concerning an early release, for Catchpool recorded:

> "Prussia, crushed on the battlefield in Flanders, has triumphed here at the ballot box." 81

79. Ibid., p. 72. Letter dated 2 May, 1918.
80. Ibid., p. 123. Letter dated 22 November, 1918.
81. Ibid., p. 136. Letter dated 3 January, 1919.

However, by the end of January there was still no general release for conscientious objectors and Catchpool and others became restless about their future. He found it difficult to understand why objectors were being kept in prison. The only motive, he could think of was one of spite. Not until five months after the Armistice did release come. On 19 April, 1919, Catchpool became, once again, a free man.

CHAPTER V

SOCIALIST - QUAKERS AND WORLD PEACE

I

From the very beginning of the Great War there was talk of peace. At first the words were spoken in a whisper by a few and were unheard by men dashing off to war in patriotic fervour. However, as the war dragged on and on, more voices demanding peace were heard from many nations of the world, both belligerent and neutral. Some of the peace overtures were treated with suspicion in certain quarters. German declarations were thought by many to be clever manoeuvres and not overtures of peace. From Rome the Pope gave his recipe for peace. Messages of peace began to pour into Europe from the United States. European socialists gathered together and talked of peace. After the Bolshevik revolution, the new leaders of Russia suggested peace for all. There were back-stairs diplomatic peace moves in some of which the nobility of Europe played a key role. Even when these are mentioned the list of peace attempts is by no means exhausted. However, none of the attempts proved fruitful. The war dragged on until Germany, sensing that it was time to retreat and lick its wounds, snatched at Wilson's fourteen points.

Within the pages of The Ploughshare it is possible to see the attitude of Quaker-socialists to some of these attempted peace moves; the problems of peacemaking and the opinions they expressed upon the diplomatic machinery invented to prevent future wars.

Arriving at a formula for peace was difficult, but some idea of Quaker-socialist thinking on the subject can be gathered from two book reviews which appeared in The Ploughshare. [82] The first concerned a book by A. J. Toynbee entitled Nationality and the War. In reviewing this work, Joan Mary Fry took exception to the insinuation made by the author that "only one country is to blame for the whole of this madness." The country implicated was Germany, but following H. N. Brailsford, she contended that: "Responsibility is far more widespread, and as much connected with dividends as with Dreadnoughts." [83]

In one respect she did agree with Toynbee, when he said that nationalism 'is at the heart of most difficulties'. The implication behind this was that before a lasting peace could be made, a new insight into the causes of the war must be obtained. To make Germany solely responsible for the outbreak of war could only lead to a vindictive peace which would have repercussions later. She indicated that she felt capital was responsible for the war, the capital held by businessmen everywhere.

John Henry Barlow, in reviewing Towards a Lasting Settlement, a book edited by C. Roden Buxton, found more to his liking. The book was a collection of short chapters by prominent people in the peace movement. Barlow did not offer criticism or agreement on all the chapters, often merely outlining the contents.

82. As this journal was mainly concerned with reconstruction and writings concerning peace moves were scarce, it was necessary to glean Ploughshare opinion from such sources as book reviews.

83. The Ploughshare Vol. 1, No. 1, (February 1916) p. 31

However, from the introduction and conclusion of his article it is clear that most of the opinions contained in the book agreed with his own views, on the subjects discussed. With G. Lowes Dickinson, he agreed that the friction which led to wars could be removed by 'human reason which is also human charity.' C. Roden Buxton's article on Nationality also found favour, for it aimed at proving wrong the common assertion that pacificists were too 'cosmopolitan', disregarding the claims of 'individual nations'. In Roden Buxton's settlement proposals, nationalities were to receive due attention. Barlow was not as happy with a chapter entitled The Freedom of The Seas by H. Sidebottom. He commented that it "does not provide altogether pleasant reading for an Englishman".

Sidebottom asserted that British naval power was equivalent to Prussian militarism in the minds of the Neutrals. Barlow did not offer any opinions on this statement and dodged the issue by saying, "Clearly the question is one which will have to be squarely faced in the negotiations after the war." 84

It would be thought that J. A. Hobson's article on The Open Door would have been worthy of comment by a Socialist-Quaker for the author was a prominent guild socialist and maintained that, "There can be no security of durable peace unless the chief economic causes of discord among nations are removed." 85 Yet Barlow recorded this view, a view expressed consistently in The Ploughshare, without comment. Other articles by H. N. Brailsford and Philip Snowden received

84. Quoted in The Ploughshare (February, 1916) p. 32.

85. Ibid. p. 32

no comment from Barlow, although the former's advocacy of 'a permanent international tribunal, to be, if possible, elective, with an obligatory years delay before war may be declared' was a suggestion which would be welcome to Quakers, for there was a long association between Quakerism and arbitration. Socialist-Quakers, with their emphasis on the need for economic co-operation between nations, would also welcome arbitration, but would stress that economic problems must be solved first before international tribunals were formed. They would have agreed with Philip Snowden, though, that "The Destinies of Nations have been trusted to kings, nobles and plutocrats, and they have each failed. We must now trust the people." [86]

From these two book reviews certain aspects of Socialist-Quaker thinking on matters of peace are discernable. It is clear that they did not want a vindictive peace. No nation, it was argued, had the right to impose terms upon another, for no nation was totally uninvolved in the causes of the war. Further evidence of this attitude is available in The Ploughshare. The resolutions of the National Peace Council, which spoke against an anti-German fiscal policy and against the suggestion that the Allies should annex German territory, received approval from the journal.

The connection between economics and war was pounced upon by Miss Fry. It was a message which echoed throughout the pages of The Ploughshare. Looking through the agenda for the twelfth session of the National Peace Conference, the editor of the journal regretted

86. Ibid. p. 32.

that he saw no mention of a proposed discussion of economic problems and the causation of wars. An organized world economy, it was argued, would remove the necessity of war. Ploughshare politicians, another article maintained, should think

> how to link up the organizations of national industries with the international economic process of the whole world. That will be a 'plot' which never need fear to be unmasked. It will never lead to war. [87]

Basic to any discussion of peace terms by Socialist-Quakers then, was the priority of economic planning on a world scale. Without a clause on this aspect of international life it was felt that no peace settlement could succeed. For if it was true that economic problems were one of the root causes of war, then these problems had to be removed if there was to be lasting peace. With this in mind, it is interesting to note the attitudes expressed in The Ploughshare regarding some of the peace proposals made during the War.

Ploughshare reaction to the Pope's peace messages of July, 1915 and December, 1915 were not entirely favourable, although it was hoped that Mr. Asquith would pay attention to some of the points contained in the proposals. Two selections were given from the papal messages:

> First the fundamental point shall be that the moral force of right should replace the material force of arms.

and,

> The supremacy of 'right' once established... [88]

87. The Ploughshare Vol. 2, No. 1. (February 1917) p. 3

88. Quoted in The Ploughshare Vol. 2, No. 9 (October, 1917) p. 255

The Ploughshare interpreted the first quotation as meaning that

> men are asked to lay down their arms and cease to enforce their will or resist the will of others by the use of physical weapons.

Examining this, the Socialist-Quakers said that the Pope did not really envisage the complete renunciation of armaments nor did he give any details as to how the great moral conversion necessary for such action could take place. They claimed that he still thought in terms of armies and navies. Although he wished for a reduction in size of these, he still saw a world ruled by 'potentates and autocrats'. The Ploughshare asserted that moral force was not "an alternative means of obtaining things that are normally obtained by physical force." [89]

Coming out against armed law in the form of a league to enforce peace, the journal insisted that this was "certainly not the moral force of Right." Yet the main argument against the Pope's proposals was that they were impractical. Theoretically they were not without value, but many factors of peacemaking had been overlooked. Specifically and predictably, The Ploughshare drew attention to the omission of the world economic struggle. A real peace needed two important ingredients, it ventured: the replacement of trade rivalry by world economic co-operation and the subjugation of personal nationalistic aims for the good of all.

Socialist-Quakers, then, were aiming at the Pope the criticisms they leveled at many Quakers. It was fine to hold peaceful

89. Ibid. pp. 256-257.

sentiments, but these were not much use without some practical plan of obtaining peace. One of the main objects of the Socialist-Quaker Society, it was claimed, was to bridge the gulf between spiritual ideals and practical policy. Socialist-Quakers were not afraid to get their hands dirty.

President Wilson's fourteen points did not produce a great deal of comment from Ploughshare writers, but a few of the points were examined and found wanting. The first 'point' dealing with open diplomacy was thought to be of major importance and if it could be fulfilled, then this would be a great step forward for humanity. However, The Ploughshare did not feel that the day of open diplomacy had arrived:

> With regret...we have to damp the ardour of those who think the victory nearly won...means are always appropriate to ends, and that so long as the ends are those of commercial and national egoism the diplomacy cannot be honest. [89]

The commentator equated the concern of international politics and the wars they produced with 'international economic competition'. Diplomacy used to these ends could not be honest. When, he asked, would the Union of Democratic Control put first things first. [90]

Arthur Finch, in an article written after the Armistice, saw diplomacy as the 'tool of capitalists'. Diplomacy was secret because it was the only way capitalists could 'arrange'things for their own

89. The Ploughshare Vol. 3, No. 2 (March, 1918) p. 50

90. Organization formed shortly after the outbreak of war mainly by Liberal and I.L.P. M.P.s. Important members were Charles Trevelyan, Arthur Ponsonby, E.D. Morel and Ramsay MacDonald. The U.D.C. was anti-conscriptionist and agitated for a negotiated peace. Closely associated with the U.D.C. was the exposure of secret treaties and the insistence upon open'diplomacy'.

convenience. He did not believe that Paris would provide a righteous peace:

> The working of Extranational Government will be simply the execution of policies promoted by the strongest commercio-military powers comprising it, just as has been the case in the past. [91]

Again, the point continually hammered at by Ploughshare writers was that economic questions should form the basis of any peace talks. It was felt that open diplomacy was a fine sentiment and one to be supported, but that it was impossible to have such an open discussion of foreign policy unless economic differences at both a local and international level were solved.

Point two of Wilson's fourteen points was concerned with freedom of the seas and it seemed to present difficulties for Ploughshare writers. It was argued that in times of peace

> The British have never denied to any nation, small or great, freedom of navigation. [92]

The editorial writer stated that only in war time did blockades occur, for then the freedom of the seas was impossible. There was a sense here of the rightness of British control of the seas' highways. British fair play saw to it that all commerce passed freely along the sea-lanes in time of peace. The article claimed this even though at the end of the discussion of his subject, the writer pointed out that coaling stations, commercial and naval bases were specifically for the purpose of securing trade routes which were used to further

91. The Ploughshare Vol. 3, No. 2 (March, 1918) p. 50

92. The Ploughshare Vol. 3, No. 2 (March, 1918) p. 51

economic competition. When the Germans asked for freedom of the seas they wanted it to increase their trading areas. What they really meant by the term was

> The sea is free to us only if we dominate it. If we do not dominate it, it can be one day shut to us. They want to be able to enjoy freedom as in peace and domination in war-time. They really think this is morally due to them. [93]

There certainly seems to be a clash of sentiment in this discussion of the freedom of the seas. Economic co-operation would solve the problem of freedom of the seas, claimed The Ploughshare, yet the article seemed to attribute a disinterestedness on the part of the British which was opposed to the selfish ends of the Germans. This was far removed from the journal's thesis that the capitalists of these and other nations caused the international friction which led to wars.

The removal of economic barriers was point three of Wilson's 'points' and discussion of this subject again turned about the assertion that Germany would continue economic war after the present war had ended. [94] The Ploughshare urged that economic problems be solved before other peace problems, for economic war was part of the past the present and the future and should not be thought of as some glorious ideal to be realised at some far-off date. What was needed was not

> a petty affair of tariffs or barriers or commercial treaties; (for)...all modern wars

94. With reference to Britain, The Ploughshare alluded to Sir Edward Carson as expressing 'what most men think-especially what the Germans think'.(i) He advocated that the Allies fight for control of the world's raw materials after the war. Yet the journal seemed to prefer to dwell upon German capitalism rather than British at this particular period of the War. (i) The Ploughshare (April, 1918), p. 58

93. Ibid., P. 51

> ...(are)...concerned with economics, and---arise from the perennial struggle which the capitalists of all nations are unwilling to lay down. 95

These three'points' were the only ones discussed at any length in The Ploughshare, but it is clear that the arguments used are the same as those propounded against the Pope's peace messages: there was some value to them, but they did not reach down to the root cause of war. To scratch the surface would not bring peace nor preserve it.

The proposal that there should be a League to Enforce Peace met with many criticisms in The Ploughshare. F. W. Pethick-Lawrence pointed out that there were forty-eight sovereign states in the world, eight of which were more powerful than the others. 96 The question he posed was whether these powerful states, individually or in accord, could be coerced by weaker states. He contrasted the ability of the State to restrain the individual and the lack of any centralized government to perform this task against erring nations. Indeed, the league supporters did not envisage such a body. They hoped that the nations would band together to put pressure upon states which threatened to settle disputes by force. Pethick-Lawrence was dubious about the ability of the international body to determine which state was the aggressor in the event of a sudden outbreak of war. He felt that skillful diplomats would wreak havoc with such terms as "refusal to submit the matter to arbitration" and "resort to arms". Did the latter mean

95. Ibid. p. 59

96. Vide. Appendix

> the first act of hostility, a declaration of war, general mobilization, or the dipatch of gunboats to the scene of action. [97]

As for the international body which was to decide the action to be taken in instances which threatened the peace of the world, Pethick-Lawrence argued that only a truly free international body could produce a just decision. The body as proposed, would not reach a unified decision. It would be the victim of pressure from politicians. Governments would 'instruct' delegates how to act. If this was allowed to happen, then, the powerful nations in the league would use the league for their own advantage "to keep down the liberty of subject races and of peoples struggling to be free." This might produce peace for a time, "but the world would be in a state of unstable equilibrium for which ultimately it would only free itself by a fresh devestating conflict." [98]

Having exposed what he considered were the weak points in the proposed League to Enforce Peace, Pethick-Lawrence went on to make some suggestions of his own on the subject of peace preservation. He defined real peace as "the free co-operation of the people expressing itself through free international institutions of all kinds." [99]

Using this definition, he argued that something more than an international law court was needed to preserve peace. The law courts of a country were just one element in national life and an international law court would only be one element in international life. He put forward the example of the General Postal Union as the

97. The Ploughshare Vol. 2, No. 2 (March, 1917) p. 49.

98. Ibid. p. 49.

99. Ibid. p. 49.

other type of institution which was needed in the world. Pethick-Lawrence was convinced that the existence of this body had made the outbreak of war more difficult in 1914. Other aspects of international life should be made open and not be the sole concern of diplomats, he wrote, and suggested

> a public forum... in which genuine representatives of the peoples of the sovereign states shall assemble and give expression to their national point of view. [100]

He believed that this would make the people of one country aware of the problems of another. Such understanding would allow problems to be settled before they reached a combustible situation. If this Forum failed to produce a solution to a given problem then recourse could be made to Courts of Arbitration and Councils of Conciliation. He was hopeful that states would abide by the decisions of these bodies. If war did occur, however, it would be the duty of those states not involved to acquaint their populace with the facts of the case in dispute and to inform them which decision by 'some international investigation'. Should there be a unanimous agreement on which state was guilty, then this unanimity would be a determining factor in the dispute, for it would produce two effects. Firstly, such an overwhelming verdict would hold great moral sway with the belligerent population. And secondly, the aggressor state would find itself without friends and without aid for the prosecution of the war. Putting his faith in these two measures, Pethick-Lawrence declared that force in the form of military action against an aggressor was unnecessary, for it only drove a state to more desperate resolve.

100. Ibid. p. 50

If states not involved in the conflict could not reach a unanimous verdict concerning the aggressor state, then these states should remain neutral. Local issues should not be allowed to become world issues.

Many of the points leveled at the League to Enforce Peace could be leveled at the scheme proposed by Pethick-Lawrence. A term such as "some international investigation" was as vague as "refusal to submit the matter to arbitration". How was the 'public Forum' he advocated to be gathered together? Who was to decide who were to be the 'genuine representatives of the peoples of the sovereign states? How could a truly free international body be set up which would be free from the influence of the states from which the members of the body came? Would this body, if formed, be able to collect all the facts necessary to maintain, without equivocation, which was the aggressor state, and would states pass on such information to their populations without qualification? Pethick-Lawrence did not investigate these points in his article. He put all his faith in the 'voice of the people' in both belligerent and non-belligerent nations. The idea was based upon the premise that no-one wanted war except armies, and certain cunning diplomats, statesmen and capitalists. If the 'voice of the people' could be heard, then there would be no war.

The League of Nations caused division within the Society of Friends. A Friend's League of Nations Committee received criticism from The Ploughshare, for the committee was not an official Quaker body, but merely the organization of a few Friends. In a letter to

the Socialist-Quaker journal, Anna Barlow quoted from the manifesto issued by these Friends:

> We agree that goodwill and moral influence are the essential bases of a League of Nations, but we cannot exclude the possible need for the exercise of economic pressure, and even, in the last resort, the use of such force as may become necessary to restrain the evil doer, and to uphold the authority of the League. 101

This, said the writer, was not Quakerism. She continued,

> The League of Nations is a great step forward for those who have hitherto believed in unlimited armaments. But Friends...have a higher ethic to hold before the world. 102

The Ploughshare agreed with the writer, arguing that the League might have limited success with these methods, but that working through 'starvation and the killing of men', it would not receive full support from Quakerism. War was a moral evil which was not measured by numbers "killed, or starved or towns destroyed." It suggested an alternative:

> The only kind of league which Quakers ought to be interested in is one whose function is quite otherwise, namely a positively pacific one of removing occasions for war by administrating to the economic needs of all nations beneficently, scientifically, universally. 103

Despite the Ploughshare's condemnation of the League, it received endorsement from the majority of Quakers. A proposal put forward by the minority Ploughshare party that equal distribution of food and raw materials should be the chief work of the League, was not discussed at the 1919 Yearly Meeting. Instead, complained The Ploughshare, the Meeting believed the Covenant to be 'a step

101. Quoted in The Ploughshare Vol. 4, No. 1 (February 1919 p.10

102. Ibid., p. 10

103. Ibid., p. 11

in the right direction'. In somewhat of a spiteful vein The Ploughshare declared

> We confess that apart from the possibility of positive world economic co-operation, the draft Covenant and the discussion upon it have no interest for us. [104]

From the foregoing, it is clear that the central argument used by Socialist-Quakers against the peace moves and the plans to maintain peace once the War was over, was one concerning local and world economics. The subtitle of The Ploughshare was "an Organ of Reconstruction' and the basis of this reconstruction was that there should be a greater sharing of the world's economic resources and a fairer distribution of the wealth of the world. To these ends The Ploughshare discussed agricultural, educational, political and economic reform. If Ploughshare reform did not come, then it did not really matter when peace came or what institutions any peace deliberations brought forth. Hence the seemingly callous treatment of the League of Nations by The Ploughshare. For as Ada Salter wrote in May, 1916,

> When this great European conflict is over the world-old struggle between slavery and freedom will continue to be fought out on the battle field of industry. [105]

To sum up Socialist-Quaker thinking upon world peace, note must be taken of The Ploughshare's 'fourteen points'.

Point one insisted that industry was necessary for human survival, so that it became a duty for men, and correspondingly,

104. The Ploughshare vol. 4, No. 5 (June, 1919) p. 122.

105. The Ploughshare Vol. 1 No. 4 (May, 1916) p. 107.

nations to be industrious. This led on to the second point which declared that because of regional and climatic differences, there were great discrepancies between individuals within a nation and between nation and nation. True politics should redress these discrepencies, said point three. Men had previously put their faith in commerce to perform this redistribution, but commerce had sought to gain advantages for itself, rather than to benefit mankind. When commerce failed to secure what it desired, then it turned to war. To bring world peace, then, it was necessary that each obtain what was necessary for survival. This applied to both man and nation. Only international co-operation could bring mankind peace.

Point four dealt with The Freedom of Land, Sea and Sky. It was maintained that in nature all these were normally free except for 'occasional outbursts'. Yet man through political institutions obstructed freedom. Sometimes this was necessary, the argument continued, for 'no two can "occupy" one place at the same time.' The problem could only be solved by economic planning for the whole world. If this was accomplished, land sea and air were 'technically' free. The Ploughshare suggested land nationalization as a solution to the problems concerning land. With economic planning economic barriers would cease, concluded point five. Unless nations refuse to help others, economic barriers are unreasonable.

Open diplomacy was discussed in point six. It was not the iniquities of diplomats which was wrong with conventional diplomacy. Just like armies, nations involved in 'comercio-political' competition did not reveal their plans. Diplomats would be honest when they worked from the basis advocated by The Ploughshare. There was

no need for diplomacy to 'be "open" in the sense of the wireless debates by which Bolshevism entertained the world.'

The seventh point showed disagreement with Wilson's championship of self-determination. A warning was given against decentralization. By self-determination, contemporaries meant the removal of supremacy, it was argued, but with world economic co-operation "self-determination will appear a form of selfishness."

Under the title of Planetary Federation, point eight maintained that it was necessary to raise the 'subject peoples' to equality by economic planning. With the resultant equality, federated commonwealths 'could be established and these would form a league of commonwealths' from which no nation will be excluded except under extraordinary circumstances.' The Ploughshare gave no indication as to what these circumstances might be.

Liquidation of the monopolies connected with monetary exchange between nations was the subject of point nine. When this was accomplished, commercial freedom was imminent. As for the high level of armaments in the world, point ten insisted that this would drop dramatically when people saw the 'absurdity of arms' following the adoption of 'world-welfare'. Autocratic government must be destroyed wherever it is found, said point eleven, but not by force. "Germany, Austria, Turkey may learn by the terrible fate of Russia how not to conduct their revolutions." For the plutocracies, Britain, France America and Japan, there must be a peaceful change from capitalism to socialism, stated point twelve.

Within any nation, custom and convention divide people, insisted point thirteen, but as the basis of this division is economic, economic planning can remove the problem as well as the 'political and military strife' which arises from it. Also the two classes (capitalist and working) must be destroyed by bringing both within the framework of national industrial guilds. This must be done without violence. 'No one need be killed'.

Point fourteen was merely an admission that The Ploughshare programme would not be realized easily in a world which was used to the existing pattern. Yet fulfilment of the points was possible if men wished and if they accompanied their efforts with 'inner spiritual forces'.

Here, then, within this Ploughshare statement expressed in the famous format used by President Wilson is to be found not only the Socialist-Quaker formula for world peace, but also a resume of most of their basic philosophy. There is the insistence upon industriousness; the continual repetition of the necessity of economic planning; the stressing of international co-operation. Again there is the belief that capitalist competition produces war, that socialism of the Guild-socialist variety would solve the class war; and that all change was to be peaceful and accomplished without killing. Missing is the religious basis of the Society; apart from the reference to 'inner spiritual forces' which appears in the closing paragraph. Having decided that reconstruction was the only means to secure world peace, it is not surprising that The Ploughshare concerned itself more with this reconstruction than it did upon the peace moves produced by what it described as the world of 'sword politics'.

CHAPTER VI

SOCIALIST - QUAKERS AND THE N.C.F.

1

In this study, Socialists and Quakers have mainly been linked together with the Socialist-Quaker Society which, although it was designed to bring socialism to the Quaker movement, was predominently Quaker inspired. Yet there was another organization which brought Socialists and Quakers together. This was the N.C.F. Its membership was largely composed of Socialists and owed its formation to the I.L.P. and particularly Fenner Brockway, to the editor of this party's publication, The Labour Leader.[106]

On 12 November, 1914, when conscription was an issue, but not yet a fact, he addressed to himself a letter in the Labour Leader in which he suggested that men who were not willing to serve as combatants might find it useful to join together. As an opening gesture he asked for those between the ages of 18 and 38 to send him their names and addresses. The response was immediate and the numbers surprising: 300 replies came by return of post. Quickly a National Committee was formed with Clifford Allen as its president and Fenner Brockway as its honorary secretary.

After its first National Conference, the Fellowship issued its initial Statement of Faith. This statement showed an organization of wide dimensions in terms of membership. For while I.L.P. socialists and Quakers were the two largest component groups within the N.C.F., it opened its ranks to other socialists and to non-Quaker religious

106. Boulton, Op. Cit., P. 109, maintains that I.L.P. members made up nearly two-thirds of a total membership of slightly less than 10,000.

groups of all types. The Statement said,

> The No-Conscription Fellowship is an organization of men likely to be called upon to undertake military service in the event of conscription, who will refuse from conscientious motives to bear arms because they consider human life to be sacred, and cannot therefore, assume the responsibility of inflicting death. They deny the right of Governments to say, 'You shall bear arms,' and will oppose every effort to introduce compulsory military service into Britain. Should such efforts be successful, they will, whatever the consequences may be, obey their conscientious convictions rather than the commands of Governments.

In the Autumn of 1915, this statement was made more comprehensive by the addition of a clause dealing with alternative service:

> The members of the Fellowship refuse to engage in any employment which necessitates taking the military oath. Whilst leaving the decision open to the individual judgement of each member, the Fellowship will support members who conscientiously resist compulsory alternatives to military service involving a change of occupation. 107

These statements were not formulated without much discussion and decisions were invariably voted in by a single vote; the executive consisting of 13 members. Behind the policy adopted by the N-C.F. can be seen the influence of Clifford Allen and Fenner Brockway. It is noticeable that the original basis of the Fellowship was an opposition to combatant service only, but that these two men eventually changed their opinions to coincide with the moreradical members of the Society of Friends. A meeting between Allen, Brockway and a group of young Quakers in May, 1915, resulted in Quaker representation upon a committee whose function was to bring together diverse groups of objectors under the N-C.F.; for

107. Quoted in Graham, John, W. Conscription and Conscience. London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1922. pp. 174-175.

it was considered that the N-C.F. was the most suitable organization within which all groups could work together. This first act of co-operation led to the presence on the national committee of three Quakers: A Barratt Brown, J.P. Fletcher and Edward Grubb. Their inclusion was part of move to widen the basis of the Fellowship,. following the successful work of the co-ordination committee.

Barratt Brown and J.P. Fletcher were both of military age, but Edward Grubb was already too old to be considered for military service. He became the treasurer of the N-C.F., a position he held for the rest of the Fellowship's existence. Other Quakers who served, at some period, on the national committee were Alfred and Ada Salter, Joan M. Fry, Theodora Wilson Wilson, Alexander C. Wilson and Hugh Gibbons.[108]

While there many points of agreement between the component groups which constituted the N-C.F., there were also many points of disagreement. Alternative service was an issue which caused dissension from the very early days of the Fellowship. Allen and Brockway were both of the absolutist persuasion, but while expounding repeatedly the evils of alternative service, they maintained that acceptance or refusal of such service was a matter for individual decision. In The Tribunal, the organ of the N-C.F., appeared, on 21 September, 1916, a call for unity by Fenner Brockway. Also

108. Dr. Salter and his wife were both Socialist-Quakers as was Barratt Brown, while Joan Fry, Theodora Wilson and Edward Grubb were contributors to The Ploughshare. The author has found no evidence to link J.P. Fletcher, Alexander Wilson or Hugh Gibbons with the Socialist-Quakers. After Tribunal editor B.J. Boothroyd followed the first editor, W.J. Chamberlain to jail, Lydia S. Smith, a Quaker and member of the F.S.C. became the editor.

contained was a warning that any attempt to force uniformity would be an admission that absolutists had been conquered by the same spirit of militarism which they were out to defeat. This same edition carried a message from Clifford Allen which was brought to N-C.F. headquarters by a conscientious objector recently released on temporary furlough; for by this date Allen was a prisoner in Wormwood Scrubs. The message read,

> I want National Servicemen to be treated with the utmost care. I don't want them to feel that they are out of it. Give them more attention than us men who have refused ... I am anxious to keep the ranks together and prevent division.[109]

National Servicemen were those who had accepted work of national service under the Home Office Scheme which came into operation in August, 1916. This scheme was not the first to arouse the issue of alternative service within the Fellowship, for the N.C.C. had sown dissent as also had the ambulance work of such bodies as the F.A.U. and the First British Ambulance for Italy. However, the Home Office Scheme, which took objectors out of prison and placed them in work camps where they were employed, for example, on road building, proved to have a wide appeal for conscientious objectors. Added status was given to the scheme when C.H. Norman, a founder member of the N-C.F. and a member of its national executive, decided to accept this work. In a letter to The Tribunal he gave his reasons for accepting. Firstly, he did not consider such work to be an alternative to military service.

