Did not our Lord bear the heavy cross of wood to Calvary and almost sink beneath it?
Theology, Business, and Social Activism in the Philadelphia Quaker Community, 1907-1927

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Abstract:

In the early 20th century before the beginning of World War I many members of the Quaker community carried the perception that the Friends Meeting was becoming increasingly irrelevant in the city of Philadelphia. Starting with the United States entry into World War I, the Quaker Meetings in Philadelphia transformed from sanctuaries for people to nurture their inner spirits into cauldrons of ideas for an ambitious social mission. The ‘total war’ nature of World War I thrust the Quakers into public life. In a militarized society, how could Quakers uphold their religious commitment to peace without becoming traitors to the state? Quakers commitment to peace was the underlying fact that set them apart from civil society in the United States. Adhering to this principle in wartime forced the Quakers to set out on an ambitious program of social service and war relief, which began to turn the focus of the Meeting outward to the world around them.

Called to action by the war, the Quakers became increasingly aware of the larger social problems around them. As Quakers surveyed and heard tales of the destruction in Europe, and witnessed the postwar uprisings in Germany and the United States, many became acutely concerned with the problems of economic inequality. The Quakers sought to bring about systemic reform to the capitalist system because they felt that inequitable industrial relations and the profit-seeking ambitions of business cause the ultimate evil of war. Most Quakers did not have any specific knowledge of industry or economics, they found these concepts to be scary and mysterious. Based on tales of unrest and poverty in Europe and their own industrial city, they felt something drastic needed to be done. Fearful Quaker reformers in postwar Philadelphia foreshadowed that if this inequitable system went unreformed, it would foster radical politics and lead again to war.

Motivated by the belief that inequitable economics would lead to further war, many Quakers formed groups to read about and discuss labor law, industrial relations and reform to the ways businesses were managed. In the turbulent years after WWI, Quakers in Philadelphia spoke constantly about the need to eradicate the underlying causes industrial unrest. The zeal for reform did not last. By the early 1920’s, the post-war industrial upheaval in the United States subsided, and the frightening accounts of radicalism in Europe ceased to seem threatening and close to home. The 1920's were a return to peace, with a succession of three Republican and pro-business presidents. Reform to business and limits on the capitalist system took a backseat to other measures on the national agenda until the New Deal.

Throughout the 1920’s, a small tightly knit group of visionary businessmen and social scientists who were leaders in their professions, the Meeting community, and Quaker peace movements during WWI, continued to assert that business needed to be reformed for the long-term well-being of society. Because there was little hope of the Republican administrations of the 1920’s adopting a policy of reform to business, these Quakers designed schemes to improve conditions and security for the working classes to be initiated by employers themselves. These acts, sometimes called, ‘corporate liberalism’ and ‘industrial welfare’ were silent measures which attempted but failed to prevent the collapse of the capitalist system, the onset of widespread suffering in the Great Depression, the rise of radicalism on the left and right side of the political spectrum, and war.
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Bibliography
Introduction

In the early 20th century before the beginning of World War I many members of the Quaker community carried the perception that the Friends Meeting was becoming increasingly irrelevant in the city of Philadelphia. Indeed, the membership ranks of the Meetings in the city were shrinking as many Friends during the period moved to the suburbs or lost their faith. Some Quakers criticized the reclusive character of the community, likening Meeting members to monks in a monastery. These accounts were an exaggeration because many Quakers took part in extensive philanthropic programs in Philadelphia and the surrounding region, and others were very active in the Social Gospel Movement for Progressive reform to protect the working class, but the Meetings were beset by internal insecurities.

The anxiety that Quakers were disconnected from the surrounding world would not last. Starting with the United States entry into World War I, the Quaker Meetings in Philadelphia transformed from sanctuaries for people to nurture their inner spirits into cauldrons of ideas for an ambitious social mission. The ‘total war’ nature of World War I thrust the Quakers into public life. In a militarized society, how could Quakers uphold their religious commitment to peace without becoming traitors to the state? Quakers commitment to peace was the underlying fact that set them apart from civil society in the United States. Adhering to this principle in wartime forced the Quakers to set out on an ambitious program of social service and war relief, which began to turn the focus of the Meeting outward to the world around them.

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Not all Philadelphia Quakers easily forgot the lessons of WWI and the outbreaks of postwar radical unrest in Europe and Philadelphia however. A small tightly knit group of visionary businessmen and social scientists who were leaders in their professions, the Meeting community, and Quaker peace movements during WWI, continued to assert that business needed to be reformed for the long-term well-being of society. Because there was little hope of the Republican administrations of the 1920's adopting a policy of reform to business, these Quakers designed schemes to improve conditions and security for the working classes to be initiated by employers themselves. These acts, sometimes called, ‘corporate liberalism’ and ‘industrial welfare’

This thesis is about both how the Quaker community in Philadelphia interpreted their theology into a social mission in response to local, national, and international events, and about Philadelphia Quaker’s unique approach to religiously inspired social reform movements during the Progressive Era (1890-1917) and after WWI (1917-1927). It will pose the question, in what ways was the social mission of the Philadelphia Quaker community similar or different from other Protestant churches and mainstream reformers on issues of business and social reform? It will also ask what was the underlying factor that set Quakerism apart from other religious groups and mainstream society during the period? This paper will argue that Philadelphia Quakers built upon the foundations of the Social Gospel Movement to speak out against the unjust economic order as a cause of

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war. Before WWI, the social mission of Philadelphia Quakers paralleled the general Social Gospel Movement of the Progressive Era. After the war however, Quakers created a distinctive argument, saying reform to the inequitable business relations was vital to prevent what was in their minds the ultimate evil: war.

The first requisite for understanding this argument is to define Progressivism and the Social Gospel Movement. The United States underwent rapid urbanization at the turn of the 20th century. Between 1880 and 1920, the percentage of the population of the United States living in urban areas went from 28.2% to 51.2%. In the northeast region of the United States, the percentage of the population living in urban areas went from 50.8% to 75.5%. The city of Philadelphia grew from 847,000 in 1880 to 1,823,000 in 1920. Increasingly large factories employing technologically advanced production methods that required large unskilled labor forces drew masses of migrants from rural agricultural areas of North America and Immigrants from Europe. The working classes moved into crowded urban neighborhoods with poor living conditions and worked long hours performing demanding tasks. As the gap between the wealthy and poor expanded during the Gilded Age of the late 19th century, the consequences of the capitalist system became apparent in the growth of urban poverty. In response, many forces in society including the working classes, farmers, radicals, and Christians began to campaign for reform and limits on unchecked capitalism. This broad-based movement to protect the working classes and to bring order to society through reform became known as ‘Progressivism,’ and found its most high-profile advocate in the Presidency of Theodore Roosevelt (1901-1909). In the wake of Roosevelt’s presidency, Progressivism became the dominant

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2 Statistics from US Census Bureau
ideology in national politics until World War I, and achieved legislation to among other things restrict labor for children and women, enforce anti-trust laws more strictly, and increase protections for the working class.

During the Progressive Era, several ideological movements developed in opposition to the 'steel chain of ideas' of the capitalist system. Inspired by the revolutionary discoveries of the natural and physical sciences in the late 19th century, academics working in new social science disciplines of economics, political science, sociology, psychology sought to adapt empirical and inductive methods to the study of human behavior. Many social scientists observed the consequences of the capitalist system in urban neighborhoods and tenements, became critics of greed and self-interest, and began to advocate for reform. The most important social science research institution in Philadelphia was the University of Pennsylvania. Its business school, Wharton, led research on how to improve industrial working conditions and make businesses more efficient.

The social upheaval of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era also caused reconfigurations of the religious character of the United States. The influx of immigrants from Europe added large populations of Roman Catholic, Jewish, and Eastern Orthodox into the predominantly Protestant eastern United States. Christian churches developed several theological and social responses to rapid urbanization and industrialization. First, the Christian temperance movement campaigned to protect the working classes from alcohol, gambling, and other vices. Second, Christian Socialists sought to reconstruct the economic order of society. Third, evangelical Christians developed gospel missions in working class immigrant neighborhoods to ameliorate poverty and convert new members.
Last, Christians of the Social Gospel Movement wanted to reform society to ameliorate poverty among the working classes. The Social Gospel movement combined the reconstructionist platform of Christian Socialists and ameliorative desires of the evangelicals. In the Social Gospel Movement Christian congregations set up settlement houses in urban neighborhoods and experimented with new neighborhood ministries, organizations for social research and advocacy, and charity programs for the poor. Social Gospel churches also supported political campaigns for municipal home rule, an end to child labor, the banishment of tenements and the improvement of housing, collective bargaining for workers, and the establishment of women's suffrage.

The Social Gospel Movement included varying levels of participation from many different Protestant Churches. Some Protestants sects were not formal members of the movement but had parallel programs to Social Gospel churches. The Quaker fit these criteria. Meetings in Philadelphia did not collaborate with other churches or frequently refer to national Social Gospel leaders, but the Friends had many of the same social platforms and identical charitable institutions.

The first section of this thesis will explore the Philadelphia Quaker community’s many programs of philanthropy that paralleled the Social Gospel Movement before WWI. Subsequent sections will then show how after WWI, Quakers developed their own interpretations of the Social Gospel Movement that was unlike their peers because it stressed the prevention of war as the justification for reform.

An understanding of the history and traditions of the Society of Friends, specifically in what ways it is different and similar to other Protestant denominations, is

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3 They wanted to reconstruct society but not abandon capitalism for socialism, and they wanted to ameliorate urban poverty without necessarily trying to evangelize.
requisite to the task of this thesis to paint a picture of the specific character of the Philadelphia Quaker community in the early 20th century and its relation to the Social Gospel Movement.

George Fox (1624-91), the son of a weaver, founded Quakerism in 1652 in England. As a restless teenager, Fox was led by passages in the New Testament such as John 1:9 ‘the true light that enlightens every man was coming into the world,’ to believe that the religious divinity called the ‘inner light’ was available to all people regardless of creed or position. Fox left home at age 18 and began traveling around England preaching his message and attracting followers later to be called Friends based on the passage John 15:14 ‘You are my Friend if you do what I command you.’ The radical nature of the Quaker’s Doctrine of the Inner Light, which was directly contrary to the hierarchical nature of English society in the established church led them to embrace radical democratic ideas such as freedom of speech, assembly, and worship. They refused to attend church, take oaths in law courts, recognize distinctions between social classes and genders and most importantly: fight in war. The Quakers both embraced the spirit of the English Reformation, but also reacted against other Protestant churches. They organized into Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings and held weekly ‘unprogramed’ worship services that did not employ priests or the sacraments. The basic theological difference between Quakers and other Protestants was the interpretation of human sinfulness. George Fox believed that Protestant ministers, “preach up sin... It was all their works to plead for it. They came to plead for sin and imperfections...” In contradiction to this, the

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4 As asserted in Quakers Peace Testimony of 1660 submitted to King Charles II
Quaker concept of the inner light, "stressed the capacity for goodness within the human person and an access to the revelation of truth from the wellsprings deep within the minds and spirits of women and men."  

While rejecting original sin, the Quakers shared many traditions with other Protestants. The bible was their primary source book. They also believed in the trinity, baptism of the Holy Spirit, and salvation by faith. The Quaker religion from the 17th to 20th centuries must be understood as carrying this dual nature. It was both Protestant and, "a sharp reaction away from, and a repudiation of, the most pronounced forms of Calvinist Protestantism in mid-seventeenth century England, those of Presbyterianism, Independents, and Baptists, the principal puritan groupings of the age of the English civil wars and revolution."  

Between its birth in 17th century England and the early 20th century Philadelphia, Quakerism underwent several important changes. Quakerism quickly spread to North America. After facing persecution during the 1660's from the Anglican Establishment in England, groups of Friends tried to establish Quaker havens in North America. The major colony was Pennsylvania, founded by William Penn on land acquired in exchange for a debt owed to Penn's father by King Charles II. Penn welcomed all Christians into his utopia, and incorporated faith into the political system. Pennsylvania had an elected assembly and tried to negotiate fairly with the Native Americans. Because of Quaker's opposition to war, Pennsylvania had no militia and the towns had no fortifications. By

2004 779

6 Mullet 2004 779
7 Mullet 2004 779
8 Mullet 2003, 1764

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1700 Quakers were no longer the majority in Pennsylvania, but the Quaker community still thrived in the original location into the 20th century.

