

1-1-1971

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Recommended Citation

Tucker, R W. (1971) "Structural Incongruities in Quaker Service," *Quaker Religious Thought*: Vol. 27 , Article 3.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/qrt/vol27/iss1/3>

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Structural Incongruities in Quaker Service

R. W. TUCKER

Friends are going through a period of re-examining their organizational modalities. Quarterly Meetings are abolished here, the recording of ministers there, separate Meetings of Ministers and Elders (or "Worship and Ministry," in some places) are being laid down — all in the name of "relevance." Quaker service, especially, is being re-examined, with opposite trends toward streamlining it and making it more professional on the one hand, and toward deprofessionalizing it and making it more agitational on the other.

There is nothing wrong, and much that is right, in re-examining organization and changing it. But I get a feeling that much of the alteration is happening out of impatience, and with little sense of caution. Nowhere have I seen any attempt to think about Quaker sociology in a way that relates it to its theological and historical roots. Changes that bring us back closer to our roots (by which I mean, our Root) are indeed overdue — but, are we purging the branch that beareth fruit, and preserving the branch that beareth not fruit?

Any ideology — in the case of a religious body, any theology — produces its own appropriate institutional structuring, which flows from the ideology, and in turn sustains it. To say this is simply to particularize the basic principle of causation, namely, that ends and means mutually interact and need to be commensurate. (Please note, this is *not* the same as the usual simplistic statement that the means produce the ends.)

It is my belief that the institutional structuring of the Religious Society of Friends has drifted throughout the 20th century, at an increasing rate, into forms not appropriate to nor commensurate with Quaker belief, and indeed subversive of Quaker belief. The trend toward worldly models of organizational structuring has been most conspicuous in Quaker

service, and the pacesetter has been the American Friends Service Committee.

In *Quaker Religious Thought*, XII, 2 (Spring 1970), pp. 19 and 20, Lewis Benson has succinctly set forth the ways in which AFSC literature, often produced anonymously by functionaries who may not even be Friends, has "exerted a much greater influence on Quaker faith and thought than anything emanating from the Society itself." Lewis Benson is speaking here of the direct teaching of doctrine, and he concludes his comment with this observation: "Anonymity implies the sanction of the whole organization, while reducing the hazards of critical challenge."

To this comment on literature, I would add a parallel comment on *the impact of the AFSC as a structural model*. I believe the impact has to be described as disastrous.

This statement is difficult to defend, not because of weakness in argumentation, but because it has to be defended in terms of sociological analysis, and this is a learned discipline Friends do not often use in thinking about themselves. Let me therefore make a long anecdotal excursion away from the AFSC, to develop background that will make this topic more intelligible. Let me do this in highly personal terms.

MY TWO DEBTS TO DAVID S. RICHIE

I owe two debts to David Richie and the Weekend Workcamps he has operated for over 30 years in the Philadelphia slums.

The first debt is a standard one, shared by thousands. In my teens, living in a comfortable middle-class suburb, I underwent severe culture-shock through my exposure by way of the workcamps to America's poverty class. This was critical in my life. It is one of two sets of youthful experiences that made me viscerally aware of the misery that surrounds our comfort. I owe David Richie a debt of personal gratitude that I can never hope to repay; that man altered the course of my life, and enriched me spiritually more than I can measure.

The second debt is enrichment of my understanding of how Friends should and should not do things organizationally,

and I got that from David Richie by quarreling with him. And he was right, and I was wrong.

When I returned to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1963 after a 14-year absence, I was soon put onto the Social Order Committee. Historically, this was the Yearly Meeting committee for social radicals. Over many years it had pioneered in low-cost housing and in labor relations; it had issued pamphlets; it had run study groups on aspects of the social order. But by the time I was appointed to it, all it did was run Weekend Workcamps in Mantua, a black slum inhabited by about 18,000 humans and 125,000 rats. White youngsters would come to spend a weekend there, helping people fix up their houses, and then would return to their protected suburbs.

