

The Quest for Harmony in a Turbulent World: The Principle of "Love and Unity" in Colonial Pennsylvania Politics

ACCORDING TO JAMES LOGAN, mentor of many politicians in Pennsylvania, "Dissension, Faction, Wars, foreign and intestine" were created by "Pride, Ambition, and Resentment," qualities antithetical to his—and the Quaker—ideal of "the Beauty of Civil Life."¹ For Logan there was an inverse correlation between responsible political behavior and the degree to which human passions controlled politicians. On one level Logan's opinion is perfectly compatible with that political theory which takes as its starting point the sorry fact that mankind is mostly governed by passions. Since passions are not reliable guides for proper behavior, the responsibility of establishing order falls to the chosen few who manage to keep their passions within proper bounds. Yet, on a different level of argument, it is no coincidence that Logan's causes for "Dissension, Faction, Wars, foreign and intestine" are identical with those other Quakers usually reserved for wars. Moreover, for Quakers these causes were not just deficiencies of mankind but serious deviations from Christian values encompassed in terms like "meekness," "mildness of temper," and "love" as prescribed in the Sermon on the Mountain. Did these terms, however, affect the Quakers' vision of politics and society the same way that the concept of the passions influenced, for example, the political theory of Hobbes and Harrington,² and if so, in what way did this affect the structure of politics in Pennsylvania?

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¹ Roy N. Lokken, "The Social Thought of James Logan," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series [henceforth: *WMQ*], 27 (1970), 68-89, esp. 78-79, 85.

² For Quaker values cf. below, James Cotton, "James Harrington and Thomas Hobbes," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 42 (1981), 407-421.

In eighteenth-century political theory, passions were taken as god-given qualities which governed mankind's behavior. They served as explanations for common social ills (i.e., vices, licentiousness, luxury, etc.) and political misbehavior (i.e. corruption, lust for power, etc.).³ For Quakers, passions had a different quality: they characterized behavior of the "Old Adam" whose dominance was broken by the sheer act of rebirth as "New Adam." This "New Adam," guided by the Inward Light, was not governed by his passions.⁴ Such conceptual differences suggest consequences for Pennsylvania's political situation.

Historians assume that the colonists shared basic political concepts with the mother country. Certainly the key terms of "court" and "country" ideologies were current in North America.⁵ No one has examined, however, the assumption that this English frame of reference remained unaffected by fundamental religious concepts also held by influential members of the Society of Friends. There is a curious quality to much of what has been written on William Penn's colony. Everyone is aware of the Quakers' dominant role in Pennsylvania's colonial politics; everyone agrees that political disputes revolved around the Quakers' peace testimony. Yet political historians have not asked whether other religious tenets held by members of the Society of

³ Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle. The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole*, Harvard Political Studies (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), esp. chap. 3; H.T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property. Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London 1977), 102-118; Hermann Wellenreuther, "Korruption und das Wesen der englischen Verfassung im 18. Jahrhundert," *Historische Zeitschrift*, 234 (1982), 33-62; Thomas A. Horne, *The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville. Virtue and Commerce in Early Eighteenth-Century England* (New York 1978), 1-18 *et passim*; Herbert M. Atherton, *Political Prints in the Age of Hogarth. A Study of the Ideographic Representation of Politics* (Oxford 1974), esp. 130-140.

⁴ E.g. *The Journal of George Fox*, ed., John L. Nickalls (Cambridge 1952), 298. In the 18th century Fox's arguments do not seem to have been employed.

⁵ John M. Murrin, "The Great Inversion, or Court versus Country: A Comparison of the Revolution Settlements in England (1688-1721) and America (1776-1816)," *Three British Revolutions: 1641, 1688, 1776*, ed., J.G.A. Pocock (Princeton, 1980), 368-453.

Friends had an equally profound influence on politics in Pennsylvania.⁶

This essay analyzes the relationship between the political and religious concepts of eighteenth-century Pennsylvanians. It first considers the Society of Friends' social value system as contained in the terms "Love and Unity," and then relates this Quaker system to the political crisis that culminated in the middle of the eighteenth century. Between 1739 and 1754 the views of the small group of proprietary supporters were to a large extent shaped by their reactions to the Quaker concept of "Love and Unity." After 1755, however, a crisis occurred within Pennsylvania politics and particularly within the Society of Friends. One word of caution ought to be added: this article ignores social and economic factors—not because they lack relevance to politics but in order to focus more clearly upon the religious/ideological factors involved.