Quakers in England, Philadelphia, and elsewhere in North America developed new elements of social character throughout the 18th century that set them apart from society well into the 20th century. 'Quaker Saint' John Woolman (1720-1772) wanted to return spiritual fervor and disciplinary rigor to the Society of Friends. He helped establish strict traditions of social conduct. First, 18th century Quakers developed rules for marriage. Young Quakers were supposed to marry other Quakers, and marriages had to be approved by the Monthly Meeting. The marriage process was the most important part of the 'social engineering' of the Friends community, and as a consequence assured the longevity and insular nature of the Quakers. Second, Quakers gravitated into certain 'Quaker Professions.' This was partly by necessity, the English government did not allow religious freedom for Friends until the end of the 17th century and even then Quakers were still bared from the universities and certain professions. Quakers also considered only certain professions to be close enough to their spiritual life to be condoned. Thus, Quakers in England and the United States developed a tradition of entering certain occupational fields such as medicine, money lending, and business. By the early 20th century in Philadelphia, the 'Quaker Professions' towards which Friends gravitated were professional jobs such as law, medicine, science, and teaching. A substantial minority of Orthodox Friends in 20th century Philadelphia still entered the traditional Quaker

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9 Quaker Saint is a term used by Historians to distinguish Quakers who made significant contributions to Quaker theology and character.
10 Levy, Barry J. ""Tender Plants": Quaker Farmers and Children In the Delaware Valley, 1681-1735." Journal of Family History. 3 (1978) 116-135
professions of money lending and business management (this group will play prominently in this thesis).

Third, Friends Meetings in the 18th century ceased evangelizing new members and began to focus on the purity of the existing community. This phenomenon, called ‘Quietism,’ required Quakers to turn away from the outside world and focus on making their own lives spiritually pious. Quietism dictated that inspiration should come from divine and not human sources. The Quietist tradition stifled the growth of Quaker Meetings, but also preserved Quaker theology and lifestyle. The undying adherence to religious principle required by Quietism also facilitated many works of Quaker activism in the 18th century. Quakers could not partake in owning slaves or doing business involving the slave trade without violating their religious ethics. They began to speak out against these problems in society, and many became pioneers of the abolition movement in England, Philadelphia, and elsewhere in North America.12

In the 19th century, the Society of Friends in North America was beset by doctrinal division and splintered into factions. ‘Quakers Saints’ disagreed on a series of theological issues, and different Meetings took a range of stances on basic theological Questions: Is Christ a Son of God or the Son of God? Is rebirth, salvation, and coming to Christ an instantaneous thing or a process? What rituals should Quakers perform? Should Quakers employ missions and evangelize? Employ paid Ministers? Wear only plain dress? Have choirs or sing hymns? Allow young members to intermarry with non-Quakers?13 Different Meetings adopted different stances on these questions, and by the

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12 Lapsansky-Werner, 2010
13 Lapsansky-Werner, 2010
end of the 19th century the theology of individual Meetings in North America represented the entire spectrum of Protestant belief.

This argument of this thesis will focus on the Quaker Community in Philadelphia, which by the early 20th century was split between Orthodox and a liberal branch of Quakers called ‘Hicksites’. The Orthodox and Hicksites split during a theological schism in 1826-1827 called ‘the Great Separation’ initiated by the controversial preaching of Elias Hicks (1748-1830). Hicks was born in New York and swore off a life of gambling at age 24 to convert to Quakerism. He had a series of ‘openings’ and began to preach that the inner light was the root of real religious experience rather than scripture. He believed that the inner light was more important because it was the word of God as opposed to the New Testament, which was the word of the Gospel writers. The elders of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting repudiated Hicks, but some Monthly Meetings agreed with his message and decided to form a new Yearly Meeting based on his liberal theology. The Hicksites formed the Friend’s General Conference, and the Monthly Meetings of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting who disowned Hicks became the ‘Orthodox.’ By the early 20th century, the Quaker community in Philadelphia remained split down the middle, with each sect having its own Yearly Meetings, Friend’s Schools, Colleges and charities until reunification in the middle of the 20th century.

Inspired by the evangelical fervor of the Great Awakening, many new evangelical Meetings developed west of the Appalachian Mountains in the 19th century with high concentrations in Ohio and Indiana. These meetings discontinued traditional ‘unprogramed’ silent worship, and began to employ ministers, choirs, and other customs

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14 Quaker term for a personal spiritual revelation

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characteristic of non-Quaker Protestant churches. One sect of evangelical Quakers took root in the northeast in response to the teaching of Quaker Saint Joseph John Gurney (1788-1847). 'Gurneyites' place heavy emphasis on the scriptures, and split from the Orthodox in the mid 19th century. Unlike the Hicksites, they enjoyed a closer and more amicable relationship with the Orthodox, who shared their emphasis on reading scripture. Gurney in fact helped found Haverford College and establish other Friend's Schools to provide a 'guarded religious education' to young Quakers. One Gurneyite Quaker was Rufus Jones (1863-1948), who later became a Quaker historian and theologian, with many ties to the Philadelphia Orthodox Meeting through his teaching at Haverford College. Jones became a driving force behind the most important theological movement of Quakers in the late 19th and early 20th century, known as the 'Modernizers'. The Quaker 'Modernizers' were a group of intellectual Friends from different Quaker traditions in England and North America who sought to update the theology of Quakerism in order to make it more applicable to modern society. Jones and the modernizers pushed Friends to invest in education, update theology in a way to attract new members and eventually unite the different factions, and helped the formation of the American Friends' Service Committee and other humanitarian programs in the 20th century.

In the early 20th century Philadelphia Quaker community, there was no such thing as a 'typical Quaker.' Individual Quakers, although they shared much in common, belonged to different sects of Quakerism. Furthermore, within the separate Orthodox and Hicksite Meetings, there were different subgroups defined by social class, occupation, neighborhood, extended families, and institutions such as schools and colleges. One
important subgroup essential to this thesis was a fraternity of business executives at industrial firms in Philadelphia. These wealthy men, mostly members of the Orthodox meeting, associated with each other through the Meeting and in their shared neighborhoods, golf club, resort in New Jersey, and employers association. Throughout the early 20th century, they took a leadership role in the Quaker community’s crisis of conscientious objection in World War I and business reform during the postwar period and 1920’s.

While recognizing the theological and socioeconomic differences between individuals in the Philadelphia Quaker community in the early 20th century, one must not forget that the majority of Quakers still had overwhelming similarities because of the distinctive beliefs and traditions shared by all Friends. The divisive differences of the Quaker community were primarily theological and inside the Meeting. On matters outside the Meeting, such as programs of philanthropy and social service and objection to war, the distinctions between sects was less important. Because this thesis is concerned with matters external to the Meeting—how Quakers paralleled the Social Gospel Movement during the Progressive Era and spoke out against economic inequality as a source of societal unrest and the ultimate evil of war— it will speak about the Philadelphia Quaker community as one diverse group, making distinctions between sects and subgroups only when necessary.

The characteristics of Quakerism that are most essential to the Philadelphia Quaker community in the early 20th century were opposition to war and commitment to programs of social service. Quaker theology historically required that its members bear

the burden of social service. In Quaker religious tradition, a person can become closer to God through good works and serving others. By answering the call to serve, Quakers were keenly responsive to the world around them. This thesis will explore the social mission of the Philadelphia Quaker Community and chart how it responded to several important early 20th century events: Progressivism, World War I, postwar civil unrest in Philadelphia and Europe, and reform during the 1920’s.

Several trends in early 20th century United States society emerge when examining the response of individual Friends and Quaker organizations to world events. First, Quaker began to adopt humanitarian ethics in their theology. Before World War I, Quakers performed philanthropy as a way to solidify their spiritual relationship with God. Beginning with humanitarian programs during and after World War I, Quakers began to perform service out of empathy for the pain of other humans. This demarcation can be seen in the language Quakers used to describe their programs of service. The distinction is between the otherworldly concept of religion and the new this-world concept of compassion for shared pain. The birth of humanitarian ethics in the Quaker community is indicative of a larger shift from 19th century religious philanthropy to 20th century secular humanitarian sentiment.

Second, Quakers believed that the underlying cause of the WWI was economic. Many people believed that the United States entered the war merely to protect the interests of East Coast business tycoons who profited from markets in Britain and France. Furthermore, when Quakers visited Europe and observed the massive destruction of the war, they came to equate class inequality with violence and suffering, and vowed to work against it.

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Third, Quakers demonstrated undying faith in technology to solve social and industrial problems. Quaker reformers believed the social sciences, and technological innovations to business management (more Taylorism) would solve the underlying causes of unrest in society. The Quakers believed that science could tame the threat of radical organized labor and Bolshevism to democratic society.

The records of Quaker organizations and Quaker periodicals show how Quakers interpreted local, national, and global events and provide evidence of the crucial debates of the Philadelphia Quaker Community. The weekly newspapers for the Orthodox Meeting, *The Friend*\(^\text{16}\), and the Hicksite Meeting, *Friends' Intelligencer*\(^\text{17}\), provide many details about how Quakers adopted their theological principles to address real world issues. *The Friend* and *Friends' Intelligencer* provide first hand news stories and editorials that read like sermons by offering instructions to Quakers on how to interpret world events through the lens of Quaker faith. The newspapers also published many submissions, including letters from Friend's traveling or working outside of Philadelphia, papers about religious and social topics written by Friends, and full transcripts of speeches and public events. Beginning in 1917, each weekly edition of each paper included a section devoted to the AFSC Programs.

Another source recording Quaker reform measures to business and industry in the early 20\(^{\text{th}}\) century is the archive collection of the Social Order Committee (SOC)\(^\text{18}\). The SOC formed during WWI to discuss economic reform, and its record collection includes presentations to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting and papers written by committee members.

\(\text{16} \) *The Friend*, Haverford College Special Collections (HCSC)  
\(\text{17} \) *Friends' Intelligencer*, HCSC  
\(\text{18} \) Social Order Committee records, Swarthmore College Friends Historical Library (FHL)
that advocated social reform. Another source of information on this time period is the collection of the *AFSC Bulletin*[^19]. The AFSC frequently released newsletters and appeals for donations and volunteers. The *Bulletin* shows the development of and reflections of Quaker service programs in Europe and other locations around the world. A final set of documents is in the records of the Metal Manufacturers Association of Philadelphia (MMA)[^20]. The MMA records contain importance evidence of Quaker involvement in labor issues before WWI, and efforts at reform during the 1920’s. Altogether, these primary documents paint a picture of the public discourse of the Friends community, and how they interpreted their theology into social action on local, national, and world events.

Although there is a wealth of secondary material available on this time period, there is very little that talks about the Friends and their social mission after the war on matters of business reform. *Philadelphia Quakers in the Industrial Age 1865-1920*[^21] by Phillip Benjamin gives an overview of the socioeconomic character of the Quakers in the years leading up to these events. *A Service of Love in Wartime: American Friends Relief Work in Europe, 1917-1919*[^22] written by Rufus Jones in 1920 recounts the formation of the AFSC and its programs throughout World War I. *Quakers in Action: Recent Humanitarian and Reform Activities of the American Quakers*[^23] by Lester M. Jones is a 1929 summary of Quaker programs of social action, and includes a section about Quaker

[^19]: *AFSC Bulletin*, HCSC
[^20]: Metal Manufacturers Association of Philadelphia, Temple University Urban Archives
postwar programs. The challenge of this thesis is to integrate the history of the Philadelphia Quakers into the context of social reform movements in the United States.

The extensive secondary on the Progressive Era, the Social Gospel, and the Labor Movement includes little mention of the Quakers. In Progressivism: A Very Short Introduction, Walter Nugent argues that Progressivism was a broad-based movement that favored government protection for workers from the industrial system and regulations of corporations. Progressivism was the dominant political force in national politics in the first years of the 20th century up until World War I. The Social Gospel movement was the religious component of Progressivism that argued for better opportunities for the working class.

On Labor, David Montgomery argues in The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the state, and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925 that the character of labor unions grew out of the traditional work environment of the first industrial firms. Almost no Quakers in Philadelphia shared this background, and they had no participation in the labor movement except for their roles as employers. In Bloodless Victories: The Rise and Fall of the Open Shop in the Philadelphia Metal Trades, 1890-1940, Howell John Harris argues that employers maintained the open shop through labor bureaus and cooperative organizations that coordinated their power to control the labor market and undermine organized labor. Many Quaker business executives employed this strategy in their businesses. After the experience of World War I and brush with radical politics, the Quakers were the leaders in implementing Progressive employer-led reform into businesses to prevent industrial unrest.

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In Struggles For Justice: Social Responsibility and the Liberal State, Alan Dawley looks at social movements before, during, and after World War I.25 His book explains the relationships between the many competing movements and how they interfaced with national politics and the economy. Given the size of the Quaker community, it is understandable that the authoritative narrative on social reform in this period gives little mention of the Quakers. The writing that does exist about Quakers in business and social movements does not answer the question of how Quaker theology informs the outward programs of the meeting. That is the purpose of this thesis, to connect Quaker theology, the character of the Friends community to the social mission of the Friends meeting and the larger sociopolitical context.