The committee was divided into bitter factions. First, there were people, and I was one of them, who felt that workcamps were not enough: the tradition and mandate of the committee was immensely broader. Second, there were those who were on the committee simply to support David Richie in his work. And third, there were those who were interested in Mantua who were harshly critical of him. These Friends argued that the time has passed when white people can take initiatives in black neighborhoods; we should either change the nature of our work, or shift our operations to a racially mixed slum. I sat through arguments in which it was stated that the black people working with David Richie were Uncle Toms, and that he collected and paraded them to defend his work. David Richie, on the other hand, argued that the entire thrust of his work was to develop black leadership, and that there were significant successes.

I tended to feel all three sides were right, but that the critics were probably more right. It took me about a year of membership on that rancorous committee to come to a fundamental realization that we critics were all wrong.

The simple point we were all overlooking was, and is, that David Richie is a Friend possessed by a concern to which he has devoted his life. It was proper for those who shared his concern to support him in it and release him to it. Those of us who did not share it had a corresponding duty: namely, to find someone whose concern we did fully support; or to develop

a clear notion of what our concern was, and find someone who would take it up fulltime, and provide support for that person.

The one thing we were not entitled to do was to sit around and snipe at David Richie merely because his concern was not exactly ours, or his way of implementing it was not exactly ours. The bald fact that a Friend with a concern could in fact discover enough other Friends who shared his concern, to generate the financial support that liberated him in his concern, was full and sufficient reason for believing his concern was authentic whether we personally fully shared it or not.

The problem was that on paper David Richie was not a Friend released in the service of a concern. On paper he was a functionary. He was the Social Order Committee's executive secretary. A Friend released in a concern is supported and advised in it by others. A functionary is instructed in what to do. In our sniping at him, we were in the business of trying to take a Friend with a concern and turn him into a functionary, and this did not strike us as wrong because, theoretically, a functionary is what he was.

The organizational structure of a committee with a hired executive secretary automatically put all the committee members into a mind-set appropriate to that organizational structure.

Under the new system in Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, with the whole Yearly Meeting acting as a Meeting on Social Concerns which has an appointed guiding committee, we have returned to an organizational formula in which Friends like David Richie are not official functionaries, but are Friends released in the service of social concerns. The fact that some Friends do not support his particular concern is now beside the point; they are no longer involved with him; they are now operating in an environment which encourages them to find other Friends to release in other concerns. Meanwhile enough Friends do support him strongly to give him the necessary sense of having a community of concern behind him, so needed by any Friend released in a concern.

Let me note that all of these comments could well be made about other former committees of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting: the Prison Service Committee, for instance, where there was tension and ill-feeling over whether the primary job was

prison visiting or legislative lobbying. Let me also note that I am not uncritical of Philadelphia Yearly Meeting's Meeting on Social Concerns. In point of fact, I walked out of the organizing session on grounds that it was departing procedurally from gospel order, by which I meant that it was busy being busy instead of seeking the Lord's will. I voiced an objection, but I made the mistake of using the term "gospel order," which is no longer commonly understood by our social activists, and the term "right ordering," which is understood by them pejoratively, and I was literally shouted down. I felt a duty for maximum protest, so left, and have not returned. The Meeting on Social Concerns is a clique within the Yearly Meeting — and this is the fault of Friends like me who find it an uncongenial environment and therefore stay away. We have not achieved a perfect instrument by any means. However, we have achieved an organizational formula that releases concerned Friends and does not seek to turn them into functionaries.

The point to stress is that "seeking to turn concerned Friends into functionaries" was never something anybody deliberately set out to do. Rather, any given organizational structure has an inbuilt thrust. A structure conceived in terms of releasing concerned Friends will work to do that. An organization conceived in terms of hiring functionaries will tend to produce functionaries, and to engender sniping at any concerned Friend who refuses to become a functionary. The same individuals behave one way in one organizational structure, another way in another.

