PACIFIC YEARLY MEETING and PACIFIC COAST ASSOCIATION
of the
RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS

Minutes of Interim Committee Meeting held March 12, 1955 at Palo Alto, California

PRESENT: Ted and Stella Freedman, Ferner Nuhn, Anna B. K. Willson, Ortha Thomas, Gretchen Tuthill, Robert and Margaret Simkin, Roberts and Dorothy Richie, John Dorland, John Way, Patricia Stewart, Sara and Thornton Conrow, Mary Hansen, Vern and Edna James, Dorothy Murray, Ella Wright, Cleo Cox, Dubanks Cersner, Leslie Spelman, Elizabeth Kramer, Mary Martine, Phoebe Seagrave, Fred Allan, Fermor Church, Ruth Brown, Catherine and David Bruner, John Salyer, Mildred Joyce, Esther Richards, Robert Simkin, Elizabeth Lantz, Clarence Cunningham, Lois Bailey, Will and Anna James, Ruth Schmoe, Frances Woodson.

The meeting opened at 9:30 a.m. with a period of worship.

1) Reports from Monthly Meetings: Reports from the Monthly Meetings included a number of concerns. Those not discussed or acted upon were: a) The need for an advisory group, possibly in the form of a special committee, to whom new Meetings can apply for guidance; b) Consideration of the possibility of Pacific Yearly Meeting's association with Friends General Conference. Others were discussed or acted upon later.

The Clerk reported renewed contact with the Denver Meeting and a continued interest in affiliating with Pacific Yearly Meeting, but hesitancy because of the distance from other Meetings. It was suggested that we might show cordiality by inviting them to attend this year's session of Yearly Meeting since it will be closer to Denver. The Boulder Meeting in Colorado, too, might appreciate the interest shown by having an invitation.

Santa Barbara Meeting was reported to have applied to Friends Fellowship Council for status as an Independent Meeting under that body.

2) Monterey Peninsula Meeting: The application for membership was presented, together with the recommendation from the College Park Quarterly Meeting. Interim Committee asked that those serving as the Quarterly Meeting committee of oversight continue in that function as a committee of the Yearly Meeting, to report to the next Interim Committee; and that the Monterey Park Meeting be invited to send a representative to next Yearly Meeting. The committee of oversight consists of Dorothy Murray and Vern James (Palo Alto), Madge Seaver (San Francisco), and Anna and William James (Berkeley).

3) Half Yearly Meeting, Pacific Southwest: The concern of the La Jolla Meeting for the development of a regional grouping of Meetings in Southern California and the Southwest was reported to have resulted in the formation of a Half-Yearly Meeting, having had its first meeting in that capacity Jan. 29-30. Although the name has not yet been agreed upon and the organization not completed, it was clear that its function is primarily one of developing unity through fellowship and of serving to promote the spiritual life, rather than being a larger unit for the accomplishment of business. The Meetings composing the Half-Yearly Meeting are Albuquerque, Santa Fe, Phoenix, Tucson, Claremont, La Jolla, Los Angeles, Orange Grove, Riverside-Redlands, San Fernando, and Santa Monica.

4) The Clerk asked the cooperation of Meetings in reporting prison visitation activities of Meetings (as opposed to AFSC projects) following an inquiry from the Prison Committee of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting regarding our efforts in this area.
5) The Clerk presented an appeal from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Indian Committee. We were reminded that our policy does not allow for contributions from the Yearly Meeting itself, the feeling being that support for such activities should come directly from those Meetings having a concern in that area. The Indian Affairs Committee was asked to respond to this communication as an indication of our interest in their efforts, but pointing to our own active concern in this area as well as our policy. If the Indian Affairs Committee wishes to make further recommendations to Yearly Meeting in this connection they are to feel free to make such, although the Interim Committee re-affirmed its support of the policy regarding financial contributions by the Yearly Meeting.

6) Doukhobors: The concern of the Argenta Meeting to act as mediators in the hope of resolving tensions between the Doukhobors (Sons of Freedom) and the Canadian Government has resulted in the calling of a conference for the re-evaluation of Friends' position in this situation. The Argenta Meeting asked that Pacific Yearly Meeting be represented, and Francis Dart was chosen, with Dorothy Lash as alternate. The use of funds budgeted for "conferences" was authorized to cover the representative's expenses.