Section 1: The Philadelphia Quaker Community and the Tradition of Philanthropy, 1907-1917

Between 1681 and the early 20th century, the city of Philadelphia transformed from a utopian religious community into one of the world's largest industrial centers. Although many Quakers branched out across the United States, a small piece of the Quaker community always remained intact in Philadelphia. By 1916, 10,793 people were members of Hicksite Meetings and 4,457 people were members of Orthodox Meetings in the Philadelphia region. Of these approximately 15,000 Quakers, 3,425 were members of meetings in the Philadelphia Quarter, meaning that they most likely lived in the city of Philadelphia.26 These figures are likely slightly lower than the actual number of Quakers

26 Benjamin, Phillip. Philadelphia Quakers... 1976, 217
living in the Philadelphia region, because of the strict criteria Quakers required for people to become official members of Monthly Meetings. At the beginning of the 20th century, Philadelphia Quaker community was in a period of decline. The Philadelphia Quarter of the Orthodox Meeting lost 9.7% of its members between the years 1899 and 1916. The Hicksite Meeting in Philadelphia suffered even worse, losing 23% of Philadelphia members during the same period.27

As Quakers became inclined to move away from the city of Philadelphia or even drift away from Quakerism, the Philadelphia Meetings debated how to maintain the traditional high standards of the Society of Friends. Inside the Meeting House, in private conversations, and in the Quaker publications that circulated amongst the members of the Meeting, weighty Friends questioned how to preserve expectations for Friends in their religious, personal, and professional affairs. A 1907 editorial in the *Friends’ Intelligencer* argued:

> We cannot maintain to any very good purpose the standard of our meeting or our principles, if simply a few and a decreasing number live according to certain laws and regulations and prejudices, while our children and less weighty members of society ignore the standard, yet profess to honor it, and feel a pride in being numbered as members of a society that has such high and noble standards and such noble record in straight living in the past.28

This editorial expresses the sentiment that many members benefited from that hard work and religious devotion of past generations of Friends, but themselves did not meet these high standards. The concern with high standards among Quakers also touched on broader insecurities that defined the Quaker community at the turn of the century. As the number of Quakers declined, Friends feared that they were becoming less relevant:

27 Benjamin, Phillip. *Philadelphia Quakers*... 1976, 217
28 *Friends’ Intelligencer* 3/16/1907 “Keeping up a high standard”
That era in the Society is past, when we can complacently see ourselves grow fewer and fewer in numbers, while our neighbors and fellow workers in many common interests quietly pass us by, giving us honor for our high principles but failing absolutely to see that our principles and our maintenance of them have anything to do with the actual present day world and its problems and perplexities.\(^{29}\)

Some contemporary Quakers lamented for the conditions of the past when Quakers rendered much control over the social character of the city of Philadelphia. When William Penn drew up the plans for the city in the 1670’s, he imagined a utopia based on Quaker principles. For much of the 18\(^{th}\) century even though the Quakers were no longer the majority population, the city and surrounding tracts retained this Quaker character. Now in 1907, Friends feared this character was lost, and the city was quickly becoming an amalgamation of religion and culture.

Behind the declining fortunes and presence of Quakers in the city’s public life was the legacy of the 18\(^{th}\) century quietist tradition in the Society of Friends. Many new sects of Quakerism, such as the evangelical Meetings in the midwestern United States, had updated their theology and reached out to evangelize new members. The Philadelphia Quaker Community however, still maintained focus on the purity of the interior Friends community and did not seek new members. In the early 20\(^{th}\) century, other Christian Congregations in Philadelphia experienced large growth by converting new members through evangelical gospel missions in urban working class neighborhoods. Although Philadelphia Quakers actively served in the same neighborhoods with their own programs of philanthropy, they never tried to convert new members. By the early 20\(^{th}\) century, Philadelphia Quakers began feel the quietist tradition was stifling the growth of the Meeting and making Quakers less relevant in the city:

\(^{29}\) Friends’ Intelligencer 3/16/1907 “Keeping a high standard”
It is a great thing for any neighborhood to have a background of steadfast, consistent people who can never be swerved from what they think is right by any inducement or allurement that the world about them can offer. But if this background consists of a community or monks or of communists, or other utopians, who avowedly turn away from the life of the neighborhood and keep aloof from its activities and interests, it is of very little value to the neighborhood, whatever it may have personally for the inmates.\(^{30}\)

Not all members of the Quaker community turned away from the neighborhood. The insecurities of decline represent only a part of the character of the Quaker community in the early 20\(^{th}\) century. Part of the Friends duty to make themselves pure and become closer to God was to carry out good works throughout their lives. Meetings in Philadelphia thus had extensive social missions in which they supported many philanthropic institutions in Philadelphia and other parts of the United States.

The roots of Quaker philanthropy lay deep in Quaker history. Thomas Chalkley (1675-1741), an early Quaker Saint born in England, travelled as a preacher throughout the North America colonies. When he saw Quakers involved in the slave trade and shipbuilding he became concerned that wealth was corrupting Friends. He thought that Quakers who acquired wealth would be tempted to leave the Society of Friends, or resort to violent means to protect their wealth.\(^{31}\) Chalkley's contemporary, and fellow Quaker Saint, Samuel Fothergill, shared his concern for excess wealth and indoctrinated it into Quaker theology. Fothergill asserted that Quakers who acquired excess fortunes should either stop making money, or give their money to the poor. In an era when many types of Protestant communities were beginning to support charities, Fothergill canonized the particular character of Quaker philanthropy.\(^{32}\) Fothergill's tradition that lasted well into

\(^{30}\) *Friends' Intelligencer* 3/16/1907 "Keeping a high standard"

\(^{31}\) Lapsansky-Werner, 2010

\(^{32}\) Lapsansky-Werner, 2010
the early 20th century dictated that Quakers should not have money at the end of their lives. In practice at the turn of the 20th century, 80% of Orthodox and 88% of Hicksites bequeathed their wills to individuals, while 15.5% of Friends bequeathed their wills to charity. Nevertheless, many Friends took this principle seriously. Quakers philanthropic tradition also dictated that Friends give their money to charitable institutions, not individuals. In 1907, Philadelphia Quakers supported a long list of organizations, many advertised through Meetings and Quaker periodicals, to fulfill their philanthropic mission.

The theological basis for philanthropic activity is prevalent in early 20th century Quaker writing. A 1910 editorial in The Friend entitled ‘The Poor Penny and Rich Pound’ argued that charity was a form of personal sacrifice performed out of love. The editorial argued, “Verily there are rewards for the righteous in heaven which can never be purchased for us by our money or good works, but only through the sacrifice of the lover of our souls; yet within that purchased kingdom there are rewards according to our deeds have been.” The concept of being righteous through charitable deeds was an important duty for Friends trying to lead a pious life and be rewarded with salvation. Friends wanted to lift the fortunes and spirits of less fortunate people. They measured their contributions by the gratitude they brought to the people they served, who in turn reflected that gratitude back on them:

We are exhorted by the King Of Life so to use our mammon as to make friends unto ourselves by the accumulation of gratitude which our sympathy will store up, that when we fail, as our mortal bodies must, the grateful company of those who, in Christ’s spirit, have been relieved by us

33 Benjamin, Phillip. Philadelphia Quakers... 1976. 234
34 The Friend 2/17/1910 “The Poor Penny and Rich Pound"
on this footstool may receive and welcome us ‘into everlasting habitats.’ (Luke xvi: 9.)

Friends rejected the notion of original sin, and generally did not focus on the trappings of the afterlife, however Friend’s charity was seen as a necessary religious duty. Charitable work was essential for the Quaker who wanted to maximize his or her spiritual life, be as close to God as possible, and pursue perfection. The editorial argued, “We spiritually need the poor as much as they need us carnally.”

The editorial argued, “We spiritually need the poor as much as they need us carnally.”

The social mission of Quaker Meetings in Philadelphia reacted strongly to local and national events. During the 18th and 19th centuries, Quaker social activists performed extensive charity programs helping the disenfranchised populations of Native Americans and African Americans in the United States. At the turn of the 20th century, Philadelphia Quakers had recently performed extensive programs to ‘civilize’ Native Americans in the frontier and educate African Americans in the south during Reconstruction. Now, the disenfranchised population that Quakers felt called to serve was living amidst them in the working class neighborhoods of Philadelphia. A 1907 editorial in the Friends’ Intelligencer argued:

Our nearest duty is to open our eyes to the often painful truths that surround us to detect a field of work suited to our powers, and to discharge at least a portion of our duty to our neighbors by active and working interest in some phase of philanthropy which seeks to better the conditions of life that surrounds many of God’s children.

Quakers were witnessing the growth of working class poverty in Philadelphia as a consequence of rapid industrialization and urbanization over the previous decades. They

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35 The Friend 2/17/1910 “The Poor Penny and Rich Pound”
36 A term used when characterizing the goal of Quaker spiritual practice
37 The Friend 2/17/1910 “The Poor Penny and Rich Pound”
38 Friends’ Intelligencer 11/9/1907 “Duty to Our Neighbors”

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saw a large class of wage laborers who could not make enough money to properly support themselves. What most concerned many Quakers was that these people living in poverty were becoming spiritually devoid:

Before we shall witness a great increase in the goodness of men or develop in them a higher degree of spirituality, we must see to it that the annual income of thousands of wage earners is increased, so as to make it possible for them to maintain a decent standard of living.\(^{39}\)

Many Christian Congregations in Philadelphia and cities throughout the United States bore witness to the same consequences of industrialization and urbanization at the turn of the 20\(^{th}\) century. In response, Christian Churches advocated for temperance, turned to Christian Socialism, built urban gospel missions to 'save' working class immigrants, and developed the Social Gospel movement.\(^{40}\) The Quakers established many social programs and platforms of the Social Gospel. They set up many charitable institutions and settlement houses in working class neighborhoods, advocated for improved access to health, recreation, and social security for the poor, and campaigned for laws to limit corporations and protect workers. Quakers did not see themselves as part of a nationwide Christian movement for reform, they simply saw themselves as religiously pious individuals becoming closer to God by trying to alleviate suffering and increase opportunities for disenfranchised classes:

Our neighbors need us to see that law is not outraged to make our compulsory education laws correct effectively with child labor laws, to restrain the exploitation of labor because the laborer is ignorant, to see that adequate school accommodations are provided, to protect the equal rights of races, to abolish subtle temptations of sin which line our streets and corrupt our recreation parks.\(^{41}\)

\(^{39}\) *Friends' Intelligencer* 11/9/1907 "Duty to Our Neighbors"

\(^{40}\) The distinctions between these Christian responses to capitalism are detailed in the introduction, page 6

\(^{41}\) *Friends' Intelligencer* 11/9/1907 "Duty to Our Neighbors"
Quaker Progressives adopted the Social Gospel platform that government should restore order to rampant social problems. They argued that new laws must be enacted, and existing laws needed to be more strongly enforced to protect the working classes from exploitation that barred them from certain opportunities in life. In the early 20th century the Quakers in Philadelphia, Hicksite and Orthodox, supported many charitable institutions intended to uplift the spirits of destitute or otherwise deficient populations. Many of the charities Friends supported and managed were founded by previous generations of Quakers. They served the needs of African Americans, Indians, women, children, immigrants and the unemployed.

In support of impoverished African Americans in Philadelphia Quakers founded The Association for the Care of Colored Orphans in 1822 and The Home for the Moral Reform of Destitute Colored Children in 1854. Both provided shelter and education for African American children in a nurturing home-environment.

To support freed slaves after the civil war, in 1863 Philadelphia Quakers founded the Friends Freedmen's Association of Philadelphia. It provided relief and education for freed slaves in the city and turned into a scholarship fund for African American students in the middle of the 20th century. In 1868, a Pennsylvania Quaker named Martha Schofield founded the Schofield Normal and Industrial School with the intention to provide free education for freed slaves. The school evolved into a boarding school for training young African Americans in industrial trades or to become teachers. A 1907

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42 Finding Aids For Organizations Records of Friends Historical Library: http://www.swarthmore.edu/x6672.xml (FHL)
43 Finding Aids...FHL

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article in *The Friend* detailed the rationale behind charitable programs aiding African Americans. It aimed to raise their morality:

The Negro’s opportunity to earn money and his superior average intelligence in Gloucester county, Virginia, have led to the building of good houses... These good houses have had apparently a marked influence upon the morals of the colored people. For instance, twenty-five years ago, when three-fourths of the people lived in cabins, bastardy was common. A half dozen cases among the colored people, and two, by the way, among the whites, in 1903, was regarded as an alarmingly high rate. In 1904, there was but one case among the Negros within a radius of ten miles from the courthouse. There was also but very little miscegenation.\(^{44}\)

To support all orphaned children regardless of race, Quakers founded in 1881 the Friends’ Home for Children. In response to the poor conditions of state run group homes and orphanages, the Friends’ Home for Children provided a homelike residential facility for children.\(^{45}\) Another Quaker charity, the Annual Association for the Relief of Sick Children in the Summer founded in 1818, maintained a camp outside of Philadelphia that allowed impoverished sick children and their mothers relief from the crowding and oppressive heat of Philadelphia in the summer.\(^{46}\)

Philadelphia Quakers also set up free schools to serve poor, immigrant, and African American children. The Benezet House Association was a consortium of three schools, the oldest of which was started by the Quaker Saint Anthony Benezet in 1795, to provide religious education to African American children in Philadelphia.\(^{47}\) The Richard Humphries Foundation was founded on bequest to fund schools for African Americans in

\(^{44}\) *Friends’ Intelligencer* 7/20/1907 “Effect of Good Housing on Morals”


\(^{46}\) Finding Aids...FHL

\(^{47}\) Finding Aids...FHL
Philadelphia in the middle of the 19th century. This foundation helped to later set up Cheyney University, which housed many of these charities begun during the 19th century in Philadelphia at a sheltered site outside the city throughout the 20th century. It should be noted, that these schools set up by the Quakers were distinct from their own Friend's Schools, which were established to provide guarded education to Quaker youth.