Organizational thrust is the central point of this essay, and the whole reason for writing at such length about one particular man and one particular committee and one particular Yearly Meeting. *Organizational structure preconditions us as to how we behave in the organization.* And if we want to behave like Friends, then we have to seek structures whose nature is such that we will behave like Friends as we function within each such structure.

BEHAVING LIKE FRIENDS

The Friendly way of organizing things is in a weakened and subverted condition today, but it is by no means dead,

and there are various signs of its revival as part of the general reconstructionist trend. But at best it survives side by side with structures whose nature is bureaucratic and hierarchical. I refer primarily to the AFSC.

I have had one startling experience of this, which is worth reporting. A recent major social struggle in Philadelphia concerned a proposed expressway to be built across South Street. It went nowhere; neither the Delaware nor the Schuylkill River is bridged at either end of it; some planner put it on a map years ago when the notion of inner-city expressway loops was in high vogue. Those of us who live near where it was to go were profoundly concerned about its social impact. It would have totally destroyed what's left of the oldest and most stable major urban black community in America; it would have been a Chinese wall separating the poor from the affluent; it probably could not have been built without riot and violence. Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting was one of many groups that endorsed and joined the Citywide Coalition to Stop the Cross-town Expressway, and I was appointed to testify at City Hall for the Quarter, and to attend sessions of the Coalition in the name of Friends living in the city of Philadelphia.

When I actually got to meetings of the Coalition, I learned that in the eyes of the others there, I was only half of the Quaker representation. The other half was a very pleasant young lady who was not a Friend, and who was employed by some sub-agency of the AFSC that I had never heard of, and still am puzzled about (what is it and why is it?), which had also affiliated with the Coalition. I was never even able to compare notes or discover just where in the Quaker Quadrangle I could find the office she was working out of. And she, for her part, had no notion of what a Quarterly Meeting is. Just to complete the irony, let me point out that the Clerk of Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting is also the Treasurer of the AFSC. But he had no idea who she was, or what part of the AFSC she represented, either. I suppose I never will know; the Expressway was killed, and I have no more opportunity to follow this up.

One can see the point of using the AFSC to assert a Quaker presence on social issues in cities where the Society is weak or

non-existent. In Philadelphia, though? And the total lack of liaison says something significant, I think, about how the AFSC relates to the Society of Friends. It is a parallel structure connecting to its parent body mainly at the top.

It is a parallel structure, but it is not structurally Quaker.

What is the Quaker structure? There are, essentially, two ways in which Friends historically have liberated a person in the service of a concern. I have observed both ways in operation recently in Ohio Yearly Meeting, Conservative.

One way occurs when a Friend has a concern and asks for corporate endorsement. William Taber has a concern to do some of the things that in most Yearly Meetings are done by a functionary with the title of Field Secretary. Ohio Yearly Meeting did not hire him as a field secretary. Instead, it released him in the service of his concern, and appointed a committee to consult with him and help him. He makes an annual report, and part of his report takes up the question of whether he now feels free of his concern, or whether he feels he should continue under it for the next year. Here is more than a matter of nomenclature — "field secretary" versus "released Friend" — here is an organizational expression of how Friends behave.

The other way operates when a concern rises corporately and is then laid upon someone. Ohio and Lake Erie Yearly Meetings have long felt a concern for Korean Friends, and particularly for the leper colony run by the Meeting in Seoul. In 1969 they heard a report that the leper colony could possibly be made agriculturally and commercially self-sufficient, but that an investigation by a trained agriculturist was needed. The Yearly Meetings laid this concern upon Floyd Sidwell, telling him, in effect, "We feel it is the Lord's will that thee should put aside what thee is doing and go to Korea." Friend Sidwell did a very competent study and came up with a detailed proposal for silk-worm culture, which is now being acted upon.

Until this century, Quaker service knew no other forms than these.

Very massive relief operations were mounted, financed, and sustained on an ad hoc basis, and laid down when the need ceased to exist. The three largest instances, in historical order, probably were the relief of the siege of Boston, the Irish potato

famine relief, and the joint project of English and American Friends and American Mennonites in relocating the Doukhobors. These things were done, and done competently, despite the fact that an AFSC, a CFSC, and an FSC did not exist.