109. The Tribunal, 21 September, 1916. p. 2.

It was only an alternative to prison work and was part of his punishment. If he did not object to being made to work in prison, he did not see how he could object to this work. Norman added, however, that there was some concern that the road in Sussex upon which he was working was being constructed for military purposes and should this prove to be the case

> delightful though it is to be free after three months of gross maltreatment in jail there will be no surrender of principle ... should it be necessary to go back to prison, back one will go, and that is the feeling of most of those here at present.[110]

He expressed here perhaps the feelings of many who had had their first confrontation with prison life. As the accounts of Catchpool and Hobhouse show, there was a sense of release when they returned to the comparatively freer atmosphere of the Army. For men who could accept the Home Office Scheme, the sense of freedom must have been infinitely greater. Many of these men believed that they were working in penal colonies and they were still working out their prison sentences. Others had always been willing to accept alternative service, but this had been refused them. They had proceeded via the Army to prison and now found that they could obtain work outside the prison walls.

It will be remembered that it was the Quaker M.P.'s in the Liberal Party who had been the prime movers in the fight to extend the wording of the 'conscience clause' in the Military Service Act to include work of national importance. These Quakers and the section of the Society of Friends for which they spoke, welcomed any scheme

110. The Tribunal, 24 August, 1916. p. 3.

which allowed more conscientious objectors to find an avenue by which they could serve their country without violating conscience. Within the pages of The Tribunal it is possible to see the conflict caused by disagreement over alternative service between T. E. Harvey, the chief spokesman of the Quakers in the House of Commons, and the absolutists on the N-C.F. executive.

In July, 1916, when the proposals for the Home Office Scheme were being discussed, Harvey wrote a letter to the editor of The Tribunal. Enclosed with this letter was a further letter from Gilbert Murray.[111] The two letters contained a plea for conscientious objectors to accept work of national importance. Objectors had made a protest against conscription, Murray maintained, and they were now free to undertake such work. Alluding to the absolutist cry that the Government was trying to divide the conscientious objection movement, Harvey said that he was convinced that this was not the case. Men who could not fight should undertake the humbler of life's tasks.[112]

A reply from acting editor, B. J. Boothroyd said that although The Tribunal disagreed with Harvey, it must be stated that the movement was very grateful for the work he had performed in parliament for the benefit of conscientious objectors. The word 'alternative' was one which the editor held up for examination. He felt that

111. **Vide** Appendix.

112. Harvey was a member of the Pelham Committee, a Board of Trade Committee which sought to bring objectors willing to accept alternative service into contact with employers who were willing to supply work for these men.

alternative service was forced upon objectors. If they could not find it or could not accept it, they were put into the Army. It was clear from this that such service was part of the Military Service Act. Gilbert Murray said a protest had been made and this was true, but this was no time to stop protesting. Not until the evil of militarism was defeated would the objector cease his protestations.

While one section of the Quaker movement supported alternative service, it was seen that the Socialist-Quakers and the F.S.C. were absolutist in outlook and therefore upheld the policy of the N-C.F. executive. On 6 July, 1916, the Fellowship of Reconcilliation, the F.S.C. and the N-C.F. made a joint declaration against alternative service. [113] The signatories of the F.S.C. were Robert O. Mennell, the secretary and Hubert Peet, the organizing secretary. Both men were connected with the Socialist-Quaker Society and Peet was one of the Joint editors of The Ploughshare. [114]

If there was agreement between the Socialist-Quakers and the N-C.F. on the question of alternative service, relations between the two groups were not without friction on occasions. A Barratt Brown resigned from the national committee because of disagreements over policy and so did another Quaker J. P. Fletcher. The latter resigned in July, 1916 over a committee decision that the N-C.F.

113. The Fellowship of Reconciliation was an organization which consisted of Christian pacifists. It brought together a wide variety of denominations.

114. Vide appendix.

should seek to secure for conscientious objectors the exemptions which they could accept. The resolution to which he took exception stated

> That while the Fellowship should continue to make its principle object the exposure of Militarism and the spread of Pacifist views, it should make every possible effort, by political and other means, to secure for its members and other conscientious objectors those forms of exemption allowed by the Act which they applied for at the Tribunals, or can conscientiously accept. 115

This resignation was referred to by Barratt Brown when he explained the reasons for his own resignation in a letter to The Tribunal on 7 June, 1917. He wrote that he had been contemplating this step for nearly a year, for he found himself becoming more and more at odds with the executive committee. In the Autumn of 1916, this committee had endorsed the policy regarding political action formulated in July, 1916 and had voted out by eight votes to three a resolution by Barratt Brown opposing this policy:

> That this Fellowship make a practice of giving full publicity through Press, Parliament, public meetings and tribunals to the witness of its members, but make no efforts, direct or indirect to alleviate their conditions, or obtain for them exemptions of any kind, devoting its energies solely to arousing the public conscience on war and conscription for war. 116

He was under no illusions that this was a minority viewpoint, but he had some supporters amongst absolutist objectors. With Hubert Peet he felt that the N-C.F. had become a "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Conscientious Objectors". Too much

115. The Tribunal, 3 August, 1916. p. 4

116. The Tribunal, 21 June, 1917. p. 4.

of the Fellowship's time was taken up with fulminating against prison conditions and the conditions of work camps used in the Home Office Scheme. [117] Stephen Hobhouse supported Barratt Brown in a letter which appeared in The Tribunal in March, 1917:

> I write as one who has felt the burdens cast by prison life upon both body and spirit sufficiently to shrink from any prolongation of the experience, greatly as I know I shall profit from it...however, I would most earnestly plead that the N-C.F. and those pacifists associated with it should not spend energy upon securing the release of us absolutists. [118]

Hobhouse continued by indicating the objects for which the Fellowship should strive. Firstly, it should aim to bring together and support all types of conscientious objectors and their associates; and secondly, it should work towards a negotiated peace.

In the same issue, Fenner Brockway, writing from the Guard Room at Chester, said that there was only a very small number of conscientious objectors in prison who did not want release and that most of these men expected their friends on the outside to work towards this end. However, Barratt Brown, in his letter of resignation, charged that the Fellowship had gone to strange lengths as the result of its decision to take political action on behalf of conscientious objectors. He alleged that the N-C.F. had involved

117. Yet one of the results of having literate men in jail was that prison conditions were exposed and that after the war Hobhouse was very much involved in prison reform. Vide Hobhouse. op. cit., pp. 175-179.

118. The Tribunal, 22, March, 1917, p. 4.

itself with War Office officials. Personally he could have no part in actions which sought to undermine wholehearted rejection of conscription and which served to ease the working of the Military Service Act.

The F.S.C. endorsed the opinions expressed by Barratt Brown, although it was admitted that some members of its executive wanted an official note to be sent to the Government requesting the release of conscientious objectors. [119] In a declaration sent to The Tribunal, the F.S.C. gave the main reasons for its attitude in opposing political action for the release of objectors. It felt that the Society of Friends and conscientious objection were too closely connected in the public mind and the Society did not wish to complain 'too loudly' about any suffering involved in holding to its peace testimony. Appeals, therefore should come from non-Quakers. Further, the F.S.C., believed that an official appeal for relief might result in the release of 'religious' conscientious objectors only. The declaration continued by saying that it was no concern of the Society of Friends to see that the Military Service Act was 'justly administered'. The Society stood against all war and conscription and would not be satisfied until both were eliminated. Nothing less than the complete repeal of the Military Service Act was required, for the F.S.C. wanted all men relieved from conscription, not just conscientious objectors. Quotations from a letter by J.P. Fletcher were inserted here to make this point. He was in prison as a conscientious objector, but he was still adamant that the F.S.C. should not issue

119. Barratt Brown, in fact, was one of the men who signed this declaration.

an appeal for the release of prisoners. Finally, the declaration insisted that everything should be done to influence public opinion towards a better understanding of the conscientious objector's position. It was an enlightened public conscience which should demand the release of conscientious objectors.

The position adopted by the F.S.C. was bitterly attacked by T.H. Ferris in a letter to The Tribunal. He said that the Society of Friends

> show such a deplorable lack of faith and moral courage that I trust you will allow me the opportunity to hold them up to the condemnation they so richly deserve. [120]

He argued that the Society of Friends stated that it must not ask the Government to do right nor condemn it for its mistakes and that to move ahead of public opinion was wrong, for it would worsen the whole position of the conscientious objector. Ferris disagreed with this, saying that there could be no better way of influencing public opinion than by holding up before the public the Government's wrongs. Was it true, he asked, that Governments of evil intent did more to change public opinion for the better than did good Governments? Everyone connected with the conscientious objection movement should ask for the release of prisoners. If only Quakers were freed then it would be that much harder for the Government to continue to refuse the release of non-religious objectors.

120. The Tribunal, 10 January, 1918. p. 4.

Another letter, this time from a Quaker, A.R. Ecroyd, who was also a member of the N-C.F. and the F.O.R., endorsed the action of the N-C.F. in its use of political action to secure the release of objectors. He enclosed a memorial to this effect which he had proposed at the East Devon Monthly Meeting and which had been unanimously adopted by that Meeting. The memorial was not printed by The Tribunal.

Clearly, then, as Barratt Brown admitted, the opinions which led to his resignation were those of a minority within the N-C.F. His views were shared by the F.S.C., but this was a majority decision and not a unanimous one. And as the example of the East Devon Monthly Meeting showed, there were areas in which a unanimous Quaker vote was given against the views of the F.S.C. It is also interesting to note that when Barratt Brown resigned, his place on the executive should have been taken by Theodora Wilson Wilson, but she refused to take the vacancy. [121] Yet the place was filled by Ada Salter, a Socialist-Quaker on the Advisory Council of The Ploughshare. By this action it would appear that she agreed with the official N-C.F. policy towards conscientious objection.

As this enquiry has shown, the coming together of socialists and Quakers was not brought about without some disagreements. A further example of this was when Clifford Allen, in an open letter to Lloyd George, advocated work strikes by absolutists. He felt that conscientious objectors should not work while in prison. [122] Alfred

121. Barratt Brown did not resign from the N-C.F., but only from its national executive. He continued as chairman of the Midland Division and of the Birmingham Branch.

122. The Tribunal, 14 June, 1917. p. 2.

Salter disagreed with Allen and indicated that there were one or two others on the national executive of the N-C.F. who felt as he did on the subject.[123] He warned that none of the Quaker absolutists would participate in such a movement.[124] A further line of argument he used was that with absolutists confined in 39 different prisons they were too widely separated to make such action effective. Lastly, he claimed that men needed prison work to help them keep their sanity.

Once again the dangers of putting forward a Quaker view on conscientious objection and conscription must be stressed. There were the views of the Quaker M.P.'s and the section of the Quaker movement for which they spoke on such subjects as alternativism, absolutism and political action for the release of conscientious objection. There were the radical members of the F.S.C. and the S.Q.S., who shared a great deal with the socialists in the N-C.F., but who disagreed with them on occasions, sometimes to the point of resignation from the N-C.F. national executive. In an organization which spanned the whole of the conscientious objection movement, the Socialist Quakers appear to have operated as an extreme left-wing. Yet individuals within the latter group had divergent opinions about what the correct policies of these organizations should be. This (short) chapter has sought to show some of the points of agreement and disagreement between Socialist-Quakers and other groups within the N-C.F. and some of the work performed by members of the Ploughshare group in this larger body.

123. Ibid., p. 2.

124. Salter quoted from an F.S.C. pamphlet which claimed that 106 of the 252 absolutists whose religion was known, were Quakers.

PART TWO

TO THE PRO-SHIRKERS

You that in civilian lobbies,
While the battle-thunder rolls,
Hug your little party lobbies,
So to save your little souls,
Treating England's deadly peril like a topic for the polls;

Half of you - the record's written -
lately strode to Downing Street
And for love of Little Britain
Wallowed at the PREMIER'S feet
Urging him to check the wanton waste of our superflous Fleet.

Had your passionate prayer been granted
And the Kaiser got his way
Teuton crushers might be planted
On our hollow tums today
And a greatful foe be asking what you want for traitor's pay.

Disappointed with the Navy,
You in turn were keen about
Putting Thomas in the gravy,
Leaving Thomas up the spout,
Lest if adequately aided he should wipe the strafers out.

Well our memories may be rotten,
Yet they'll stick to you all right;
Not so soon shall be forgotten
Those whose hearts were fixed more tight
On the salvage of a fetish than the winning of the fight.

When the Bosches bite the gutter
And we let our tongues go loose,
Franker words I hope to utter
In the way of free abuse,
But at present I am badly hampered by the party truce.

D.S.

Thirty-nine Members voted against the second reading of the Military Service Bill. Punch 19 January, 1916, p. 42.

CHAPTER I

THE PASSING OF THE MILITARY SERVICE BILL (No. 2).

I

When the Military Service Bill(No. 2) was read for the first time in the House of Commons on the 6 January, 1916, 105 members voted against the measure while 403 members voted with the Government. When the Bill was read for a second time (12 January, 1916) the Government votes increased to 431, but the anti-conscriptionist vote fell dramatically to 39. By the third reading (24 January, 1916) a meagre band of 36 members went into the divisions opposed to conscription. They were faced by a decreased, though still overwhelming group of 383 government supporters. 125

The principal reason for the decline in opposition numbers was the loss of the Irish Nationalist vote when the Government removed Ireland from the scope of the Bill. 57 out of the 105 opposition votes recorded on the first reading had been cast by Irish Nationalist members. However, on the second and third reading, the Irish Nationalist vote fell to two and one respectively. 126

John Redmond, leader of the Irish Nationalists in the House of Commons, stated the Irish position towards conscription during the first reading of the Bill. After declaring that he and his supporters were against compulsory military service, he went on to say that:

125. The figures given here do not include the two tellers necessary when any vote is taken in parliament.

126. A. Byrne voted against conscription on the first and second readings. L. Ginnell voted against the measure on all three readings.

"With me it (conscription) is a question of necessity, and not of principle. It is a question of degree." 127

Redmond's argument, then, was that Ireland did not need conscription. He felt it had supplied an impressive number of volunteer recruits already and that conscription would not provide a greater number. At the same time, he implied that there might be occasions when conscription would be necessary for Ireland. In different circumstances conscription for Ireland would be brought in for Irish defence and with Irish approval, but it should not be forced upon Ireland by a British government.

The Irish Nationalist leader showed clearly by his attitude to conscription in England that the principle of conscientious objection played no part in his anti-conscriptionist sentiments. He pointed out during the second reading of the Bill that it was apparent after the first reading that there was a majority support for conscription amongst the English, Scottish and Welsh members. Labour M.P.'s in opposition to the Bill had numbered less than half the membership of the parliamentary Labour Party Redmond maintained, and most of the Party's 'responsible' leaders had voted for conscription.[128]

127. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVII, col. 1006, 5 January, 1916.

128. Labour Party voting on the first reading: for, ten; against, thirteen; non-voters, eight. It was convenient for Redmond to stress that less than half the Labour members had voted against the Bill and to play down the fact that more voted against than for at this stage of the Bill. Redmond could, of course, define 'responsible' any way he wanted to, but Henderson (Chairman of Labour Party) did not vote on the first reading, although it was well known that he supported the measure; neither did W. Brace a Labour member of the Government. MacDonald (Treasurer of Labour Party) voted against.

Further, most of the Liberal members who had supported the Irish cause, said Redmond, had voted with the Government. For these reasons he called a truce with the Government and pronounced that:

> Having made our protest, both by speech and by vote in the lobby, we say now that we have given our last vote against this measure. [129]

Sir Edward Carson, the Irish Unionist leader, pressed Redmond to make the popularity of the Bill unanimous by voluntarily bringing Ireland under the provisions of the Bill, but Redmond was unmoved by this proposal from his old adversary.

Redmond knew that the introduction of conscription into Ireland would have been met with defiance. The Irish Nationalists had chosen to support the voluntary system early in the war and for this support had been rewarded with royal assent for a Home Rule Bill which had been rushed through Parliament. No immediate results came from this legislation, however, for Home Rule would not be introduced until the end of the war. Redmond repeatedly urged Irishmen to volunteer for military service in the British Army, although he asserted that these men thereby became members of an Irish Army. In the introduction to a book concerning the exploits of Irish regiments during the war he wrote: "They (the Irish People) have, for the first time in their history...put a national army into the field." [130]

129. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVII, Col. 1472 11 Jan., 1916.

130. M. MacDonagh, The Irish at the Front (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1916) p. 6.

With Irish regiments under Irish officers it was perhaps possible to argue that this constituted an Irish army, but if conscription had been introduced into Ireland the myth of Irish freedom would have been exposed. Irish Nationalists, then, were anti-conscriptionist while Ireland was included in the proposed Military Service Bill, but their opposition ended when the Government decided that Ireland was to be omitted from the measure. The Nationalists had committed themselves to securing Home Rule through legislation in Parliament and they did not want conscription to threaten the progress they had already made there.

In 1918, Lloyd George, in an attempt to replenish the ranks of the Army, extended the Military Service Act. The new provisions applied to Ireland as well as to the rest of the Empire. Immediately opposition arose in Ireland and dissident ranks closed to fight conscription. The Church, in particular, played a prominent part in this opposition. A voluntary fund raised to counter compulsory military service reached a sum of £ 250,000. Resistance was effective, for as one author has written: "Conscription was carried in parliament, but was never put into application in any parish of Ireland." 131

Where Asquith had held back, Lloyd George plunged forward, but without success. Redmond had been correct when he said conscription for Ireland would mean less and not more troops for the British

131. Stephen Gwynn, The History of Ireland (London: Macmillan, 1923) pp. 518-19.

Army. [132] The extention of conscription to Ireland produced nothing but ill-feeling and perhaps helped to take power from the hands of the moderate forces led by Redmond and put it into the hands of more extremist elements.

II

A small number of Labour M.P.'s who had voted against the Bill on its first readings did not vote again on the second or third readings. [133] These abstentions perhaps reflected the resigned approval given to conscription after the first reading by some sections of Labour. [134] Asquith felt, in August, 1915, that the main opposition to conscription would come from organized labour and from the Irish Nationalists, although he was aware of the anti-conscriptionist feelings of some members of the Liberal Party. [135] He resolved the problem of Irish opposition by excluding Ireland from the Bill, but Labour had to be wooed by a different method.

132. The Government was well aware of the possible objection to conscription in Ireland. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, Edward Short, read the Cabinet a letter from the Head of the Royal Irish Constabulary who reported that Ireland was united against conscription and that there were not enough troops in Ireland to force the measure on the country. Cab. 23/6 Minutes of 16 April, 1918.

133. J. R. Clynes, W. Hudson, W. Thorne, C. J. Wardle.

134. Neither Wardle nor Thorne voted against the measure which brought in general conscription in May, 1916. During the debates on this measure the following conversation took place: Goldstone (Lab): "I hope...(W. Thorne) will be as insistent...for the conscription of wealth as he is for the conscription of men." Thorne: "Certainly, but the party would not support me." It seems clear from this that Thorne had accepted conscription. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXXII, Col. 229, 4 May, 1916.

135. Views expressed in a letter written by Asquith to the First Lord of the Admiralty, A. J. Balfour. Quoted in Roy Jenkins, Asquith (London: Collins, 1964) p. 374.

At the annual Trades Union Congress held at Brighton, in September, 1915, a resolution was passed which condemned conscription. The resolution was tempered by the insertion of a section which said that to avoid conscription, the voluntary system must be made to provide more men. There was more space given to supporting voluntary recruitment than there was to condemning conscription. The resolution was a mild statement against conscription. Shortly after the Trades Union Congress ended, a secret meeting took place between Asquith, Lord Kitchener and representatives of the T.U.C. and the Parliamentary Labour Party. By the close of the meeting Labour had agreed to help the recruiting drive by holding recruiting meetings on Labour platforms. There was nothing new in Labour leaders speaking at recruiting drives. As early as 29th August, 1914, the Labour Party had agreed to co-operate in the recruiting campaign. However, where labour representatives had previously spoken on the platforms of other organizations, they now agreed to recruit through meetings sponsored by their own organizations.

The Conference which included the meeting with Asquith and Lord Kitchener also discussed what action should be taken over the anti-conscriptionist resolution passed at the Trades Union Congress. It was decided to form a committee. In October the 'Socialist National Defence Committee' produced its finds in the form of a manifesto which said that if the public

> refuse to respond to their country's call, the nation must and will claim them on other terms.

The manifesto also pointed out that:

> Britain half-armed and using half her strength cannot conquer Germany which has mobilised the entire nation for the struggle. National service is not only a duty but a right. [136]

From the manifesto it is clear that the anti-conscriptionist parts of the T.U.C. resolution had been forgotten and that the call for volunteers now came foremost in Labour policy towards the war.

The introduction of the Military Service Bill by Asquith on the 5 January, 1916, however, prompted the calling of a conference the following day which was attended by trade unionists and by members of the Parliamentary Labour Party. This conference passed an anti-conscriptionist resolution, and decided to oppose conscription by every possible means. One recommendation of the resolution was that the Parliamentary Labour Party should fight the Military Service Bill at every stage. The voting in favour of the resolution was impressive: 1,998,000 to 783,000; but many Labour M.P.'s were against the resolution. At a meeting of the three labour executives prior to the conference, Henderson, a Labour member of the Coalition Cabinet, had spoken in favour of some measure of conscription and his arguments had been supported by other Labour M.P.'s and some of the older Labour leaders. They tried to win others to agree to a limited form of conscription by the argument that if Labour stood out against conscription they would bring a general election in which all the Labour M.P.'s would lose their seats. [137]

136. Quoted in Boulton, op. cit., p. 85

137. Beatrice Webb, Diaries (1912-24) Vol. I (London: Longman and Green, 1952), p. 52.

Henderson even told his listeners, "If this Conference considers I must oppose this Bill I shall refuse to accept their decision." 138

Despite Henderson's assertion that he would not be bound by a conference decision which ran counter to his own opinions, he did not feel that he could continue in the Government when the Parliamentary Labour Party adopted the recommendation of the Conference. He wrote to Asquith on 10 January, 1916:

> In consequence of the decision of organized Labour to oppose the Military Service Bill I have no alternative but to tender you my resignation...I supported the...Bill in the Cabinet, I shall continue to do so in the House as the representative of my constituents on the grounds of military necessity. 139

Henderson's letter of resignation was followed by similar communications from W. Brace and G. H. Roberts, the other Labour members in the Government. 140

Faced with these resignations and labour opposition to conscription, the Cabinet decided that Asquith should consult the Labour M.P.'s and with the Labour Executive. During the course of these talks Snowden records that the Prime Minister promised:

138. Snowden, op. city., p. 392

139. Jenkins, op. cit., pp. 389-390

140. Brace and Henderson did not vote on the first reading of the Bill, but Roberts did. Henderson did not, in fact, vote on either the first or third reading of the Bill, despite the Snowden's assertion that Henderson, '...through all the stages of the Bill voted in support of it.' Snowden, op. cit., p. 393

> That there would be no extension of compulsion to married men; that the Bill was to operate during the War only; that amendments would be introduced obviating any possibility of industrial compulsion; that the tribunals would be civil and not military courts; and that opportunity would be afforded to Parliament to strengthen the clause exempting conscientious objectors. [141]

These promises quelled the doubts of the majority of those at the meeting, for at a further joint meeting it was decided to advise the three Labour members of the Government to withdraw their resignations. The members involved followed this advice.

Difference of opinion over the war and conscription was much in evidence at the Annual Labour Party Conference held at Bristol late in January while the Military Service Bill was still before Parliament. A resolution which proposed opposition to the Bill and agitation if the Bill became law had to be separated into two parts before a vote could be taken. The Conference endorsed opposition to the measure by a vote of 1,716,000 to 360,000, but refused to fight for repeal by a vote of 649,000 to 614,000. [142] Snowden, MacDonald and Anderson of the Independent Labour Party spoke against the war, against conscription and against participation in the recruiting campaign, but apart from securing the resolution to oppose the Military Service Bill, they had no success with their anti-war resolutions. Beatrice Webb recorded in her diary on the 31 January, 1916: "Three quarters of the delegates wanted no

141. Snowden, op. cit., pp. 393-394.

142. Ibid., p. 394.

trouble either with Munitions or the Military Service Bill." 143

It is against this background of confusion and often hostile difference of opinion among the ranks of Labour that the withering away of the anti-conscriptionist vote in Parliament must be seen. Conferences might pass resolutions against the introduction of conscription, but Labour had three members in the Government who supported conscription. The Annual Conference voted overwhelmingly to keep these men in the Government, but voted against a measure endorsed by these same men. Despite the anti-war resolutions of the British Labour Movement prior to the war, the majority of labour organizations had come to believe in a war of defence or that a 'just' war was possible. These views led some Labour M.P.'s to support conscription, for they believed that the cause was just, therefore, the cause must be won. 144 Many of these men had supported the voluntary recruiting system before the Government declared that this method could not provide the required number of men. The willingness to increase their commitment to recruiting during the latter part of 1915 indicated that many Labour leaders prefered a voluntary army. However, once the Government appealed for conscription on the grounds of necessity and efficiency, it was difficult for those who had spoken on recruiting platforms to oppose a measure which the Government claimed was necessary if victory was to be achieved. Asquith's promises won

143. Webb, op. cit., p. 53

144. Sixteen Labour M.P.'s voted for the Bill: G. N. Barnes, C. W. Bowerman, W. Brace, W. Crooks, C. Duncan, F. Hall, A. Henderson, J. Hodge, J. O'Grady, G. H. Roberts, J. E. Sutton, J. W. Taylor, R. Toothill, S. Walsh, A. Wilkie, W. T. Wilson.

over some waverers and from this point Labour opposition in Parliament centered around the handful of I.L.P. members and one or two members who supported the war, but objected to conscription.[145]

All seven I.L.P. Members of Parliament voted against the Military Service Act at some stage of its passage through Parliament.[146] W.C. Anderson and Philip Snowden were the chief spokesmen of the I.L.P. during the conscription debates. No member of the I.L.P. spoke during the first reading of the Bill, but Anderson moved the rejection of the measure on its second reading. He told the Commons that universal conscription would follow if the Bill was allowed to pass on to the statute book. Anderson said that the Bill attacked many ancient rights of Britain, and "apart from its military aspects altogether I believe it embodies the beginning of industrial conscription."[147]

To emphasise this argument he quoted the September edition of Outlook:

> Trade Unionism - that shelter for slackers and shirkers - is imperilling our existence and by its action a rot of our national soul has set in. One remedy and one alone can eradicate this state of rot. Martial law will cure it.

Anderson warned his listeners that such an attitude to Labour was dangerous,

> You are making for disaster if you try to apply the rules of the Army to the men in the workshops, factories and the mines. They will not submit to that.[148]

145. J.H. Thomas and F. Goldstone supported the war, but were particularly strong opponents of conscription and consistently voted with the small majority which opposed conscription.

146. W.C. Anderson, J. Parker, P. Snowden and T. Richardson voted against on all three readings: F.W. Jowett, and Ramsay MacDonald on the first and second readings; and J.R. Clynes on the first reading only.

147. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol LXXV11, col. 1460, 11 January, 1916.

148. Ibid., cols, 1460 - 1461, 11 January, 1916.

On the subject of exemptions from the Bill, Anderson feared that any man engaged in Trade Union activity would be at the mercy of his employer unless exemptions were made absolute. Temporary exemptions, he felt, might lead to a 'troublesome' employee being found expendable by his employer and forced into the Army. Thus, Anderson was not swayed by the promises concerning conscription made to Labour by the Prime Minister shortly after the first reading of the Bill. He felt the measure before the House was just one more step towards general conscription, a process which had been set in motion by the National Register in 1915. Anderson was mainly concerned with industrial conscription as his speeches in Parliament show. Despite the Government's insistence that industrial conscription would not ensue from the Bill, he still believed that industrialists would manipulate the Act for their own uses.

Philip Snowden also spoke during the second reading of the Bill. He made his position to the Government and its conscriptionist policy clear when he told the Commons,

> I have never been a party to that pledge.[149] I have never been a party to the Coalition Government. I have never accepted the political truce, and, therefore, the Prime Minister's pledge has no binding effect upon me.

149. Asquith pledged, in November, 1915, that a last attempt would be made (The Derby Scheme) to bring in more single men by voluntary recruiting. All men of military age had to attest, married and single. Married men would not be called out, however, until the single men responded to their Country's call. Altertation figures showed that married men, secure in the knowledge that single men would be called first, had attested in large numbers, but that many single men had not come forward. The redemption of the Prime Minister's pledge provided a useful slogan for the conscriptionists; if the single men would not enlist they must be fetched or the promise to the married men was broken.