Many early 20th century Quaker charities resembled the settlement houses of the Progressive Era. Typical Christian settlement houses were located in urban working class and immigrant neighborhoods. They provided services to improve the living conditions of the working class living in urban poverty. Many provided education in crafts and trades, basic health and childcare, and food and clothing services in emergencies. They also supported community and labor organizations by publicizing information about on housing and labor conditions, advocating for Progressive legislation, and campaigning for political candidates.

Quakers supported several settlement houses. They founded The Central Soup Society of Philadelphia in 1861 and the Female Association of Philadelphia for the Relief of the Sick and the Infirm of the Poor with Clothing in 1828. The Friends Neighborhood Guild established in 1879 offered multiple services as a welfare agency in North Philadelphia. The 1901 annual report lists a wide range of roles played by the Quaker charity. It held kindergarten classes, manual and ethical training, a banking service for

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48 The Quakers also had other institutions in Philadelphia devoted to mental health and prison reform, but these are not examined in this survey of early 20th century philanthropy because they were not concerned with economics and the consequences of capitalism.

49 Nugent, Walter. Progressivism... 2010 61
low-income individuals, a sewing school, and bathing facilities.\textsuperscript{50} It also offered programs in the evening for boys and girls ages 8 to 18 in order to, "Keep the children off the streets and give them happy evenings amid warmth, light, and refining influences."\textsuperscript{51}

The Quakers also maintained several employment societies to provide work and wages for unemployed men and women. The Germantown Employment Society for Women was founded in 1879 as a 'two-fold' charity.\textsuperscript{52} Using donated garments, the association brought together unemployed female workers to sew the garments into clothing and blankets, which were then donated to missions, hospitals, and orphanages throughout the city. A 1906 report outlined the function of the organization, "Each woman is given a moderate amount of work every week for which she receives seventy-five cents. This is not a large sum truly, but as it goes mostly to women with little children who cannot go out to work, they all seem to appreciate it highly, and are very eager to apply for the sewing in the early winter."\textsuperscript{53} All 36 of the managers of the Germantown Employment Society in 1906 were women. Women operated most Quaker charities. According to statistics regarding the gender distribution of Weighty, Practicing, and Nominal Friends\textsuperscript{54}, females were more active in the meeting. 53.7\% of females were weighty or practicing Quakers, while only 39.2\% of men were weighty or practicing.\textsuperscript{55} Benjamin determined that 60.8\% of male Quakers were considered Nominal Friends, meaning they were not very active in the Meeting. This gendered divide in Meeting

\textsuperscript{50} Invisible Philadelphia...1995
\textsuperscript{51} Invisible Philadelphia...1995
\textsuperscript{52} Records of Germantown Employment Society for Women, HCSC
\textsuperscript{53} Records of Germantown Employment Society for Women, HCSC
\textsuperscript{54} Weighty Friends were leaders in religious and social affairs of the Meeting, Practicing Friends attended Meeting and took part in social programs, Nominal Friends were members but did not attend Meeting regularly.
\textsuperscript{55} Phillip Benjamin. Philadelphia Quakers...1976 225

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activity was very apparent in the strong representation of females on the boards of charities.

Support for Social Gospel platforms of government-led reforms regarding labor laws and other protections for the working class was of the preeminent issues inside the Quaker community in the early 20th century. Meetings often held forums and discussions, or exchanged reading lists about the problem of working class poverty. On one such occasion a social scientist from the University of Pennsylvania delivered a lecture on child labor law in Newtown, “He stirred a good-sized audience by telling of conditions under which young children are degraded by long hours of monotonous, deadening toil.”56 Many Quakers saw themselves as spiritually obligated by Quaker principles to help out the working classes living in poverty in Philadelphia, and campaign for government reforms to limit self-interested capitalists and protect workers. Soon, the theology behind the social mission of Meetings in Philadelphia would undergo drastic changes. Philanthropy and reform to society would not longer be personal religious duties. After the jolting experience of World War I, they would become essential practices by which Friends could prevent the outbreak of war, and serve the growing 20th phenomenon of secular humanitarianism justified not by religion but by the ethics of human compassion.

56 The Friend 3/9/1907 “Conference on the topic of child labor”
Section 2: Philadelphia Quakers and Business

Many of the most radical and reactionary programs of the social mission of Meetings in Philadelphia after WWI addressed issues of business and industry. In order to understand why these postwar programs were such large leaps for the Quaker community, this section will look at Quaker individuals and institutions involved in business in the early 20th century before WWI.

According to occupational data of the Philadelphia Quaker community taken at the turn of the 20th century, 20.2% of Quakers achieved the status of business executive.57 The proportion of business executives is equal to that of any other occupational group in the Quaker community. 16.1% entered the major professions, 16.4% entered the lesser professions, 21.4% entered small business/skill professions, 20.6% entered white collar/sales professions, and 4.2% engaged in blue-collar work.58 The proportion of Quaker business executives and blue-collar workers demonstrates an important fact about the socioeconomic character of the Quaker community. The Quakers had much more than their fair share of business executives at 20.2% and far below their fair share of blue-collar workers at 4.2% than the general population. The Quaker Meetings were to a degree an institution of Philadelphia's aristocratic elite.59 Of the high proportion of business executives in the Quaker community, 67.9% were born in the area of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 74.8% were born in the city of Philadelphia, and 92.7%

57 Benjamin, Phillip. Philadelphia Quakers...1976 224
58 Benjamin, Phillip. Philadelphia Quakers...1976 224
59 Harris, Howell John. Bloodless Victories...2000 284
were birthright Friends. The Quakers who reached the status of business executive overwhelmingly hailed from Quaker families residing in Philadelphia.

Despite the strong tradition of business executives in the Philadelphia Quaker Meetings, they did not dominate the affairs of the Meeting. The guides to Quaker social conduct, meeting minutes, and articles and editorials in Quaker publications at the time show that Quakers took keen interest in political and social affairs of the public sphere, but often disagreed among themselves to the point that it was impossible for them to develop a unified Quaker voice. A 1907 editorial in The Friend argued that:

> The membership of a large meeting includes those whose political interests are different, and those who cannot unite on the same course of political action or in support of the same political party. If questions involving these differences are brought up with a view to taking some official action with reference to them, there will be, instead of helpful interchange of view, what is bound more or less to approach controversy, and antagonism. Any official action taken or pronouncement made is bound to represent only a portion of the members. The rest have been put in the position of favoring what in their heart they do not favor.

Internal division and disagreement, and a general lack of unity in producing an outward message on political and social problems composed part of the character of the Quaker community. Philadelphia Quakers believed that in the past their Meetings produced more unified outward messages, "There may have been a time when the Friends were a more homogenous body and could take part as a unit in political matters." The Friends community in 1907 however was made up of people of different subgroups within the Meeting determined by neighborhood, occupation, extended family, and schools. Although most Quakers shared basic religious and beliefs, they often disagreed to the point that some said, "Our Friends' Meetings are not the place in which to lay

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60 Benjamin, Phillip. Philadelphia Quakers...1976 226
61 The Friend 5/11/1907 "Government Petitions and Protest"
down specific rules and regulations for the conduct of the business enterprises in which individual Friends may engage, nor is a Friends' meeting a suitable place to take up the work of a political party, or a political caucus.”

Early 20th century Meetings did not control the types of business enterprises individual members could engage in or take sides on political issues. When studying the ways in which Friends applied their religious ideas to the political and social problems of the outside world in the early 20th century before WWI, there is no history of official positions by which to chart the course of the Quaker community. One must look to the social traditions of the Meeting. First, Friends expected each other to perform their occupations up to the highest moral standards. Second, young members experienced social pressure to enter the ‘Quakerly professions.’ Third, Quakers felt strongly that the working classes deserved protections to afford them greater opportunities to attain, “a larger share of the good things in life.” The early 20th century Quakers were neither ruthless capitalists nor Socialist radicals, they were most concerned with efficiency, tradition, and their own morality.

The actions of individual Quakers also sheds light on how Quakers engaged in the early 20th century before WWI. Morris E. Leeds, a business executive and social activist, was a visionary leader for the Quaker community in their involvement in the Social Gospel Movement, peace movements, and most importantly in the question of how Quakers should deal with business with regards to their professions, charity work, and as consumers and voters. Leeds was an Orthodox Quaker, alumnus of Haverford College, and he owned and managed a metal manufacturing firm employing 300 workers that

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produced scientific instruments. Leeds wrote and lectured extensively about Quakers in business. His address, *Attitude of Friends Towards Industrial Conditions* delivered in 1909, argued:

The Society of Friends has always considered it a matter of great importance to see that its members dealt justly in economic and social matters in all the relations of life, as is clearly shown in the queries which caution against some of the subtler forms of injustice, such as living beyond the limits of ones’ income, dealing in smuggled goods or goods captured in warfare, and by its action in disciplining members who do injustice through mismanagement of their business affairs, resulting in failure.64

Leeds acknowledged the ways in which Quakers addressed business in the past through their social principles and charity. Leeds argued that now, "What is wanted is not charity but that the opportunity be afforded to everyone. Much of the distress which it is the object of the charitable organizations to alleviate, is due to a lack of opportunity, and that a smaller proportion than is generally supposed, is the result of idleness and vice."65

To afford greater opportunities to the working class, Leeds recommended that Friends as support good labor practices by purchasing goods from companies that treated workers well. Leeds also advised Friends to look more positively upon labor organizations because although they were sometimes violent and radical, they helped improve conditions for the working classes.

Leeds also expressed an optimistic faith in technology. Leeds hailed the potential of what he termed ‘commercial experiments.’ He argued, “Many of these experiments have been undertaken by men who are notable exceptions to the general rule that successful businessmen do not take interest in broad economic problems, by men who

64 Leeds, Morris. *Attitude of Friends*... (1909)
65 Leeds, Morris. *Attitude of Friends*... (1909)

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have not only thought out new methods but have put them in practice." Leeds believed social science researchers would help to better organize industry resulting in improved conditions for workers and greater efficiency. He also believed technology could help more equally distribute the benefits of business to all those who were engaged in it. Leeds believed these experiments were, "Preemptive medicine for the ills of the social and where they succeed their method should become known and copied as widely as possible." In line with the divided character of the Quaker Community, most Quakers disagreed with Leeds and saw labor unions and strikes as frightening events that threatened the peace of society. A 1910 article of the *Friend's Intelligencer* regarding a disruptive strike in Philadelphia read:

> We commemorate the spirit of forbearance, patience and law-abiding character of the great masses of our population which have been conspicuous during the past few weeks of strain and anxiety. Is it not a legitimate fruit of religion wherever professed to keep the mind tranquil and to restrain the easily excited passions of men and thus to cooperate with and promote the efforts of those who are especially responsible for maintaining order in that community?\(^6\)

To the middle and upper classes, organized labor still posed a threat to the fabric of society. However the sentiment of the Christian Social Gospel movement had created a sympathetic alliance between middle class Christian reformers like Leeds and working class labor leaders. This alliance would ultimately not last as the Progressive Era and Social Gospel movement came to a halt when the United States entered WWI in 1917.

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\(^6\) Leeds, Morris. *Attitude of Friends...* (1909)

\(^6\) Leeds, Morris. *Attitude of Friends...*(1909)

\(^6\) *Friends' Intelligencer* 3/31/1910 "In commenting upon the strike which has existed in this city"
In the early 20th century before WWI, the Quaker approach to business was informed both by religious traditions of the Society of Friends and Quaker’s involvement in the Social Gospel movement to alleviate poverty. By setting up charities to assist the poor and arguing for platform for reform, Quakers were nobly fulfilling their religious duty. In reaction to the events of WWI, which brought many challenges to the Friends community, Philadelphia Quakers took a much greater interest in business and industry. They would keep some of these pre-war platforms, such as Leeds faith in technology, but on other topics such as labor relations, business management, and capitalism, they would develop much more radical views.