These huge projects of the past, and many others, and the two in Ohio and other current projects, are distinguished by their noninstitutional character. Here is no setting-up of a permanent organization to serve some social concern that presumably will exist into perpetuity; here is no setting up of a home-office bureaucracy nor hiring of functionaries and professional social workers; here is no professional fund-raising apparatus.* The concern rises prophetically within the community of faithfulness, and is served, individually and corporately, in immediate faithfulness.

Much of the current complaining about ancient Quaker structural forms has to do with their irrelevance, and in truth there is much that is irrelevant. Quarterly Meetings seem to assemble mainly because they always have. Monthly Meetings for Business are usually a thundering bore. The popular reaction is to say "change it" or "abolish it," and this is an understandable reaction. But — especially after my experience on the Citywide Coalition to Stop the Crosstown Expressway — I am inclined to ask another question. If the AFSC did not exist, and all the things it does had to be done the old-fashioned way through Monthly and Quarterly Meetings, would Quarterly Meeting still seem irrelevant? To what degree have we created a professional agency to take over the entire function of prophetic concern, and then abdicated prophetic concern as a corporate function, and thus created the irrelevance of the structures we complain about? When a Friend has a concern these days, does he turn first to his Monthly or Quarterly Meeting, or does he look to the AFSC for funding and professional help and organizational support? Especially our social activists: Are they not often the very Friends who are most impatient with ancient structures? most contemptuous of them, in the

* Professional fund-raising is essential to contemporary modes of Quaker service. I seriously question its appropriateness to Quaker belief; it is an additional incongruity; selling indulgences would be significantly less un-Christian; space unfortunately forbids its adequate discussion here.

sense that they act as though these structures either did not exist or were hopeless as a vehicle to work through? and most involved in not only the AFSC, but a whole spectrum of Quaker organizations that exist to one side of our mainstream organizational structure?

And, not at all by the way, are not these also the Friends who most complain about the faithlessness of modern-day Friends, and the lack of general support, especially for radical social concern? To what extent are these Friends challenging the rest of us with their proposals, by bringing them forward through Monthly, Quarterly, and Yearly Meetings? And doing so in a way that takes these Meetings seriously? that does not say, "Okay, we'll give you a chance to be good, but if you don't go along with us all the way and right away, we'll go ahead on our own." And thereby inviting the response of patting an activist on the head indulgently and telling him to do his own thing.... There is a huge disrespect today for Quaker corporateness, and the people who most complain of the lack of corporate backing are so often the people who least respect Quaker corporateness.

The "fault" for all this does not lie with the AFSC, and, despite appearances, this essay is not designed as an attack on the AFSC and should not be so read. The AFSC was created as a temporary emergency committee during World War I, like others before it, through the usual method of a concern being endorsed and passed along from one Meeting to another. For many years the AFSC periodically considered whether the time had now arrived when it could lay itself down. For many years it refused to own property. It is a reflection of the great tragedy of our times that a committee organized to meet a temporary emergency should have found other equally pressing temporary emergencies, year after year, from 1917 on up to today. If over the years the AFSC grew bigger than its parent, this is among other things a measure of the crisis of our times. And insofar as it has become the primary channel for the expression of Quaker social concern, seriously weakening Quaker understanding of the sociology of Quakerism, the fault is not with the earnest and dedicated people who have made the AFSC so successful.

The fault is partly the general failure of Quakers to theologize adequately and therefore to understand themselves adequately; and the fault is partly original sin. For those who are turned off by the term "original sin" I add my usual rephrasing: If humans can do things wrong, they generally will. If with divine assistance our spiritual forebears worked out an organizational modality that maximized faithfulness and responsiveness to prophetic insight, sooner or later we were bound to abandon it, at least in respect to the really important tasks of faithfulness.

