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Friends Intelligencer

The religion of Friends is based on faith in the "INNER LIGHT," or direct revelation of God's spirit and will in every seeking soul. The INTELLIGENCER is interested in all who bear the name of Friends in every part of the world, and aims to promote love, unity and intercourse among all branches and with all religious societies.

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Growing Points in the Society of Friends

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SELF-EXAMINATION is a commendable practice for individuals and groups, but continual concentration on weaknesses can be disastrous to both. Indulgence in such introspection is to be deplored as leading to discouragement, despair and eventually disaster.

For some time now the Society of Friends has been carrying on a critical self-examination. It has revealed obvious weaknesses and some less apparent faults. As an antidote to such revelations it may be wise to examine some of the strengths and growing points in the Society of Friends. To enumerate them is gratifying, healthy, and imperative if we are to move forward into a new day with great expectations.

Across this continent, and in other parts of Quakerdom, there is a feeling of spiritual insufficiency, of spiritual shallowness, and a determination to seek the eternal sources of power. Articles have been written, retreats and conferences held, and much individual soul-searching has gone on in an effort to quicken the spiritual life of Friends. Such a sense of inadequacy, coupled with a desire to be active and effective in the period just ahead, is our greatest strength today. These are basic attitudes for growth.

Friends now are also striving for and achieving a new sense of unity among themselves. Theological fences are still existent, but the barbed wire has been removed from many of them and in some places they have been torn down. 1945 saw the amalgamation of all Friends in New England and a move toward further unity between the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. 1944 had seen the first joint sessions of the three Canadian Yearly Meetings. For several years now there have been joint organizations of Young Friends in the Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York areas, and the American Young Friends Fellowship is a new unifying force across the United States. Two Quarterly Meetings, one in New York and the other in New Jersey, are now united, as are a score of individual Meetings. Several others hold meetings jointly at least part of the year. A few independent Meetings have seen their way clear to joining long established Yearly

Meetings, in some cases joining two groups in their desire to be affiliated with different groups. Civilian Public Service has served in many ways to foster a spirit of spiritual fellowship between men from various bodies of Friends. Here, too, is progress.

With startling rapidity, new Meetings have developed in almost every section of the country. The Fellowship Council reports seventy-five to one hundred such groups, to which should be added several new churches, due largely to the evangelical fervor and foresight of Oregon Friends moving into frontier territory. The Wider Quaker Fellowship now claims 3,266 members, some of whom will eventually become full-fledged Quakers, and many more of whom will spread the spirit of Quakerism in their own denominational groups. The fact that a large proportion of these people are very young, augurs well for the future of the Society.

A widely traveled Friend recently referred to race as the "fastest growing concern among Friends." After dozing almost to sleep on this testimony for many years, we are suddenly awakening to our responsibilities. Swarthmore has recently opened its doors to Negroes, Westtown has done the same. In Baltimore an inter-racial Meeting with its own Friends' House, has just been formed. C.P.S. men have been very actively concerned with this issue and many Meetings are alert to the problem. The establishment by the Service Committee of a traveling Negro lectureship in Friends' schools and colleges, and the appointment of full-time secretaries on race relations in the New York and Philadelphia Yearly Meetings are signs of real stirring on this subject, as are the activities on behalf of Americans of Japanese ancestry.

A similar interest has developed in fostering rural life among Friends. The most tangible expression of this concern is the formation of the Rural Life Association and the efforts to encourage young Friends from C.P.S. and the armed forces to settle in Quaker communities after the war. Again, progress has been slight, but we are moving in what seems to be the right direction.

The formation in recent months of the Friends' Committee on National Legislation marks a return to a

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basic belief that Friends can and should work in and through governments. Just how potent this organization can be as an expression of Friendly concern, no one can predict, but its efforts to date have been very significant.