Section 3: The Quakers in World War I: Conscientious Objection and Humanitarian Service, 1917-1919

On April 30, 1917 representatives of the three major branches of the Society of Friends met in Philadelphia to discuss pressing business. Inside the Young Friends Building, a dozen men from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting (Orthodox), Friends General Conference (Hicksite), and Five Years Meeting (Orthodox) discussed the news that United States was going to join the war in Europe.69 Less than a month before, on April 6, the United States Congress passed a Declaration of War on Germany. The Quakers from all branches of the Society of Friends had a well-documented history of pacifism. Throughout the 250-year history of the Society of Friends, its members refused to serve in the military. Of all the challenges Quakers faced in defending themselves and their faith from external persecution and the state, the question of conscientious objection

posed the most severe challenges. As the war began and the War Department prepared to call the nation's young men for conscription, the Society of Friends was in a flurry trying to protect their members from the consequences of refusing to serve the military.

The War and conscientious objection dominated the affairs of the Meeting because it had the potential to forever change the lives of so many young members. The Friend's Meetings remembered the harsh consequences for their members from previous wars. Quakers swapped stories in meeting and discussion groups about the harrowing tales of the past. One of many stories published in *The Friend* in 1917 recounted the tale of two young conscientious objectors in the civil war. The tale narrated:

Their life in the dirty third-story room, in company with rough or drunken substitutes or perhaps 'bounty jumpers,' fiddling or fighting as the case might be, who appropriated their possessions and little understood the fine points of morals for which the Quakers stood. These outlines fail to tell us of the refusal to form in line when they and their companions were summoned to do so twice a day. They fail to tell us of the angry officers who were about to tie them up by their thumbs, their toes just touching the floor, when a new lot of substitutes unexpectedly arriving it was thought best to get the refractory Quakers out of sight. They fail to tell us of the persistent efforts of their friends to ease their situations, and to help them from being sent to camp near the Potomac, or further south.\(^{70}\)

These two young Quakers eventually received their release from the military without having to serve in combat. But the account demonstrated to many Friends the potential for intense hardship and public ridicule in the upcoming months as they tried to earn exemption from military service as conscientious objectors.

Representatives from different Meetings around the United States and their attorneys tirelessly negotiated with the War Department to secure conscientious objector

\(^{70}\) *The Friend* 12/20/1917 "Pacifism During the Civil War" p 318
status for their young members. The anxious feelings from Quaker families regarding
their draft age men could be felt through the weekly periodicals updating the society:

This statement is issued in response to the urgent requests from all
sections for information and advice. We realize that no statement can fully
reach the deep waters through which you and the whole Society are
passing. By following our vision of truth as God reveals it to us, we may
render full loyalty to the Kingdom of God, by which course alone can we
by truly loyal to country and to every other lesser allegiance.\footnote{Friends Intelligencer 9/1/17 pg 552 “Advice to Friends Drafted”}

The leadership of the Quaker Meetings in the United States had to do everything
in its power to articulate its objection to not only fighting, but to any involvement in
military apparatus. The Quakers described their position to the War Department that any
participation in the military violated their nonviolent beliefs:

It is an objection to the whole military system as embodying a spirit which
we feel is a denial of the way of life as presented by Jesus Christ. From
our point of view there can be no division of ‘military service’ into
‘combatant’ and ‘non-combatant,’ but it is all combatant. The only non-
combatant service which seems consistent with the principles of Friends is
a service that is not a corporate part of the military organization.\footnote{Friends Intelligencer 9/1/17 pg 552 “Advice to Friends Drafted”}

With the backdrop of the Quaker community feverishly preparing young Quaker
men to become conscientious objectors to the war, a dozen Friends gathered in
Philadelphia on April 30, 1917 to chart a novel response to the looming crisis. They soon
named themselves the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). One founder of the
AFSC, scholar, activist and theologian Rufus Jones recounted, “It was the unanimous
sense of the group that the Friends could not accept exemption from military service and
at the same time do nothing to express their positive faith and devotion in the great
human crisis.”\footnote{Jones, Rufus. A Service... 1920, 8}

This group did not feel comfortable merely abstaining from the conflict.
As citizens who enjoyed the protections and liberties of the Constitution, they felt a responsibility to serve the state. They also felt a humanitarian call to serve. The social mission of the Quaker community throughout was history responsive to the world around it. In the same way that previous generations of Friends felt called to serve African American, Native Americans, and the working class, this generation could not ignore the needs and suffering of millions of civilians in Europe. Jones recounted, “It was not possible for one who had a real, living, throbbing soul within him to run away into some bomb-proof shelter built by faith and to wait in security for the storm to roll by.” The Quakers wanted to find an alternative way to both demonstrate their patriotic allegiance to the United States and to maintain their bedrock religious principle of nonviolence. They also wanted to avoid being labeled traitors like Quakers in former generations. The plan to put conscientious objectors to work serving the needs of humanity in Europe took shape. Jones recounted that the Quakers, “Wanted to show our faith in action and show it in a way that would both bring healing to the awful wounds of war and at the same time take us out of self and selfish aims and carry us into the furnace where others were suffering.”

Before the AFSC took shape in the first months after the declaration of War on Germany, the Philadelphia Quakers had to work out diplomatic details with the War Department, President Wilson, the Red Cross, and peace churches. The AFSC turned to high-ranking Quakers in politics and industry who had the requisite access to political power and wealth to set up their programs. To communicate with the President, the AFSC relied on Quaker members of Congress. Because President Wilson had needed the

74 Jones, Rufus. A Service... 1920 xiv
75 Jones, Rufus. A Service... 1920, xiv
support of groups like the Quakers for his reelection in 1916 in which he had to court Progressive,\textsuperscript{76} anti-war, and pro-labor voters to win the majority, he was already favorable to their position, and granted them a dialogue to plan their programs of alternative service.

The AFSC also had to raise $150,000 by the summer of 1917 to finance their plans.\textsuperscript{77} The AFSC initiated a donation drive through its newsletter, the \textit{AFSC Bulletin}, which updated interested citizens on the AFSC's work and asked for financial contribution, coordinated collecting clothing donations, and recruited volunteers. In Philadelphia, the AFSC also published regular sections in the Quaker periodicals \textit{The Friend} and \textit{Friends' Intelligencer}.

Members of the small but influential subgroup of business executives in the Philadelphia Quaker community provided crucial leadership of the AFSC and handled the committee's finances. Executive and activist Morris E. Leeds, bankers Alfred and Henry Scattergood, and managers Charles Evans and Robert Yarnall, also contributed their expertise and money towards creating the AFSC. These men sacrificed large amounts of time from their own firms, which worked in industries that were booming from the war economy. Their devotion to the AFSC caused them abandon large quantities of potential profits. Their decisions to leave their business for long periods of time fit with the attitude fostered in the Meeting community that the Quakers were bearing a great humanitarian burden:

\textsuperscript{76} Wilson was himself a Progressive

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Those who love Christ, the Savior, and God, the pitying Father of all, frequently bear spiritual or material burdens to the very limit of human endurance. If we play the man’s or woman’s part we cannot escape them. But why should we desire to cast them aside? Did not our Lord bear the heavy cross of wood to Calvary and almost sink beneath it? Did not his spiritual agony prove the most terrible of all?\textsuperscript{78}

In the summer of 1917, Morris E. Leeds and J. Henry Scattergood joined the initial voyage of Red Cross executives from the United States to France to see what relief was needed.\textsuperscript{79} After the trip through France, the Red Cross and the AFSC decided the American Quakers should combine their new programs with the established programs of the British Quakers. The British Quakers began war relief programs in 1914, and by 1917 they had an extensive network at home and in France. They ran ambulance service in France in which they fed, clothed, and housed war victims and refugees. In England, they assisted aliens and their families. They also offered legal representation and moral support to Christians imprisoned in Britain for refusing to serve in the military as conscientious objectors. The success and sophistication of the British Quakers programs convinced the Red Cross that the AFSC would also be successful.

After earning the hard fought approval of the United States government, the International Red Cross, and the War Department, the first wave of AFSC volunteers gathered in the summer of 1917 to train and prepare for the rigors of relief and reconstruction work in Europe. The first group was composed Quakers, Mennonites and the Brethren from around the United States who had been granted conscientious objector status from the War Department. The volunteers were on average much better educated

\textsuperscript{78} The Friend "Burden-Bearers" 9/13/1917 p 133
\textsuperscript{79} Frost 1992, 10

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than the national average, with many holding college degrees.\textsuperscript{80} The group developed its own spirit, filled with optimism and excitement. They sometimes sang together as they worked, and had a character more like sailors than saints.

[sung to the tune of ‘I’ve Been Working on the Railroad’]

“We will soon be reconstructing
eighteen hours a day;
We will soon be reconstructing,
And we won’t get any pay.
We will live on grass and dog-meat,
Sleep upon the ground,
Have to march along in bare feet
When we are homeward bound

We will soon be reconstructing
Somewhere in France
We will soon be reconstructing
In these khaki pants
We will build a lot of houses.
Roads and Paris flats
Find our lonely wives their spouses;
To all take off our hats.”\textsuperscript{81}

For the 100 initial volunteers, and other AFSC members who travelled across the Atlantic during and after the war, the first time setting foot in Europe was a jolting experience. The physical destruction, atmosphere of panic, and looming danger of the front was very different from anything most had ever seen. The young volunteers recalled falling asleep at night in the blacked out city as they listened to the distant rumblings of exploding bombs and gunshots.\textsuperscript{82} In the initial years of service during the war, AFSC volunteers worked building and assembling temporary houses, running several hospitals and orphanages, and providing shelter for refugees. They also had projects in agriculture to grow food for hungry populations and restore farms and transportation networks.

\textsuperscript{80} Frost 1992, 10
\textsuperscript{81} American Friends Reconstruction Unit \textit{Friends’ Intelligencer} 8/11/1917 p 508
\textsuperscript{82} Frost 1992 20
The Quaker periodicals ran weekly letters sent from AFSC leaders or volunteers in France that reflected the realities of the War back to the Quaker community in Philadelphia. The letters included vivid descriptions of destruction, suffering, and widespread need. One excerpt from an AFSC volunteer printed on *The Friend* read, "We have not made much impression yet on the work to be done, but I think that our presence here has cheered up the people considerably. They are already speaking to us more pleasantly, and must be beginning to appreciate that we shall be able to make them more comfortable. I wish there were some way to supply their needs." The letters showed a striking regard for the individuals on a personal level. The experience of living and working in the devastated war zones in France, with very poor housing and food was a transformative experience for many volunteers. The volunteers themselves had to struggle to pass through the months of rigorous labor working on farms, building shelters, preparing food for the hungry, and tending to the sick in hospitals all while receiving little food and poor shelter themselves. One letter from an AFSC volunteer published in *The Friend* read:

The Germans have certainly made a thorough job of smashing things up. They hacked off the wheels of the carts; filled wells with manure and filth; destroyed stoves and house furnaces and left the houses hardly habitable. I am beginning to appreciate what it means to have a roof over me sleeping through several rains with the water trickling down the walls and from two or three spots in the ceiling so the beds had to be placed scientifically to avoid the deluge. We shall be lucky if we get through the winter with some of the paper still on.  

The letters home from AFSC volunteers in Europe and editorials in Philadelphia Quaker periodicals began to include the language of a new ethic behind the Friend's war  

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83 Letters From France *The Friend* 12/13/1917 p 307  
84 Letters From France *The Friend* 12/13/1917 p 307  

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relief service. In the past, Quaker Philanthropy focused on fulfilling the needs of others such as the working class and African American as a way for Friends to serve and become closer to God. Philanthropy was a central part of 19th century Christian theology by which people could assure themselves salvation.

Now, AFSC volunteers rarely wrote about their own spiritual fulfillment in the work they were performing. What motivated them was compassion for the people they were serving. They saw the pain of war refugees, and experienced some of that pain themselves as they fearfully lived mere miles from the war front in makeshift housing with little food. They increasingly performing service not only to fulfill their Quaker commitment to nonviolence, but also out of a secular humanitarian ethic to empathize with and eliminate the pain of others. A poem published in The Friend in 1917 showed the mixed religious and humanitarian ethic:

O heart, that beats with every human heart,
O heart, that weeps with every human tear,
O heart that, that sings with every human song,
Fill our slow hearts with flood-tides of Thy love:
That they may beat with every human heart,
That they may weep with every human tear,
That they may sing with every human song,
And thus Thee, unite with all mankind.
-Maurice Rowntree, Prisoner for Conscience's Sake, 1917.