Snowden spoke with contempt of the figures produced by the Derby Scheme: "To present such a hotch-potch mass of contradictory figures to the House of Commons is an insult to the intelligence of Parliament."[150]

He continued by explaining why he objected to the figures. There was no indication of how many conscientious objectors were included in the Derby figures and there were other groups included who would never form part of the armed forces. The Government said that there were hundreds of thousands of single men of military age who were holding back, but nowhere did the Government define the limits of this 'military age'. In Snowden's opinion, if the Government wished to win the war by fighting, then it should concentrate on providing more munitions. More men seemed merely to lead the Government to waste manpower on such ventures as Galipoli. The Government insisted that conscription had the general consent of the country, said Snowden, but this was not so. At the annual Labour Party Conference a large majority had condemned conscription. He ended by saying that the real reason behind the movement towards conscription was that the conscriptionists wished Parliament to "put into their hands a strong weapon for enforcing the chains of slavery on the democracy."[151]

Together with W.C. Anderson and T. Richardson, Snowden maintained an anti-war attitude throughout the war.[152]

150. H. of C. Debates, 5th Series, Vol. LXXVII, Cols. 1717-1718, 12 January, 1916.

151. Ibid., Col. 1726, 12 January, 1916.

152. W.C. Anderson elected after the war had begun (Attercliffe Division of Sheffield, 28 December, 1914).

These men were against the entry of Britain into the war and against any involvement with recruiting campaigns. During the three readings of the Military Service Bill they voted against the Government at every opportunity.

The remaining I.L.P. Members of Parliament, who took little part in conscription debates in the House of Commons, had a variety of attitudes towards the war. Both Jowett and Ramsay MacDonald insisted that although the war had resulted from secret diplomacy of which they did not approve, once entered into, the war had to be won. Jowett, chairman of the I.L.P. held that Britain was fighting a defensive war. He refused to recruit for the Army because he was convinced that participation in recruiting could only lead to labour acceptance of conscription.

> "You have co-operated in the national effort to get volunteers" the Government would say, "and share responsibility for the failure to get sufficient men - you cannot now oppose compulsion". 153

The statement was prophetic, for the Government did use this argument to win waverers to its side. Jowett, however, took no part in the recruiting campaign. He wrote in the Bradford Pioneer in June, 1915, that he deplored the methods used to force men into the Army!

> Under the threats of dismissal by employers and by moral press - gang methods exercised by people too old to enlist or who belong to the sex who cannot enlist. 154

153. Fenner Brockway, Socialism Over Sixty Years (London: George Allen and Unin, 1946), p. 140.

154. Quoted in Brockway, p. 141.

Jowett was often asked by his critics how he could oppose conscription and yet believe in national defence. He countered the argument by saying that conscription was not necessary for the defence of Britain. Those who wanted conscription wanted it for the defence of Britain. Those who wanted conscription wanted it for the invasion of Europe. In Parliament Jowett voted against the Military Service Bill on its first two readings.

Ramsay MacDonald held complicated views on the war. He was chairman of the Labour Party on the outbreak of war, but resigned his chairmanship on 5th August, 1914, when it became clear that the majority of the Labour Party, swayed by the same patriotic fervour which held most of the Country at this period, were supporters of the war. The actual resignation came when the Party vetoed MacDonald's proposal that he, on behalf of the Party, should oppose the Government's war credit demand. MacDonald remained treasurer of the Labour Party, but found that more and more, his anti-war views led him to identify himself with the I.L.P., a section of the labour movement with which he had had many differences of opinion before the war. He accepted the I.L.P. position against involvement in the recruiting campaign, although he supplied his own definition of what constituted recruiting. He could write in the Leicester Pioner 16 July, 1915: "Those who can enlist, ought to enlist, those who are working in munition factories should do so whole-heartedly." 155

155. Quoted in Lord Elton, The Life of James Ramsay MacDonald (1866-1919) (London: Collins, 1939), p. 263.

But MacDonald refused to go onto a recruiting platform and say this. The difference between views expressed in a newspaper and similar views given from a recruiting hall may not have been very great, but MacDonald's boundary was the recruiting platform and he maintained this attitude throughout the war. Despite his non-participation in recruiting, MacDonald felt that wrong as Britain had been to enter the war, it should strive to win the war and conclude a peace which would ensure that the folly of war would be averted in the future. This opinion took him into the U.D.C., an organization dominated by Liberals and one in which MacDonald felt more comfortable than with the extremists in the I.L.P.

MacDonald's objections to conscription were those repeatedly expressed by other members of the I.L.P. in Parliament: that conscription was unnecessary and that if the measure became law, industrial conscription would follow. He also prophesied that if conscription was introduced it would be continued after the war. In MacDonald's mind conscription was linked with the secret foreign policy which he insisted had caused the war. He was convinced that conscription would ensure that the same kind of secret diplomacy would operate after the war. If this were allowed to happen, then Europe would once again be set on a war course. MacDonald equated conscription with militarism and felt that if conscription was brought into Britain, militarism would be stamped on the Country.

The remaining two I.L.P. Members of Parliament did not agree with the official I.L.P. attitude to the war. Both J. R. Clynes and James Parker supported the war. They adopted the official Labour Party policy towards the war and spoke at recruiting

meetings. Clynes, in a letter to the General Secretary of the I.L.P. at the 1915 I.L.P. Conference held at Norwich, a conference which Clynes was unable to attend, wrote that although he agreed with the I.L.P. concerning the evils of secret diplomacy, war and the arms race, he disagreed with its attitude towards Britain's entry into the war and on the subject of recruiting. He believed that Germany's actions in August, 1914, made British entry a necessity and that to secure victory Labour should be willing to co-operate with other parties in the recruiting campaign.

Clynes wrote,

> These views are consistent with the actions of a Socialist when the choice is no longer between peace and war, but between peace and submission to the war-maker. 156

In his Memoirs Clynes wrote that he was not censored for his opinions, "I continued my membership of the I.L.P. with scarcely another word of criticism from anybody." 157

Lord Elton records in his biography of Ramsay MacDonald, however, that some delegates to the 1916 I.L.P. Conference seriously considered moving a resolution to withdraw support from Clynes and Parker. Elton claims that MacDonald acted as a peacemaker and succeeded in quashing the proposal.

Clynes' autobiography contains few references to conscription, but it does say that he thought wealth should be conscripted. He wrote:

156. J. R. Clynes, Memoirs Vol. I (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1937), p. 186.

157. Ibid., I, 187

> Men were to be forced, against their wills and convictions, to go out and be slaughtered; but the pockets of the financiers who stayed safely at home must be kept sacrosanct. 158

Clyne's asserted that: "In Parliament we Labour Members fought the Conscription Bill in all its stages." 159 However, he voted against on the first reading of the Bill, but did not vote on its second and third readings. Yet he did vote with the anti-conscriptionists on most of the divisions at the Committee stage. Clynes was certainly in a delicate position within the I.L.P. His support of the war contrasted with the views of most other I.L.P. members, who were unashamedly anti-war at this period. As Jowett had predicted, the Labour members who took part in recruiting campaigns found it difficult to oppose Government appeals for conscription. Parker actually voted with the Government when a Bill for general conscription was introduced by Asquith on 3 May, 1916. Clynes voted against the extention of conscription, but it is perhaps not coincidence that Parker and Clynes accepted Government posts in 1917. 160

158. Clynes, op. cit., p. 181.

159. Ibid., p. 199

160. Parker became a Lord Commissioner of the Treasury (1917). Clynes accepted a position as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Food (1917-1918). The I.L.P. removed its support from Parker in 1917.

It is clear, however, that Clynes exaggerated the strength of Labour opposition to conscription when he claimed that Labour members had consistently voted against the measure. Just over half the Labour M.P.s actually voted for conscription. The total labour opposition of 13 (seven I.L.P.) on the first reading fell to 11 (six I.L.P.(includes one teller) on the second vote and to six (includes one Labour teller(four I.L.P.) on the third vote. Throughout the three readings of the Bill, fifteen Labour members had voted against the Bill, but only six of them had recorded a vote against on each of the three main divisions. [161]

III

A group of Liberals consistently opposed the Military Service Bill, of whom 23 voted against on all three readings. The leader of the group and by far the most distinguished of them was Sir John Simon. As Home Secretary, he had held an important Cabinet post, in 1915, when conscription was being considered by the Government. He indicated his objections to conscription during Cabinet meetings and at that period he was not the only Cabinet Minister with objections to conscription. Dr. Addison records [162] that four members of the Cabinet had certain objections to conscription: Lord Harcourt,

161. W. Abraham, W. Adamson, W.C. Anderson*(teller on the second vote), J.R. Clynes, F. Goldstone*, W. Hudson, F.W. Jowett, J.R. MacDonald, J. Parker*, T. Richards, T. Richardson*, P. Snowden*, J.H. Thomas*(teller on the third reading), W. Thorne and G.J. Wardle.

* M.P.'s who voted against on all three readings of the Bill.

162.C. Addison, Politics From Within, Vol. I (London: Herbert Jenkins, 1924), p. 171

Reginald McKenna, Sir Walter Runciman and Sir John Simon [163] Only Simon left the Cabinet because of his anti-conscriptionist views. Runciman and McKenna did not object to conscription on principle. The former argued that the 70 divisions which Kitchener demanded would take too many men away from armament production. McKenna believed that raising the divisions would cripple the country financially and mean a reduction in aid for Britain's allies. However, Runciman, McKenna and Harcourt found that they could support conscription by the time Asquith introduced the Military Service Bill on 5 January, 1916. [164]

Sir John Simon raised three main objections to conscription. Firstly, he objected on principle. As he said on 5 January during the first reading of the Bill: "There are some of us who regard this principle of voluntary enlistment as a real heritage of the British people." [165] Secondly, he did not agree with the figures provided by Lord Derby which purported to show that 650,000 single men had not volunteered. Simon said it was not enough to subtract the figures given by Lord Derby from those collected for the National Register. [166] The major prop of his argument was that Clergymen, merchant seamen, men in other protected positions and conscientious objectors, included

163. The first Commissioner of Works; the Chancellor of the Exchequer; the President of the Board of Trade; and the Home Secretary.

164. Jenkins, op. cit., p. 388 shows that Grey, McKenna, Runciman and Simon submitted resignations over the conscription issue and that Birrell had indicated that although he might with reluctance support the measure, he did not feel he could remain with the Government if the four resignations were accepted.

165. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVII, col. 976, 5

166. Enacted in July, 1915, the National Registration Act was needed, said the Government, to supply accurate figures of the man-power resources of the country. Its opponents said the Act was the first stage to the introduction of conscription.

in the National Register total, could not be counted as part of the missing 650,000. Only by subtracting these clerics, seamen and others from the National Register total and then subtracting the Derby figures from the resultant total could an estimate be given of the available men for military service. Simon's third objection to conscription was that he feared for the unity of the country if the Bill was passed. He believed that the labour unions had shown quite clearly that they were opposed to the measure.

Simon was not opposed to the war; for he stated frequently during the debates that he wanted the Country to be strong. However, he did not feel that conscriptipn would provide strength: "The methods which this Bill proposes to adopt are not going to make our country stronger or more united." 167 Many M.P.'s who objected to conscription echoed Simon's fear that the measure would dividethe country. Sir William Eyles, Lief Jones, H.G. Chancellor, and R. D. Holt all indicated, during the first reading, that they believed national disunity would follow the passing of the Bill.

During the second reading, Liberals placed less emphasis on the threat posed by conscription to national unity and concentrated more on the possibility of industrial conscription following in the wake of military compulsion. Richard Lambert, J.M. Hogge and A.G. Harvey all expressed the opinion that the Bill could form the basis of industrial conscription. Simon also put forward this view when he

167. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVII, col. 1646 12 January, 1916.

spoke on the second reading. However, Asquith promised an amendment to ensure that there would be no possibility of industrial conscription arising out of the Bill. W.M.R. Pringle said that he, and other Liberals for whom he spoke, were satisfied by the Prime Minister's promise and that they would not vote against the Bill on its second reading. 168

In Objection Overruled, D. Boulton places both Dr. Christopher Addison and Barnet Kenyon among those independent Liberals who opposed the Bill. Both voted for the Bill on its first two readings, however, which hardly makes them opponents of conscription. From Addison's autobiography it is possible to see that he had some reservations about conscription:

> There are some elements in the Bill which a good many of us do not like. As it stands, it could certainly be used by an employer as an instrument of industrial pressure. 169

Addison wrote this on January 17, 1916, after he had voted for the Bill on 6 January; but he had decided that some measure of conscription was necessary long before this date. On July 28, 1915 he told the House and more particularly, "those Members with whom I have worked for many years", that they should keep an open mind on conscription. He went on to say that the views of the volunteers at the Front should be canvassed. Addison was of the opinion that they often asked 'When are those at home who have not come forward going to bear their fair share?' 170

168. The other members were probably Sir J. E. Barlow, J.M. Hogge and G.C. Rees. These men together with W.M.R. Pringle voted against conscription on the first reading, abstained on the second and dissatisfied with the amendments regarding industrial conscription voted against on the third.

169. Addison, op.cit., p. 245

170. The Parliamentary History of Conscription in Great Britain (London" George Allen and Unwin, 1917, p. 21.

It was on the grounds of efficiency, however, that Addison endorsed conscription. He wrote:

> The serious defect of the voluntary system as we saw it then, and as it was being operated under the Derby Scheme, was that a great number of keen young men joined up who could be spared from vital industries and that many who could have gone and ought to have gone did not enrol. 171

The Independent Liberals who voted against conscription were: Sydney Arnold, John Burns, Sir. W. H. Byles, H.G. Chancellor, W. Clough, R.D. Denman, Sir W. A. Gelder, H.J. Glanville, A.G.C. Harvey, J. M. Hogge, R.D. Holt, Edward T. John, Lief Jones, Sir. E. H. Lamb, T. Lough, Sir Walter Luncinas (Hartlepool), D. M. Mason, Philip Morrell, R. L. Outhwaite, Arthur Sherwell, H. B. Lees-Smith, J. H. Whitehouse, Penry Williams (Middlesboro), L. Williams (Carmorthen).[172]

A further group of Liberals who voted against conscription were those connected with the U.D.C.: Joseph King, Arthur Ponsonby, Richard Lambert and Charles Trevelyan.

Also in the Liberal Party were four M.P.'s who were members of the Society of Friends: J. Allen Baker, T.E. Harvey, Arnold Rowntree and J.W. Wilson. The first three Friends voted against the Bill on all of its three readings. But J.W. Wilson did not vote on the main divisions. 173

Here, then, was the sum of the resistence to conscription in the House of Commons. It was composed largely of Liberals with a

171. Addison, op. cit., p. 170

172. H. B. Lees-Smith came from the Front to cast his votes against conscription and wore his uniform as he did so.

173. Wilson only appears to have been in the House on one day, 18 January, 1916 while the Military Service Bill was being debated. All references to him during this period occur on this date. He spoke and voted on amendments at this time.

handful of I.L.P. members and an even smaller number of other Labour Party members. In the latter part of 1915, it had appeared that the opposition to conscription was much more widespread than this. It has been shown that for varying reasons the Irish Nationalists, Labour and even members of the Cabinet had opposed conscription. Gradually, however, this opposition was eroded away. The Irish Nationalists were prepared to oppose conscription for Ireland, but were not willing to stand with other anti-conscriptionist elements when Ireland was omitted from the Bill.

Labour never formed a united front against conscription. Throughout the passage of the Bill Labour M.P.'s were almost equally divided numerically into those who supported conscription and those who objected to it. Outside Parliament, Labour Conferences passed resolutions against conscription, but conference decisions expressed in the form of recommendations, did not bind M.P.'s. Other factors had to be considered, especially the M.P.'s personal views and the views of their constituents. Critics of the decisions of the T.U.C. Conference could also argue that because many Trade Unionists were at the Front, the Conference decisions did not reflect true Union opinion. The implication underlying this criticism was that the soldiers would have voted unanimously for conscription. Whether or not this would have been the case is open to dispute, but the important point to be kept in mind is that conference decisions against conscription were ignored by a large number of Labour M.P.'s.

Even the Irish Nationalist and Labour Party vote combined could not have defeated the Bill, although it could have been the deciding factor if a substantial number of Liberals had also opposed the measure. Cabinet dissension over conscription and the expressed opinions of many Liberals before the introduction of the Military Service Bill seemed to indicate that many Liberals would oppose the Bill, but in the event the majority of Liberals voted for conscription.

IV

Many M.P.'s who opposed the Military Service Bill were called pacifists by their critics, although very few were. Those who opposed the Bill generally did so because it meant a loss of freedom and because the Bill would divide the Country. The Quaker members were against all war and some I.L.P. members were against the particular war then being fought, but most Labour M.P.'s and non-Quaker Liberals supported the war. Richard Lambert, a staunch Liberal opponent of conscription said during the second reading of the Bill:

> I do not agree with the conscientious objector. If I were of military age (He was 50) I would go myself, but the conscientious objector is entitled to his opinion. [174]

J.H. Hogge during the same reading also said he would go to the Front if he were not too old. (He was 43). He added that he felt a pride for the Scottish regiments and for the Empire. H.B. Lees-Smith, as already indicated, came directly from the trenches to oppose conscription. Mr. Lough told the House on the 11, January:

174. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXV11, col. 1469 11 January, 1916.

> I am opposed to compulsion, but if I were assured that compulsion was necessary to win this war, I should, with reluctance accept even that bad system. 175

E.T. John spoke for himself and other opponents of conscription when he said, "I have voted twice against this Bill ... (but) ... it does not follow that we have any doubt as to the justice of the cause for which we are fighting. "[176] Sir John Simon showed that he objected to conscription but not to the war itself when he joined the Royal Air Force as a major in 1917.

Philip Snowden became the chief voice in support of the conscientious objector in Parliament, but he himself was not a pacifist. In his Autobiography he wrote: "I have never taken up the attitude of the extreme pacifist who objects to war in all possible circumstances."[177] He emphasized his attitude to extremists when writing later about the absolutist objector: "I never agreed with the attitude taken up by these absolutists, although I had the greatest respect for what they regarded as the right course."[178] Snowden objected to the war not as a pacifist, but because he felt it had been started by captalists and the secret diplomacy which arose out of capitalism.

MacDonald and Jowett thought the war must be won. Neither spoke at any length on the subject of the conscientious objectors, although MacDonald had a son in the F.A.U. MacDonald himself tried

175. Ibid., col. 1516, 11 January, 1916.

176. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVIII, col. 1028, 24 January, 1916.

177. Snowden, op. cit., p. 362.

178. Ibid., p. 410.

to join an ambulance unit in December, 1914, but Lord Elton records that the military authorities in Belgium considered that he was "too dangerous a person to be allowed within reach of the Western Front." [179] Despite his outbursts, in 1914, against the war and his determination not to take part in recruiting campaigns, MacDonald was willing to serve amongst the ravages of war as an ambulance worker. MacDonald did not consider himself a pacifist. He wrote in the Socialist Review, in October, 1914:

> For myself I cannot accept that doctrine (Tolstoyism). It is emerging from the moral evolution of the world. I wait for it...But it has not yet come....I give it the homage of one who is working for its embodiment. Beyond that I cannot go now. 180

MacDonald's utterances in Parliament during the war show that he was more interested in the complaints of soldiers than those of conscientious objecters. He raised points about widow's pensions, soldier's pensions and kindred problems put forward by soldiers or their families, but he rarely spoke on the subject of conscientious objectors.

Jowett shared many of MacDonald's opinions during the war. He too was very interested in the welfare of the soldiers and their dependents and when he was not denouncing the secret foreign policy which he claimed was responsible for the war, his parliamentary speeches were about these people.

179. Elton, op. cit. p. 269.

180. Ibid., p. 263.

Jowett was not a pacifist as evidenced by his support for a war of national defence. He had sympathy for those who were pacifists, however, and wrote in the Bradford Pioneer in June, 1915:

> No outside power, no human authority, is entitled to compel a man to do that against which his soul revolts. A man had better lose his life than his soul, and many men in this country will, if they are forced by the madness of their rulers to face the alternative, choosethe better part. 181

It seems clear, then that many of those who spoke and voted against conscription did so mainly because they were pro-voluntarists and not because they had deep-rooted objections to war itself. Notable exceptions were the M.P.'s who were members of the Society of Friends. The other Liberals and the bulk of the Labour members who opposed conscription, supported the war; and although they showed concern for the conscientious objector, they did not share his beliefs. To disentangle the views of the I.L.P. Members of Parliament is no easy task. Clynes and Parker can in many ways be classed with the non - I.L.P. sections of the Labour Party, for in supporting the war they showed that they had little connection with pacifism. Jowett and MacDonald took up a more central position within the I.L.P. spectrum and the latter never identified himself completely with pacifist elements either within or without the I.L.P. Snowden, perhaps was closer to the Pacifist-dominated ranks of the I.L.P. Although he maintained that he did not share the views of the absolutist objector, Snowden more than anyone else championed

181. Quoted in Brockway, op. cit. p. 141.

their cause in Parliament. Many absolutists believed, as did Snowden, that the war was a capitalist war and they would have no part in it. If, then, it is allowed that this objection to a particular war constitutes a conscientious objection, Snowden can be said to have been a conscientious objector. He did not embrace the pacifism which outlawed all war, but his objection to the Great War was unflinching.

V

During the passage of the Military Service Bill (No. 2), conscientious objection was an issue raised principally on the second reading and at the Committee stage. Sir John Simon referred to conscientious objectors on 11 January, 1916. He was the first member to speak of them at any length and he showed that he had some sympathy for 'genuine' objectors. For shirkers he had no patience and wanted provisions in the Bill harsh enough to deter them, though not too harsh to bring hardship to genuine cases. Simon said that he was aware that the exclusiveness of the Quakers in matters of conscientious objection was over and that the problem could not be solved as it had been in the Militia Ballot Act of 1802, when Quakers alone had been granted exemption from combat. He assured the Government that it would have to make the net wider than ever before to include all those with conscientious objections.

On 12 January, 1916, Arnold Rowntree, a member of one of Britain's leading Quaker families, gave the Quaker viewpoint on war and conscientious objection. He said that no-one should be made to fight when his conscience told him that this was morally wrong.

Further, he pointed out that to make every man a soldier was to destroy individual freedom and to create a militaristic nation dependent upon force to secure its ends. The views he expressed, said Rowntree, had been held by Quakers 'from the early days'. War, Quakers maintained, was in direct contrast to the teachings of Christ. While holding strictly to their pacifist principles, however, Rowntree went on, Quakers were willing to serve: "A large body of these conscientious objectors want to serve their country in a time of trial like this in the most effective way they can." He pointed out that whilst he spoke many objectors to military service were performing valuable service in the Friends Ambulance Brigade: "They have not had to bear arms, but they have done what they could."[182] Ambulance work was not the only useful service that Quakers were performing, continued Rowntree, reconstruction work had been carried out in Belgium and France as soon as the battle had moved on. He stressed that in the later work Quakers had received valuable aid from Mr. Stanley, Lord Derby and others.

The message Rowntree gave the House was clear. As a body, the Quakers wished to cause the Government as little trouble as possible. They had developed their own ways of serving their Country without violating their pacifist principles and all they asked was to be allowed to continue to give the service they felt able to give. This position was summed up very well by Rowntree when he said, "I am one of those who feel how much I owe this country." He felt that

182. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVII Col. 1685 12th January, 1916.

most conscientious objectors felt this way and that they could not do enough to pay back "what this country has done for them". They remembered those "who are dying for them in the trenches."[183]

Despite his generalization that most conscientious objectors felt as he did, Rowntree was aware that there were some who did not. These men would not accept ambulance or reconstruction work; for they felt that by accepting it they would eventually be dragged into the military orbit. This view was alien to Rowntree: "I have been trying to understand it in the last few days because I have often been in conflict with some of them."[184] Not only would these extremists not serve, he went on, but they were willing to be persecuted for their beliefs.

The men of whom Rowntree spoke were basically socialists who would not fight because of their humanitarian beliefs or because they refused to take part in what they described as a capitalist war. But within the Quaker body itself there were socialists, making it difficult to put socialists and Quakers into different compartments. Attempts were made to do this, however.

During the Committee stage of the Military Service Bill, W. Joynson-Hicks suggested an amendment which would only have granted exemption:

> On the ground that the applicant was on the fifteenth day of August, nineteen hundred and fifteen, a member of the Society of Friends or of any other recognized religious body one of whose fundamental tenets is an objection to all war. [185]

183. Ibid., col. 1686, 12 January, 1916.

184. Ibid., col. 1686, 12 January, 1916.

185. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXVIII, col. 422, 19 January, 1916.

Joynson-Hicks called the Bill the 'slackers charter' and claimed that anyone could go before the tribunals and state that he had a conscientious objection to war. His object in bringing forward his amendment, he said, was to narrow down the number of those who could apply for exemption. Everyone, thought Joynson-Hicks, should fight for the State and especially the socialists who exalted the State above everything, but would not fight for it.

Speaking from a Quaker viewpoint and echoing much that Rowntree had said during the second reading, T.E. Harvey came out against the amendment. He said that although the socialists took a non-religious standpoint, he felt that they had a right to consideration. They sincerely believed that they were working towards a greater understanding between nations.

The movement to confine the conscientious objection exemptions to purely religious organizations failed in its objectives. As the Quaker spokesmen indicated, they were not in favour of socialist doctrine, but they felt bound to sustain liberty of conscience. They could not subscribe to the view that a socialist could not have a conscience. The Government itself agreed that it was impossible to separate religious from humanitarian conscience. Boner Law stated during the debate on the Joynson-Hicks amendment that it was not possible to confine conscientious objection to religious groups alone. There was, then, little support for an exclusive religious exemption and the amendment was defeated.

A Quaker amendment was passed and incorporated into the Military Service Bill. T.E. Harvey and A. Rowntree put down an amendment which was slightly reworded by the Government, but which gave the Quakers most of what they desired in the exemption clause.

The clause which became part of the Bill read

> Any certificate of exemption may be absolute, conditional or temporary ... and in the case of an application on conscientious grounds, may take the form of combatant duties only, or may be conditional on the applicant being engaged in some work which in the opinion of the local tribunal, is of national importance. 186

The latter part of the Bill (underlined by author) was secured by the Quakers. Again this amendment pointed to the desire of the Quakers to serve their Country. They felt that if the positions open to conscientious objectors were increased, then many objectors would be able to find work which would not clash with their pacifist principles.

Harvey suggested that there were many ways in which conscientious objectors could serve. The two occupations he drew particular attention to were ambulance and fire-brigade work. Later the Government found less congenial work such as mine-sweeping for objectors who sought work of national importance.

At the time the amendment was passed there were many hopes attached to it. Sir Herbert Samuel, the Home Secretary, did much to spread optimism among objectors when he said that 'work of national importance' was to be interpreted in the widest possible terms. He gave the example of a shoe-maker who was a conscientious objector. If the man merely told the tribunal that he wanted to continue making boots, the tribunal would probably send him to the Army. If, however

186. Military Service Act, 1916. 5 and 6, George 5, Ch. 104, 2. Certificates of Exemption (3).

he said that he was a conscientious objector and wanted to continue making boots which he considered was work of national importance, then the tribunal might say

> While this is not work of national importance, if you say you are a conscientious objector, and object to becoming a soldier, you will obtain your exemption (sic.) 187

When the tribunals began to operate, however, it was soon discovered that the loose wording of the exemption clause made it easy for tribunals to interpret it in any way they chose. Herbert Samuel's explanation of the wide range of work of national importance raised hopes which were soon dashed.

Other amendments raised by the anti-conscriptionist group in Parliament were unsuccessful. C.P. Trevelyan suggested that conscientious objectors should be able to obtain exemption by affirming their objection in a document designed for the purpose. Another idea, presented by R.L. Outhwaite was that the conscientious objector should swear before two justices of the peace that he was a genuine objector. This oath, he claimed, would be as binding as any other oath, legally accepted, which was made in a like manner. Both these suggestions were unacceptable to the Government. In reply to Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Herbert Samuel said that if they agreed to the suggested amendment:

187. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, LXXVIII, col. 451, 19 January, 1916.