7) The Clerk reported the aggrieved and unhappy state of mind manifest by Clarence and Eva George following the report at the previous Interim Committee held in August, 1954, which centers around the minute referring to their activities. This minute reads:

"We have been made aware of the project called 'a Pacific Friends Center' being developed in the Santa Barbara Area and for which funds are being solicited without the approval of any Friends group. Since this involves members of Orange Grove Meeting, we asked Orange Grove Meeting to appoint a committee to confer with Friends in Santa Barbara and Friends of California Yearly Meeting and to take whatever action is necessary to insure that whatever is done in the name of Friends is consistent with Friends' principles and is done with the consent of Friends."

Clarence George asked that the minute be revised with particular reference to the part which has been underlined above since he maintains that it is untrue. Clarence and Eva George being members of Orange Grove still, the committee referred to in the above minute was asked to verify the substance and circumstances which led to the recording of this portion of the minute and report their findings.

8) Friends World Committee: The Clerk presented three matters pertaining to the Friends World Committee, resulting in the following decisions; a) That Freda Way be asked to attend the Junior Conference of the Planning Conference to be held 4-16-55; b) That Ferner Nuhn be asked to attend the Planning Conference to be held 10-28-55 to 11-3-55. It was hoped that he would be able, also, to attend Five Years Meeting which is being held near this time. Decision regarding travel allotment was postponed. c) That reply be made to the request for data regarding the distribution of the Oxford Conference messages and their possible effect, that we felt it impossible to judge either; and secondly, to the appeal for an expression of protest regarding the H-bomb that this should come as a result of concern from the individual Meetings.

9) It was reported that aid had been sent to a member of our Shanghai Meeting who has been imprisoned because of adherence to Friends' testimonies.

10) Nominating Committee: In appointing a Nominating Committee we were reminded that the policy had been amended, extending the term of office to two years and
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providing for replacement of half of the committee each year in order to provide continuity. In order to meet these provisions, the committee was enlarged from five to six members. Russell Jorgensen, Anna James and Frances McAllister were asked to serve until replaced in 1956. Fernor Church, Mildred Joyce and Dorothy Lash were asked to serve until replaced in 1957. Dorothy Lash was asked to convene the committee.

11) Committee on Permanent Records: This committee reported that the Berkeley Meeting had offered space in their meetinghouse for storage of inactive files and records. However, they were unable to proceed further, not being able to determine the amount or kind of space needed, this depending on whether or not Monthly Meetings would need to store documents such as deeds and contracts, records from Meetings that have been laid down, etc., and the amount of Yearly Meeting material outstanding. In order to determine this it was felt necessary to survey the situation and also to establish policies for determining what materials are to be stored since it is quite likely that much of the correspondence which has accumulated will need to be sorted with a view to keeping only that which is of value to the records. A committee composed of Elizabeth Lantz (Chairman), Fred Allen and Randolph Hutchins was appointed for this purpose; and the names of Rubanks Carraway, Ben Darling, Vern James and Phillip Wells suggested as resource persons to advise the committee both on policy and sorting of correspondence.

12) Visitation Committee: Following the report of this committee, the discussion brought out the need to have informal visitation by individual Friends reported to the committee; and further, that a concern to travel in the ministry should have the endorsement of the Monthly Meeting (and Quarterly Meeting, if so situated) before being presented to the Visitation Committee.

13) Education Committee: Report of this committee pointed to the proposed project for this year, centering around "Religion in the Home", the material to be gathered from families within Yearly Meeting. The response to last year's booklet, "Resources for Growth in Religious Education" having indicated a wider audience than is reached through the medium of mimeographing, it was hoped that a special issue of the Bulletin could be devoted to this year's project in order to make the printing of it possible. The budget allotment for this committee is expected to help publish the special issue and make possible additional reprints. The Interim Committee approved this, at the same time commending the Education Committee on its work.

14) Finance Committee: Robert Simkin presented a statement of audit covering the past fiscal year made by Lowell Blanchard, together with a financial statement for the year to date. Vern James interpreted our financial condition as being satisfactory although pending commitments leave no actual balance. He also clarified the policy referring to travel expenses as revised in August, 1954: Travel allotment on the basis of 2¢ per mile is made to officers (Secretary, Treasurer, and Clerk) for the mid-year Interim Committee, as well as the August meeting. Allotment to Monthly Meeting delegates is made only for travel to the meeting in August, Monthly Meetings being expected to help with their mid-year travel. It was suggessted that a letter to Monthly Meetings from the Finance Committee detailing the operation of the travel pool would be helpful.