The Quaker formula "Love and Unity" as the center piece of the Society of Friends' church discipline slowly emerged in the decades after the Restoration of the Stuarts. The English Yearly Meeting Epistle for 1678 spoke of the "blessed fellowship of life," of the meeting "united by the one Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ."⁷ Two

⁶ Theodore Thayer, *Pennsylvania Politics and the Growth of Democracy, 1740-1776* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1953), Edwin B. Bronner, *William Penn's "Holy Experiment": The Founding of Pennsylvania 1681-1701* (New York, 1962), Gary B. Nash, *Quakers and Politics: Pennsylvania, 1681-1726* (Princeton, 1968), James H. Hutson, *Pennsylvania Politics 1746-1770: The Movement for Royal Government and Its Consequences* (Princeton, 1972), Joseph E. Illick, *Colonial Pennsylvania. A History* (New York, 1976), Joseph J. Kelley, Jr., *Pennsylvania: The Colonial Years 1681-1776* (Garden City, New York, 1980). There is more sensitivity for the political implications of religious beliefs in Alan Tully, *William Penn's Legacy: Politics and Social Structure in Provincial Pennsylvania, 1726-1755* (Baltimore, Md., 1977). The Quakers' concept of authority and peace testimony and their influence on Pennsylvania's political development are the subject of Hermann Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik in Pennsylvania 1681-1776: Die Wandlungen der Obrigkeitsdoktrin und des Peace Testimony der Quaker*, *Kölner Historische Abhandlungen*, 20 (Köln, 1972).

⁷ *Epistles from the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in London, To the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings in Great Britain, Ireland, and Elsewhere, From 1681 to 1867 With an Historical Introduction and a Chapter Comprising some of the Early Epistles and Records of the Yearly Meeting*, 2 vols. (London 1858), I, xxiii-xxiv [henceforth *LYME*].

years later the English Yearly Meeting reported that the participants had experienced the presence of God “knitting our hearts together in love in which our unity and concord is preserved.”⁸ The 1680 epistle pointed to parallels between the believer’s relation to God and to fellow Quakers:

He [God] hath watched over us for our eternal Good, and hath given us just cause to say he loved us first, and who in his tender love, through the working of his glorious power in our inward man, hath caused us to love him, in which we are led to obey him which obedience is a proof of the reality of our love, and in the same we do in reality love one another, in which we watch over one another for good, and therein labour and travail, for the good, one of another.⁹

This epistle posits, on the one hand, the relevance of the principle of “Love and Unity” for the maintenance of the discipline of the church, while it establishes, on the other, a hierarchical order between “Love” and “Unity” in the relationship of Friends toward each other. For “Love” in this context implies a sense of togetherness which is more important than differences in matters of fact or interpretation. In day-to-day life disagreements are of course unavoidable. Yet the principle of “Love” forbade pushing disagreements to disruptive conclusions because of the implied danger to the mutual fellowship in the meeting. In that sense it stands in close relationship to the term “Sense of the Meeting” which, when taken by the clerk, does not record a formal vote but rather records elements on which the various speakers agreed and postpones action on other viewpoints on which disagreement prevailed. At the same time the principle of “Love and Unity” stressed the necessity of arbitration of “worldly” disputes and discouraged formal legal procedures among Friends.¹⁰

⁸ *LYME*, I, xxvii.

⁹ *LYME*, I, xxviii.

¹⁰ See the rather curious description of proceedings before a Justice of the Peace by the German visitor Gottlieb Mittelberger, *Journey to Pennsylvania*, ed. and translated by Oscar Handlin and John Clive (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), 67. There seems to have been a considerable gap between theory and practice at least for revolutionary Reading, cf. Laura L. Becker, “The People and the System. Legal Activities in a Colonial Pennsylvania Town,” *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* [henceforth *PMHB*], 105 (1981), 135-149, esp. 141-142, yet cf. the analysis of Monthly Meeting Minutes in Tully, *Penn’s Legacy*, 197-206, which shows very few cases in which Friends were dealt with for “Resort to the Law”, cf. J. William Frost, *The Quaker Family in Colonial America. A Portrait of the Society of Friends* (New York, 1973), 201.