> There would be a very considerable number of unconscientious objectors, and it might be regarded as a mere matter of form, by men of a certain class to say, "We do not want to serve, and all we have to do is to call ourselves conscientious objectors, and there will be no further trouble, but we shall be exempt". 188

Outhwaite's amendment was refused on the grounds that, as Walter Long (President of the Local Government Board) put it:

> Nobody who has been connected as long as I have with the administration of justice in our Petty Sessional Courts who does not know that there are circumstances in which the taking of an oath is regarded in certain circles with a vast amount of levity, and to regard that as sufficient proof of the existance of strong conscientious feeling is proof which must be forthcoming in other ways - is wholly inadequate for the purpose. 189

Government opinion, then, was in favour of the Quaker amendment which would require some service from the objector, but refused to accept any measure which would have made exemption too easy to obtain. The Government claimed that unless exemption was difficult to secure, the Bill would create a vast number of objectors. In effect, the Government had begun with the assumption that relief from combatant service would meet the needs of conscientious objectors, but had found that this was not the case. Non-combatants were required to perform any military activity which did not demand that they fire a rifle. Many Quakers could not accept such service. Their spokesmen in Parliament, therefore, concentrated upon widening the exemption clause to include work of national importance.

188. Ibid., col. 449, 19 January, 1916.

189. Ibid., col. 465, 19 January, 1916.

CHAPTER II

PARLIAMENTARY ACTION ON BEHALF OF THE CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR

I

As had been predicted by many of the opponents of conscription, once the idea of conscription had been accepted and legislation had been enacted, there was a movement to extend the Military Service Act in order to bring in more men. On the 3 May, a mere four months after he had moved the introduction of conscription in the House of Commons, Asquith moved an extension to the first Act. He wished to bring in the married men aged 18-41; to extend for the duration of the war men serving in the Army whose terms of service would normally have expired; to recall time expired men whether married or single if they were under 41 when the Bill was passed; to review medical and temporary certificates of exemption; to form a special reserve, composed of civilians, but who would be available for immediate call-up when necessary; and to be able to transfer territorials without their permission.

The number of men involved in the extension proposals was not great and any chance of blocking conscription had passed after the first reading of the original Bill. Yet, substantially the same group of men which had steadfastly opposed the first Bill, fought the extension proposals clause by clause. They did so knowing that there was little they could do to alter parliamentary opinion on conscription. Philip Snowden summed up this feeling when he wrote in his Autobiography:

> Once the principle and practice of conscription had been accepted by Parliament, there was no logical ground for opposition to its extension to all classes of men within the age limit.

And in widening the Act there was some hope that:

> The extension of conscription to all classes was likely to advance the movement for peace by negotiations, which by this time had assumed considerable force in the country. [190]

On the day the new proposals came before the House, the problem of the conscientious objector was discussed. Sir Frederick Banbury wished that there had been a clause concerning objectors for he felt that these men had sadly abused the privilege which the Government had granted them and had shirked their responsibility. A Labour M.P., George Barnes, pledged support for the new Bill, but said he wanted the clause concerning conscientious objection in the principle Bill extended, so that more men might come within its scope. He differentiated between the 'real conscientious objector', who he described as being a man "who through inward feeling takes his stand" and an objector with "strong social or political feelings" who obtained his conscientious objection through external sources. However, he felt that the latter should receive "some exemption" although he gave no indication of what form this exemption should take. [191] J. M. Hogge chose this debate to draw attention to the tribunals established to decide upon exemptions. He wanted separate tribunals for conscientious objectors; for he thought the men who sat upon the tribunals were not qualified to pronounce on matters of conscience. Business

190. Snowden, op. cit., p. 400.

191. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXXII, cols. 52-53, 3 May, 1916.

men, he maintained, were not the best people to enquire into a man's conscience.

There was no division on the first reading for the members did not have the Bill's proposals before them in writing. However, R. D. Holt moved the rejection of the Bill on 4 May. In so doing, he warned that he and his friends would fight in committee for an extension of the clause dealing with conscientious objectors. The motion for rejection was seconded by H.B. Lees-Smith who felt that the Bill would provide few extra men. It was just another whittling away of men's freedom. Further, he indicated the economic folly of taking away married, settled men of good means.

As in the debates upon the original Military Service Bill, there was a proposal that only members of the Society of Friends should obtain exemption on grounds of conscience. On this occasion the suggestion was made by R. McNeil. This was a lost cause, however, for the Government had realized at the time of the first Bill that such a clause was inadequate and although Major Newman resurrected the idea at the Committee stage, the amendment was removed after a somewhat lengthy debate.

It was during the second reading of the Bill that James Parker, an I.L.P. member of the House, made it known that he would vote for the Bill. He had been a consistent opponent of the earlier conscription Bill; voting against on all the three main divisions. Yet he now declared that he was convinced by the Military authorities that

the extension of the Act was a necessity. He was still anti-conscriptionist, he maintained, but necessity overruled all else in the present circumstances.

When the vote was taken, it showed a 328-36 division in favour of the proposed extension. For the anti-conscriptionists the bulk of the votes were cast by those who had opposed the original Bill. One important addition was J. W. Wilson, a Quaker and a Liberal M.P. who, though he was a member of the anti-war party, gave his first vote on a major conscription division on this occasion. Three other Liberals; H. J. Glanville, Sir Walter Runciman (The Hartlepools) and Llewelyn Williams voted against. They had voted the same way on the first reading of the original Bill, but had not voted on its second and third readings.

At the Committee stage, the conscientious objector and his treatment received more attention. Joseph King alleged that although it was generally supposed that objectors were not liable to the death penalty for disobeying Army orders, they were regularly told that they could be shot for insubordination. He wanted a clause inserted which would definitely state that these men would not suffer the death penalty or be given penal servitude. Sir George Cave, the Home Secretary, gave the Government's assurance that the former would not be imposed upon objectors and that the latter was 'Highly unlikely'. The clause was not proceeded with.

Once again, T. E. Harvey sought to extend the alternative service available for conscientious objectors. He moved the

following amendment:

> A certificate of exemption granted under Section two, Sub-section (1), of the principal Act on the ground of a conscientious objection to the undertaking of combatant service may be either absolute or conditional, but, where a conditional certificate is granted, the condition upon which it is imposed shall be the performance of some work of national importance that does not involve service under any military authority. 192

It was clear, maintained Harvey, that the N.C.C. had been an unfortunate mistake. However, most of the conscientious objector's problems could be removed if his clause was accepted. The clause received wide support amongst the anti-war group: Lief Jones, Philip Morrell, R. L. Outhwaite, Philip Snowden, J. H. Whitehouse and J. W. Wilson all spoke in favour of the proposal. J. W. Wilson was concerned about the economic waste of having objectors in the Army: "In the interests of true economy it is much better to find these men work they can do in England where labour is short than sending them abroad." The financial reward for work performed by objectors should be no more than a soldier earned, he continued, and they should be taken away from their homes and put to work in transport or dock brigades; for he thought "a practical test for conscience is whether a man is willing to make a sacrifice." 193

Walter Long, was the principal speaker for the Government on Harvey's amendment and upon the suggestions put forward by J.W. Wilson. He raised objections to both, largely on the grounds of the difficulty

192. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. LXXXII, Col. 1016, 11 May, 1916.

193. Ibid., col. 1029-1030, 11 May, 1916.

of implementing such schemes. Asked, Wilson how, without compulsion, conscientious objectors could be kept at their place of work when they were perhaps being made to work at an occupation to which they took exception. Wilson did not know, but he thought that the Local Government Board or the Board of Trade could take charge of objectors as ably as a "prison warden or a military officer." Harvey withdrew his amendment after Walter Long had spoken on the difficulties involved in putting such a scheme into operation.

It must be remembered that both Harvey and Wilson were Quakers. Their proposals show clearly the gulf existing between the section of the Quaker movement for which they spoke and the section represented by the S.Q.S. or the F.S.C.

Philip Snowden again raised a proposal which he had put forward in the original Bill: that exemptions on grounds of conscience could be secured by a person swearing to his objection before two justices of the peace, or in writing or orally before a tribunal composed of not less than two reputable persons. The same fate befell this proposal as on the first occasion it was raised: it was not proceeded with. Such an amendment, claimed the Government, made exemption too easy and open to abuse.

When the third and final reading of the Bill was heard, the vote in favour of the measure fell to 250, but this was still a huge majority over the 35 who went into the division against the Government. The anti-war group had fought the Bill clause by clause, but had accomplished little. However, the group had shown up many of the

inadequacies of the tribunals and there were some M.P.'s unattached to this body who had also shown concern about the conduct of certain tribunals. It was at last admitted by many that something should be done to secure greater standardization of tribunal decisions. The Government's contribution to the cause of clarity was to insert a new clause into the section dealing with conscientious objectors stating quite clearly that tribunals could grant absolute exemption to an objector.

II

After the passing of the Military Service Bill (No. 2), parliamentary opponents of the Bill who were also sympathetic to Britains conscientious objectors, concentrated their attentions on the decisions and conduct of the tribunals which had been set up to deal with exemptions from military service. [194] These tribunals, it must be admitted, had a difficult task: for to arrive at the evaluation of a man's conscience was no easy undertaking. And the Act with which they had to work contained a conscience clause which was far from being the acme of clarity. [195] One of the main arguments raised in Parliament against tribunals was that they were allowed to interpret the clause without specific instructions from the Government on matters of interpretation. Walter Long, who was President of the Local Government Board, the Government department responsible for tribunals, replied to the criticism by issuing a series of

194. This was also the case outside Parliament. The Tribunal, for example, carried page after page on the subject of the inadequacies of tribunals.

195. Vide. Part 2, Chapter 1.

Government circulars which he stressed were only recommendations; tribunals were still free to interpret as they wished. In the circulars, Walter Long invited the tribunals to take a further look at the exemption clause and to make their examinations with tolerance and impartiality. He reiterated the procedure concerning the holding of sessions in camera. Some tribunals had decided that all hearings should be held in this way. This was wrong. Certain parts of an examination could be held privately, but only in exceptional circumstances could the whole of the proceedings be treated in this way. 196 The latitude afforded tribunals in their interpretation of the 'conscience clause' led naturally to differences of interpretation amongst tribunals. A man exempted in one part of the country might not have received his exemption if he lived somewhere else. There were examples of similar cases being judged differently in towns only a few miles apart and there were even examples of this amongst people residing in the same town. To go a stage further, there were different decisions for members of the same family.

Philip Snowden raised many questions in the House concerning the non-uniformity of tribunal decisions and the way in which tribunals had paid little attention to the wording of the 'conscience clause'. Although the Government had declared that absolute exemption was possible, he argued on 29 February, 1916, his researches had not

196. This circular was issued on 23 March, 1916, others followed as necessity arose.

uncovered one case where such an exemption had been granted. [197] He gave the House a verbatum account of one particular tribunal proceedings which had appeared in The Times. Snowden considered that this was a typical report of how some Tribunals sought to determine a genuine objection to war on grounds of conscience. He felt that the man in question, a collier-lampman, had answered intelligently in a manner which should have satisfied the tribunal that his objection was genuine. It is worth quoting extensively from this episode as it shows clearly the type of questioning to which conscientious objectors were subjected:

> Did the man object to saving life?
> "no I would endeavour to save life even at the risk of my own."
> Would he object to being engaged in minesweeping?
> "No if I were allowed to sweep all mines - our own as well as the enemies."
> Did he object to service in the R.A.M.C.?
> "Yes it would not be proper in accordance with my convictions to heal the wound of one man in order that he may inflict wounds on another."
> Did he feel that all men in the Army were heathens"
> "I hold no brief for any other man's conscience."
> If someone attempted to kill your mother what would you do?
> "Stand loyal to my principles. I would place myself between the aggressor and the object of the assault."
> What if the man had a revolver?
> "I would not sacrifice my principles."
> You enjoy a scrap?
> "I do not think that point arises. It does not embrace the taking of life."
> If someone hit you would you turn the other cheek?
> "We are talking now of taking life. If a man deserves a thrashing, that is another matter, but I object to the taking of life." [198]

197. Yet shortly afterwards absolute exemptions appeared. In the first issue of The Tribunal it was stated that on going to press, 18 cases of absolute exemption had been granted. The Tribunal, Vol. 1, No. 1, 8 March, 1916. p. 2.

198. The Times, 28 February, 1916. p. 5

This testimony did not obtain an exemption. While many of the facts surrounding this case are not known, it would seem that the tribunal could have thought the man was a 'political' as opposed to a 'religious' objector. The reference to the turning of the cheek received an answer which showed that the man objected to killing, but was not convinced that non-violence was a solution for every problem where conflict arose. It may have been honest of the man to speak of someone deserving a 'thrashing', but it was not a sentiment which would appeal to a Tribunal in the early days of the Military Service Act. At that period men thought of a pacifist in terms of what they knew of the Society of Friends. This man did not speak as a member of that body would have answered.

Yet, some of the questions asked by this tribunal, especially the one concerning an attempt on the part of an aggressor to kill some member of the plaintiff's family or the one about soldiers being heathens were questions which said little for the intelligence of the tribunal members. Regularly this type of question was asked, however, and brought well-earned derision from The Tribunal.

It was the Government's contention that although there were some discrepancies in the findings of local tribunals, provision had been made for appeals through the appeals tribunals; and if satisfaction could not be obtained at this level, then there was a Central Appeal Tribunal which could be consulted. Snowden insisted that the appeal tribunals were as arbitrary as the local ones. He said that Surrey Appeal Tribunal had decided: "That the Act does not permit

exemption from non-combatant duties in the case of a conscientious objector." [199] Apparently his criticism was justified for Sir Herbert Nield, a right-wing conservative M.P. and Chairman of the Middlesex Appeal Tribunal, stated immediately afterwards in the House that, in his opinion, only a conditional certificate could be granted to conscientious objectors. This was his contention even though he had heard Walter Long admitting the wrongness of some tribunals when deciding about the possibility of unconditional exemptions. "It is their duty to deal with the Act as passed by Parliament." he said. [200]

Another issue raised by the anti-war M.P.s was the lack of Labour representation upon certain tribunals. They pointed out that the Government had recommended that there be adequate Labour representation, but that this advice had not been followed by certain tribunals. W. C. Anderson raised this problem when he asked whether the Government was aware that Dumbarton Tribunal was composed of a glue merchant, a builder, a factor and two lawyers. In reply T. McKinnon-Wood said that the Government was aware of this and that he was in communication with the town council in question.

Concerning the composition of tribunals, Lord Haversham, a former Liberal M.P. gave the House of Lords his personal recipe for choosing members. He was the President of a tribunal, he said, and he had been told to choose as far as possible from "both sides of politics." He continued,

199. The C.O.'s Hansard, Vol. 1, 6 April, 1916, p. 44.

200. Ibid., 21 March, 1916, p. 43.

> The first person I asked was the Conservative M.P. for the division, who proved an excellent member of the tribunal, Mr. Earnest Gardener. I then asked the agent of the largest proprietor, and he came forward...And so on. 201

Perhaps a Labour representative occured somewhere on his list, but if he did he would be somewhere near the bottom on this scale of values. In reality, most tribunal seats went to local dignitaries; men proposed by the local Conservative or Liberal Association; and local tradesmen. There were also men connected with the legal profession. In many cases, the latter's legal training helped to restrain the more extreme views of some of their fellow tribunal members, many of whom had been active in recruitment drives and who still considered that they were engaged in securing men for the Army.

After the passing of the amending Military Service Act and the Government circulars which followed it, there was a marked decrease in parliamentary questions concerning tribunal decisions. And The Tribunal also gave less space to lampooning tribunals. By July, 1916, the flood ceased. There were other reasons for the change of emphasis by those concerned with the fate of the conscientious objector. Some objectors had been sent to France early in May and in the same month had come the decision to court-martial objectors who refused Army orders and to transfer them to civil prisons. These issues tended to force concern over tribunals into the background.

201. The C.O.'s Hansard, Vol. 1 (Retrospective Series No. 5), October 1916. Speech made in the Lords 4 May, 1916.

However, there is no doubt that the Government circulars helped, in some degree, to standardise tribunal decisions. Philip Snowden, who had repeatedly raised questions on this subject in the Commons, paid a tribute to the work of Walter Long in his Autobiography. He thought that the President of the Local Government Board had done much to see that objectors received a fair hearing. If his instructions had been followed more closely, Snowden continued, then many of the problems associated with tribunals could have been removed.

III

While keeping a watchful eye upon the workings of the local and appeal tribunals and the decisions of the Central Appeal Tribunal, anti-war M.P.'s were soon made aware of a new problem: Conscientious Objectors who had not been granted absolute exemption and who had refused non-combatant or combatant service were being arrested by the police as absentees, imprisoned, brought before courts, fined and then handed over to the Army. The Tribunal first drew attention to this problem in its issue of 20 April, 1916. It reported that 30 N-C.F. members had been treated in this way.

From April, 1916, questions were regularly asked in Parliament concerning individual conscientious objectors. Was it true asked the anti-war M.P.'s that certain objectors were being kept in military prisons, bound in irons and being fed upon bread and water?

On 9 May, Arnold Rowntree raised the question of whether any conscientious objectors in the Army's custody had been sent to France.

The Government answered as it had replied to many other questions concerning objectors: enquiries were being made. Yet the avalanche of questions continued and Walter Long had, on more than one occasion, to ask that the number of such questions be curbed as it involved a large amount of work and involved Government employees making a wealth of enquiries.

Some improvement in the position of arrested objectors was affected by the War Office in the form of a new Army Order (No. 10) issued on 25 May, 1916. This stated that in the event of a breach of discipline by someone who claimed at his court-martial that he was a conscientious objector, a term of imprisonment would follow and not a term of detention as previously. The prison sentence would be served in the nearest civil prison and not in a military prison.

The question of whether men who claimed to be conscientious objectors had been sent to France was eventually resolved; they had. Snowden followed up the questions asked by Arnold Rowntree on 9 May by asking the Prime Minister whether the refusal of these men to obey orders in France would lead to the death sentence. Asquith replied that such an assurance was unnecessary. A month later, however, 34 such men had the death penalty passed upon them in France. This was announced by H. J. Tennant, the Under-Secretary for War, on 26 June, 1916. Four days earlier he had told the House,

> I can assure my right hon. Friend...(Mr. Barnes)
> ...there is no intention of dealing with them

> (the men sent to France) in any way harshly, and that there will be no question of their being sentenced to death. 202

This followed other assurances that men who professed conscientious objections to war would not be sent to France. In the event all 34 cases were commuted to penal servitude by the Commander in Chief in France and they were returned to Britain to undergo their punishment. The news of this release from the death penalty did not please Colonel Griffiths who asked,

> If these thirty-four men are sentenced to death for disobeying the orders of their superior officers, why are they not shot like other soldiers? 203

There were many cases of the ill-treatment of conscientious objectors raised by Members of Parliament, not all of which were asked by members of the anti-war group. Some enquiries came from Members interested in the fate of their constituents. Questions were asked of both the civil and military authorities. Many of these cases were either evaded or repudiated by the Government, but it had to be agreed that some of the cases were genuine and that ill-treatment had occured.

One such case was the treatment of conscientious objectors at Prees Heath Camp, near Whitchurch, Shropshire. The matter was first raised by Philip Morrell on 26 June, 1916. He asked whether a number of objectors had been,

202. The C.O.'s Hansard, Vol. 1 (Section 15 May, 13 July, 1916) p. 40.

203. Ibid., p. 40.

> Kept some time without food, were punched, kicked down, and undressed and scrubbed with a stiff sink brush till they were sore and bleeding. 204

He also wished to know whether a certain Lance-Corporal Barker gave this treatment and if the men were refused a court-martial by the commanding officer. The Government said it would make enquiries.

After the necessary enquiries had been made, J. H. Tennant was able to tell the House:

> It is undeniable that undue force was used by Lance-Corporal Barker, who was carried away by excess of zeal in his efforts to carry out the instructions of his superior officers. No permanent injury was inflicted, however,... 205

He continued by stating that Barker had crippled fingers and it was doubtful whether he could have struck 'severe blows'. However, Barker was to be disciplined for his actions and he would not be placed in a position which involved contact with conscientious objectors. Orders were to be issued that objectors would no longer be forced by physical methods to obey Army orders. Insubordination would be followed by court-martial.

Throughout the remainder of 1916 and in the early months of 1917, many other cases of ill-treatment were raised in the House. It would seem that most of these were adequately answered by the Government, for the original questions were not usually pursued by the anti-

204. Ibid., p. 41.

205. Ibid., p. 52. Mr. Tennant was quoting from a report issued by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command.

war group. However, on 4 July, 1917 began a series of questions which were to reveal one of the most sensational cases of ill-treatment involving conscientious objectors during the Great War. Mr. Needham asked Mr. Macpherson, the Under-Secretary of State, whether extracts from a letter written by a certain James Brightmore had been brought to his attention. Charles Trevelyan also asked about Brightmore who, he said, had proved the genuineness of his conscientious objection to war by suffering two terms of imprisonment. Trevelyan alleged that among other forms of ill-treatment, the man was kept in a pit 20 feet deep and 40 inches by 18 inches wide and full of water at the bottom. It was also reported that Brightmore was to be sent to France. Further questions followed by Whitehouse on the 5 July and by Captain S. Gwyn and Whitehouse again on the 11 July. Mr. Macpherson promised a full report, but on 16 July in reply to other enquiries by Whitehouse and T. E. Harvey, who ventured the information that the pit was 12 feet below ground level, he still had nothing to report.

On 18 July, Mr. Macpherson did give an answer to further questions from Whitehouse and Harvey. The latter supplied further facts concerning the case. He stated that Brightmore had been confined to a pit 12 feet below ground level for 11 days and nights and that on four of these days he was made to stand ankle deep in mud and water. The Under-Secretary of State for War had to admit that the allegations were "substantially correct". Brightmore had not been given a court-martial, but was dealt with by his commanding officer, who stipulated detention. Unfortunately, he was not held in the detention barracks

as regulations demanded. Macpherson said that the matter was communicated to the authorities on 28 June and that staff officers were sent that day to hear complaints from Brightmore and other objectors at Cleethorpes Camp, Lincolnshire.

Tenaciously, the anti-war group pressed the Brightmore case in the Commons. Harvey, Joseph King and Whitehouse continued their questioning on 23 July. In reply Mr. Macpherson said that the treatment of Brightmore stemmed from a fault in communications; for the contents of a War Office letter dated 19 September, 1916 had not been brought to the attention of the officers at Cleethorpes Camp.[206] He reported that the officer responsible for the omission was dangerously ill at the moment, so he did not wish to dwell on it. Brightmore was isolated from the rest of the camp by about 150 yards. A pit, a little over five feet deep, was given him to occupy, but no force was used to make him do this. He was given his rations and fuel for cooking:

> He spent very little time in this pit and principally employed himself in cooking his meals. He had a tent in which he was informed he could sleep, but refused. He was visited by the orderly officer and asked whether he had any complaints and always replied no. Strict instructions were given that he was not to be molested or in any way ill-treated.[207]

He ended by saying that the Army Council in no way wished to defend the "highly irregular action" which had taken place. Although the Government were forced to admit there were irregularities in the

206. Vide Appendix.

207. The C.O.'s Hansard, Vol. 2, p. 473.

treatment of Brightmore at Cleethorpes Camp, it will be noted that it was loath to admit that there had been ill-treatment. Yet the poor argument used that orders were given that there was to be no ill-treatment of this man was really a piece of slight of hand. That orders were given did not mean that they were carried out. What, it must be asked, did Mr. Macpherson consider was ill-treatment.

In reply to questions that Brightmore be released and given an absolute exemption, it was stated by the Under-Secretary for War that the man had already appeared before the Central Tribunal which decided that he was not a conscientious objector to military service. His release, therefore, was impossible. But, Macpherson ended by saying that the officers responsible for his treatment had been relieved of duty and would receive no further employment.

Yet the Brightmore case did not die. On 26 July, Needham made a further enquiry about Brightmore's future and on 1 August, he asked whether the result of Brightmore's court martial was known and whether his health had been impaired by his treatment at Cleethorpes. He was told that the court martial had not taken place and that as far as the Government could ascertain, Brightmore was in good health and did not appear to have suffered any ill consequences from his military detention.

It was suggested by T. G. Tickler, the M.P. for Grimsby in which constituency Cleethorpes Camp was situated, that perhaps the officers implicated in the Brightmore incident might be reinstated until further enquiries were made. The Government spokesman replied that the men

had had ample opportunity to reply to the charges laid against them and that no further enquiry was necessary. But Tickler returned to this topic on 8 August when he asked for a public enquiry into the Cleethorpes affair. His plea was met with a negative reply from the Government. T. E. Harvey seems to have had the final word on the subject when on 23 October, 1917, he asked for the reinstatement of the officers. He argued that the widespread publicity given to the War Offices' condemnation of the actions of these men had been sufficient to put an end to many of the irregularities which had been experienced by Brightmore and others. For the Government, Macpherson said that since an example had been made of these men he was willing to reconsider their reinstatement.

In Objection Overruled, Boulton shows the Brightmore case from the point of view of Brightmore himself. He records that Brightmore was from Manchester and was employed as a solicitor's clerk prior to his entry into the Army. Brightmore had served eight months of a year's detention when he was given 28 days solitary confinement for disobeying orders. It was because there was no guardroom cell available that he was ordered to be interned in the pit. Brightmore managed, with the help of a soldier who supplied him with a pencil and a cigarette packet, to scribble a note to his family to inform them of his condition. This letter was sent to the Manchester Guardian. Boulton gives the letter in full, but relevant details of his confinement will suffice here.

> I...found the confinement was in a pit which started at the surface at three feet by two and tapered off to two feet six inches by 15 inches. Water was struck, but they continued until it was 10 feet deep. The bottom is full of water and I have to stand on two strips of wood all day long just above the water line. There is no room to walk about, and sitting is impossible. The sun beats down, and through the long day there are only the walls of clay to look at. Already I am half mad. 208.

This statement of his position was given after Brightmore had been in the pit for a week. Four of these days were spent standing in mud and water, until the pieces of wood were inserted. And after 24 hours, one of the strips of wood fell into the water when the clay fell away from the side of the pit. His position was made worse when he was told that his five fellow objectors at the camp had been shipped to France and shot. He was told that a similar fate would befall him if he continued to refuse orders. In reality, the other conscientious objectors were still at the camp.

The parallel between the life led by Brightmore in the pit which was dug for him and the life led by the troops in the trenches is in many ways an obvious one and perhaps this was the thought of the men who put him in such a situation. In trenches men stood for hours in mud and rested upon planks above mud and water. Yet, as the authorities admitted, it was not for these officers to decide personally the way in which Brightmore should be treated. A procedure had been laid out in the event of a man failing to carry out

208. Boulton, op. cit., p. 150

orders because he claimed a conscientious objection to war. This should have been followed. It was claimed that the new regulations were not known, but it must be remembered that they had been formulated nine months before the Brightmore incident.

IV

As early as 1 November, 1916, the subject of disfranchising conscientious objectors was raised in the House of Commons by R. McNeil and Colonel Yate. They wanted those who had obtained an exemption from combatant service on grounds of conscience to be excluded from the new voting registers then being compiled. The Speaker ruled that they could raise the matter again at the committee stage of the Representation of the Peoples' Bill.

McNeil did raise the question again on 26 June, 1917, during a debate on the representation Bill. He proposed the following amendment:

> A person shall not be entitled to be registered or to vote at a Parliamentary or local government election if he has been exempted on the ground of conscientious objection to military service for which, but for such objection, he would have been liable. [209]

After presenting the amendment, McNeil gave his opinion of conscientious objectors and explained why he thought they should be excluded from the vote. He felt that such men tended to harm the State, for they refused to come to its aid during a period of strife. Thus, the burden of protecting the State fell upon others who were

209. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. XCV, col. 308, 26 June, 1917.

prepared to make a sacrifice for the common need. Conscientious objectors did not sacrifice or injure themselves, on the contrary, they actually benefited from their non-involvement in their Country's fight. Having warmed to his subject, McNeil poured scorn on objectors, claiming that although Britain had been tolerant with such men, it was clear that it was a tolerance "tinged with contempt". The majority of the British people wanted the war won, but against this majority view

> We have a small handful of men setting up a little circumscribed, ignorant, uninstructed dogmatism of their own, many of these men being, so far as we can judge...almost half crazy. 210

After this diatribe, McNeil concluded that those who did not fight for the State should not enjoy its privileges.

The principal speaker against the amendment was Lord Hugh Cecil. His speech was an impressive defence of the objector's freedom of opinion, although Cecil pointed out that he in no way shared this opinion. His main argument was that the objector had done nothing but avail himself of an exemption from military service granted him by Parliament. It was unbelievable that when a man followed the rulings of Parliament he was penalized for his actions. To Cecil, this seemed to "transgress all the principles of legislation, and National justice". 211 Captain Gwyn, an Irish Nationalist, said that conscientious objectors had the courage of the individual to stand against the crowd. It was this type of courage which produced freedom.

210. Ibid., cols, 312-313

211. Ibid., col. 316.

The acting Chairman of the Labour Party, Labour M.P., J. G. Wardle, hoped that the amendment would not be upheld.