The language of this poem demonstrates the empathy for the pain of others that began to justify Quaker service instead of personal religious salvation. The distinction is between the otherworldly concept of religion and the new this world concept of compassion for shared pain. The birth of humanitarian ethics in the Quaker community is indicative of a larger shift from 19th century religious philanthropy to 20th century secular

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85 The Friend 10/25/1917 pg 205
humanitarian sentiment. The growing prevalence of this new ethic helps explain how AFSC could find common ground (in addition to peace and nonviolence) to justify collaborating with other religious groups, the Mennonite Church and Church of the Brethren, and the secular International Red Cross.

Quakers increasingly relied on the secular humanitarian ethic as they expanded the AFSC programs in the late stages of the war and postwar period to include new projects. Many of these new projects were not directly related to the original mission of the AFSC to provide alternative service for conscientious objectors to nonviolently serve their country. This turning point for the AFSC began when they accepted a request from the Red Cross and allied governments to lead postwar rebuilding projects in a district of eastern France. As the sight of some of WWI’s deadliest battles, farms and villages in the Verdun district were almost completely destroyed. By accepting the assignment to rebuild the desolated region, the AFSC stepped past its original mission of nonviolently serving the United States, and became open to helping many populations in need after the war. Rufus Jones wrote, “Helping the French after the war had little to do with pacifism, but it was a means of healing the ravages of war. The objective was to fulfill religious commitment by humanitarian endeavors.”

Beyond France, there was a massive need for humanitarian aid after the armistice. Large regions of the defeated states of Germany and Austria were completely destroyed and its citizens cut off from food and shelter. The allied governments and Red Cross agreed with the Germans that as a non-militaristic group, the AFSC was well suited to enter Germany after the armistice. The AFSC began a massive feeding program that

86 Frost 1992 28  
McKinstry 44
provided food for close to one million German civilians for close to four years.\textsuperscript{87} The AFSC also answered calls to launch similar but less extensive campaigns in Austria, Russia, Poland, and Serbia. In many cities where the Quakers set up small missions and hospitals, they were the only international humanitarian aid group. They broadened the AFSC reach further as they began to send representatives to Mexico, Syria and Palestine, and the Philippines.\textsuperscript{88} As the work of the AFSC and many other Quakers broadened after the war, the Philadelphia Quaker community took an increasing interest in foreign parts of the world.\textsuperscript{89} The Philadelphia Quaker periodicals reflected this sense of excitement:

The future is always calling for us to strike out into the unknown. Every man must meet that call in one way or another. To meet it as a pioneer, with the will and courage to seek and to find, to strive and to achieve, to construct and produce, belongs particularly to the Christian. His is a religion which meets the blighting effects of evil in the world with the Divine purpose to transform and to create.\textsuperscript{90}

At the conclusion of the war, many Philadelphia Quakers felt energized and optimistic about their capacity of their social mission to do good works in the world. Many in Philadelphia felt that the Society of Friends was experiencing a rebirth fueled by the energy of a new generation of activists. An editorial in \textit{The Friend} read, "I believe there has come today to the young men and women of the Society of Friends a new call to a wider service. The call is not your father's call... You cannot live on the call, on the service, in the traditions made by your fathers. The man who lives on last year's harvest

\textsuperscript{87} AFSC Bulletin Vol. 1
\textsuperscript{88} AFSC Bulletin Vol. 1
\textsuperscript{89} This is not to say that Quakers ad never travelled outside North America and Europe. Many evangelical Friends carried out missions to proselytize during the 19th century.
\textsuperscript{90} Pioneers for a new world \textit{The Friend} 5/30/1920 pg. 649
and provides no harvest for tomorrow is a dead failure."91 This optimism and increased zeal to serve on the heels of the success of the AFSC extended throughout the Philadelphia Quaker Community. In addition to exciting projects abroad, the Quakers also began to rethink their approaches to problems in Philadelphia and the United States:

The war and the great changes it has brought has stimulated men more than ever to think new thoughts and enter upon new undertakings. Social and political parties, industrial groups and movements of many sorts with differing principles and purposes exist on many sides. To know and understand the ideas, the desires and the needs of the people who compose these groups is part of the task of the Christian pioneer.92

As the war ended Philadelphia Quakers were discovering topics beyond peace and war relief in need of their attention. Some Philadelphia Quakers reveled in the success of the AFSC and the victory of the United States as they optimistically looked forward to future programs of social service.

The optimism at the conclusion of the war quickly subsided as it became apparent the postwar world would not be a peaceful place. As a consequence of the strict punishments imposed by the allied victors in the Paris Peace Conference of 1919, social and economic conditions in the defeated states quickly deteriorated. The impoverished populations began to turn to radical politics on the left and right side of the political spectrum. In the United States as well, the slowdown of the war economy, massive internal migration of African Americans from the south to northern cities, and the influx of returning soldiers led to massive racial and industrial unrest in the years after the war. The Quakers believed this civil unrest to be inextricably tied to war, and they came to

91 The Friend "A call to a wider service" 12/18/1919 pg. 294
92 The Friend "Pioneers for a new world" 5/30/1920 pg. 649
realize that unless they eradicated the underlying cause of the riots and radical politics, society would again succumb to war.

Section 4: Postwar Unrest and the Social Order Committee, 1919-1922

As the only humanitarian aid group allowed into many parts of Germany after the armistice to feed starving populations, the Quakers got a privileged view of the increasingly unstable and desperate political situation. The Friend published many accounts from Friends serving in Europe, including a letter sent from an AFSC member serving in Germany in 1920 called, ‘Europe’s Needs as Seen by J. Edgar Rhodes.’ He wrote that in his observation Europe needed many supplies including sufficient food; fuel for transportation and factories; raw materials: cotton, wool, rubber, leather, copper; relief from exchange rates with foreign nations; government stability. The AFSC member also wrote, “Most important of all is a renewed faith in mankind on a spiritual basis. It is really surprising to find how generally this is realized here, even in quarters where it is not based on a full Christian belief. On every hand people are looking for a guide wise and strong enough to point out a better way. However there does not appear to be any in sight.” Rhodes described the declining climate and hopeless outlook that many people in the defeated European states shared. Rhodes was especially aware of the deteriorating conditions favorable to radical socialism:

The extremely radical notions and desires of a great part of the working class are perhaps a natural outgrowth of the generations of oppression under which they have had to live. For the first time they have a chance to


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exercise their power, and like a boy who has been kept entirely under his parents’ control in an unhealthy way, they are having their ‘fling.’

Rhodes was very concerned about the political climate in Europe. As an outside observer with a privileged view of the lower and working classes, he saw the strength of political ideologies considered foreign and dangerous in the United States. He urged people in the United States to take greater notice of this development, “The whole situation is fraught with great danger to Western Civilization, and for that reason alone, if for no other, deserves more consideration in the US than it seems to be receiving.” It seemed to Rhodes that the restrictive measures imposed on the defeated states by the allied governments in 1919 to cripple their economies and capacity to wage wars in the future were now having unintended consequences. The populations were becoming hungry and desperate, and were beginning to turn to radical politics on the left and right side of the political spectrum.

An even scarier development for the Philadelphia Quakers was that they began to observe the same dynamics within their own city and around the United States. “The immediate postwar years bucked and heaved with the most acute industrial unrest the nation had ever known. More than 4 million workers were involved in strikes and lockouts in 1919, altogether, perhaps one in five industrial workers, the highest proportion before or since.” Philadelphia Quakers began to see the massive unrest in Europe and the United States as the consequence of an unjust social structure that denied members working classes opportunities to improve their station in life. These limits left the working classes no alternatives but resort to radical politics and violence.

95 “Europe’s Needs as Seen by J. Edgar Rhodes” The Friend 6/3/1920 pg. 581
97 Dawley 1991, 234
On February 11, 1918, less than a year after the United States declared war on Germany, and a mere 6 months after deploying the first wave of volunteers to France, some members of the Philadelphia Quaker community met to form a new committee under the Quaker Meeting. This group gathered business executives, members of the white-collar professions, and women involved in philanthropy into a new forum to discuss these growing social concerns. They named their group the Social Order Committee (SOC), and during the postwar period their work would change the way the Quaker community thought about business, industry, labor relations and capital.

The members of the SOC came from different subgroups within the Philadelphia Quaker community. Some were modernizers, who had worked with figures like Rufus Jones since before the war to update the theological pillars of Quakerism so that they might better help the Society of Friends interact with the world around them. Most were Progressives who had supported government regulation of industry and commerce to protect workers before World War I, as well as temperance measures to rid the urban environment of alcohol and other vices that plagued the working classes. Individually, many served the numerous Quaker charities and settlement houses. Additionally, they all strongly supported and closely followed the exploits of the AFSC in Europe, and beyond. Some of the characters that helped found the AFSC and travelled to Europe during the war also helped to create and run the SOC.

The most important founding members of the SOC were the business executives. The SOC included men such as Morris E. Leeds, whose firm produced scientific instruments, and Alfred Scattergood, the wealthy banker. It also included business

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98 SOC records HCSC

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managers J. Edgar Rhodes, Bernard G. Waring, and D. Robert Yarnall. As high-ranking executives, they commanded high status in both the Philadelphia business community and the Friends Meeting. They brought vast knowledge on many of the detailed problems of business the SOC would discuss. For some visionary leaders like Morris Leeds, the SOC was a continuation of their interest in making business fairer to the working classes that they had held since the outset of the Progressive Era. For most SOC members however, their interest in the SOC was sharp reaction to the frightening postwar environment. When members of the SOC began to hear reports of growing socialist, anarchist and fascist movements in Europe, they feared that their own city could also deteriorate into civil unrest unless they did something to fix the problems of the working classes.99

The Philadelphia Quakers took the idea for a committee functioning under the care of the Quaker Meeting to discuss social problems from the Quakers in Britain. Brought together by commitment to pacifism and humanitarian service, the British and Philadelphia Quakers exchanged many ideas about putting Quaker faith into action during and after World War I. The character of the Friends community in Britain was different from Philadelphia. As a protestant religious sect that faced centuries of persecution from the Anglican establishment of Britain, the British Quakers historically associated with groups also on the political fringes of British society. They more readily embraced radical ideas. The Philadelphia Quakers were never outsiders in the Pennsylvania colony they founded, and they tended towards the political mainstream.100

As a result, in the first decades of the 20th century, the British Quakers had much more

99 Dawley 1991 284
100 The cases of war, such as WWI, was a major exception to this statement.
radical opinions on problems of business, industry and the consequences of industrialization than their counterparts in Philadelphia. When the two Friends communities came together during the war, the Philadelphia Quakers took back many ideas from the British. They took their name, the Social Order Committee, from a similar group in London Yearly Meeting. Although many of the SOC members in Philadelphia were already interested in reform to business and industry before collaborating with the British during World War I, the formation of the SOC would never have happened without the influence of the British Friends.

At its outset, the SOC posed two basic questions. First, how could they fix social and industrial problems as to eradicate the underlying causes of war and unrest? Second, how could Quaker principles be redefined so that they supported solutions to these problems? The Quakers looked at their basic theology to see how they could interpret it in a way that supported social action on the pressing concerns of the day. Quaker theology asserted that the spiritual presence of God existed in every person in the form of the inner light. Each Quaker could foster a personal relationship with God through silent worship. Although Quakers rejected the notion of original sin, and did not believe questions regarding the afterlife to be very important, they did believe that through good works a person could become closer to God.

When they saw the severe postwar problems in Europe and the United States, it troubled the SOC that Quaker theology did not readily support solutions for the consequences of industrialization. The SOC wanted to interpret the fundamental pillars of

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101 It was common for British Quakers to be socialists, but few if any Quakers in Philadelphia had socialist sympathies.  
102 For more on this subject: Walvin, James. *The Quakers: Money and Morals*  
McKinstry 51
Quakerism in ways that they had not done in the past. “A high standard of personal integrity has been upheld by the Discipline, and individuals in positions of industrial responsibility have done much to improve conditions, but little thought has been given by the body as a whole to those aspects of industrial life which are detrimental to society.”

The SOC wanted to make solving social and industrial problems a priority for the Friends Meeting. To do this, they needed to change the way that their fellow Meeting members interpreted Quaker theology, the Bible, and their personal faith into social action, “We recommend a consideration of the following principles, asking for the full cooperation of the yearly meeting in our efforts to apprehend the duty of Friends in this crisis in human history.” By updating Quaker theology, the SOC hoped to make the Quaker Meeting a vehicle to bring about reform to industrial problems, as it had in the past for Abolition, Native Americans, and peace.

The SOC wanted the Friends Meeting to assert simplicity in Quaker theology. They believed that much of the present day problems were rooted in the growth of individualism, which led to greed and self-interest. This self-interest led many people in society to create institutions that distributed wealth disproportionately, and ultimately limited opportunities for the working class. The SOC wrote:

True simplicity involves more than the elimination of non-essentials in the ordering of the outward life. It means freedom of the spirit from bondage to material things, from all desire for that power and influence that wealth often brings, and from the fostering of class distinctions having their root in material possessions or exclusive privileges.