PRIMITIVISM DENIED

Lest all the foregoing be taken as the ravings of an ultra-primitivist, let me here point out that, yes, of course times have changed; and yes, of course the way early Friends did things is not automatically the best way, or may no longer be the best way due to altered outward circumstances.

There are, after all, Friends whose concern is to be functionaries. Furthermore, there are areas in which we can use functionaries. A Yearly Meeting normally needs at least one fulltime desk man who is not an initiator of concern but somebody who takes care of the detail work. As to Quarterly Meetings, I have a strong belief that their boundaries should be periodically revised by Yearly Meetings *without* their permission, cautiously, but objectively by Friends from other parts of the Yearly Meeting, to make them functional in terms of demographic and political change. I also think a truly functional Quarterly Meeting is the ideal level at which to have hired personnel. A Quarterly Meeting coordinator is not a distant bureaucrat whom most Friends do not know; on the other hand, he is not attached to a single Meeting, putting in more time than all the other Friends added up, and therefore possessing more weight. Functional Quarters engaged in relevant social concern can use professional help. This would dispose of the need for Yearly Meeting field secretaries, and for Monthly Meeting executive secretaries in most cases. Most Monthly Meetings big enough to need a fulltime employee are big enough to subdivide instead. There are a few exceptions;

and of course, sometimes a Meeting needs to hire someone for purposes relating to its survival, revival, and growth.

On professionalism among Friends, I am so heretical as to propose that some inter-Yearly Meeting organization like Friends General Conference should get into the business of finding Friends with a concern to be functionaries, training them, paying them, and building up retirement funds for them, for all the Quarterly Meetings there are. "Professionalism" is one of those special Quaker dirty words, and like most dirty words it refers to something never talked about but commonly done, and even necessary. It is difficult to deal rationally with an Unmentionable Subject, so inevitably we deal irrationally with it, and then we don't like what we get, and wonder why.

There surely can be nothing wrong with the thought that the Lord may lay a concern upon us corporately, which may be properly and fully served only with the paid assistance of an expert. If Quakerism has survived into a world plagued by over-reliance on experts who see all things in terms of their field of expertise, nevertheless this is also a world in which we all sometimes need the help of experts to find our way. What worries me about expertism is not whether it is hired or not, but whether we can keep all our expertisms in perspective, and dare to stand up to one another's expertise. We let our architects tell us too much about the buildings we need, our lawyers tell us too much about what the outward world regards as right and wrong, our educators tell us too much about what we want our schools to be like, our money people tell us too much about the right use of capital assets; and if we are architects we can see how a lawyer's viewpoint is skewed by his training, and if we are lawyers we can see how an architect's viewpoint is skewed by his training, but we naturally dislike being challenged by nonexperts in the fields we happen to be expert in, and we become defensive. The problem of expertism in today's world and its impact upon our religious society is quite separate from the problem of professionalism, or of appropriate organizational structuring.

On the question of whether we can effectively coordinate social concern on a worldwide basis in the face of inordinate needs, without some fulltime organizational mechanism and

professional staff, let me suggest that (1) there are plenty of organizations already existing through which we can work, if we want to, for almost any conceivable social concern; and (2) this question is a worldly question. It is worldly because it looks at social need, and the social desirability of doing something about it, instead of asking, what does the Lord lay upon *us* to do, and does he still lay upon us today what he laid upon us yesterday? The mode of thinking that sees an AFSC as indispensable is ultimately political, rather than the thinking appropriate to faithfulness.

Faithfulness embodies trust. Trust that way will open. I deny the obligation some have sought to lay upon me, of coming up with a formula for some other organizational modality that will be able to replace the AFSC and its many counterparts and do just what they do. That suggestion starts at the wrong end. As citizens, as participants in the wider society, we may properly consider our duty to respond to social needs. As Christians, we let our awareness of social need inform us as we seek prayerfully to learn not only what the Lord would have us do, but how he would have us go about doing it. We understand that it is the duty of discipleship to conform the outward world to the mind of Christ and to keep very busy at it; we also understand that we simply cannot bear every cross, and that, as to the doing of good works, there are people already doing just about every good work imaginable, and they can usually use our help if that particular good work is what is rightly ordered for us, or even if it isn't.