When Sir George Cave, the Home Secretary, spoke for the Government, he argued in much the same way as Lord Cecil had done. He did not think the amendment should go through. This was the Government's position and it was reflected in the voting: 141 against the amendment and 71 for.

Yet this was only a temporary reprieve for the conscientious objector. When the amendments came to be considered in a later stage of the Bill's passage through Parliament, Sir George Younger brought forward a new amendment which was a combination of the one proposed by McNeil and a previous amendment of his own. This sought to take the vote from objectors who had joined the Army; had refused to obey orders; and had been court-martialled. The amendment in the new form submitted by Younger would, if adopted, disfranchise more men. For theoretically, those objectors who had entered the Army were soldiers, willingly or otherwise. If they were soldiers then they had not received exemption and were not provided for in McNeil's proposal for franchise exclusion.

In seconding this amendment, Sir. C. Kinloch-Cooke alluded to the recent rejection of McNeil's proposal. He said the amendment had been rushed upon the House because other business had been completed earlier than expected. Thus many supporters of the measure were not prepared for the vote. Also the Government had 'put on the

whips'. Kinloch-Cooke continued his argument by referring to the speed with which Canada had brought in the disfranchisement of conscientious objectors:

> Canada has found no difficulty in disfranchising conscientious objectors, and why should we? The Canadians did not take two days in coming to a conclusion. The Canadian Legislature came to their conclusion at once, and Canada approved it. 212

Bonar Law, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, sought to explain the Government's use of the Whips. He indicated that the Government had had to abide by the recommendations of the Speakers conference, but that in the Extension of the Municipal Franchise for women it was obvious that a majority of the House were in favour of the extension. A mere technicality could not stand against the will of the majority. Once the precedent was set, the Government could not hold such a rigid line with the disfranchisement of conscientious objectors. He concluded by saying that whips would not be used for the new amendment, adding that absolutist objectors must be curbed or they would increase dramatically.

Again, the principal speaker against the amendment was Lord Cecil. His arguments were virtually the same as he had used previously. A. Rowntree also spoke against. He made it clear that he had no sympathy with the absolutist, but he did not wish to see the disfranchisement of those who had performed work of national

212. H. of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. XCIX, col. 1141, 20, November, 1917.

(i) Canadian conscientious objectors were disfranchised under The War-time Elections Act 20, September, 1917 7 and 8 George V, Disqualifications 67(1) (e and f).

service. They had helped the State as had members of ambulance and medical units.

When the vote was taken on 21 November, 1917, it showed that the amendment had been approved by 209-171, but there was a proviso that the amendment was open for recommittal on the third reading.

The Government stated through Sir George Cave, on the third reading, that it wished to make three points on the question of the disfranchisement of objectors; they should be disqualified from voting for seven years; and those who had given service to their country should not be disfranchised.

When the Bill finally received assent, the clause affecting conscientious objectors was, to a large extent, in the form proposed by the Government. A large body of men were to be disfranchised. These included all conscientious objectors in Home Office Camps; all those in prison; all those discharged from the Army on grounds of ill health; all those given absolute exemption by the tribunals; and all those who had applied to tribunals on conscience and other grounds and who had been exempted on health or domestic grounds. However, the disfranchisement did not apply to members of the N.C.C.; men who could prove they had joined the Army or the Navy; those who joined the F.A.U., the British Red Cross or other units of this type; or those who had performed satisfactorily work of national importance granted by tribunals. The wives of objectors were not to be disfranchised. A five year period of disfranchisement was substituted for the seven year period previously suggested. This period was to begin after the close of the war. Men were to be given a year after the end of the war to prove to the Central Tribunal that they had

performed work which would save them from disfranchisement.

One conscientious objector's reaction can be seen in the letters of Corder Catchpool. He had not heard all the details of the provision when he made his comments, but he was greatly affected by the principle involved. Most men affected to take the matter lightly, he wrote, yet he could not do this. If conscientious objectors were to be denied access to local politics, then an important avenue for useful work by the Friends would be closed. While some objectors were unable to perform military service, he continued, they were anxious to perform Civil work after the war:

> It seems almost to amount to disowning us as Englishmen...but it is because we see the true greatness of England...that we mind. [213]

Local government was indeed an important element in the Friend's plans for better social conditions and it must also be pointed out that local government was of equal importance to socialists. They too had made much progress through local government elections. Infiltration into local government bodies was a definite programme for 'gradualist' socialists.

J. W. Graham, in Conscription and Conscience, felt that it would be impossible for the Government to pursue the policy set out in the disfranchisement clause. The war did not end technically until 1 September, 1921, which meant that the Central Tribunal would have to operate for a further year in order that objectors might

213. Catchpool, Letters of a Prisoner, pp. 45-46. Letter dated 4 February, 1918.

prove their right to the vote. This would be an inconvenience for the Government. Further, a change of a conscientious objector's residence would make it difficult for him to be denied the vote unless the Government wished to keep strict surveillance over him. A further point, and one made in the speech by Lord Cecil, was that there were many other men who had been court-martialled besides conscientious objectors:

> There are also those who have been insubordinate, and deserters, and all those who have been sentenced for various military crimes and for crimes not merely military but civil, those guilty of criminal vice of the worst and most atrocious kind - all these may have votes. All those who have been sentenced by Civil Tribunals, such as pickpockets, robbers, all those concerned in fraud, acts of violence, and those animated by the most odious lusts, the names of whose offences must not pass honest lips - all those may have votes. [214]

If the Government was to disfranchise those who had been disobedient, argued Cecil, it should include all those he listed. This argument won sympathy for the conscientious objector and this, together with the passage of time and the appearance of more pressing problems for Britain and its Empire, helped to end the enforcement of this vindictive measure.

V

There were some attempts to increase the anti-war group in the Commons by men who stood at war-time by-elections as Peace-by-Negotiation candidates. One of these was Albert Taylor, a conscientious objector, who contested the Rossendale division of

214. H. Of C. Debates, Fifth Series, Vol. XCLX, col. 1220, 21 November, 1917. And not in the House of Lords on 16 January, 1918 as maintained by Boulton, op. cit., p. 276 and p. 292 f. 4.

Lancashire as an Independent Socialist and Peace-by-Negotiations candidate in the winter of 1917. It was reported in The Tribunal that he was the Secretary of the Shoes and Slipper Workers' Union in Rossendale and a member of the British Socialist Party. [215] However, Taylor's conscientious objection to war was not recognized by his local tribunal and he was arrested as an absentee on the day he received his nomination to contest the by-election. Despite this, the campaign continued. In Taylor's absence Charles Roden Buxton spent a great amount of time campaigning on his behalf.

The Tribunal gave some indication of Taylor's platform when it printed extracts from a speech he made before his arrest. He asked his listeners if it was not time the workers worked for themselves. Were they prepared to let the war go on when it meant the loss of thousands of lives and of a vast amount of money? He remined them that the lives and money of which he spoke were largely provided by the working class. And why were they making these sacrifices? In order that Constantiople could be given to the Russians "and a few other things". How many of those who had gone into the Army to save Belgium thought today that this was why Britain was still at war? The workers of the world had no quarrel with each other, strife arose between the 'master-classes'. Yet, they did not fight. They used the workers as pawns to serve"their (master-class) interests." [216]

From prison, Taylor wrote a letter to the electorate:

215. The Tribunal, 25 January, 1917, p. 3.

216. Ibid., p. 3

> I do not look upon myself as a martyr. I am pleased to defy the Huns at home, and consequently shall bear the punishment with our faithful comrades who have gone before. Workers, we are fighting your fight: won't you play your part for your own freedom?...My only crime is that I refuse to kill those with whom I have no quarrel. They have been taught to hate us as we have been taught to hate them. You are strong: rise in your strength and demand in your vote that this hellish war shall cease. [217]

At the election Taylor polled 1,800 votes, while his opponent Sir J. H. Maden, Liberal [218] polled 6,000. The Tribunal commented that the venture had been useful for propaganda purposes. A daily paper had been circulated in Rossendale which contained peace writings; articles on the horrors to which soldiers were subjected; and reports on the profits made out of the war by a certain class of people. If The Tribunal was not unduly impressed with the 23 percent of the vote gained by Taylor, Philip Snowden, in his Autobiography, thought the performance of W. Bland, a Labour and Peace candidate who gained 33 1/3 percent of the vote at a by-election held at Keighley in April, 1918, was a remarkable achievement. [219]

In its issue of the 22 March, 1917, The Tribunal referred to a by-election at Stockton-on-Tees which was being contested by Edward Backhouse, a Quaker, who was standing as a Peace-by-Negotiation candidate. Backhouse, it was reported, was convinced that peace would

217. The Tribunal, 8 February, 1917, p. 2

218. The Times, 22 February, 1917. p. 8 Maden succeeded Viscount Horcourt.

219. W. H. Sommerville (Lib.) 4,873.
W. Bland (Peace) 2,349.

come if negotiation attempts were made. The Allies should state clearly that they were not waging an aggressive war; for peace dictated by one side would contain the basis for a further war at some time in the future. He also stood for the return of British liberties lost during the war and for freedom of the Press. Other points of his campaign were support for adult suffrage, reconciliation in Ireland, greater benefits for mother and child and a change in the educational system as set out in a Bill recently brought forward by Fisher. He was opposed to any commercial war after the war. [220]

F. W. Pethick Lawrence, noted earlier as a Ploughshare contributor on the subject of an Enforced Peace and as a prominent member of the U.D.C., also fought a by-election as a Peace candidate. He stood for South Aberdeen in the Spring of 1917. Pethick-Lawrence was a conscientious objector too, but he was not called before a tribunal until the middle of 1918 when he was aged 46. He told his tribunal that he did not object to all war, but he did object to the one then being fought. The tribunal classed him as a political objector, yet offered him exemption if he would accept work of national importance. This he accepted.

In his autobiography Pethick-Lawrence gives a sample of the literature he used at the time of the South Aberdeen by-election. [221] He showed that there were two alternatives before the country: a negotiated peace, or a period of war for months or perhaps years.

220. Result of the Stockton-on-Tees election: J.B. Watson (C. Lib.) 7,641, E. Backhouse (Peace) 596

221. F.W. Pethick-Lawrence, Fate Has Been Kind (London: Hutchinson, 1943).

A negotiated peace did not mean capitulation to Germany, he continued. Britain should insist on certain peace terms. It was in a position to do so, for although Germany had made territorial advances, Britain had maintained superiority at sea and had the blockade. He felt that British terms should be the independence of Belgium; the evacuation of France; Serbia; and other Balkan States. The Trentino should go to Italy and Russia should be allowed free passage through the Dardonelles.

Pethick-Lawrence secured only 333 votes in the election, while Professor J. R. Watson andIndependent National polled 1,507 and the victorius Liberal Sir J. Flemming, 3,283. This was a substantial defeat for Pethick-Lawrence, for he only polled 6 percent of the total vote.

If it was impossible for men seeking to join the anti-war party in the Commons to get themselves elected, the stand which some members of this party took in Parliament caused them many difficulties in their constituencies. E. T. John, A. A. W. H. Ponsonby and R.L. Outhwaite were expelled from the Liberal Party. C.P. Trevelyan was asked to resign by his constituency association but he refused and Ramsay McDonald was disowned by the Liberal Party. [222]

The real test, however, came when the Government called an election in 1918 after the Armistice. Many of the anti-war party lost their seats at this election. Of the Liberals who were consistent opponents of conscription and had shown some sympathy for Britain's conscientious objectors by speaking or voting on their behalf in Parliament H. G. Chancellor, W. Clough, A.G.C. Harvey, T.E. Harvey,

222. MacDonald was a member of the I.L.P., but in the 1910 election the Labour and Liberal Candidates in Leicester (a double seat) had run together to defeat the conservative candidate.

E. T. John, Lief Jones, Joseph King, T. Lough, D.M. Mason, R.L. Outhwaite, Arthur Ponsonby, W.M.R. Pringle, Arnold Rowntree, Sir John A. Simon, H.B. Lees-Smith, C.P. Trevelyan, and J.H. Whitehouse all lost their seats in 1918. [223]

I.L.P. Members of Parliament who lost their seats in 1918 were W.D. Anderson, F.W. Jowett, J. Ramsay MacDonald, Philip Snowden, and Thomas Richardson. [224] F.W. Goldstone, a member of the Labour Party, also lost his seat.

It would be wrong to assume that the only reason for the defeat of these men was because they were members of the anti-war party in Parliament, for some members, who had voted against conscription and against the Government on other issues connected with the war, were elected. [225]

Yet the rejection of some of the anti-war group by their local constituency associations and the well known anti-war position adopted by the group effected the voting attitudes of an electorate flushed with victory and fed with slogans of making Germany pay and of hanging the Kaiser. Even though C.P. Trevelyan wrote in his election literature

223. Two Liberal members of the anti-war group died before the election: J. A. Baker (Quaker), in July, 1918; W.P. Byles in October, 1917. The following did not seek re-election: R.D. Denman, Richard Lambert, Philip Morrell, A.J. Sherwell.

224. James Parker, who left the anti-war group during the course of the war was elected for the Cannock Division of Staffs in 1918. J.R. Clynes, who also took a Government post after opposing conscription was elected for East Manchester.

225. J.H. Thomas (Lib.), elected at Derby. He was General Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen and Derby was a major railway centre. J.M. Hogge (Lib.), elected for East Edinburgh, Sydney Arnold (Lib.), elected for Holmford Division of Yorkshire.

of Prussian aggression and praised the British troops, there must have been many who read his pamphlet who dwelt more on the passages which demanded the repeal of the Military Service Act; the end of the Defence of the Realm Act; and the freeing of political prisoners. His stand during the war would not easily be forgotten so soon after it ended.

One interesting outcome of the grouping together of Liberals and Labour M.P.'s in opposition to conscription was that some Liberals joined the Labour Party after the war. It would not be correct to atribute this change entirely to their common action in opposing the war and conscription. R.L. Outhwaite, for example, left the Liberals because he disagreed with their land policy. Yet it cannot be denied that the sharing of a common cause played some part in the leftward movement of these politicians. It will be remembered that one Plough-share commentator detected a similar political movement among conscientious objectors. [226] Among Liberal M.P.'s who entered the Labour Party after the war were E.T. John, who stood unsuccessfully as a Labour candidate in 1918; A.A.W.H. Ponsonby and C.P. Trevelyan who joined after the 1918 election; Joseph King and H.B. Lees-Smith became members in 1919; S. Arnold joined in 1922; and R.D. Denman was a Labour M.P. in 1929 [227]

226. Bertrand Russell also provides an example of this. During the war he came to believe that capitalism led to war. This was one reason for his change from Liberalism to Socialism. It is interesting to note that at that period he, like the Socialist-Quakers, advocated Guild-socialism. Wood, op. cit., p. 125

227. Richard Lambert joined the Labour Party during the war.

PART THREE

CHAPTER I

CANADIAN QUAKERS BEFORE THE GREAT WAR

I

The Society of Friends in Canada was not a unified body during the Great War when conscription was introduced into Canada. Two important divisions had occured in the nineteenth century which left it ill-prepared to meet this challenge to its longheld peace testimony. Methodism, with its emphasis on evangelicalism, was the main cause of the division of 1828. This new, dynamic force from England attacked the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century quietism of the Society and caused division. An orthodox group which had responded in a limited way to evangelicalism formed one side of the division, while the Hicksite (or Genesee) Friends, who had rejected evangelicalism, formed the other. There was also an element of Anglo-American friction in this separation, Hicksite Friends claiming that influential English Friends had interfered too much in American Quakerism. It is significant that the Hicksite Friends in Canada kept close ties with Quakerism in the United States, while the orthodox group, although influenced in many ways by American Friends, tended to look to England for guidance. In 1881, division occured within the orthodox group. A surge of revivalism swept through this body carrying most of the members with it. Those who resisted formed a conservative group dedicated to maintaining the simple worship and way of life of earlier Friends. Those who accepted some relaxation of the older Quaker tenets have been called progressives. 227

227. Terminology used here is as in A.G. Dorland, A History of the Society of Friends (Quakers) in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1927). Hereafter referred to as 'Dorland'.
Conservatives have also been called Wilberite, while Progressives have been called Gurneyite.

And although many of those involved came to regret the rift, Friends in Canada continued to be divided into three groups until long after the Great War. Some unity was effected by the co-operation needed to explain to the Government the views of Friends towards military service; but although tentative steps towards unity were taken by certain individuals between 1917 and 1919, it took the Orthodox and Hicksite Friends until 1928 to agree to hold a joint Yearly Meeting.

After the divisions of the nineteenth century the Progressive group emerged numerically stronger than the other two groups, Statistics are scarce for the Conservative and Hicksite Friends, but statistics are available for the Progressive group during the period of the Great War. [228] Figures supplied for the Canada Yearly Meeting (1917) show that there were 1014 members of the Progressive group living in Canada in that year; the year of the introduction of conscription in Canada. More than half, 579, lived in the area which was the responsibility of the Yonge Street Quarterly Meeting, whose principal centres were Newmarket, Pickering and Toronto. [229] Two other important Quarterly Meetings,

228. In 1890 there were 839 Hicksite Friends in the Canada and Pelham Half Yearly Meetings (Although three preparatory meetings in the Pelham Half Yearly Meeting were U.S.A. Meetings). Dorland, 158. Dorland also shows in Appendix (c) that six of the Hicksite preparatory meetings (including the three American meetings) were discontinued after 1890. This would seem to indicate that the number of Hicksite Friends was less than 839 in 1914-19 period (Dorland's figures were taken from 1890 Genesee Yearly Meeting Statistical Report).

229. The small meetings of Manitoba (Hartney, Chain Lakes and Dand) and Saskatchewan (Swarthmore Monthly Meeting) also came under the jurisdiction of the Yonge Street Quarterly Meeting.

West Lake and Pelham were also in Ontario and had 135 and 159 members respectively. The largest membership outside Ontario was the British Columbia Quarterly Meeting. This Meeting included Victoria, Vancouver and Calgary in its total membership of 141. From these figures it is clear that most of the Progressive Friends living in Canada in 1917 were to be found in the province of Ontario. The majority of Hicksite and Conservative Friends lived in this province, too. 230

The figure given for the membership of the Progressive Friends, in 1917, probably represents as close an approximation to the actual membership of this section of the Society of Friends in Canada as it is possible to obtain. Friends counted in the Yearly Meeting Statistical Survey were possibly those known personally to the clerks of the preparatory meetings. The membership of the Hicksite and Conservative groups is more difficult to ascertain. Figures quoted for the Conservative Friends were recorded in 1899, whilst those of the Hicksite Friends were gathered in 1890. It would be erroneous to base conclusions about non-Progressive membership in 1914-18 on these figures, but as the general movement of the Society during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, in terms of membership, was one of decline, it is possible to say, with certain reservations, that the combined membership of these two groups was probably just under a thousand in 1914-1919. Thus, the total actual membership of the Society of Friends in the period of the Great War was less than two thousand. If this figure is contrasted with the total population of Canada in 1911 (7,204,838), it is clear that, numerically, Friends were of little significance in the total Canadian population.

230. Norwich Quarter contained most of the Conservative Friends in Canada. Dorland 257. All the Canadian Hicksite preparatory meetings were in Ontario: Toronto, West Lake, Pelham, Yarmouth and Coldstream. 1 bid., Appendix (c)

Further, it is apparent that women, children and men too old to be called for military service are included in the approximate Quaker membership total of 2,000. The number of men directly affected by the introduction of compulsory military service, therefore, was very small.

Census returns for the period 1861-1921 can be used to clarify the position of the Society of Friends at the time of its confrontation with conscription. It would be inaccurate, however, to use these figures without qualifying them in certain ways. The statistics supplied for the Yearly Meetings probably show the actual number of members who regularly attended the Meeting House, while the census returns show all those who claimed membership of the Society. Regular attenders were obviously included in these census returns, but there must have been many claiming to be Friends whose membership was of a more tenuous nature. Many of those claiming membership would be people whom Friends called 'attenders'. These were usually either people of other denominations who were in the process of becoming members of the Society or were people who, for any reason, left an area where they had been able to worship in the church of their choice and went to an area where there was a Meeting House, but no church of their own denomination. If they found that the ways of Quaker worship were not too different from the ones they had known previously, they went to the Meeting House as 'attenders'. Many ' attenders' were thought of locally as Friends and it is possible that some considered themselves as such. To Friends, however, they were not strictly members of the Society. In many cases their allegiance to Quakerism was not strong and they were an unstable group within the

Society. A further group who would claim membership of the Society when confronted with a census form, would be those who had been born Friends, but who, for some reason, no longer went to the Meeting House. This might have been because they no longer wished to attend; because they had become 'attenders' but not actual members of some other church; or because they lived in rural areas far from a Meeting House. This last situation was common in Western Canada, where Quakerism failed to establish itself to the degree it had done in Eastern Canada.

With these reservations in mind, an analysis of the relevant census returns is revealing. In 1871, the census returns for Ontario show that 7,106 people considered themselves Friends; this was out of a total Canadian membership of 7,345. By 1911, however, the centre of gravity of the 'theoretical' membership had moved westward. Of the total number of 4,027 Friends living in Canada, only 2,898 resided in Ontario, whereas 1,194 lived in the Western provinces of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. From the figures previously noted for the 'actual' membership, as opposed to the ' theoretical' membership figures given here, it is evident that the Society still had the majority of its 'actual' membership living in Ontario in the period of the Great War. The organizational centre of the Society therefore remained in Ontario while many members moved into the West and outside the pale of Quaker organization. A new Quarterly meeting was established in British Columbia in 1912, which helped to strengthen the Society in that province. However circumstances were more conducive to the establishment of meetings in British Columbia than in the other western provinces. The census returns for 1911 show that three-quarters

of those claiming to be members of the Society of Friends lived within seventy-five miles of Vancouver. In Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, Friends did not live as close to each other and this made attempts to organize Quakerism in these areas much more difficult. There was little hope that these members would remain Friends unless a new network of meetings could be established in these provinces. In the event, although some small meetings were established, lack of funds and people to work as missionaries, when added to the problem of distance, determined that these people were lost to the Society. The 1921 census returns show that in that year only 251 people in the West claimed membership of the Society. This represents a decline of almost four-fifths when compared with the 1911 figures.

A further point which stands out clearly from an examination of the census returns for 1861-1921 is that the membership of the Society of Friends was declining throughout the period. In 1861, 7,504 people claimed to be members of the Society, whereas, in 1921, the total figure for Canada was only 3,141.

From this statistical analysis of the membership and structure of the Society of Friends it can be seen that at the period when the Society was faced with the greatest challenge to its peace testimony which the Society had known, it was also faced with many other problems which weakened it in the fight against conscription. With a three-fold division within its own ranks, unity of action against the common enemy was not easy. The continual movement of Friends into the West, usually with the result that these members were lost to the Society, sapped the strength of Quakerism in Canada, leaving only a small body of Friends in the East to form a bulwark against conscription.

II

Despite the small membership of the Society of Friends in Canada during the Great War, Friends as individuals and as members of the Society, had to face many of the problems which confronted the larger numbers and more powerful British Society. When war came, in August 1914, Canadian Friends had to decide whether to maintain the peace policy of their Society by refusing to help the war effort in anyway, however trivial, or whether to seek some form of service which would enable them to serve their country and humanity without violating their principles. Some had to decide whether for them the correct path did not lie in enlistment and a place at the Front. Later, in 1917, when the Canadian government introduced conscription, Friends, together with other groups whose tenets precluded participation in war, were only promised non-combatant service should they apply for exemption on grounds of conscience. [231] As most members of the Society were rural dwellers, however, they found it relatively easy to secure exemption through the exemptions afforded by the government to farmers and farm

231. This did not apply to Mennonites or Doukhabors who had been granted exemption from military serve by Order in Council of August 13, 1873 and by Order in Council of December 6, 1898, respectively. These sects had come to Canada on the understanding that they would not be called upon to undertake military service. The pledge was honoured by the government in 1917-19.

It is interesting to note the following, however, in the light of modern events. Some Mennonites and Doukhabours had moved across the border into the U.S.A. since their original emigration to Canada. The government of Canada were informed ".. that some of these are now returning in order to escape military service in the United States where they have lived for years....". In view of this, legislation was passed which stipulated that only members of the original emigrations or their descendents, who resided permanently in Canada could claim exemption under the above orders in council.

The Canada Gazette, 9 November, 1918, p. 1613.

workers. When, in April, 1918, the government cancelled all exemptions previously granted to men in the age group 20-22, Friends could no longer obtain exemption on the strength of their importance as part of the agricultural economy. Although the size of the problem was greater in Britain, Canadian Friends of military and non-military age had major decisions to make concerning the conflict between militarism and the traditional Quaker peace testimony.

Friends in Canada had a long history of peace testimony to guide them in the decisions they had to make. They could also call upon the experience, in matters of peace, found in the history of Quakerism in Britain and America. From the earliest periods of the Society peace was a basic element in the Quaker way of life. Wherever dispute arose peaceful means were offered as a solution. Arbitration was prominent in dealings between Friends, and force of any kind was frowned upon.

Stephen S----- of Norwich was disciplined "for striking when struck". [232] Many Friends who came to Canada in the late eighteenth century came from the United States and these settlers had already had to face the problems raised by the American revolution. During the revolution, Friends had sought to remain neutral, but some members of the Society had taken part in the war and they "were disowned by their Monthly Meetings when in membership". [233]

As settlers, Friends appear to have been readily received in Canada. Their peace testimony was made clear to the British authorities in Canada and it seems that this testimony was provided for. Lord Simcoe

232. Quoted in Dorland, 14 and taken from "Advices" "Treating with offenders", New York Discipline, 1810, pp. 37-39.

233. M.E. Hirst, The Quakers in Peace and War (London: Swarthmore Press 1923) p. 389.

wrote, "I have not hesitated to promise to the Quakers and other sects the similar exemption from militia duties which they have always met with under the British". [234] Friends were expected to pay for such exemption, however, and by the Militia Act (1793) they were required to pay twenty shillings a year in peace time and five pounds a year in time of war. Many Friends refused to pay this money, for they felt that by paying such a fine, a direct contribution was being made to the country's war funds. However those refusing to pay were fined by the authorities, goods being seized by local J.P.'s to the value of the annual exemption fee. Eight members of the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting were imprisoned, in 1810, for one month because they refused to pay such fees. [235]

Maintaining the Quaker peace policy was not easy; there were social hardships. In his Statistical Summary (1817), Robert Gourlay hinted that it was very profitable to have a peace policy during war-time. He argued that the prosperity of Friends in Norwich was largely due to

> "the advantages of remaining at peace on their farms during the invasion of the Province (the war of 1812-14). Quakers, Mennonites or Tunkers have all this blessed privilege and are allowed to pay money in lieu of military service. They had the further advantage of the high price of produce occasioned by the war which many others could reap no advantage from while their farms lay neglected". [236]

234. Quoted in Dorland, 54 and taken from letter written by Simcoe to Dundas, 1792, vol. I, p. 199 of E.A. Cruikshank, Simcoe Papers, published by Ontario Historical Society, Toronto, 1923.

235. Quoted in Dorland, 312.

236. Robert Gourlay, Statistical Survey, Vol. I (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1822), p. 336.

Such writings may have influenced those who resented the lack of martial ardour shown by Friends and helped sow doubts among non-Quaker neighbours concerning the sincerity of Friend's views on war.

Some Friends, either from social or financial pressure found it difficult to maintain the peace testimony. The Society often found it necessary to discipline members who gave way to, or threatened violence. Lewis Powell was brought before a Quaker committee because " he had given way to passion so far as to threaten a man with violence who imprest (sic.) his team, and also of using deception to the officers of the Government to prevent the teams going". 237

From these examples it is evident that the peace policy of the Society of Friends was essential to the Quaker mode of living. Peace entered into the basic relationships between people and was a policy to be followed in times of peace and war. Although the British authorities recognized this, they did not exempt Quakers from militia duties without seeking to make them pay for the privilege. If the exemption fee was not paid willingly then it was taken by force. Friends reacted to this in various ways. Some would not bend before this violation of their peace policy and were willing to go to prison rather than compromise their views. Others found it more difficult to stand firm. There were those who, when faced with the forcible seizure of goods were willing to attend militia training. Some, like Lewis Powell, resorted to threats of violence in defence of their property. Wherever too close an affinity with violence prevailed, however, the Society told the offenders that the peace testimony must be maintained if the member wished to remain within the ranks of the Society. It required constant prompting then,

237. Dorland, 313.

by the elders of the Society, to ensure that some of the more adventurous members of the Society did not subvert the Society's peace policy. The troubled period of the early nineteenth century which provided the examples used here, gave way to more peaceful times in Canada and Friends were not faced with any great challenge to their peace policy until the Great War.