An astounding amount of Quaker literature, most of it outstanding, has appeared in recent years from such persons as Kenneth Boulding, William W. Comfort, Howard Brinton, Rufus M. Jones, Thomas Kelly, Henry Cadbury, Douglas Steere, D. Elton Trueblood, and Janet Whitney. Almost all of it will help fortify our own faith and stimulate our spiritual growth, while much of it will be helpful in interpretation and evangelization among friends of the Friends. Pendle Hill pamphlets and the *Hymnal for Friends* have likewise filled a real need; and the revival of *The Penn Weekly* as a Friendly paper and the appearance of the volumes of Quaker Meditations have been distinct contributions of Five Years Meeting Friends.

Meanwhile Friends have begun to develop a keen sense of world friendship, particularly with foreign groups of Quakers. That this has been achieved in a period of world turmoil is particularly encouraging. The Yearly Meeting Epistles are indicative of the fact that friendships know no barriers and that we are one in those things which are eternal. Plans are under way for reunions of Friends as soon as possible, and it is to be expected that we will draw closer together as the years pass along.

During these war years the younger and smaller groups of Friends around the world have developed a real sense of responsibility, especially when heavy duties were thrust upon them by the exodus of Friends to England and the United States. This has been true with the assumption of responsibility for Secours Quaker by French Friends, and the handling of

Friends' centers and local work by German, Swedish, Danish, Dutch, and Swiss Friends. This same development has characterized Friends' work in slightly different ways in Cuba, Africa, Jamaica, and Palestine. Almost every group outside the United States has grown numerically as well as in local leadership in these tumultuous war years.

Several Quaker schools and colleges have taken on a new lease of life, realizing that there must be something distinctive about them if they are to perform their real mission today. In California a group of Friends have started the Pacific-Ackworth School, and in Iowa two branches of Friends have sponsored the re-opening of Scattergood School. At least two Quaker colleges have re-examined their responsibility to rural constituents and have begun to develop a program to serve rural as well as urban groups. Most of them are struggling with ways and means of strengthening the spiritual life among students. These are important signs of the times.

Finally, there is the renaissance of the Young Friends' movement and the conviction among many young Friends that there is a new day coming in which Friends can and must speak convincingly to a distraught world. There is new life in evidence everywhere. And much of it is being cultivated in summer camps, in Junior Yearly Meetings, in Young Friends' seminars, and in local fellowships. An awakened interest in the basic testimonies of Friends is noticeable.

Yes, there is much to make us morbid about the state of the Society, but there is much to make us proud of the Society to which we belong, much to make us want to put our shoulders to the wheel, much to make us believe that Quakerism will speak and act in more vigorous, dynamic, prophetic ways in the years just ahead.

World News of Church and Religion*

Canada

From Toronto comes word that in a rally of 2000 people the United Church of Canada inaugurated its "Crusade for Christ and His Kingdom" on the twentieth anniversary of the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist churches. The crusade is planned to bring into membership the 500,000 people entered on the census rolls as members of the United Church but of whom there exists no church record. The moderator of the United Church declared that the rehabilitation of men and women from the armed forces and war plants was the "largest social undertaking that ever faced the Christian Church in Canada." At the same rally, the retired Methodist Bishop of New York, Francis J. McConnell, said that "if the spirit of a

meeting like this is caught, it might point the way to the union of nations of the world." The United Church urged the fullest possible aid to the Japanese Christian Church "at the invitation of the church and in cooperation with the other churches on this continent."

Thirteen women are now serving as ordained ministers in the United Church. Four hundred and fifty women have taken the prescribed training and are giving full-time service; of these one hundred and two are deaconesses; the rest are missionaries serving as doctors, teachers, secretaries, and community leaders.

In Saskatchewan the United Church is experiencing an acute ministerial shortage. Thirty vacancies were reported among the two hundred five charges in the province. Filling in are twelve laymen, seven retired ministers, and seventy-three university students. Two women have regular charges and two girls are studying to become ministers in Regina.

To meet the growing sentiment for Lutheran cooperation on this continent, the American Lutheran

* These reports are compiled from a number of sources, including releases from the *Religious News Service* and *Worldover Press*, and material from the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America.