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103 SOC records 2/11/18
104 For the Orthodox, not true for the Hicksites who relied less on the bible
105 SOC Minutes 2/11/18
106 SOC Minutes 2/11/18

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By lifting up simplicity, the SOC thought people would be driven by what they needed, instead of greed. They wanted to mold theology to act against the dangerous inner motivations of capitalists to pursue self-interest without control.

To mark this theological break with the past, the SOC made their intentions clear to the Meeting community. In a letter to the yearly meeting they wrote, "We recommend that a historical statement of earlier Friend's attitude towards social and industrial problems be prepared and an effort made to interpret their ideals and aims in light of the modern social conscious."\(^{107}\) The SOC wanted to make clear to the Meeting that Quakers needed to change the way they applied theology to life outside the Meeting. Unlike more hierarchical churches, the Friends Meeting did not have a formal structure to oversee theology. Individual members determined the affairs of the community in the forum of business meeting. For the SOC to implement their adjustments to Quaker theology, they did not pass through a predetermined process, but rather presented their opinions in multiple places. They delivered statements at Yearly Meeting and various other forums where the community discussed and defined the theology of the Meeting.

One way the SOC implemented theological changes to the meeting was by advocating for changes to *Faith and Practice*, the Philadelphia Orthodox Yearly Meeting's guide to procedure in worship and conduct outside the Meeting House. The editions released in 1907 and 1926 reflected strongly contrasting theology about how Quakers should become involved in Business and Industry. In the section called, 'Some Problems of the Social Order,' the meeting canonized the ideas of the SOC and the

\(^{107}\) SOC Minutes 2/11/18
growing change in Quaker public opinion on economic and class issues. The section quotes Quaker Saint, John Wolman:

Our gracious Creator cares and provides for all His creatures His tender mercies are all His works; and so far as true love influences our minds, so far we become interested in His workmanship and feel a desire to make use of every opportunity to lessen the distresses of the afflicted and to increase the happiness of the creation. Here we have a prospect of one common interest, from which our own is inseparable, so that to turn all that we possess into the channel of universal love becomes the business of our lives.¹⁰⁸

The writers of Faith and Practice pointed to this passage by Woolman to show that Quaker theology entailed that members consider seriously the physical and spiritual well being of the working classes. They decided Wolman's 17th century creed about universal equality and service to others theologically justified reform to modern industry. The Quakers often looked backwards to the wisdom of the Quaker Saints to address contemporary problems. This section of Faith and Practice concluded, "a new way of life is needed and the basis of it is to be found in the attitude of Jesus towards men."¹⁰⁹ This new interpretation of theology so that it would help Quakers better support opportunities for the working classes was an important result of the SOC.

In addition to theological reform of Quaker principles, the SOC and its members also read, discussed, and wrote extensively on measures that would alleviate the suffering of the working class and reverse the consequences of industrialization. Based on the new interpretations of theology, they took important steps for making the SOC and the Quaker Meeting vehicles of reform. Although few of their ideas, many religiously inspired, ever became well known or a part of public policy, throughout the 1920’s many individuals on

¹⁰⁸ Faith and Practice, 1927, 53
¹⁰⁹ Faith and Practice, 1927, 53
the SOC worked extensively on schemes to improve society. They believed, "A true interpretation of the Christian religion will lead those who profess it not only to try to live out the teachings of Jesus but to do all within their power to help create a Christian order of society."

This new order of society that the SOC envisioned included better conditions for the working class. They believed slum level housing conditions and physically demanding work environment caused irreducible physical and spiritual harm to individuals. Moreover, there was little opportunity for members of the working classes to escape this station in life. The SOC wrote, "A social order based on the teachings of Jesus and controlled by his spirit will give every individual full opportunity for the development of body, mind, and soul."

They believed that members of the working classes as human beings deserved at least the opportunity to improve their personal condition and station in life. They thought every person deserved basic resources and the chance to earn spiritual and material happiness for themselves and their families. They wrote, "This calls for comfortable and healthy homes, for adequate education, for suitable recreation, for provisions for old age and disability, and for reasonable security and freedom."

In the postwar period, problems of business and industry became one of the central topics of the social mission of the Philadelphia Quaker community. Many Quakers before WWI had supported the Social Gospel through philanthropy to the working classes and platforms of reform. Now however, more was at stake for the Quakers, they saw reform to the social order as an essential step towards preventing the

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110 SOC Minutes 2/11/18
111 SOC Minutes 2/11/18
112 Faith and Practice 1927 55

McKinstry 55
ultimate evil of war. Amidst the widespread suffering and growing radicalism in Europe and growing interest in humanitarianism in favor of philanthropy, many more individuals within the Meeting joined the call for changes to businesses. The Quaker periodicals became increasingly focused on this activity. An entire front section of a 1922 edition of *The Friend* devoted itself to the topic of business. The editorial showed the Quaker communities increasing awareness of the extent to which business affected their lives and the world around them:

Economics is a harsh clinking word. We should do well to refer to it as the knowledge of the activities produced by certain invisible forces of our life. These strange forces which are responsible first, for the movement of portions of this earth's crust, ores, and minerals, to places where these rough inert rocks are converted, as if by magic, into metals and then into tools. Secondly, these same forces shift a vegetable and animal matter from places where it is underproductive and of no use to places where it is reproductive and useful to man. These movements are indeed great tides moving across the surface of the earth, with each human being adding a tiny share of work and consuming a tiny bit of goods.\(^{113}\)

Many Quakers considered economics to be mysterious and complicated, but also pervasive and a part of every person's life. The editorial also implied a fear of the unknown, like complicated but imperceptible scientific principles, economics was not something that ordinary citizens could understand or control. Due to the events during and after the war, and the work of the SOC to raise awareness through the Meetings, the Quaker Community had a heightened awareness and increasing concern with these mysterious forces. Many Quakers increasingly questioned the economic order:

We suggest serious consideration of: what makes value, The purpose of property, What determines wages, How foreign exchange indicates the flow of goods from one country to another, Capital- what is it, Why

\(^{113}\) Untitled Editorial *The Friend* 1/19/1922
capital is the core of our current system, Labor,-the work of human hands, Why it can be considered the weather-vane of the future?\textsuperscript{114}

Quakers questioned the tenants of business and economics because they were both fearful that the mysterious order might collapse, and keenly aware that it was causing the working class severe hardship. Many within the Quaker community had sympathy for the working classes in Europe and Philadelphia, and felt a religious and humanitarian obligation to assist them, "We must never forget that the proper object of such study is genuine human welfare. We must study the forces and the movement that affect mankind. For, after all, our world is not a world of mills, machines and money, but a world of human beings."\textsuperscript{115} By 1922, the Quaker community was much more interested in solving problems of business than it had been before World War I. Problems of business and industry was now an everyday concern among the meeting, not merely the domain of a few exceptional Friends.

The SOC facilitated increased interest among Quakers in business problems by spreading information to the different subgroups of the Philadelphia Quaker community. The SOC produced reading lists on books about Progressive Era reform and distributed them to the Monthly Meeting branches. These reading lists often appeared in the weekly periodicals. They also published and distributed essays written by reformers and activists. The 1922 edition of \textit{The Friend} devoted to business problems presented an essay called, 'The way to industrial peace' by Seebohm Rowntree, a British Quaker and social scientist, about how to improve labor relations.\textsuperscript{116} The SOC hoped these materials would educate individual Friends and inspire them to work for reform. The SOC also hosted

\textsuperscript{114} Untitled Editorial \textit{The Friend} 1/19/1922
\textsuperscript{115} Untitled Editorial \textit{The Friend} 1/19/1922 pg 337
\textsuperscript{116} 'The way to industrial peace' Seebohm Rowntree, \textit{The Friend} 1/19/1922 pg 338

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speakers and lecturers to give educational talks about business reform. Some SOC members exchanged information with academic institutions that studied business and labor. A few SOC members let social scientists use their factories as laboratories to experiment with alternative management structures, and other times SOC members used academic studies to educate themselves and the Quaker community. The SOC modeled many of these measures on, and took many books and articles from, the Social Order Committee of London Yearly Meeting. The result of these measures was to transform the Meeting into an institution theologically and socially interested in reform to business.

The Philadelphia Quaker community focused on multiple new issues, one of which was labor. Although the Quaker community did not alter labor politics in Philadelphia, they were a part of several interesting reform measures to labor relations during the 1920's. The involvement of the SOC and individual Friends in these measures showed an interesting way in which the Friend’s community changed from before World War I into the 1920’s in its approach to business and its social mission. Many of these measures became overshadowed and irrelevant by the massive labor reforms of the New Deal, but they mark an important point of transformation for the Philadelphia Quaker community.

Section 5: Concern for Order and Schemes for Peace, 1922-1927

Thus far this thesis has endeavored to show how the social character and theology of the Quaker community and local, national, and global events shaped the social mission of the Society of Friends in Philadelphia. The jolt of World War I triggered a sudden
change in Quakers’ priorities, from 19th century philanthropy to a massive program affirming Quaker peace principles by protecting young conscientious objectors and answering the humanitarian call to war relief in Europe and beyond. In the postwar period, the Quaker social mission continued to respond to massive social fractures. As Quakers in Europe saw the rise of radical politics, and Quakers in Philadelphia saw massive labor and social unrest in their own city, they took steps through the SOC to prevent the breakup of industrial society and further war.

The Quakers were not unique in joining in this postwar tide of reform. In the years after WWI the United States passed the major reforms of women’s suffrage and prohibition into law. The turbulent postwar environment dissipated quickly however, and the 1920’s brought a ‘return to normalcy’. Under three successive Republican presidents, early 20th century Progressivism was replaced by a pro-business agenda. The policies of the Progressive Era would return with the New Deal in the 1930’s, but 1920’s were a hiatus from national movements for social reform. As the government began to favor the interests of business and postwar unrest in the United States subsided, the radicalism of Europe started to seem more distant and less threatening. Many Americans enjoyed the more peaceful culture of the decade, enjoying the ‘era of wonderful nonsense’, ‘the jazz age’, and the growth of professional sports and entertainment. Although few Quakers took part in these activities, they also began to feel that society had righted itself.

How in this environment did the Quakers fulfill their postwar ambitions to reform society and eliminate industrial unrest? In 1917, a member of the SOC wrote, “This war
presents great opportunities for radical social and industrial advances. After the armistice many Quakers believed that the underlying cause of the war, and the greatest continuing threat to society was inequitable class relations. A 1922 article in *The Friend* argued, "We cannot get rid of war and leave out the economic causes of war." By the middle of the Republican 1920's, many Quakers felt the United States was entering a more secure age, and the majority of subgroups within the Friends community lost their postwar zeal for reform. Many Quakers began to take less interest in the SOC, and reports of problems in business and industry came up less in Quaker periodicals. Many people remained interested in the AFSC and topics related to peace, but of the energy of the Quaker community reverted to peacetime issues of the Society of Friends, such as affairs of the meeting, education, and families. One subgroup of Quakers however refused to forget the lessons of WWI and lose their fervor for reform. The fraternity of business executives continued the work of the SOC throughout the 1920’s. Their represented a brief merging of the business traditions of Friends dating back to the 19th century with recent trends of social activism inspired by WWI and postwar unrest.

The social platforms of Progressivism temporarily disappeared from national politics at the beginning of WWI and reemerged in the 1930’s in the New Deal. In the interim, reformers committed to Progressive reform did not simply disappear or hibernate; they found other avenues by which to advocate reform. Despite the more

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117 SOC Letter written April 24, 1917 to Miss Agnes L. Tierney of Germantown by Charles. A Elmwood
118 Christianity and Industry *The Friend* 12/28/1922
119 Such as disarmament, and diplomacy between states to form a peacekeeping 'league of nations'
120 Topics written about most often in Philadelphia Quaker periodicals included: Should the Meeting expand? Should Quakers become more evangelical? How to raise children properly?
peaceful character of the 1920's, Quaker Progressives still saw underlying inequities in
the economic system. Like the reactionary Quaker reformers in the postwar period, they
foreshadowed that unjust class relations and an inequitable economic system would have
future consequences for capitalist society.

The Quaker reformers were most concerned with the relationship between
employees and employers. British social scientist B. Seebohm Rowntree in a 1922
address in Philadelphia argued, "The policy of federated capital on the one hand and
federated labor on the other, each trying to become so strong that it can dictate its own
terms, has resulted in appalling instability in industry. The only effective way of dealing
with industrial unrest is to get down to it root causes, and then seek to remove them."\(^{121}\)
Other Quaker reformers also identified fixing the conflict between workers and their
employers as the key to bringing about long-term industrial peace.