III

The outbreak of war, in 1914, was preceded by an uneasy period when many arguments were raised against the growing quantities of arms in the world. Canadian Friends were as concerned about this problem as were their British counterparts and the pages of the Canadian Friend provide many examples of this anxiety. The West Lake Quarterly Meeting noted with concern that the Canadian Government proposed to spend $35,000,000 upon war vessels. After discussing this matter, the Meeting proposed that the Clerk of the Yearly Meeting might summon a representative meeting to authorize a protest to be sent to the Government about "wasting ... (money on)... warlike preparations by a Christian nation". [238] In an article reprinted from the Messenger of Peace, [239] the myth of increased armaments acting as a deterrent to a warlike nation was quashed by Mary D. Hole. She argued that knowing the power of submarines to destroy battleships had not stopped the British navy from increasing its number of battleships. If the U.S.A., Germany, France and Japan are peaceful nations, she added, "Why are they arming at such a fast rate and who will attack them if they are all concentrating on defence?" [240]

238. The Canadian Friend. Newmarket, January, 1913, p.3

239. A pacifist journal published by the Peace Association of Friends in America, Richmond, Indiana.

240. The Canadian Friend, May, 1913, p.13

When the Canadian Yearly Meeting met at Newmarket (June 26-29, 1913), it was decided to send a resolution to the Premier of Canada protesting strongly against the Opposition's suggestion of a Canadian Navy and against the proposed increase in armaments. In the memorial, Canadian Friends suggested that:

> Our country should seek rather to actively encourage both nationally and internationally, by every means within its power, the adoption of the Principles of Peace and Arbitration rather than to continue an increasing activity and larger expenditure in preparation for war. 241

The memorial said that all war was morally wrong and that despite persecution, Friends had objected to it for 250 years. They asked that attention be turned to the Canadian-American border which had remained peaceful for almost a hundred years or to Canada itself which proved that different nationalities could live together in peace. The memorial ended with a suggestion that the money intended for armaments would be better spent on the formation of a Canadian Peace Commission which could help to bring peace and understanding between nations.

Frequently it was asserted in the Canadian Friend that Canada needed no defence forces. The real enemies, wrote David Starr Jorden, were "ignorance, violence, waste, injustice, disease and vice". 242 More money was needed to combat these problems, he stated; it should not be wasted upon armaments. But to secure this money for the eradication of the ills he had previously enumerated, Jorden argued, it was necessary to combat the actions of international armament combines who saw the wealth of Canada and wished to control it.

241. The Canadian Friend, July, 1913. p. 5.

242. The Canadian Friend, December, 1913. p. 14.

These combines promised safety for Canada by the defensive capabilities of their arms, but such defence was illusory. The real aim of these armament manufacturers was to grow richer. Jorden named the manufacturers as Krupp, Vickers-Armstrong, Brown, and Schneider-Crevsot, and pointed out that the Canadian Shipbuilding Company of Nova Scotia was just another name for John Brown, the Clydeside Shipbuilding firm. Jorden's message was clear and was one which was also prevalent in British pacifist groups, both Quaker and socialist at this period: a group of European arms manufacturers (he had mentioned examples from Germany, Britain and France) were responsible for the stockpiling of arms. They tempted nations with safety by selling vast quantities of arms to one nation to defend itself against the arms they were selling to another. If this murderous traffic was not stopped then war with all its suffering would follow. [243]

Friends were also concerned about the fostering of a military spirit in Canada. A.G. Dorland in an article entitled Militarism in Canada expressed the fears of many Friends. He used Australia and New Zealand as examples of what happened when militarist ideas gained prominence. There, he wrote,

> everyone is required to become a member of the militia, and on refusing to do so can be tried and punished by court martial from which there is no appeal to a civil court. [244]

243. In Britain, Philip Snowden, I.L.P. member of parliament using material supplied by Walton Newbold, a Quaker-Socialist made a speech in the House of Commons in which he exposed " the International Armament Ring, and the financial interests of M.P.s in the British armament firms". Not one of Newbolds assertions was challenged Snowden comments in his Autobiography, op. cit., p. 249.

244. The Canadian Friend, July 1913 p.15.

Boys of eleven and a half were required to do military training, he continued, and any principal whose school was unco-operative could be dismissed by the military authorities. It was such a situation as this, Dorland maintained, that the Minister of Militia, Colonel Sam Hughes, wished to introduce into Canada. Dorland gave details of the objects of the Canadian Defence League which, he said, were to give all males military training; to give boys gymnastic and military training in schools; and to provide a cadet corps or similar organization for boys when they left school. This corps would give training under canvas while manoeuvers would be an important aspect of the corps.

Friends were appalled by the idea of boys receiving military training in schools and at the 1914 Canada Yearly Meeting, they drafted a letter to the Minister of Education and to the Premier of the Province of Ontario objecting strongly to the growth of militarism in schools. Militarists, they claimed, wished " by utilizing the school connection to instill in the young minds the military spirit, and a false and pugnacious ideal of patriotism". A horror of war should be taught the young not the glorification of it, the note continued, and the educator " should instill the higher patriotism of social service and of international brotherhood which will make all war between civilizedpeople impossible". 245

Very young Friends were also made aware of the problem of militarism. A message from the British Columbia Peace Committee began, " Dear Children" and went on to make special note of the drilling of boys in Australia and New Zealand. Drilling was not

245. The Canadian Friend July, 1914. p.8.

required in Canada, it was pointed out, but if it were, many people would, no doubt, consider this a violation of conscience and refuse to drill. The children were told that boys in Australia had been jailed for their refusal to undergo military training. Finally, the message stressed that children were not too young to contribute to establishing a peaceful world. Foreigners were to be treated with kindness and not to be treated differently from Canadian people. Such an extension of kindness would help to solve international problems.

In the troubled years which preceded the beginning of hostilities in 1914, Friends in Canada were active in making their views on arms, militarism and war known to the government. They did not have Members of Parliament through which to speak to the Government as did British Friends, so that the memorial addressed to the Prime Minister of Canada was perhaps the best, possibly the only means of acquainting the Government with their views on armaments. The influence of such a memorial would not be great, but nevertheless Friends were raising a voice, however small, against what they considered a great wrong. Friends were anxious to point out that their views were consistent with loyalty to the Empire: loyalty could be shown in various ways. The way suggested by Canadian Friends was to use the money intended to strengthen the Canadian and British fleets for the dissemination of peace literature. Canadian Friends informed the government of their opposition to increased arms and pointed out their long association with problems resulting from their peace testimony.

246. The Canadian Friend, June, 1914. p. 5.

As with their protest against increased armaments, the method the Friends adopted for showing concern about an increased interest in military training for Canadians was to send a letter to the Government.

CHAPTER II

THE COMING OF THE WAR AND CONSCRIPTION

I

When war came in August, 1914, Friends were at once faced with the problem of the attitude they would adopt to the war. It was from British Quakerism that Canadian Friends took their lead. In the September edition of the Canadian Friend appeared the message sent out ' To Men and Women of Goodwill in the British Empire ' by British Friends. It began with a statement of loyalty:

> We recognize that our Government has made most strenuous efforts to preserve peace, and has entered into the war under a grave sense of duty to a smaller State towards which we had moral and treaty obligations. While as a Society we stand firmly to the belief that the method of force is no solution of any question, we hold that the present moment is not one of criticism, but for devoted service to our nation. [246]

There was no mention here of the growth of arms leading to war or the contributing factor of the growth of a militaristic impulse in the Empire, arguments which had played such a prominent part in Quaker ideas concerning the causes of wars. Britain had entered the war to protect Belgium and there was an end to the matter at this stage. There was no indication that Canadian Friends felt the need to add anything to this British statement, for the message was presented without comment. Criticism was temporarily abated. Instead, the message to be considered was " let us not fail first to blame ourselves". [247] From the beginning of the war Friends looked

246. The Canadian Friend, September, 1914, p. 14. Compare with wording of editorial by Dorland, A.G. iv Canadian Friend, May 1913. p.3. "War is always and under all circumstances wrong, not primarily because of its evil consequences, but because it is itself wrong and immoral".

247. The Canadian Friend, September, 1914, p.14.

to the future and not to the past. They asked themselves what service they could perform to help their country and humanity in the critical days ahead.

British Friends suggested that the way to serve was to help and pity the "suffering and stricken" at home and also to pray for and love the enemy. [248] On October 11th, 1914, in Toronto, however, Joseph Allen Baker, a Canadian who had lived for many years in Britain and had become a British M.P., suggested a very practical way in which Friends could help serve humanity. [249] He told his listeners that few English Friends had enlisted, but that a large group of Friends had formed an ambulance unit which was in training and would soon leave for France. He also told of the work of British Friends among Austrian and German nationals who had been caught in England by the outbreak of the war. Baker was a frequent speaker at meetings held by Canadian Friends in late 1914. Largely through his influence, money contributions soon began to flow from Canada. These funds were augmented later by parcels of clothing, which were theproducts of numerous sewing groups which were set up all across Canada by women Friends.

In the early period of the war, the Ambulance Corps was not an official organization because some Friends did not feel that

248. Friends in Canada spoke of National service. We must '--- help build national character , the shaping of righteous policy at home and abroad, or the tasks of local or central government'. The Canadian Friend, November, 1914. p. 16.

249. Joseph Allen Baker, native of Ontario. Went to London, England in 1870. Manufacturer of Baking Machinery. Lib. M.P. for East Finsbury, 1905-1918. Died 3 July, 1918. Information from Who Was Who? 1916-18 p. 44 and from The Canadian Friend, August 1918. p. 7.

such a close connection with the military authorities was in keeping with the Quaker peace message. Baker, however, was not one of those who believed this. He felt that ambulance work was acceptable as a form of service for Friends in a time of war. In a letter printed in the Canadian Friend, he pointed out that many of the men in the Corps were men of importance; L.E. Harvey, M.P. and his brothers, all Oxford men, he emphasized, were members, as also was Lawrence Cadbury, the son of George Cadbury of Bourneville. 250 The quality of the men in the Ambulance Corps was also noted by the Toronto Star. An article reprinted from this newspaper appeared together with Baker's in the December edition of The Canadian Friend. The article stressed that Philip J. Baker (J. Allen Baker's son) was a Cambridge graduate and that " other members of the corps are largely men of the same class, men of trained intellects and bodies, idealists, full of the spirit of duty and self sacrifice". 251

Canadian Friends, then, were presented with a splendid picture of the qualifications of the men in the Ambulance Corps. They were told that it contained the son of one of the wealthiest and most respected British Quaker families, that there were M.P.s and graduates of Oxford and Cambridge within it ranks. They were not told of the arguments used by those opposed to ambulance work, who felt that although members of the Corps did not carry weapons or fight, they wore a uniform and worked in close co-operation with the military authorities. It seems that there were few doubts in the minds of Canadian Friends about the compatibility of ambulance work and their peace testimony. Problems concerning the saving and healing of wounded soldiers, so that they might then be returned to

250. The Canadian Friend, December, 1914. p.7.

251. Ibid. p. 15.

the Front were not raised in The Canadian Friend. Neither was the argument that by taking up work as ambulance men, Friends were condemning other men to a place at the Front. These arguments may have been put forward and discussed by some Friends in Canada, but such arguments did not find their way into print. From the beginning of the Friend's Ambulance Corps in Britain, Friends in Canada appear to have wholeheartedly supported ambulance work with funds, materials and eventually with recruits. [252] The names attached to an appeal for contributions for the Corps in December, 1914, show that in Canada, at least, the Corps was considered 'official': Albert S. Rogers, Clarence E. Picket, Walter D. Gregory, Joseph P. Rogers, all very prominent members of the Progressive section of the Society of Friends signed the appeal which asserted that the Corps gave Friends a chance " to assist financially in relieving the suffering and distress without in any way compromising Friend's principles of peace".[253]

252. (i) Goldwyn Gregory, Toronto; Ewart Wright, Pickering; Ellsworth Rogers and David Rogers, Toronto were all mentioned in The Canadian Friend as being members of the First British Ambulance Unit for Italy (Led by G.M. Trevelyan, the historian, it was not a Quaker organization, but many Friends were members).

(ii) $3,276.99 had been sent to Britain since November 17, 1914, reported The Canadian Friend on December, 1914, p.2.

(iii) The Canadian Friend, July 1915, pp. 12-13, reported that Toronto women under the leadership of Mrs. S.M. Busselle had sent 75 hospital shirts, 1,000 bandages, socks, scarfs and wristers to F.A.C.

253. The Canadian Friend, December, 1914, p.8.

II

Conscription, which had been introduced into England, Wales, and Scotland, in 1916, did not appear in Canada until August 1917. Friends in Canada had discussed the possibility of its introduction, but this had been before the outbreak of the war. From the outbreak of the war to the time when the government actually introduced it little was written in The Canadian Friend to show that Quakers were worried about the possibility of conscription being brought into Canada. This was despite the assertion, in September, 1914, that: " we must offer strenuous opposition to the establishment of compulsory military training in any part of the Empire". [254] Quakers apparently imagined that they would receive exemption if conscription was introduced, so perhaps they were more complacent about the issue than they might otherwise have been. Even the announcement that the Government was to hold a census under the auspices of a National Service Commission does not seem to have ruffled contributors to The Canadian Friend. Such a step in Britain had brought storms of protest, for it was asserted that a census of this nature implied conscription. In Canada, the Friends appear to have raised little protest. The only mention of the census to appear in The Canadian Friend was contained in a report from the Yonge Street Quarterly Meeting which indicated that the " general feeling was that it is advisable to respond and not to ignore the efforts of the Commission". [255] When answering the questions contained in the census card, Friends were advised to answer in full and not merely to state 'yes' or 'no'. Specific attention was drawn to two of

254. The Canadian Friend, September, 1914, p. 16.

255. The Canadian Friend, January, 1917, p.8.

the questions: number twenty-three which asked " Would you be willing to change your present work for other necessary work at the same pay during the war?" and number twenty-four " Are you willing, if your railway fare is paid, to leave where you now live and go to some other place in Canada to do such work?" Friends, it was suggested, should reply that they were not willing to change their occupations if it meant "forcing someone else out of his present employment and into the fighting ranks". 256

Alternative Service, which produced much argument in Britain between sections of the conscientious objection movement, did not become a major issue in Canada. Friends were advised that they should not support such a measure, but The Canadian Friend went no further with the problem; no discussion of the rights or wrongs of alternative service appeared in its pages. As most Friends lived in rural areas and many of them were farmers, it was perhaps natural that there was little interest shown in alternative service. In the past farmers had been allowed to continue upon their farms and there was nothing to indicate that this would not obtain during this war. In the event, alternative service was not introduced into Canada. After the Government cancelled all exemptions, in April, 1918, however, Friends became more interested in Alternative service. The minutes of the 1918 Yearly Meeting show that a letter concerning such service was drafted and sent to the Prime Minister in Ottawa. In the letter Friends requested that their members be allowed to take up service with the F.A.U., the English W.V.R. Committee or the American Reconstruction Units in France, but they also asked that a similar order to that issued

256. Ibid., p.8.

by the U.S.A. (31.5.18) allowing alternative agricultural service, be made in Canada. [257] Nothing came of this request, however, and the government made no provision for alternative service in Canada.

There were no Quaker M.P.s in the Canadian Parliament to raise a voice against conscription. [258] During the Summer of 1917, while the Military Service Bill was being debated, conscription and its possible effects upon Friends in Canada did not receive any attention in The Canadian Friend. Friends expressed their views to the Government in the usual way: by sending it a resolution. It is apparent that despite the reticence of Friends to discuss conscription publically in their journal, much discussion had taken place privately on the subject. Faced with a problem which affected the whole of the Society, some unity was effected. A joint committee had been formed in May, 1917 representing the three sections of Quaker opinion, and it was these representatives who affixed their names to the resolution sent to Parliament in May, 1917. They were, Charles A. Zavitz (Hicksite), George Clark

257. Minutes of the Canada Yearly Meeting (1918), p. 24.

258. There was one M.P. who is reported to have been a Quaker. This was Lieut.-Col. John, James Carrick, Conservative M.P. for Thunder Bay and Rainy River. Born 17 September, 1873, Terre Haute, Indiana, U.S.A. Mayor of Port Arthur, 1898, M.L.A. for Port Arthur 1898-1911, Elected to the House of Commons at the 1911 General Election. In January, 1915, he was appointed to act as a Special Service Officer with the Canadian Expeditionary Force with the rank of Lieut.-Colonel. Lieut.-Col. Ernest J. Chambers, ed. The Canadian Parliamentary Guide, 1917. p. 109.

Carrick did not speak on the House on conscription or conscientious objection in 1917 and did not seek re-election in the election held towards the end of 1917. He was not, therefore, an M.P. when Quakers and other conscientious objectors were being taken into the Army after April, 1918.

(Conservative) and Albert S. Rogers (Progressive). In the resolution, the friends asked that the old exemptions which they had enjoyed be included in the Bill, " but that they should be broadened to include all those whose conscience forbade them to carry arms, regardless of their membership in anyparticular church or society" 259 A letter of acknowledgment was received from the Prime Minister in which he stated that the resolution would be placed before the Minister who was preparing the Bill. When the Military Service Bill emerged from Parliament it was seen that the Government had not responded to the appeal for a wider conscience clause. Exemption on grounds of conscientious objection to military service was to be granted only to members of a religious body. The so called conscience clause which was contained in the military Service Bill stated that exemption could be obtained if the applicant:

> Conscientiously objects to the undertaking of combatant service and is prohibited from so doing by the tenets and articles of faith, in effect on 6th July, 1917, of any organized religious denomination existing and well recognized at such date and to which in good faith he belongs. 260

A further clause, however, dealing with conditional certificates of exemption stipulated that a

> certificate may be conditional as to time or otherwise and if granted only on grounds of conscientious objection shall state that such exemption is from combatant service only. 261

259. The Canadian Friend, October, 1917, p. 6.

260. Military Service Act, (1917) 7&8 George V, Exemptions II (1) (f).

261. Military Service Act, 7&8 George V, Exemptions II (2) (a).

Not only did the government refuse to widen the conscience clause to include those who were not members of a religious society, but it also refused to grant Friends absolute exemption. Non-combatant service which the Government did offer was not acceptable to many Friends, for such service demanded that Friends wear a military uniform and take orders from the military. In some cases they might even be asked to handle weapons, although they would not be required to fire them. Because of their agricultural connection, however, Friends were not at this stage required to decide whether to accept or decline non-combatant service. Being farmers they could apply not under the conscience clause but under the clause which provided exemption if:

> it is expedient in the national interest that the man should instead of being employed in military service be engaged in other work in which he is habitually engaged. 262

Until the government cancelled exemptions under this category, in April, 1918 it appears that Friends were often successful in securing exemptions under the provisions of this clause. No evidence has yet been discovered to show that any Friend was refused exemption until after this date. 263

The decision as to who was eligible for exemption was in the hands of local tribunals which were set up across Canada. Each Tribunal consisted of two men, one chosen by a board of selection designated by the Senate and House of Commons, the other by the legal authorities in a province, by an appropriate judge or by the Minister

262. Ibid., II. (1) (a).

263. Non-Combatants were not called out until April, 1918.

of Justice. [264] Provision was made for appeal against the decision of a local tribunal and in the last instance appeal was available to the Central Appeal Judge in Ottawa. Local tribunals began to sit on 8th November, 1917.

Quaker attitudes to the Military Service Act and to local tribunals were well represented by a report submitted to The Canadian Friend by the British Columbia Quarterly Meeting. [265] In the report, these Friends argued that since the Act was now law the most helpful service which Friends could perform was to ensure that all members of the Society affected by the Military Service Act were made aware of the requirements of the Bill. In the October issue of The Canadian Friend appeared extracts from a letter which had been sent to all members of the peace committee. [266] In the letter it was suggested that members look carefully at the exemption clauses, for they might be able to claim exemption on grounds other than conscience. Attention was also drawn to the closing date for applications. Friends were told to apply early, to present themselves at their local tribunal and to beprepared to state their case with evidence if required. Clerks of the Monthly Meetings would provide those seeking exemption with certificates showing that they were members of the Society. Also printed at this time was an extract from the Military Service Bill in which the classes of those required for service were given together with

264. The Canadian Gazette Vol. 51 (part 1) p. 811. (In an emergency Minister of Justice could appoint both men.).

265. The Canadian Friend, December, 1917. p. 4.

266. The peace committee chairman was A.G. Dorland at this period.

the possible forms of exemption. As soon as copies of the Act were available, similar extracts were sent to all the Clerks of the Monthly Meetings, so that those seeking exemption would be in no doubt as to the contents of the Bill. When the calling up of Class One came, on 13th October, 1917, Clerks of Meetings were asked to send a list of the members involved and their attitude to the war. It was further suggested that each Monthly Meeting form a committee to help those affected by the first calling-up of men. To protect Friends from the vagaries of local tribunals, a declaration containing the peace views of Friends was sent to the Central Appeal Judge in Ottawa. If the local tribunal refused an exemption and an appeal was necessary, then the appeal court had adequate information available concerning the long association of Friends with pacifism.

CHAPTER III

CONSCRIPTION AND CONSCIENCE

I

On 20 April 1918, by two Orders in Council, the Canadian government strengthened the Military Service Act. All exemptions previously granted to those in the age group 20-22 were cancelled and the age of call-up was lowered from twenty to nineteen years. 267 No provision was made for conscientious objectors at this time except that they were to be placed on non-combatant service and would not be sent overseas. The urgent need for more men in the Canadian Expeditionary Force was so great, the Government insisted that:"time does not permit of examination by exemption tribunals of the value in civil life, or the position, of the individuals called up for duty". 268 Later the government modified the two Orders in Council of April, 1918 and once again allowed exemption for members of certain religious groups which the Government recognized as having tenets which forbade their members to take part in war. 269 The groups to which the Government drew specific attention as fulfilling the necessary requirements under the new order were Mennonites, Dunkers (Tunkers), Christadelphians and Seventh Day Adventists. In a note attached to this list of religious groups it was pointed out that the list was not exhaustive and that: "The Society of Friends (Quakers) e.g. should be added though no

267. Canada Gazette, Vol. 51 Order in Council (962) and (919) 20 April, 1918. (Extra to Supplement)

268. Ibid., Order in Council (919) 20 April 1918.

269. Ibid., Order in Council P.C. (1567) 6 July 1918.

judgment has been rendered as yet concerning it". 270

Between the period of the Orders in Council of 20 April, 1918 and that of 6 July, 1918 however, some men previously exempted with conscientious objections to war had been called to the colours and had reported for duty at the appropriate military barracks. One member of the Society of Friends who received orders to report for duty during this period was Thomas George Mabley. 271

Mabley was born at Apsley Guise, Bedfordshire, England on 3 November, 1894. He became an orphan while still a small boy; and under a scheme organized by Dr. Barnardo's Homes he was brought out to Canada in 1904. On arrival in Canada, Mabley went to work on the farm of Howard Zavitz, a Quaker. Mabley was not a birthright Quaker, but living and working with Quakers he came to admire them and when it was suggested to him in November 1910 that he join the Society, he did so. At the time of the introduction of conscription into Canada, Mabley had acquired eighteen acres of land, and was employed on a farm of 200 acres. By the provisions of the Military Service Act, therefore, he could apply for exemption upon two grounds: his usefulness to the country as a man engaged in agriculture and as a member of the Society of Friends. Mabley applied for exemptions on both grounds and he was served notice that his case would be heard before Bryanston Tribunal No. 438 on 19 November 1917. He was informed that his presence was allowed, but that it was not recommended unless there was some difficulty in presenting his case in writing. Mabley attended the tribunal, but has said that he took little part in the proceedings. 272 Most of

270. Canadian Expeditionary Force Routine Orders No. 830, p. 247, 22 July 1918.

271. Later, after his term in prison as a conscientious objector, he was adopted by his employer, Howard Zavitz, and took the surname Zavitz.

272. In conversation with the author 24 August, 1968.

the questions centered about his farming activities. Mabley was asked whether he considered himself a bonafide farmer, how much stock he owned and the number of acres he farmed. He was not questioned about his membership of the Society of Friends nor about any conscientious objections to war which he might hold. After hearing the evidence, the tribunal decided to grant Mabley exemption from military service. Although the document informing him of his exemption does not indicate the grounds of exemption, it is clear that it was granted because of his connection with agriculture and not because he was a member of the Society of Friends.

The changes made in the Military Service Act in April 1918 cancelled Mabley's exemption gained on 19 November 1917. As there were to be no tribunals to decide who was or was not a conscientious objector, it was evident that unless the Military Service Act was subjected to further change, Mabley would be called for military service. At this period he was not averse to working with, if not for the military, for he applied to the American Service Committee. A letter from this committee shows that on 29 May 1918, Mabley was accepted for service with " the America Friends Reconstruction unit of the Red Cross to engage in relief and reconstruction work in France, and is under orders of this committee to sail for France at the earliest possible date". 273 Mabley's discharge papers show, however, that on this date he enlisted as a private in the Ist Depot Battalian, Western Ontario Regiment C.O.M.F., Canadian Expeditionary Force at London, Ontario.

273. Letter from the American Friends Service Committee to George Mabley signed Vincent D. Nicholson (Executive Secretary) and countersigned by (illegible) Public Notary.

At the army camp Mabley was treated as any other recruit. For the first few days he slept under canvas, ate his meals and answered the role-call without complaint. No-one in the tent he occupied knew he was a conscientious objector, for he did not speak to anyone concerning his opinions upon war. In these early days the recruits were dressed in civilian clothes, but eventually they were asked to present themselves for their military uniforms. Mabley has stated that the first military order he refused was in his tent just before he was to present himself for a uniform. He was asked to pick up his blankets, but he would not do this. Next he went with others to the outfitting store where he refused to sign for his uniform. It was at this moment that Mabley was threatened with ill-treatment. A sergeant drew his bayonet in a threatening manner, but after this gesture the bayonet was quickly replaced and an officer was summoned. Mabley was asked whether he understood what his refusal meant. He replied that he understood the seriousness of his actions after which a superior officer was called and a note was made of the charge to be made against Mabley. He was put on a 'ground charge' which meant that he could not leave the barracks. The 'ground charge' lasted for two weeks until Mabley was brought before a Court Martial on 17 June 1918. During this period Mabley recalls that he received very little attention from the military who did not seem to know what to do with him. 274

At his Court Martial, Mabley was brought before six officers and in the court room he was surrounded by soldiers. He pleaded

274. In conversation with the author 24 August, 1968.

guilty to the charge of disobeying an order and stated that he had done this knowing that for such a breach of army discipline he could be sentenced to two years imprisonment. The court asked why he adopted this attitude of non-compliance with military orders. Mabley replied that he was a conscientious objector. He was not asked to give any details about his beliefs, nor was he allowed a counsel to speak for him. [275] After this brief period of questioning his hearing ended. A verdict of guilty was brought in against Mabley (July 4). He was sentenced to two years in Kingston Penitentiary. The next day he was paraded before the regiment in which he would not serve and his two year sentence was read out before the assembled troops. This ceremony over, Mabley was transferred to the London City jail where he was to serve a period of solitary confinement before being transferred to Kingston Penitentiary. In the city jail he was not placed in solitary confinement, but was confined with a group of men. None of these were conscientious objectors, but men convicted of civil crimes. Mabley was confined at London until 18 July. There he lived for two weeks on water and mush. Toilet facilities consisted of a pail kept in the corner of the cell.

The journey to Kingston was made by train, Mabley being handcuffed to another prisoner. [276] On arrival at the penitentiary he collected his prison clothing and his prison number (G. 740). After this, a number of forms of prison employment were offered to him. From the list of carpenter, farm-worker or machine shop

275. Mabley to the author in conversation 24 August 1968.

276. Mabley recalls that the man to whom he was handcuffed was not a conscientious objector. He was a huge man who talked all the time of escaping and told Mabley (a small man) that if he escaped he was taking Mabley with him.

operative, Mabley chose farm-work; the work he knew best. During the whole time he was in jail, he had no complaints about his treatment by the prison authorities or by the prison guards. He worked from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. on the prison farm and found that if he worked well and kept his cell clean and tidy he was not punished in any way. One privilege granted to the prisoners at Kingston was that they were allowed to walk in the town during their lunch hour. This gave them some contact with the world outside prison and made their stay in prison less arduous.

Ministers of various churches came to see Mabley while he was in prison. He has said that many of these tried to persuade him to abandon his position as a conscientious objector, but that none of them succeeded in changing his mind. 277. Despite the attempts of these men to change his views, Mabley did not refuse to see them and talked with all those ministers who came to see him.