15) AFSC: Patricia Stewart outlined a proposed seminar to be held June 19-22 by members of the AFSC team to the United Nations while they are on the West Coast attending the U.N. sessions. It was hoped that of the contemplated 25 persons at-
tending, four persons could represent Pacific Yearly Meeting and the following were suggested: Richard Demery, Vern James and Alice Shoemaker, the fourth person to be chosen after consulting with the Canadian Meetings. Robert Dann and Fred and Bunny Shorter were named as alternates. It was hoped that the local Meetings might help meet the travel expenses.

16) FCNL: Marjorie Weber reported on the activities of this committee on both the state and national level, which is covering, among other issues, UMT, reciprocal trade agreements, disarmament, capital punishment, and the Fifth Amendment.

17) Yearly Meeting Arrangements for 1956: The report on this committee, made by Fred Allen, indicated a comprehensive survey of the Bay Area and vicinity. The committee was not able to offer any clear-cut proposals or suggestions because of various uncertainties relating to the facilities which were approached. Interim Committee listened with interest to the wide variety of possibilities being investigated and gave to this arrangements committee the power to act, should that be necessary before the next meeting of Interim Committee.

18) Friends Bulletin: The report of this committee pointed to two continuing needs: One for financial support and the other for participation by individual members in using the Bulletin as a means of expression. Esther Richards felt that Meetings are making an effort to cooperate in the matter of subscriptions but that false modesty among members deprived the publication of stimulating and creative material.

19) Indian Affairs: John Salyer reported for this committee on plans to canvass the activities of the individual Meetings relating to Indians, and outlined the work being carried on at present.

20) The Secretary reported undertaking a project of listing officially the membership of the Yearly Meeting, attempting at the same time to survey the categories of membership existing within the Monthly Meetings, which appear to differ rather widely. She pointed to the need for having standard forms available for the use of Monthly Meetings, such as the statistical blank which accompanies the certificate of removal; and made known to representatives the availability of mimeographed forms for use by the Recorders in gathering data to be recorded.

21) Yearly Meeting Arrangements for 1955: This committee reported having completed arrangements for the use of an Episcopal camp site two miles southwest of Prescott for August 18-21.

22) Discipline Committee: Eubanks Carsner indicated that the efforts of this committee are being directed toward formulating a statement on membership for the Discipline; and before attempting such the committee would like the considered thought of all the Monthly Meetings on this important section. Feeling that the statement recently arrived at by the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings for their new joint Discipline would help in furthering our own thinking, the committee proposed circulating it, together with the outline which is used by Orange Grove as a suggested guide when prospective members are being interviewed, to the Meetings for study, in preparation for further discussion at Yearly Meeting. This was approved.

23) Yearly Meeting Agenda: Two suggestions relating to a departure from the present plan in drawing up an agenda were discussed, these being: 1) To follow the pattern used by the German Yearly Meeting, meeting in small sections on opening day to discuss an item of general importance, each section then reporting a summation to the meeting at large. This would involve convening one day earlier than
has been customary. 2) To open the sessions with a prepared lecture patterned after the William Penn or the Swarthmore Lectures, by drawing on resources within the Yearly Meeting.

A vigorous discussion followed, stimulating other suggestions as well as variations of the two proposals above. Representatives were asked to carry these suggestions back to their Meetings in order that they might be fully discussed, together with the request that each Meeting communicate to the Clerk its conclusions, particular attention being given to the possible additional day of Yearly Meeting sessions. Possible topics suggested, either for discussion or lecture were: "Conformity and Diversity"; "The Significance of Silence"; "The Inner Light"; "Relevance of the Peace Testimony to the Present World Situation".

24) The care of children during Yearly Meeting was mentioned as having been the responsibility of the host Meeting. The Interim Committee felt that because of the heavy duties of the host Meeting in having to care for arrangements as a whole, this should be the responsibility of the Education Committee.

25) Appreciation was expressed for the pleasant and generous hospitality of the Palo Alto Meeting.

The meeting closed with a period of worship, to meet again at 9:30 a.m., August 18, 1955 at Prescott, Arizona.

Ruth Schmoe, Clerk