The conflict between the labor movement and employers stretched back 60 years.
In the wake of the Depression of the 1870's, workers joined together to form the Knights
of Labor and AFL, the first major labor unions in the United States. Beginning in earnest
in the 1890's, labor unions representing workers in industrial trades pitched a long series
of confrontations against employers over wages, hours, and working conditions.\(^{122}\) To
counter the collective action of organized labor, employers formed organizations to
coordinate their efforts and control the labor market. These employers associations often
set up labor bureaus to control the hiring of workers. The bureaus kept employment
histories on all applicants, and helped firms verify that were not hiring workers with

\(^{121}\) "The Way to Industrial Peace" Synopsis of address delivered at University of
Pennsylvania by B. Seebohm Rowntree *The Friend* 1/19/1922 p338

\(^{122}\) For more on the Labor Movement: Montgomery, David. *The Fall of the House of
union affiliations. The Labor Bureau was especially helpful to firms during strikes, when it could quickly amass a force of scab workers through newspapers and calls to nearby cities. This allowed forms to continue operating (although often at diminished capacity) during strikes and hold out longer against organized labor.  

Labor bureaus were essential tools for employers to undermine organized labor throughout the early 20th century, but they could not prevent disruptive and prolonged strikes under certain conditions. When production increased in periods of economic growth, firms hired more workers to increase their output. High employment rates put a strain on the labor market, and put workers and unions in a higher bargaining position. The periods of economic growth, especially after prolonged downturns, were the most active periods of organized labor activity.

The postwar crisis in the United States was not a typical offensive of organized labor. It was a rare confluence of events. The slowdown of the war economy resulting in layoffs, massive internal migration into northern cities, and the return home of soldiers from Europe led to a saturation of the labor market and high unemployment. Competition for scarce jobs and resources sparked massive riots and demonstrations. Some of these episodes involved racial tension. In postwar Chicago, several factories employed African American scab workers during labor strikes. The tension between the white working class and African Americans erupted into a riot in 1919 after confrontation in which police refused to arrest a white man who killed a young African American boy swimming in Lake Michigan. The riot resulted in several gunfights and massive

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123 For more on employers associations: Harris, Howell John. Bloodless Victories...2000.
124 Dawley, Alan. Struggles For Justice...1991
vandalism and fires. Similar less high profile incidents took place in cities throughout the United States, with the same root problems of high unemployment and scarce resources.\(^{125}\)

For the Quakers who were close observers of postwar Europe and the United States, they saw the weakness of the economic order and unrest in the working class as the root cause of the turbulent period. The group of reformers in Philadelphia argued for several different employer-led remedies to alleviate industrial relations. Their various schemes represented a range of ideologies, some of these plans were radical and utopian, some were merely novel, and others were similar to the types of ideas people write about during the Progressive Era.

B. Seebohm Rowntree, a social scientist whose Quaker family managed the Rowntree Cocoa Works in Great Britain, had utopian ambitions for labor relations and the working class. He believed every worker should receive, “The payment of wages which, in the case of a man, will enable him to marry, to live in a decent house, and to bring up a family of average size in a state of physical efficiency, leaving a margin for contingencies and recreation.”\(^{126}\) Rowntree had high criteria compared to his peers for what concessions workers would need in order to achieve a stable society.

Rowntree’s utopian ambitions did not incur state socialism. It was the responsibility of employers to oversee the wellbeing of their employees, “The important point is that employers should do everything in their power, by improving industrial processes and organization, to render industry so efficient that such wages can be paid in

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\(^{126}\) "The Way to Industrial Peace" Synopsis of address delivered at University of Pennsylvania by B. Seebohm Rowntree *The Friend* 1/19/1922 p338

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the near future, and not rest content until this has been achieved.”¹²⁷ Rowntree’s plan of employer led working class reforms was similar to pre-Progressive principles that spoke to the conditions of the 1920’s. Before the outset of the Progressive Era, when the working classes, farmers, socialists, and Social Gospel Christians began to assert that the government needed to limit capitalists and restore order, that responsibility fell to employers. Now in the Republican 1920’s, this employer-led paternalistic concern for workers again seemed to be the solution to prevent unrest.

Rowntree’s full platform for reform laid minimum standards and securities for workers that should be provided to them through their employers. Employers needed to provide:

1) Earnings sufficient to maintain a reasonable standard of living.
2) Reasonable hours of work.
3) Reasonable economic security during the whole working life and in old age.
4) A Reasonable share with the employer in determining conditions of work.
5) A reasonable share in the increasing prosperity of the industry.¹²⁸

Other Quaker reformers wrote about the same fundamental problems in industrial relations, but proposed different and less radical changes than the policies put forth by Rowntree. Morris Leeds proposed eliminating the mechanisms from the management structure of businesses that enabled owners and investors to over-pursue profits. Leeds wanted to bring about fairness by making management more accountable to their

¹²⁷ “The Way to Industrial Peace” Synopsis of address delivered at University of Pennsylvania by B. Seebohm Rowntree *The Friend* 1/19/1922 p338
¹²⁸ ¹²⁸ “The Way to Industrial Peace” Synopsis of address delivered at University of Pennsylvania by B. Seebohm Rowntree *The Friend* 1/19/1922 p338

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employees rather than their investors. To accomplish this goal, Leeds proposed a plan called the ‘democratic control of business’, which distributed profits more equally to employees and gave them a greater share in managing the firm.

The Democratic Control of Business may be described as a limited form of profit sharing which aims to give control of business and a just share of its profits to all those who contribute in a managerial or equivalent capacity to its success. It also aims to take the control out of the hands of capitalists who are not active workers in the business, but to be just to capital by securing to it a fixed return on its investment.\(^{129}\)

This plan was a less radical step towards quelling industrial unrest than the measures proposed by Rowntree. There was an important distinction between Rowntree and Leeds. Rowntree thought the poor and unstable lifestyles of workers was at the root of unrest. Giving them the resources they lacked, such as housing, insurance, and income for leisure, could solve this problem. Leeds however believed that the profit motive of business executives was the underlying cause. It led managers to work closely with investors concerned with the bottom line, and pay the workforce as little as they could get away with. Leeds felt that restructuring businesses so that workers received parts of the profit, and had a voice in management, would make managers more responsive to the needs of their workforce.

Another Quaker reformer during the 1920’s, Henry Dennison, the manager of the Dennison Manufacturing Company, did not think employers needed to provide any concessions to their employees. Dennison did not think the remedy to unrest was fairness, he thought it was efficiency. Dennison argued:

\[\text{The effective effort of organization can be no more the sum of what the individual members bring and put into it. We can bring no more into a crowd of people than what each one brings. We can get less than the sum}\]

\(^{129}\) Morris E Leeds. Democratic Control of Business 10/14/1917 SOC records

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because of various losses, losses divided into many difficulties. There are losses from variety of aim, when all the pulling or working parts of the organization do not aim in the same direction; when the powers exerted are pulling against each other instead of working in a single unified manner. The second form of loss is the very obvious Internal Friction, which can and does develop in organizations.  

Dennison thought unrest was the result of poorly run firms. Dennison observed employees performing their work inefficiently because they lacked the proper physical abilities, were unhappy with conditions, insecure about the longevity of their employment, and fearful that if they got sick or lost their job they would lose all hope of living well. To remedy this, Denison argued employees could improve their firms by matching workers skills to the factory task, give workers extra incentives and affirmative rewards for working efficiently such as bonuses and recognition, and offer them a sense of security with insurance and pensions. The primary difference between Dennison and Rowntree was that Rowntree sought to remedy working class unrest for all society, while Dennison thought employers were only responsible for the matters within their own firms.

Hicksite Friend Joseph Willits, who worked in the Department of Industrial Research at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania, thought industrial unrest could be solved through improvements in technology. Throughout the industrial age most people in society shared faith in technology. In 1926, Willets wrote, "The research method has proved itself. Greater development and greater transformations have occurred in business during the last 50 or

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130 8/28/1926 Employee Co-operation in Management by Henry S. Dennison pp697

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75 years than occurred in the previous thousand.”¹³¹ This rapid growth had brought consequences however. Willets acknowledged that the growth of industry had resulted in complex problems for society:

> We have so suddenly built such a large and complex economic and business life that we can only partially understand and control it. Science and its application have so rapidly drawn the world together and moulded civilization that our business and economic structure is subject to severe strains. The facts are so numerous and so complex, so much beyond the range of casual study, that wise judgments must be based upon systematic collection and study of data.¹³²

Willets believed both that the rapid growth of technology had caused many economic problems of industrial unrest, but now technology could also offer solutions. He argued, “We need continuing fundamental study of the more wholesome and successful experiments in industrial relationship. We need similar study of the real facts back of the mental attitudes of irritation and unrest. Every bit of worthwhile research will tend to stimulate more intelligent and more wholesome relations.”¹³³ Willets advocated social scientific research be applied towards industrial problems to invent informed schemes to alleviate unrest.

Some members of the Philadelphia Quaker community put their reform proposals into practice in their professional careers. Morris E. Leeds, Bernard Warring, and Robert Yarnall among other Quakers were members of an employers association called the Metal Manufacturers Association of Philadelphia (MMA) to protect their firms from

¹³¹ The Place of Research in Industry, Dr. Joseph H. Willits *Friends' Intelligencer* 10/2/1926
¹³² The Place of Research in Industry, Dr. Joseph H. Willits *Friends' Intelligencer* 10/2/1926
¹³³ The Place of Research in Industry, Dr. Joseph H. Willits *Friends' Intelligencer* 10/2/1926

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organized labor.\textsuperscript{134} Several Quaker reformers ascended to positions of leadership of the MMA during the 1920’s. In these positions, they coordinated the committee of employers, set the agenda for meetings, and determined to a large extent the approach the MMA took towards issues of labor and business structure. With few strikes in the 1920’s, the Quakers reoriented the mission of the MMA away from combating unions to implementing reform aimed to improve the root causes of industrial unrest. As Secretary of the MMA, Morris E. Leeds argued that to eliminate unions and class based animosity, workers deserved a greater share of increasing prosperity.\textsuperscript{135}

> It seems clear that our working people should have their share of increasing prosperity; but how and when to make the changes that keep the proper balance between general wealth and particular wages is the difficult but inescapable problem of each one of us, to the adjustments of which we are called by the demands of labor and the dictates of justice.\textsuperscript{136}

The proposals instituted by Leeds and other Quakers in the MMA changed the function of the group from an anti-union institution of the aristocracy into a vehicle that oversaw both the best interests if business but not at the expense of decay within society. Over time, this model helped employees win better conditions and raise their standard of living through civil means without resorting to the radicalism and militarism that permeated before World War I. Leeds argued:

> When we do these things wisely and with a just regard for all factors involved, we help by so much the cause of industrial peace; and when through lack of knowledge or a too-short-sighted view of our immediate interest we make arrangements that are lacking in wisdom or justice, we plant some seeds of discord.\textsuperscript{137}

\textsuperscript{134} MMA records: Minutes from 1908 Meeting, Temple Urban Archives 44 box 2 folder 27 (series 1/27)
\textsuperscript{135} For more on Quakers involvement in the MMA: Harris, Howell John. Bloodless Victories...2000
\textsuperscript{136} MMA records, Temple University Urban Archives
\textsuperscript{137} MMA records, Temple University Urban Archives
Leeds and the Quaker reformers in the MMA did not go so far as Rowntree to improve the conditions of the working class, their intended to preserve industrial and social peace. Overall, the wide range of plans developed by Quaker business executives and social scientists during the 1920’s demonstrates an important change in the character of the Quaker community. The jolting experience of WWI, in which Quakers had to go through great lengths to affirm their peace principle and experienced frightening civil unrest, had inspired a generation of reformers. These reformers not only contributed to the overall effort to bring about industrial peace, they also changed the attitudes of the Philadelphia Quaker community regarding the working class, the labor movement, and the priorities of business management.

Any hope for employer-led reform proposed by the Philadelphia Quaker business executives during the 1920’s vanished at the outset of the Great Depression. Employers had so many immediate struggles to negotiate with finding markets for their product and services that the finer points of industrial relations did not matter. Many of the reforms advocated by the Quakers, such as insurance, social security and collective bargaining, eventually came about in the sweeping reforms of the New Deal. Ironically, the collapse of the economic system and global depression which pushed Progressive Era platforms back to the forefront of national labor policy, was the very event the Quakers feared might happen and were trying to avoid.

To return to the question posed at the beginning of this thesis, what was the underlying factor that set apart the Philadelphia Quaker community and their social mission from other Protestants and other mainstream reforms? It was Quakers...
commitment to nonviolence, and their belief that the roots of war lay in the inequitable economic order, that set their social mission apart from others. The Quakers reformers were members of the upper class, they never spoke in their schemes about their own salvation or religious duty, nor did they have any particular links to the working class. What drove them was the belief that if they did not help restore order to society, unrest would continue to build and lead to the event they could not tolerate: war. The belief in non-violence is what ultimately sets Quakers apart from other Social Gospel Protestants during the early 20th century.
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