Mabley explains his conscientious objection in simple terms. He believed in the Quaker peace testimony and " he would have nothing at all to do with the military". 278 The army did talk to him about the possibility of his doing non-combatant service, but he refused this. 279 Mabley was the only member of the Society of Friends in

277. In conversation with the author 24 August 1968.

278. Ibid.

279. There is some doubt as to whether Mabley was officially offered non-combatant service. In a letter to Hugh Guthrie, the Solicitor General dated 11 January, 1919, C.A. Zavitz mentions that Friends had been exempted from combatant service on different occasions (An example given was the exemption of I. Way whose appeal from combatant service was allowed by the Central Appeal Judge on 18 May, 1918). It appears from this that even at this date Zavitz was arguing that Mabley should also have been granted non-combatant service.

Kingston jail during his period of confinement, but there were other objectors there at this time. He talked with some of them and they informed him that they refused to fight in Europe, but they would fight in Canada if they felt that this was necessary for the defence of the country.

While Mabley was at Kingston another member of the Society of Friends, Howard Toole, was in prison at Burwash Industrial Farm. Hewas also imprisoned for his objection on conscientious grounds to military service. Little is known to the author about Toole's background other than the fact that he came from the Mount Albert area of Ontario. [280] Like Mabley he was a member of the Hicksite branch of the Society of Friends. Toole was court martialed on 31 May 1918.

II

The Canadian Friend has few references to the two men who went to prison because of their observance of the Quaker peace testimony. One article alone mentions both men by name and this was written by A.G. Dorland after the War had ended. Dorland visited Mabley at Kingston Penitentiary and recorded his impressions in the April, 1919 edition of The Canadian Friend. He found Mabley in the hospital wing recovering from a bout of influenza. [281] They

280. Information given by E.M. Starr, Newmarket, Ontario, in letter to author 14 December 1968. No answer was received to correspondence sent by the author to an address in Mount Albert suggested by E.M. Starr.

281. Dorland maintained that Mabley, while cutting ice for the Penitentiary, caught a cold which turned to influenza. Mabley does not remember this. He says he was merely the victim of a virulent 'flu virous which affected many people in 1918-19'.

talked freely and discussed Mabley's experiences and those of Howard Toole. [282] Mabley had served eight months of his two year sentence when Dorland visited him and his release had already been approved. As soon as he recovered from his influenza he was to be released. It was in a thoughtful vein that Dorland closed his article on Mabley. He questioned:

> Whether we sufficiently honoured those who had been willing to give up their personal freedom and liberty in order that the sacred principle of liberty of conscience might be vindicated. [283]

If The Canadian Friend be taken as a guide, then Dorland's thoughts may be answered by saying that these men were certainly not honoured for their personal sacrifice. Until the March 1920 edition there is no further mention of either man. Then, under the heading " Young Friends Activites ", Margerie Moore of Newmarket wrote that loyalty in battle was equalled by loyalty to conscience. She mentioned Mabley as an example of the latter type of loyalty. This, then, together with Dorland's article, was the extent of the interest shown in the two men who had maintained the Quaker peace testimony in the face of war. There were no articles concerning their call-up, court martial or release. They and their actions were virtually ignored. In the July, 1919 edition the fact of the release of the two men was noted without details.

The reason for the lack of interest in these two men is difficult to understand. It is true that both men were members of the Hicksite branch of the Society of Friends, whereas The

282. Dorland thought that Toole came from the same area as Mabley (Coldstream), but, in fact, he came from Mount Albert, Ont.

283. The Canadian Friend, April, 1919, p. 10.

Canadian Friend expressed the opinions of the Progressive section of the Society. But faced by conscription, the three sections of the Society had come together in a joint committee and there was unity against conscription. The steadfastness of these two men should have provided an example for other Friends in Canada, but the editors of The Canadian Friend do not seem to have been aware of the value to the Society of the experiences of these two men. Unless the two men were known personally to Friends in other parts of Canada or word was passed by private letter concerning their stand against conscription, there was little possibility that their position would be known across the country.

It might be thought that The Canadian Friend faced proscription if it had drawn attention to the Friends in prison because of conscientious objection to war. Many publications of a religious nature were proscribed by the government, particularly those of the International Bible Students. The Canadian Friend, however, did print articles concerning conscientious objectors in Britain and it was not proscribed for doing this. [284] As the Order in Council dealing with censorship stressed that opinions which tended to weaken the war effort in Canada or Great Britain would be censored, it does not seem that The Canadian Friend had much to fear from the censors.

284. (i) The Canadian Friend, May, 1917, printed statements made at the Court Martial of Corder Catchpool. pp. 4-5.
(ii) The Canadian Friend, September, 1916, printed a report of the trial of P. Southall of Birmingham. pp. 4-5.

Perhaps the statement made by the Legislative Committee at the 1919 Yearly Meeting gives a clue as to why The Canadian Friend failed to draw attention to Mabley and Toole:

> Considering the condition of war and the state of public opinion during the period, the committee feels that the Government authorities have shown throughout much consideration and courtesy towards our members, recognizing the sincerity of our convictions as a religious body with regard to non-participation in war. [285]

It appears from this statement that the legislative committee was satisfied with the original exemption granted by the Government to members of religious groups whose tenets precluded participation in war. This exemption only provided for non-combatant service, however, and this was not acceptable to all members of the Society of Friends. From the earlier examination of Friends in ambulance and reconstruction work, it is clear that most of the members of the Society in Canada wished to serve humanity in some way while still maintaining an anti-war attitude. Ambulance work was considered by the Society as fulfilling these conditions. The main body of the Society, then, were not absolutist in outlook. By this is meant that few members refused all work which brought them into even the slightest contact with the military. It was seen that Mabley himself had applied for work with the American Friends' Service Committee. His objection to doing the same kind of work under the army was that this made him, in effect, a soldier, for he would be required to don a uniform and take orders from the army. This he refused to do. While the Society had sympathy for Mabley's position it is not clear that they wanted to draw attention to it

285. The Canadian Friend, July, 1919.

publicly. The image which the Friends had created was one of service and it was this image which they wished to keep before the public and before the Government. 286 This was probably the real reason for the lack of identification between the Society of Friends and its two known objectors who went to jail for their beliefs: the two men represented views which, although consistent with the Quaker peace testimony, were not the views of the main body of the Society.

The experiences of Corder Catchpool help to show the conflict between the 'service' and the 'absolutist' positions. In the statement he made at his Court Martial after he had become an 'absolutist' he said that when he had volunteered for the F.A.U., he had had to defend his actions against many Quakers who feared that such service"might lead to a compromise of our Peace Testimony". 287 This did not deter him, however, and it was not until the voluntary units became, in effect, absorbed into the medical units of the army that he decided to leave the F.A.U. He left, he indicated, because men who held the same convictions as he did were called cowards in England while he was held up before the public as genuine conscientious objector. Although this is a British Example of 'service' and 'absolutist' opinion within the Society, it can be used in conjunction with what is known about the position of George Mabley to show that there was the same divergence of opinion among

286. 'The only exemption the members of F.A.U. asked for was not to be compelled to carry arms'. The Canadian Friend ,December 1914. p. 15. Reprint of article from The Toronto Star. (no date supplied)

287. The Canadian Friend, May, 1917, p.4.

Friends in Canada. Mabley was not an 'absolutist'. He would have accepted work with the American Friends Service Committee if the Canadian government had permitted him to do so. In Canadian terms, however, Mabley and Toole were considered to be 'rebels'. To the public and to the Government, it was a thin line which divided service with a volunteer unit attached to the army from ambulance work within the army. It was a distinction which some Friends found it difficult to make too. The example of the changed circumstances of Corder Catchpool was used by the editor of The Canadian Friend to provide for Friends " a clear statement for those who have been unable to understand the position of the conscientious objector in prison". [288] When Mabley and Toole decided not to serve as non-combatants, they alienated themselves in some degree from the main body of opinion within the Society of Friends. The adoption of ambulance work by the Society blurred the clarity of what the correct position of a Friend should be in a time of war. It was no longer a question of whether it was right or wrong to have connections with military pursuits. Many members had decided that some connection could be maintained without harming the Quaker Peace Testimony. Once this policy was adopted, those who would not serve became extremists. Mabley and Toole were not considered to be examples of what the Quaker position should be in time of war. In the early nineteenth century they would have been thought of as men dedicated to the Quaker peace testimony, and those who had served the military in any way would have been censured. In the early twentieth century, they were virtually forgotten by

288. Ibid., p. 5.

The Canadian Friend and the opinion it represented, and no-one was censured for participation in the war be they combatants, non-combatants or volunteer ambulance workers.

Mabley and Toole were not completely forgotten by the Society of Friends while they were in jail. C.A. Zavitz, Clerk of the Genesee Yearly Meeting, took a great interest in the welfare of both men. [289] He, as a representative of the Genesee Yearly Meeting, worked with Albert S. Rogers (Progressive) on a joint committee of legislation [290] which was responsible for contacts between the Society and Ottawa. This committee also informed Friends of the contents of the Military Service Act, its amendments and exemptions.

L.H. Toole was the first member of the Society to be court martialled on 31 May 1918. C.A. Zavitz, on hearing of the intended trial, sent two telegrams concerning Toole: one to Justice Duff, the Central Appeal Judge, and the other to Major William Keslick, the Second Depot of the Ist Canadian Ordinance Regiment at Niagara Camp, Ontario. These communications informed the recipients that Toole was a member of the Society of Friends whose members had held their peace testimony for two-hundred and sixty years. Two days earlier William Harris, Clerk to the Canada Yearly Meeting (Progressive), and A.S. Rogers had visited Ottawa and secured a

289. Charles A. Zavitz, Professor of Field Husbandry in the Agricultural College at Guelph, Ontario. Confered with D. Sc. by U. of Toronto 1916 for attainments in Field Husbandry. Dorland, A.G. op. cit. p. 171 andff.

290. The Canadian Friend, Oct. 1917 mentions that they were to work with any representative appointed by the Conservative body of Friends.

copy of Routine Order 471 which they sent to C.A. Zavitz. 291 This order stipulated that conscientious objectors would not be sent overseas but would serve within Canada in the Canadian Engineers; the Army Service Corps; the Army Medical Corps; the Canadian Ordinance Corps on clerical duties. Harris and Rogers wrote that they had hoped to see the Minister of Militia, but that he was not in Ottawa. 292

On 31 May 1918, when Mabley enlisted, C.A. Zavitz again sent telegrams to the authorities informing them of Mabley's membership of the Society of Friends and that he had been accepted for service in the American Friends Reconstruction Unit. Zavitz hinted that Mabley might be able to give greater service to his country at the farm upon which he had been employed for thirteen years. However, Mabley was court martialled as Toole had been, and was sent to jail. On the day of his court-martial (June 18), the Genesee Yearly Meeting sent him a letter of sympathy:

> We have been moved and drawn by our affection for thee to write in tender sympathy of thee at this time when thy life has been brought into places of difficulty and danger in the service into which thee has been led by thy conscience 293

291. Routine Order 471 (22 April, 1918). Contents communicated in letter A.S. Rogers to C.A. Zavitz 29 May 1918.

292. Friends appear to have been more successful later. It was stated in The Canadian Friend, July, 1918 p.6. that C.A. Zavitz and Albert Rogers met with the P.M. and other members of the Federal Government in Ottawaand had an 'interesting and satisfactory interview'.

293. Letter - Genesee Yearly Meeting to George Mabley (18 June, 1918).

It seems that apart from this simple letter Mabley had little contact with other Friends while he was in prison. A member from Mabley's district has said that Mabley did not encourage visitors.[294] Mabley has said that he cannot recall adopting this attitude, for he agreed to see all those who wished to visit him. He does admit, however, that he had wished that Friends would not concern themselves with trying to secure his release as he wished to 'stick it out' until the end of the war.[295] Mabley and Toole did correspond with each other while they were in jail, but these letters are no longer available for examination.

In January, 1919, two months after the armistice C.A. Zavitz wrote to the Solicitor General, Hugh Guthrie asking for the release of Mabley and Toole.[296] He again made a brief statement of Quaker peace views, giving historical examples to show that these views had been held for over 250 years. Just over a month later, a letter from Thomas Mulvey, the Undersecretary of State informed Zavitz that:

> I am commanded to inform you that his Excellency the Governor General has been pleased to order that these two young men be released from close custody.[297]

In a reply to this letter it was stated that Toole had been released

294. C. Harold Zavitz in conversation with the author, Toronto, 17 April, 1968.

295. George Mabley in conversation with the author 24 August, 1968.

296. Letter - C.A. Zavitz to Hugh Guthrie 11 January, 1919. The reply to this letter mentions a letter on behalf of Toole also dated 11 January, 1919.

297. Letter to C.A. Zavitz from Thomas Mulvey 25 February 1919.

and had arrived home 25 February 1919, but that Mabley was still in prison suffering from influenza. [298] As his dishonourable discharge shows, Mabley was eventually released 8 May, 1919 after spending nearly nine and a half months at Kingston.

Although it has been found, then, that Friends worked for freedom of conscience and sought to secure the release of those who were of military age, but who refused to fight or undertake non-combatant service, they seem to have been loath to draw public attention to the problem of conscientious objection in Canada. The pages of the Canadian Friend would not have reached a wide reading public, but at least they could have informed members of the Society itself about the men who went to jail because of their views concerning peace and military service. There can be no doubt, from the few scraps of information provided by The Canadian Friend regarding conscientious objectors in Canada, that conscientious objection was a problem for Friends all across Canada. The British Columbia Quarterly Meeting had reported in the November 1917 edition of the Canadian Friend that they had few men of military age in the Meeting, but that if a further draft was called out there would be some men involved. The March, 1919 edition, however, carried a report that Friends in Vancouver had, for some time, been visiting conscientious objectors in Okalla prison. " There are others in the Penitentiary whom we should like to visit, the report continued, but the too rigorous regulations make it impossible." [299]

298. Letter to Thomas Mulvey (unsigned) 13 March 1919.

299. The Canadian Friend March, 1919.p.7.

Nothing indicates whether the conscientious objectors were Friends or non-Friends, but the act of visiting these men shows that Friends in the West were as much involved in the problem of conscientious objection as were those in the East. The position which Friends in the West had adopted to the problem was not reported, however, nor was any real discussion of the problem attempted through the pages of The Canadian Friend.

Little material is available to assess the attitude of Friends towards non-Quaker objectors. It will be remembered that the resolution sent to Premier Borden in May 1917 had shown concern not only for Friends but for all those who had conscientious objection to carrying arms ' regardless of their membership in any particular church or society'. 300 Mabley's testimony shows that there were objectors other than religious ones, but there is no indication that Friends worked on their behalf. 301 In the East no evidence has been discovered by the author to show that Friends combined in any way with any other groups, religious or otherwise,

300. The Friend's Peace Committee recommended that '1. The Religious Society extend moral support to those who though not members of the Society hold genuine objection to war.'

301. Pelham Quarterly Meeting did discuss early release of conscientious objectors from prison and decided to bring the matter to the attention of the Joint Legislative Committee of Yearly Meeting. Canadian Friend, March 1919, p. 2.
(By this date, Toole had been released and Mabley's release had been ordered, only a bout of influenza was keeping him from his freedom. Author's note)

to protest against the imprisonment of conscientious objectors.[302] The West, however, did produce a body which was open, "to all those who on any grounds objected to conscription and which sought to help those who objected".[303] This organization, formed in Victoria, British Columbia, was called the Canadian Freedom League. Friends in Victoria do not seem to have been too sure of the attitude to adopt to this League.[304] In The Canadian Friend of November, 1917 it was reported that:

> While two or three Friends have attended some of the League Meetings - as a congregation we are anxious to keep in touch with Yearly Meeting's actions in connection with the Military Service Act.[305]

It would seem, then, that Friends in Victoria were not prepared to commit themselves too deeply to a league against conscription. As individuals, some Friends were willing to have dealings with non-Friends involved in the conscientious objection issue, but the Society itself was more reticent.

302. (i) Dorland mentions that a group of Hicksite Friends formed ' The Peace and Arbitration Society ' shortly after the close of the Boer War which was undenominational, but his references to the Society end in 1906. Dorland, 322-323.

(ii) The Canadian Friend, February 1913, p. 10. made reference to meeting of this Society. Discussed were the growth of armaments in the world; Quaker loyalty to the Nation; the promotion of peace in the world. Mr. Clark did not believe " that the task of promoting a sentiment in favour of peace belonged entirely to the working classes and socialists".

303. Canadian Friend November 1917. p.3.

304. In reply to a letter sent to Victoria Public Library requesting information on the Canadian Freedom League, the author received a communication stating that an examination of relevant local newspapers had revealed no trace of the League. The Library had also contacted the Provincial Library and the Provincial Archives, but no information concerning the League was found. Letter, Victoria Public Library to author, 13 March, 1969.

305. Ibid. p.3.

CONCLUSIONS

It seems clear from an examination of British and Canadian Quakers in the Great War that the peace testimony of the Society in both countries had undergone a marked change since the days of George Fox. Corder Catchpool summed up this change in attitude very well when, in the midst of his rejection of ambulance work he wrote:

> It may be illogical my being here. I did not come out at the end of a train of reasoning exactly. I could not see George Fox clearly in the war zone-but ... I never failed to see Jesus Christ here...'Ah, you have gone out to save life, not to kill,' said Sir W.P. Byles to me the other day ...(he)... put into words the thought that has so often been my motive force. [305]

These words contained the key to much Quaker thinking during the war: a sinking of Quaker exclusiveness in order to give service to others. There was nothing new in Quakers serving others. They were well known philanthropists and their work towards prison reform and the abolition of slavery provide noteable examples of Quaker service. It can be argued that these activities helped in some way to break down the barrier which existed between many Quakers and political affairs; for such service involved contact with political institutions and political figures. Another important force which effected change in the Society of Friends was evangelicalism. It attacked many aspects of Quaker life and severed many Quakers from traditional ties. Also to be included in the forces working towards the greater involvement of Quakers in public affairs was the growth of Quaker business interests. Trade widened the horizons for some

305. Catchpool, On Two Fronts, p. 88. Letter dated 12 March, 1916.

members of the Society of Friends. And after 1832, Quakers took their place in Parliament, again confirming that the quietist period was over.

The peace testimony of the Society experienced changes too. Quakers took part in national and international peace societies in the nineteenth century and sent peace delegations throughout Europe. Eventually aid and personnel were dispatched to war-torn areas. Quakers still maintained that war was wrong in all circumstances, but they no longer remained aloof from war. Yet the F.A.U., formed after the outbreak of hostilities in 1914, marked a further stage in the evolvement of the Quaker peace testimony; for Quakers actually went into the firing zone to aid and rescue soldiers. Previously, although Quakers had sent relief supplies during wartime, they had not sent personnel into the war zone.

The figures supplied by Graham in Conscription and Conscience show that service for others motivated the largest section of the Society of Friends during the Great War. He recorded that 640 men were involved in ambulance work at the Front. Not all of these were Quakers and some were not conscientious objectors, but Quakers made up a large part of this Unit. There were also 440 men enrolled in the General Section of the F.A.U. who served in Britain. Many of these men were Quakers. It was also estimated by Graham that 32 percent of Quakers of military age enlisted. These figures can be compared with the 279 Quakers who went to jail for conscience sake of whom 142 were absolutists. Unfortunately, similar figures have not been gathered for Canada. [306]

306. In April, 1919 A.G. Dorland made an appeal in The Canadian Friend for such statistics. The author enquired for the result of his appeal, but was told by the Assistant Secretary of the Canada Yearly Meeting who contacted Dorland on this point, that the response was so small that no statistical table could be made.

However, the pages of the Canadian Friend show a predominance of men who served in ambulance and reconstruction work over those who went to jail. That some Canadian Quakers enlisted is beyond doubt. The author was told by George Zavitz and Harold Zavitz that James Stanton of the Goldstream Meeting enlisted and The Canadian Friend mentions the memorial service of David Secord Muirhead, a birthright member of the Pelham Meeting who had been killed in action at Coral de Norde, France on the 27 September, 1918. The note reported that although Muirhead did not believe in war, he was not a conscientious objector and had said, "Other boys must go and I am no better than they." Strangely for a Quaker journal, the words of Muirhead's Commanding Officer were given: "He was as brave a soldier as any officer could wish." 307 From the Calgary Meeting came news that all those who had served "with the military forces, and who are now living, have returned and are again taking up the pursuits of peace." 308 There are numberous references in the Canadian Friend to people returning from service overseas, but the service they had rendered is not always given. Many of these appear to have been members of the Quaker Adult School, an organization active in Britain and Canada which provided evening classes in many subjects. It was open to non-Quakers and Fred Haslam, who was a prominent member of the Adult School movement in Canada confirms that many of its non-Quaker members of military age went into the Army. Clearly then to deal with absolutist conscientious objectors within the Society of Friends in either Britain or Canada is to deal with the few. 309

307. The Canadian Friend, January, 1919, p. 4.

308. The Canadian Friend, November, 1919, p. 5.

309. A word of warning must always be inserted when quoting statistics concerning religious groups, for many who claimed membership were not necessarily active members.

It was not intended that this study should be primarily a comparative study of British and Canadian conscientious objection, but some interesting comparisons can be made and these have been made wherever possible. The situation of Quakers in Britain and Canada was different in many ways. In Canada, Quakerism was rooted in rural areas, most of its adherents were farmers or farm workers. In the cities there were Quakers pursuing a wide variety of occupations, but as an examination of census returns show, very few Quakers were urban dwellers. British Quakers, on the other hand, were to be found in all types of occupation, for business and industry had attracted many Quakers into urban areas. It can be concluded from this that the concept of service for others took different forms in an industrialized Britain and a partially industrialized Canada. As was seen by an examination of the lives of Corder Catchpool and Stephen Hobhouse, Quakers in Britain were very active in social work among the industrial poor. Thus, it is not surprising that some Quakers should show an interest in socialism and believe that a form of this doctrine would solve the ills they saw around them. Socialist-Quakers, then, were a product of the interest of a religious group in social welfare. Canadian Quakers, because of their rural orientation were more concerned with the social welfare of immigrants and in sending out missionaries among the new arrivals from Europe. Socialism was not an important element in Quaker thinking in Canada nor was it an important element in the thinking of the majority of other Canadians.

Yet it would be wrong to assume there were no socialists in Canada at that period. Among Quakers the author has found one person in Canada who forcibly expressed the need for Ploughshare politics. [310] This was George T. Sheward who, in a letter to The Ploughshare, regretted that prospects for such politics in Canada were discouraging. He felt Canadian Labour was only interested in maintaining conflict between employer and employee. [311] Neither was Sheward impressed with the Society of Friends in Canada. Quakers appeared to support British participation in the war, he said, and,

> have neither the courage to repudiate Friends views re war nor to maintain them; in fact their aim seems to be to maintain their organized meetings, actuated by sentiments of the past. [312]

In Britain the position was different, Socialist-Quakers although a minority within the Society of Friends, were influential in many aspects of its life. It was possible to show in this study the concern shown by Quakers for the growth of arms prior to the war. This was true in Britain and Canada. Canadian Quakers sent petitions to the Government, but in Britain the combination of statistics supplied by a Quaker-Socialist, Walton Newbold, and the oratory of Philip Snowden ensured that the facts of armament production and profits reached a wide audience. However, armament production did not cease and war came.

310. Readers of The Canadian Friend were recommended, to read The Ploughshare, but there was little to indicate that the British journal had a marked effect on the Canadian publication.

311. Canadian labour was against conscription before it was introduced, but once a fact, it was accepted.

312. The Ploughshare, Vol. III, June, 1918, p. 166.

As previously stated, the first reaction of Quakers to war was conditioned by the service performed in the wars of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 1914, the idea of a Friends Ambulance Unit was welcome to those who could not fight, but who wished to serve others and at the same time show loyalty to their nation. The personal reactions of two Socialist-Quakers have been noted. Catchpool, anxious to serve, was an early member of the F.A.U. Hobhouse for his part, worked on behalf of enemy aliens and their familes in Britain. The attitude of these two men changed markedly when conscription was introduced in 1916. Hobhouse had advocated alternative service before the war, but repudiated such service under the threat of compulsion. As Adjutant of the F.A.U., Catchpool's decision to return to Britain and seek absolute exemption was not made without a great amount of thought concerning its effect upon the rest of the Unit. Both men were refused absolute exemption and were drafted into the Army. For these men, neither Army or prison life was marked by the ill-treatment met by some absolutist objectors. Catchpool and Hobhouse did not go on hunger or work strikes and gave little trouble in jail. However, Hobhouse did object to the silence rule. Catchpool found that after a period of imprisonment a return to Army life was refreshing in some ways. yet, as the case of Brightmore shows, the Army did not always effuse an air of freedom when compared with prison life. 313

313. One objector told the author that after wearing the same clothes for ten days, sleeping on a platform in the guardroom and having nothing to do, he found the routine of prison life relatively welcome. Fred Haslam, Secretary of Canada Yearly Meeting, who was an objector in Britain during the Great War. Later he came to live in Canada. Recounted in conversation with the author, Toronto, 22 August, 1968.

Canadian Quakers responded immediately to the idea of wartime service. Money and supplies for the F.A.U. were sent from Canada and later Quakers went to serve in the first British Ambulance Unit for Italy and with American ambulance and reconstruction units. One of the chief advocates of the F.A.U. in Canada was J. Allen Baker, a Canadian born Quaker who was a member of the British House of Commons. He travelled extensively across Canada on behalf of the F.A.U.

Conscription did not occur in Canada until 1917 and very few Quakers were affected by conscription in its early days because most members of the Society were engaged in agriculture and were exempted from military service because of the importance of their occupations. Many Quakers with whom the author has had conversations also insist that most young Quakers they knew at that time were either just too young or too old for the draft. However, when the Government cancelled all exemptions in April, 1918, some Quakers were claimed by the Army and the story of one of these men shows that he received much the same treatment as the two Socialist-Quaker objectors whose Army and prison experiences were examined in this work. Mabley was not ill-treated and the pattern of court-martial and then transference to civil prison was the same system which had been evolved for British objectors who would not perform alternative service. Yet in some ways Mabley's story and treatment were different. He actually reported at the military barracks whereas Catchpool and Hobhouse were 'fetched' by the Army. Mabley regretted this later and told the author that if he could re-live that section of his life he would still resist, but he would make the

Army fetch him. Another difference between Mabley and the British objectors examined here was that his sentence was heavier. British absolutists usually received 112 days sentence, were then transferred back to the Army and were re-court-martialled. This was not the case in Canada.

Mabley was not an absolutist, for he would have accepted work with the American Reconstruction Unit if the Government had allowed him to take it. Yet, he maintains that he refused non-combatant service within the Army. In prison Mabley was treated more like British objectors who accepted the Home Office Scheme. He worked on the prison farm and was allowed to walk in Kingston during his lunch break. Fred Haslam, who was engaged in Home Office work at Wakefield prison in Britain, recalls that prisoners were free between the hours of 5:30 and 9:30 P.M. and that Saturday afternoons and Sundays were free. Some prisoners went home at weekends. Mabley could not go home, but he had more freedom than the British absolutist.

It has yet to be established whether there were any absolutists in Canada in the Great War. That there were socialist objectors in Canada seems clear from two examples gathered from The Winnipeg Tribune. One report stated that Joseph Murray, a conscientious objector was sentenced to two years in the penitentiary for refusing to report for service. He was alleged to have said, "I am a conscientious objector on account of being a member of the Socialist Party." 314

314. The Winnipeg Tribune, 25 January, 1918, p. 1.

Another article referred to Christopher Kinsell and Robert Oswald Knaggs who were given five years hard labour for refusing to don uniforms. It was stated that Knaggs refused on religious grounds, "although he was not a conscientious objector." Kinsell did not give a reason for not enlisting, but "a great deal of I.W.W. (International Workers of the World) literature was found in his possession at the time of his arrest." 315

It was seen that Mabley was not ill-treated and no reports of Canadian Quakers being ill-treated have been found in the process of this study. Yet Graham records that 25 Canadian conscientious objectors, "after a particularly cruel incarceration in Canada were shipped to England" where they received similar rough treatment. In Wandsworth Military Prison they were subjected to about 100 days of confinement and fed for three days on bread and water and for three days on a more substantial diet. This alternate feeding system was continued for the 100 days. Graham asserts that Miss Joan Fry, a visitor to military camps, discovered that one of these men was a Quaker, but she did not visit him. The name of this man is not given in Graham's account. 316

However, it would appear that Canada, like Britain, had men who thought objectors should be taught a lesson. On 24 January, 1918, the front page of the Winnipeg Tribune carried a photograph of nine

315. Ibid., p. 11.

316. The Canadian Quaker was told that the Chaplain was there to see him. He thought this was the usual Anglican visitor and he refused to see him. The visitor was, in fact, Miss Fry. Graham, op. cit., pp. 133-134.