INSTITUTIONALIZED CHARISMATIC LEADERSHIP

The Society of Friends corporately is the people of God, gathered into communities of discipleship, their model being the original twelve disciples and the way they related to Jesus. Leadership among Friends is charismatic, and the charismatic leader is always the Lord. On any given subject some one Friend may have more understanding of the Lord's will than others, and when the community works as it should, it is able to recognize who has most light on a subject and unite behind that person, adopting his view, perhaps with additions or modifications, perhaps adding more light.

Sociologically, an understanding of the Lord as prophetic or charismatic leader thus becomes dispersed as the community of discipleship seeks after truth, into a derived charismatic leadership shifting from one member of the community to another, according to the topic, and the momentary distribution of faithfulness. Direct obedience to a charismatic leader is one common organizational model, and ordinarily it alters to another structure, or the organization vanishes, with the death or replacement of the leader. Quakerism, uniquely, has found a formula for institutionalizing charismatic leadership. In the last analysis this may be the *only* thing about Quakerism that is truly unique and truly a major new insight into the way God works with man. Certainly it is our most precious possession; with it we are all; without it, nothing.

Social concern among Friends is merely a specialized case of the model of shifting derived charismatic leadership. In this case, what specifically is derived is the prophetic function of our Lord.

In this context, where there are hired experts or other functionaries, their duty is to help the community of faithfulness in its tasks of faithfulness, perhaps simply by relieving it (responsively) of housekeeping tasks so it can fully devote its time and energy to faithfulness. A functionary ideally should be someone with a concern laid upon him to serve the community in this way. If he gets some more explicit concern laid upon him, then it is his high duty to distinguish it clearly from his role as a functionary, and make sure the two roles do not interfere, or that he is not using his office as a functionary to promote his concern beyond its corporate leading.

Christian social concern, as Quakerism intrinsically understands it, is not susceptible to institutionalization other than the institutionalization of gospel order which is Quakerism itself. There is, for example, no principle of delegation of authority or of decision-making among Friends; an individual may represent Friends, but he cannot possibly speak for Friends, since no one may speak for a Meeting except that Meeting.

How do our major social agencies, such as the AFSC, match this model? Plainly, they don't at all. The AFSC and its counterparts are bureaucratic hierarchies.

A hierarchy is a hierarchy because it comprises various levels of officialdom. Usually wage scales have to follow the hierarchial pyramid: the man at the top has to get a raise so that people on the next level can get a raise so that people on the third level can get a raise and so on. A full-blown bureaucratic hierarchy is also characterized by the ambition game, in which one cannot admit under any circumstances that one is happy in a dead-end job doing what one loves to do and does well; a key measure of judgment is the desire of people to be promoted. Judgment-making is intrinsic to the full, or perfected, hierarchy; it is called "personnel assessment." Therefore the perfect bureaucratic hierarchy also follows the Peter Principle, according to which people get promoted as an award for efficiency, until finally they reach a job at which they are not efficient, and then they stay at that level. And it follows Parkinson's Law, according to which work expands to fill the time and manpower available for it.

Finally, a bureaucratic hierarchy has an inbuilt tendency to become permanent; if it exists to do a job, and it does the job, it casts around for another job. A perfect example of this is the old March of Dimes Foundation, whose job was to find a cure for infantile paralysis, and which became the largest medical fund-raising and research-funding private organization in the world. When the Salk vaccine was perfected, this organization moved intact over to another field of research, in which, as it happened, there was already another smaller bureaucratic hierarchy working, which it bumped.

In fairness, there is no Quaker agency anywhere that is a full-blown and perfect bureaucratic hierarchy. The AFSC and its cousins are all saved from their intrinsic organizational thrust by the fact that they are loaded down with Quakers. The AFSC has to be described as an *incomplete* bureaucratic hierarchy. It is saved from the monolithicism and inefficiency of a perfect bureaucratic hierarchy, but at the cost of another set of inefficiencies.

I think of a non-Quaker expert who was put on the Philadelphia staff to do a job, came there with great enthusiasm, and left embittered two years later. "I just could never get anything done," he told me. "I was responsible for producing,

but I had to depend on other people for what I was responsible for, and everybody there was doing his own thing, and I could never know if I'd meet a deadline." Since his position in the AFSC was hierarchial, with people who were supposed to be subject to his instructions and other people to whom he was responsible, the natal Quaker subversion of hierarchy was something he had every right to resent; his position was impossible.

But to say that the AFSC is a peculiar, even a Quakerized, bureaucratic hierarchy does not subtract from the essential definition of it as such. All the stigmata are there. The peculiarities are merely indications of how very alien this structural form is to the Quaker mind, so far as the mind in question truly is Quaker.

The problem is that a one-hundred-percent Quaker does not exist, because we are all conditioned by the world outside us, and though the Lord helps us decondition ourselves and reprogram ourselves, we are but imperfectly faithful (being human), and get only imperfectly reprogrammed. In one area of our lives we will be very clear on how we differ from prevailing cultural values; in another area we will conform to the world, perhaps simply because there are too many things for us to achieve total reprogramming.

And the bureaucratic hierarchy is the form of organization we nowadays know best through our worldly conditioning. It is the common form of governments, whether democratic or totalitarian, from local to international. It is the structure of both business and labor; of both the military and of peace organizations; of political parties, cause groups, fraternal organizations — just about everything that is organized. It is the model we take for granted.

Organizational structuring generally has now become one of the "too many things" we do not get around to thinking about and applying our special value system to. This is a drastic and important change in Quakerism.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

There are a great many possible organizational models. I have discussed only two: bureaucratic hierarchialism, which is the prevailing worldly model today, and institutionalized

derived charismatic authority, which I take to be uniquely Quaker and the foundation of any Quaker claim to be the church and to speak for the Lord. Of the other structural models, some are totally inappropriate to derived charismatic authority, as much as bureaucratic hierarchialism is. Others may offer supplementary ways of looking at Quakerism sociologically; they may possess some degree of congruity to Quaker self-understanding.

Feudalism or the tribe or the clan all seem at first to be totally irrelevant organizational models. However, nomadic tribalism is making a sort of comeback in the youth-dominated alternate-culture movement, and some developments in Quakerism seem to match that model. One thinks of various "floating Meetings" and of some of the activities of the New Swarthmoor Friends.

There is a grab-bag of structural models formed by reaction against bureaucratic hierarchies. These include cooperatives; syndicalist organizations such as, in the field of labor, the Industrial Workers of the World; communes; a whole raft of what Charles Reich describes as "Consciousness Three" groups and what others have labeled "counter-culture" groups. Some are utopian, but others are revolutionary and may be summarized as to purpose by the IWW slogan, as attempts to "build the new society within the shell of the old." AQAG, A Quaker Action Group, is moving in that direction in interesting ways; in the political arena, so is the Debs Caucus half of the Socialist party.

Counter-culturism is not only congenial to Quakerism, it is close to being necessary, as we all face the terrible difficulties in today's mass society of getting ourselves reprogrammed out of worldly values, and into the values appropriate to a life of revolutionary faithfulness. It is so important that I am at work on a major essay on that topic alone, so I do not wish to discuss it here. In terms of social structuring, what matters is that there are many models that can be regarded as adjuncts to a full understanding of derived charismatic authority (or "Gospel Order," or "the Lamb's Rule") informing us not only on how best to organize ourselves, but also adding up to a proximate vision in terms of which to agitate and organize the wider

society. The vision is proximate because times change, because the Lord adds continually to our understanding, and because the mighty task of conforming the world to the mind of Christ is by definition a task of permanent revolution, in which specific outward revolutionary turnover points in the larger society are mere incidents, though very important ones.