International Bible Students who were conscientious objectors, but who had been taken into the Army. 317 One of the men, Robert Clegg, signed an affidavit in St. Boniface Hospital stating that he had received "cruel and inhuman treatment." Another man. D.R. Naish, was alleged to have received harsh treatment at Minto Barracks. A further objector, Charles Matheson, who did not appear in the photograph, was said to have given way under torture and agreed to obey orders.

Clegg's affidavit, signed before F.J. Davidson, barrister, said he had been taken in charge on 18 January, 1916 (sic. should read 1918) as an absentee and taken to Minto Barracks. There, he refused to obey orders and was not issued with blankets and had to sleep upon bare boards. On 21 January, Clegg refused to move certain pails which led to his being taken into detention. The next day a major ordered him confined to barracks for two days. When Clegg still refused orders after this detention, he was taken to the ablutions, forcibly undressed and given an ice-cold shower for 15 minutes. A non-commissioned Officer partially dried him, but asked Clegg to finish the drying. Clegg refused and was lashed with the towel until he was dry. Then, between two Military Policemen he was made to run up and down. In the afternoon, Clegg alledged he was given the same treatment exeept he was not lashed with a towel. Yet after his cold shower, he was taken and laid on a cold, stone slab. He lay there helpless.

317. The Winnipeg Tribune, 24 January, 1918, p. 1.

A soldier at the barracks, Private Paul Case, also issued a statement which said that one man had been given one fifteen minute shower and another man two 15 minute showers with a 30 minute interval between them. During the night one man's condition was so bad that he was taken to hospital. Case said the soldiers at the camp were annoyed by the affair and reports were false that the soldiers and not the authorities were responsible for the treatment of the International Bible Students.

On 25 January, The Winnipeg Tribune reported that it was thought a military court had exonerated the authorities at the camp who claimed that the 'torture bath' was in reality a regulation bath. Yet, the Commanding Officer of the depot battalion and his second in command were charged by the I.B.S. with conspiring to commit an indictable offence. Sargeant Simpson, the provost sargeant, was charged with assault occasioning bodily harm. Two days later, Magistrate Hugh John MacDonald refused to hear the case against simpson, but agreed to a military request that he tried by court-martial.

The report that the military authorities had been exonerated proved correct. However, it was announced on 31 January that the I.B.S. lawyer had permission to bring in a plea of mandanuss: the magistrate had to try the case against Simpson. All this time Clegg was kept in hospital, although it was maintained that he had only been given a 'regulation bath'. There was no further reference to the events at Minto Barracks in The Winnipeg Tribune up to 4 February where the author ended his search. A full examination of the legal proceedings would be interesting, but essentially the statement of Private Case and the

length of Clegg's stay in hospital seems to indicate that there was a case to answer. And in many cases of ill-treatment to conscientious objectors in Britain, the 'regulation bath' seems to have played an important part. After reading reports of such ill-treatment, it is understandable that the Legislative Committee of the Canada Yearly Meeting indicated in a statement issued after the war that they had received fair treatment from the Government in the difficult circumstances occasioned by the war.

When considering the influence of anti-war parliamentarians on legislation dealing with conscientious objectors in Britain it was seen that the Quaker M.P.s in the Liberal Party had some success in widening the conscience clause. T.E. Harvey and Arnold Rowntree were greatly interested in alternative service and they consistently worked to get more conscientious objectors within the scope of such service. Few of the anti-war group had any sympathy for the absolutist objector, although R.L. Outhwaite was an exception; for he thought them the only true objectors. Philip Snowden was the greatest champion of the objector in terms of parliamentary questioning, but he was not a thorough-going pacifist. In common with many socialists he did not object to war in all circumstances. Indeed, he was surprised to be sent hundreds of letters from objectors and their relatives which sought to involve him in their problems. He assumed it was his stand against conscription which had brought him this mail.

Boulton makes the point that many of the socialist leaders of the N-C.F. had strong non-conformist backgrounds even though they might not have been attached to any church after their youth or early manhood.

This also seems to be true of the anti-war group which contained Quakers, Baptists, Congregationalists, Unitarians, Free Presbyterians and Primitive and Weslyan Methodists.

In assessing the work of these men in Parliament, it seems at first as though they had little success in opposing the war. They were too few to stop conscription once the Irish Nationalists and many Liberals and Labour members had failed to oppose conscription. When an extension of conscription was introduced, opposition was again too meagre to substantially modify the amending Bill. However, by continually questioning the Government on the war and on conscientious objection as well as on many other issues involving conscientious objectors, the anti-war group did help many objectors to secure fairer treatment. Some of this questioning has been shown in this study, but there were other questions dealing with the Home Office Scheme, tribunal decisions and concerning individual objectors whose whereabouts were unknown to their relatives. And the group was just as vocal outside the House. Anti-war M.P.s travelled all over the country speaking at peace meetings.

One of the main differences between Canadian and British legislation concerning conscientious objection was that exemptions on grounds of conscience could only be claimed in Canada if the claimant was a member of a religious group whose tenets contained a conscientious objection to war. As the case of the I.B.S. in Winnipeg shows, however, the Government reserved the right to determine which religious organization fulfilled the necessary qualifications. It will be remembered that attempts to secure a similar exemption clause in British

legislation had failed. In 1916 it was clear to the British Government that there were many men without religious attachments who would resist conscription and although the Government provided, in some measure, for these men, it soon became apparent that the Government had underestimated their number. Hence the need to clarify the position of non-religious objectors for tribunals which insisted that socialists could not have a conscientious objection to war. In Canada there were so few socialists that the Canadian Government could bring in legislation granting exemptions only to religious objectors. There were not enough socialists to challenge this decision.

In Britain there were certain men who held both a religious and a socialist objection to war. The Socialist-Quaker group examined in this study was composed of people who held both views. It was found that the group had agreements and disagreements with other Quakers and also with other socialists. Within the Quaker movement, the S.Q.S. acted as a left-wing minority which sought to bring socialism into the Society of Friends. Socialist-Quakers wanted to change the Society in many ways, but economic reform was the basis for many of the changes they suggested. When speaking of war, the Socialist-Quakers insisted that it was no longer enough for Quakers to speak of wars being caused by lust or greed. They argued that a thorough examination of war and its causes was needed. In the Ploughshare, Socialist-Quakers sought to examine war in the context of social reconstruction. Without such reconstruction, they claimed, there could be no permanent peace. Thus, as was clearly seen there could be no permanent peace. Thus, as was clearly seen when Socialist-Quakers examined the peace proposals of the U.D.C., or of any other organization or individual, they always insisted that when

peace came was not important unless the reconstruction advocated in The Ploughshare took place. There would be no new beginning when hostilities ceased. The forces which produced war had to be attacked immediately or after the end of the fighting there might be a period of peace, but it would be followed by war within a number of years.

For Socialist-Quakers, capitalism caused wars and the remedy they suggested was Guild Socialism. Such socialism sought to organize industry under worker-control and suggested a similar way of organizing other aspects of society. Guild socialism was not a revolutionary form of socialism and Socialist-Quakers refused to consider the possibility of seizing control of the country by force in order to implement the reforms they wanted. Reform was to be brought about without bloodshed.

APPENDIX

M S A. 32.

CANADA.

MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

Notice of Disposition of Claim for Exemption.

To Thomas G Hobbs

St. and No. R R # 2

City or Town Kingston

Serial No. 749.384

Consecutive No. on Schedule 128

You are notified that the Claim for Exemption from Military Service made on behalf of E P

has been considered by Kingston Local Tribunal No. 430 under the Military Service Act, 1917, and that the decision of the Tribunal was that exemption be:—

Allowed

Any communication on the subject of this notice is to be sent to London

addressed to "The Registrar under the Military Service Act, 1917."

A copy or copies of this decision was or were

{Strike out method not used.} (a) Handed to the Claimant personally; (b) Sent to the Claimant by registered mail } on the 19th

day of May 1917.

Notice of it has also been given to the Military Representative.

Robt. M. Hobbs
Member of Tribunal.

W. L. Douglas
Member of Tribunal.

N.B.—See other side of this sheet for instructions and explanations.

M S A. 23.

Serial No. 749384 AC.

MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917

Consecutive No. on Schedule 128.

Notice of Hearing of Application for Exemption

Name Mr. Thomas G. Mabley.

St. and No. R. R. #2.

City or Town Ilderton, Ont.

The application for the exemption from military service of Yourself.

will be considered by the Local Exemption Tribunal sitting at

(St. and No.)

(City or Town) Bryanston Tribunal 438.

on the 19th. day of November. 1917, at ten o'clock in the morning, or such later hour of that day as the number of cases before the tribunal may dictate.

Anything you desire to lay before the Tribunal should be put in writing and sent immediately by post to "The Local Exemption Tribunal under the Military Service Act," at the above address. You must be careful to note on any communication you thus send, the serial number and consecutive number on schedule which appear in the squares at the head of this notice and any facts which you may state or any representations you may make in this way will receive due consideration by the Tribunal.

Your personal attendance before the Tribunal is permitted, but it is not recommended, unless it is impossible to properly set out the facts in writing.

Upon the decision of the Tribunal being arrived at or its becoming necessary that you should be examined by a Medical Board, notice will be sent to you by registered mail. If you do not receive it in due course of post after the date of hearing of your claim mentioned in the first paragraph, please notify the undersigned Registrar quoting the numbers at the top of this notice, and the reason for the delay will be enquired into.

W. E. WISMER,
Deputy Registrar under Military Service Act, 1917,
LONDON, ONT.

NOTE.—The Military Service Act, 1917, section 11, subsection 4, provides as follows:—

(4) Any person who, for the purpose of obtaining a certificate or a condition in a certificate for himself or for any other person, or for the purpose of obtaining the renewal, variation or withdrawal of a certificate, makes any false statement or representation, shall be guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for any term not exceeding twelve months with or without hard labour.

INSTRUCTIONS TO TRIBUNAL.—One copy of this notice is to be delivered or sent by registered mail to each applicant, and another is to be sent daily to the Registrar (or Deputy Registrar) under the Military Service Act, in whose jurisdiction the local tribunal sits, attached to any papers which may have been received by the tribunal in connection with the application and a memorandum of any oral evidence heard before it.

If the man is not on the schedule, a form of claim for exemption M S A 3 will be filled out and the proper particulars will be entered in the schedule furnished by the Registrar to the Tribunal. The serial number of the form of claim for exemption so filled out and the consecutive number of the added entry on the schedule will be inserted in the appropriate spaces on this notice.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CLAIMANT.—If the application for Exemption has been dismissed, an order with regard to the time and place at which the man concerned is required to report himself to be placed on active service will be sent to him in due course, and he will be furnished with transportation for his journey to his battalion.

If the Claim for Exemption has been allowed a Certificate of Exemption will be sent to the man within about six weeks. This Certificate will be valid upon the conditions specified or for the time limited by the decision or until the men in the medical category in which the man has been placed are required to again report themselves.

If exemption has been granted until the services of the men of the Medical Category in which the man has been placed are required, and the services of the men in that Medical Category are hereafter called for, an opportunity will then be given to put forward any ground of exemption already urged, as well as any that may arise in the interval.

If you desire to appeal you must give notice in writing of the grounds upon which you base your appeal to "The Registrar under the Military Service Act, 1917" at the place stated above.

This notice must be postmarked not later than the third day after the delivery by the Post Office of this advice, or your appeal cannot be heard. It must also refer to the serial number and consecutive number on schedule which appear at the head of this Notice.

If, by reason of any delay in the delivery of this Notice to you, it reaches you so late that you cannot give notice of appeal within twenty (20) days from the date of the dispatch of the notice, *then you must, in addition to the grounds of your appeal,* give the reasons for the delay in the delivery, if you know them. If the delay in delivery was your fault, your right of appeal is gone, and it is only if the delay in delivery was not due to you, that your appeal can be considered.

If you give a notice of appeal, you will be advised by the Registrar in due course, as to the time when it will come on for hearing before an Appeal Judge.

TELEPHONE WALNUT 6473

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE

20 SOUTH TWELFTH STREET

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that T. George Mabley who resides at Ilderton, Ontario, Canada has been duly appointed as a member of the American Friends Reconstruction Unit of the Red Cross to engage in relief and reconstruction work in France, and is under orders of this Committee to sail for France at the earliest possible date.

This Unit will engage in France in the following lines of relief work. 1. Medical, hospital and general relief work for the refugee population of France who are living under indescribable conditions, and whose physical and moral deterioration is one of the greatest menaces to the prosperity and morale of our ally. 2. Agricultural work in the evacuated war-zones, where an increasing amount of land is going out of cultivation through a lack of labor and the spread of weeds. 3. Construction and erection of portable houses in the devastated regions for the people that were either driven from their homes, or have been living in cellars and piles of ruins.

The restoration of the devastated regions of Europe has been recognized by the government at Washington as a part of the obligation of the United States. The following is an excerpt from a letter addressed by President Wilson to our Committee.

"I am sure that you will permit me to express my deep appreciation of the reconstruction work proposed, and my happiness that it is being carried out in association with the Red Cross which is already doing a great work in France to express the heart of America. Cordially yours, Woodrow Wilson."

AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE.

Vincent D. Nicholson
Executive Secretary.

State of Pennsylvania }
County of Philadelphia } ss

This 29th day of May, 1918, there came before me Vincent D. Nicholson to me personally known who made affirmation and said: that he signed the above certificate under the direction of the American Friends Service Committee, of which he is the Executive Secretary, and that the facts stated therein are true to his own knowledge.

[illegible]
[illegible] LOING,

Commission Expires March 29th, 1921

Guelph. Sixth Month, 18th, 1918.

To George Mabley,

From Genesee Yearly Meeting of Friends.

Dear George:

We have been moved and drawn by our affection for thee to write in tender sympathy to thee at this time when thy life has been brought into places of difficulty and danger, in the service to which thee has been led by thy conscience, and in which thee is now giving thy whole effort. Our hopes are ever with thee and we pray that God may grant thee light and strength and courage to support and guide thee, always, and in every need.

"The Lord shall keep thee from all evil, he shall keep thy soul."

"The Lord shall keep thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and for evermore."

In deep and abiding love from thy Friends.

On behalf of the Yearly Meeting.

Charles A. Lavitz

Clerk.

CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE

DISCHARGE CERTIFICATE

This is to Certify that No. 3137105 (Rank) PRIVATE

Name (in full) MABLEY, Thomas George, enlisted in

the 1st DEPOT BATTALION, Western Ontario Regiment, C.O.M.F.

CANADIAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE at LONDON, ONTARIO, on the TWENTY-NINTH

day of MAY 19 18

He served in ~~——————~~ CANADA. ~~——————~~

and is now discharged from the service by reason of ~~Demobilization.~~ ~~Medical Unfitness.~~ MISCONDUCT

R.O. 1892 d/14-4-19.

THE DESCRIPTION OF THIS SOLDIER on the DATE below is as follows:—

Age 24 Years	Marks or Scars
Height 5' 2"	N I L
Complexion FAIR	
Eyes GREY	
Hair LIGHT BROWN	

T. Geo. Mabley
Signature of Soldier

Date of Discharge

[illegible] SECTION
[illegible]
No. [illegible] Depot

[signature]
Issuing Officer

LIEUT.
Rank
D.C. DISCHARGE SECTION, NO. I D.D.

Date EIGHTH MAY 19 19

N.B.—As no duplicate of this Certificate will be issued, any person finding same is requested to forward it in an unstamped envelope to the Secretary, Militia Council, Ottawa, Canada.

M.F.W. 39.
75M.—2-19.
H. Q. 1772—39—882.

IDD 10-M-951
ID 102-M-171

(P. T. O.)

War Office Letter alluded to in the Brightmore case.

War Office, S.W.
19th September, 1916.

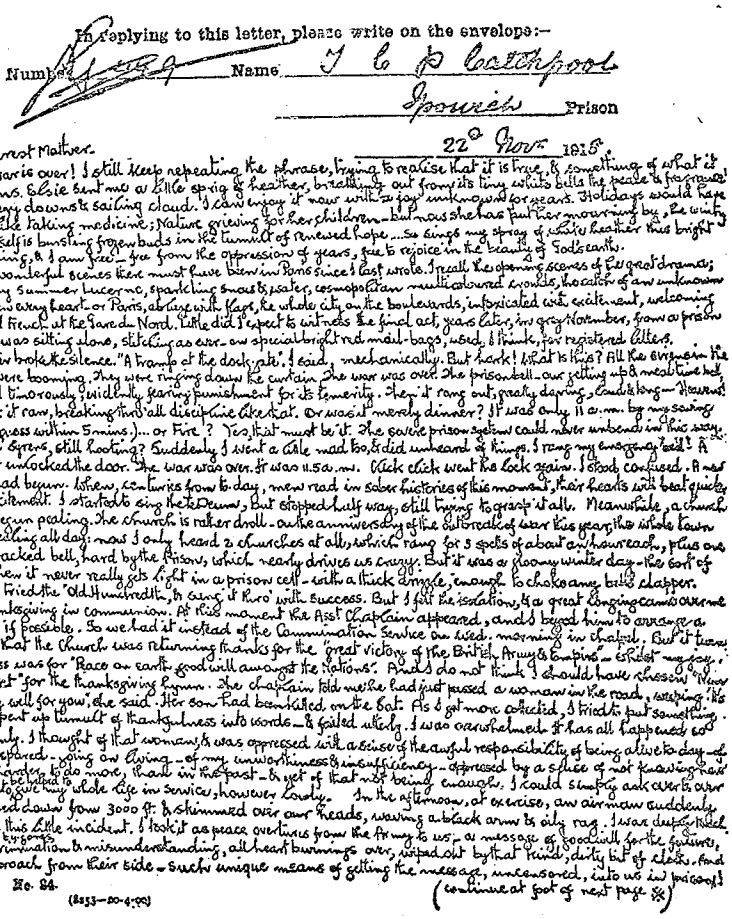
Sir, - I am commanded by the Army Council to inform you that it appears from reports which have been received in this Department that in certain instances attempts have been made by Commanding Officers to compel conscientious objectors to perform their duties by ignoring acts of grave insubordination and ensuring compliance by physical means.

I am, therefore, to request that you will be good enough to take steps to ensure that such a procedure, if it is taking place, immediately ceases, and that Commanding Officers be informed that acts of insubordination committed by conscientious objectors should be dealt with strictly in accordance with the law. The men concerned should immediately be placed in arrest and remanded for trial by court-martial, unless a minor punishment is awarded, or the soldier concerned elects to accept the award of his Commanding Officer..

It has also been reported that Commanding Officers have been awarding sentences of detention without giving the soldier concerned the opportunity of excersising his right to be tried by a court-martial under the provisions of Section 46(8) of the Army Act. If this should prove to have been the case, the Army Council will seriously consider whether the officer concerned, who has been guilty of a grave dereliction of duty and disregard of the law, can be permitted to retain his command.

It should be clearly pointed out to all concerned that the treatment of the coscientious objector who is resisting lawful military commands should be exactly similar to that accorded to any other soldier who is guilty of acts of insubordination, that it is entirely subversive of discipline if a soldier who commits an act of insubordination is not immediately placed in close confinement, that any special treatment in the way of coercion other than by the methods of punishment laid down in the Army Act and King's Regulations is strictly prohibited, and that very serious notice will be taken of any irregularities in this respect which come to light.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,



In replying to this letter, please write on the envelope:—
Number 4269 Name J. & P. Catchpool
Ipswich Prison

Dearest Mother. 22nd Nov. 1918.

The war is over! I still keep repeating the phrase, trying to realise that it is true, & something of what it means. Elsie sent me a little sprig of heather, breathing out from its tiny white bells the peace & fragrance of breezy downs & sailing cloud. I can enjoy it now with a joy unknown for years. Holidays would have been like taking medicine; Nature grieving for her children — but now she has put her mourning by, & the whole earth itself is bursting forth buds in the tumult of renewed hope ... so sings my sprig of white heather this bright morning, & I am free — free from the oppression of years, free to rejoice in the beauty of God's earth.

What wonderful scenes there must have been in Paris since I last wrote. I recall the opening scenes of the great drama; dazzling summer Lucerne, sparkling snow & water, cosmopolitan multi-coloured crowds, the cancer of an unknown dread in every heart — or Paris, ablaze with flags, the whole city on the boulevards, intoxicated with excitement, welcoming Several French at the Gare du Nord. Little did I expect to witness the final act, years later, in grey November, from a prison cell. I was sitting alone, stitching as ever — on special bright red mail-bags, used, I think, for registered letters. A footstep broke the silence. "A tramp at the back gate", I said, mechanically. But hark! What is this? All the engines in the town were booming. They were ringing down the curtain. The war was over. The prison bell — our getting up & meal time bell — tinkled timorously, suddenly fearing punishment for its temerity. Then it rang out, really daring, loud & long — Heaven knows the risk it ran, breaking the whole discipline of the establishment. Or was it merely dinner? It was only 11 a.m. by my sewing (I can guess within 5 mins.) ... or Fire? Yes, that must be it. The entire prison system could never unbend in this way. But no sirens, still hooting? Suddenly I went a little mad too, & did unheard of things. I rang my swagging bell! A warder unlocked the door. The war was over. It was 11.5 a.m. Click click went the lock again. I stood confused. A new world had begun. Whew, centuries from to-day, men read in sober histories of this moment, their hearts will beat quicker with excitement. I started to sing the Te Deum, but stopped half way, still trying to grasp it all. Meanwhile, a church had begun pealing. The church is rather droll — as the anniversary of the outbreak of war this year, the whole town was pealing all day: now I only heard 2 churches at all, which rang for 3 spells of about an hour each, plus one little cracked bell, hard by the prison, which nearly drives us crazy. But it was a gloomy winter day — the sort of day when it never really gets light in a prison cell — with a thick drizzle, enough to choke any bird's clapper.

I now tried the "Old Hundredth", & sang it thro' with success. But I felt the isolation, & a great longing came over me for thanksgiving in communion. At this moment the Asst Chaplain appeared, and I begged him to arrange a service if possible. So we had it instead of the Communion Service on Wed. morning in chapel. But it turned out that the Church was returning thanks for the "great victory of the British Army & Empire — & that we may ... fulness was for "Race on earth good will amongst the nations". And I do not think I could have blessed "Now Danket" for the thanksgiving hymn. The chaplain told me he had just passed a woman in the road, weeping. "It's all very well for you", she said. Her son had been killed on the Bat. As I got more collected, I tried to put something of my heart-up tumult of thankfulness into words — & failed utterly. I was overwhelmed. It has all happened too suddenly. I thought of that woman, & was oppressed with a sense of the awful responsibility of being alive to-day — of being spared — going on living — of my unworthiness & insufficiency — oppressed by a sense of not knowing how to try harder, to do more, than in the past — & yet of that not being enough. I could simply ask over & over again to be used, to give my whole life in service, however lowly. In the afternoon, at exercise, an airman suddenly swooped down from 3000 ft. & skimmed over our heads, waving a black arm & oily rag. I was deeply touched by this little incident. I took it as peace overtures from the Army to us — a message of goodwill for the future, all recrimination & misunderstanding, all heart burnings over, wiped out by that kindly, dirty bit of cloth. And the approach from their side — such unique means of getting the message, unreasoned, into us in prison!

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(continue at foot of next page)

"The rather terrifying originals . . . those closely inscribed pages of microscopic handwriting." [p. xvi.]

APPENDIX D

BROWN, ALFRED BARRATT, M.A., Oxon; B.A., London; born 31 December, 1887; educated Bootham School York; Merton College Oxford. Lecturer, Woodbrooke Settlement, Birmingham, 1912-21; Vice-Principal Ruskin College, Oxford 1921-26, Principal of Ruskin 1926-44. Regional Welfare Officer, Ministry of Labour 1940-47. Educational Advisor, Community Education Trust (1948). Member of The Society of Friends. Served on the National Executive of the N-C.F. 1915 until his resignation in June, 1917. One of five members of this executive jailed for refusing to pay a fine in connection with the publication of a leaflet intitled Repeal the Act. Closely associated with The Ploughshare. A member of the F.S.C.; the Joint Advisory Council; and the I.L.P.

GIBBINS, HUGH, Graduate of Manchester University. Active in the Quaker Adult School Movement. Member of The Society of Friends. Served on the National Executive of the N-C.F. Member of the I.L.P.

HARE, WILLIAM LOFTUS, Author, lecturer and editor. Born 30 April 1868. Engaged in the engraving and printing trades until the Great War. Became a lecturer in Comparative Religion to the Theosophical Society. His works are mainly concerned with comparative religious study. He was joint editor of The Ploughshare during the war and sole editor afterwards until 1920 when publication ceased.

MENNELL, ROBERT, O., London merchant. Birthright Quaker of Croydon. He was taken in handcuffs through Croydon on his way to jail as a C.O. in 1916. Served as Hon. Sec. of the F.S.C. and was closely associated with The Ploughshare.

MURRAY, GEORGE, GILBERT, AIME, M.A., Oxford; L.L.D., Glasgow; D.Litt., Birmingham; D.Litt., Oxford; F.B.A., F.R.S.L.; Trustee of the British Museum, 1914; Regius Professor of Greek, Oxford University since 1906. Born Sydney, New South Wales, 2 January, 1886. Educated Merchant Taylors' School London; St. John's College, Oxford. Prominent member of the U.D.C.

PEET, HUBERT WILLIAM, editor, The Friend, the Quaker wekly since 1923; born 18 March, 1886. Educated Dulwich College. Editorial Staff, The Bystander, 1903, Daily Sketch, 1909, Daily News, 1909; editor Sell's World's Press, 1913-15; during the war, joint editor, The Ploughshare, the Socialist-Quaker Monthly, and Secretary. F.S.C. Served 28 months hard labour as a C.O. in the war. Became secretary of the Friends Literature Committee, 1919-24; editor, Far and Near Press Bureau, 1924-37.

PETHICK-LAWRENCE, FREDERICK, WILLIAM, born 1871; educated Eton and Trinity College Cambridge. 1899-1901, lived in Mansfield House University Settlement, Canning Town; selected as L.U. candidate, N. Lambeth; retired because of his opposition to the Couth African War 1900. Imprisoned nine months, 1912 for conspiracy connected with demonstration by women suffragists. Hon. Treasurer of the U.D.C., 1916. C.O. during Great War. He accepted alternative service and was employed as as agricultural worker. Unsuccessfully contested South Aberdeen as a Peace-by-Negotiation candidate in 1917. Contributor to The Ploughshare.

ROWNTREE, MAURICE, L., theology student at Oxford. He was lecturing at Swarthmore Settlement near Leeds when he was arrested as a C.O. His lectures were addressed mainly to the working class and later he joined the I.L.P.

SALTER, ALFRED, bacteriologist; born 1873, Greenwich, died August 24 1945. Parents were strong Wesleyan Methodists, but later became Plymouth Brethren. Alfred joined The Band of Hope (a temperance movement) at age nine and addressed Salvation Army meetings at the age of 16. Educated Roan School; Guys Hospital Medical School. Became a socialist and an agnostic while at Guys. 1890 he joined the Social Democratic Federation, but left this to join the Fabian Society a few months later, only to leave this organization shortly afterwards. Began settlement work in Bermondsey in 1898. Sir Cooper Perry who interviewed him for this work said he was impressed with Salter, 'despite the aggressiveness of his anti-religious views and his extreme political opinions'. While in Bermondsey he was re-converted to Christianity and joined The Society of Friends. Became poor man's doctor in Bermondsey giving up

propects of brilliant medical career as prophesied by winning the Entrance Scholarship at Guys; the First Year Prize (1891); the Sands Cox Scholarship for Physiology (1892); Triple first-class honours when graduating as an M.B. and was awarded the gold medal, and the Treasurer's prize (1895). In graduating as an M.D. he again won first place and gained the gold medal (1896). A year later won the Golding-Bird gold medal and exhibition in Public Health.. Joined the Liberal Party and became treasure of the Bermondsey Association while in Bermondsey.. Elected to Bermondsey Borough Council (1903) and to London County Council.. One of the founders of Bermondsey I.L.P. (1908). Unsuccessfully contested West Bermondsey as an I.L.P. candidate, 1909 and 1918.. Elected as a Labour representative there in 1922.. Defeated in 1923. Re-elected in 1924 and held seat until his death.

SPARKES, MALCOLM, the founder of the Builders' Parliament and inventor of plan adopted by Whitley Council. Member of The Society of Friends and a Guild Socialist.

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