One model that needs to be briefly looked at is the family, if only because Friends tend to think of it as a model for a Meeting when they think about such matters at all. We usually think of it inadequately.

In a family, "democracy" is not relevant. Tasks are assigned, reassigned, shared, or divided on the basis of who is best able to do them, or sometimes, of who can be coerced into doing them. "Love" is also not defining of a family, however desirable it may be and however destructive its absence. Families are held together by economics, history, common purposes, as much as by love.

The congruence of the family structure to Quakerism appears when we consider the surrogate family and the extended family. A small commune is one kind of surrogate family. There is a vast difference between the Manson family of drug-addicted killers, and a devout commune of Quakers; yet structurally they may be identical. Another kind of surrogate family is the youth gang, and its recent offshoot, politicized youth gangs such as the Black Panthers or the Young Lords. Here, too, the structure is familial.

Finally, there is the over-extended family. The Black Panthers have grown to the point where they are so much extended that they no longer function in a proper family way, and they are having internal squabbles as they grope for restructuring. They must introduce either formal democratic procedures, or formal undemocratic procedures, probably of a hierarchial nature in either case, inasmuch as they are turned off by the white middle-class counter-culture movement from which they might learn other organizational modes. These same generalizations may be made about the Mafia.

If Quakerism is a family, then it is an over-extended family; from this view, the Black Panthers and the Mafia are the two

worldly organizations most similar to us in structure and current internal problems.

My position is that the family analogy is a dangerous one precisely because it is so seductive. A good Friends Meeting does have an internal life with striking similarities to the extended family. It is pleasant to think of ourselves as members together of a family. It is even useful: we do in fact often function as a family, and it is a model for our thinking that helps, so long as we restrict ourselves to families that are loving families in our thinking. It helps us get along together. But if we must use this model, let us see it plain. Above all, let us understand that at best it is only an adjunctive model. The Lord gathers his people into a brotherhood, and God is our father who loves us, but God is not a physical presence as would be the father in an actual family. As children in the family of God we face the problem of obedience to a father with whom we are capable of only clouded communication. Thinking out the structural model of the family, as descriptive of the Society of Friends, is simply another route to understanding gospel order. If we do not carry "family" thinking that far, we abdicate the authority God wants us to have.

GOSPEL ORDER

The model of gospel order embedded in the form and procedures of the Meeting structure was seen by the first Friends as more than just a special way of doing things. It was their working model of how the world itself would be organized once they had finished shaking things up. The Meeting structure was actually used to perform legislative, administrative, and judicial functions in early Pennsylvania in the Welsh tract. And though Friends soon lost the notion of seriously bringing the entire world to the organizational model of Quakerism, until modern times we continued to lay enormous stress on our organizational form for other reasons. Disciplines began by quoting or paraphrasing Matthew 18:15-20. We had a strong sense of a Meeting as possessing apostolic authority: the power to bind and to loose, to forgive sins, to declare the word of the Lord.

But now for half a century we have had among us, interpenetrating with our Meeting structure at all points, the AFSC as our main channel for social concern, and it has also stood before us as an invitation to organize in the worldly way. These are the same fifty years in which the term "gospel order" has become meaningless to most Friends, and I believe that is cause and effect. Here is the half-century in which the notion of a Meeting as possessing apostolic authority has virtually vanished. Here is the half-century in which we have decided that Quakerism is a form of Christianity characterized by the notion that we make it up as we go along, with everybody following his own light whether it leads him to go to jail for draft resistance, or to enlist in the Green Berets; and all is equally all right so long as one follows one's own light. Truth has become totally subjective, discipline has collapsed, doctrine has dispersed; strange new notions of what Meeting for Worship is for flourish among us. Satan has come among us disguised as good works and heroic saintliness, and has taken from us that which was most central to us, that without which we are nothing. And we have lost our light and we are in the dark.

For the plain fact is that a mode of organizational structuring grows out of a value system, and has that value system imprinted on it. And we cannot mouth one value system, while adopting a structure into which another value system is built, and retain our identity or meaning.