The principle of "Love and Unity" does not, however, rule out conflict and differences of opinion and it certainly does not prevent members of a meeting from expressing a particular dissenting opinion; what it does do is prevent members from forcing an issue, from foisting their opinions on others. For Quakers found only such opinions acceptable which were in harmony with their deep-felt concepts—not rationality but the dictates of the "life of the Word" or the "glorious Light and Sun of the Soul."¹¹ The term "Unity" was a particular mode of behavior which corresponded closely with terms like "meekness" and "mildness of temper" and which in its most impressive form was demonstrated by John Woolman in the middle of the eighteenth century.¹²

One cannot overstate the importance of this principle for Quakers. Together with other causes, "Love and Unity" was evoked in the dispute with George Keith who, for "that spirit of reviling, railing, lying, slandering, and falsely accusing" was disowned by the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting in 1692.¹³ Within the next fifteen years, William Southey at first irritated Quakers and by 1717 risked disownment for his insistence that the Yearly Meeting, despite considerable opposition from many Friends, condemn slavery and slave trade. His crime lay not in his asking the Meeting to endorse his position but in twice carrying his views into the public with the intention of forcing

¹¹ The citations are from William Penn, *Primitive Christianity Revived* (1696), in *The Select Works of William Penn* (London 1825), III, 478

¹² See the excellent description of the decision-making process in Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 144, and for slightly different emphases Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 22-32. Frost, *Quaker Family*, 49-51, in my view emphasizes too much the repressive features of the concern for unity which might be the result of his rather heavy reliance on Robert Barclay, *The Anarchy of the Ranters and Other Libertines, the Hierarchy of the Romanists and Other Pretended Churches, Equally Refused and Refuted* (London, 1676)

¹³ Rufus M. Jones, *The Quakers in the American Colonies* (London 1923), 452. On the religious issues of the Keithian schism cf. Jon Butler, "'Gospel Order Improved' The Keithian Schism and the Exercise of Quaker Ministerial Authority in Pennsylvania," *WMQ*, 31 (1974), 431-452, and "Into Pennsylvania's Spiritual Abyss The Rise and Fall of the Later Keithians, 1693-1703," *PMHB*, 101 (1977), 151-170, "Power, Authority, and the Origins of American Denominational Order. The English Churches in the Delaware Valley, 1680-1730," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 68, pt. 2 (Philadelphia 1978), 32-39, *The Keithian Controversy in Early Pennsylvania*, ed. J. William Frost (Norwood, 1980)

the issue at the risk of open division and a breach of "Unity" within the Society of Friends.¹⁴

In 1741 the Yearly Meeting followed similar tactics when confronted with James Logan's letter on the problem of the peace testimony and the needs of government in wartime. It refused to discuss the issue or to have Logan's letter read to the Meeting; Logan recognized the divisiveness of the subject but at the same time took care to keep the issue within the closed ranks of the Society of Friends.¹⁵ In their letter to the English Yearly Meeting, the Pennsylvania Quakers pointedly noted, probably in reference to Logan's initiative and to the turbulent politics of that year, "the Concern Continued for the Preservation of that comely Order our Primitive Friends under the Influence of the Holy Spirit were lead to Promote and Establish."¹⁶

Without doubt, Southeby as well as Logan had raised issues of central importance to Quaker theology. In both cases, however, their controversial views were not in harmony with the thinking of the overwhelming majority of Friends. Fearful of division within the church,

¹⁴ Kenneth L. Carroll, "William Southeby Early Quaker Antislavery Writer," *PMHB*, 89 (1965), 416-427, Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven, Conn., 1950), 29, William Southeby, *An Anti-Slavery Tract* (Philadelphia Printed by Andrew Bradford, 1715 [Evans, no. 1781]), this was re-published in 1717 [Evans, no. 1929], and generally *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery*, ed. with introduction by J. William Frost (Norwood 1980).

¹⁵ Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 202-203, William Allen to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, October 24, 1741, Thomas Penn Papers, microfilm edition [henceforth: TPP], roll 5, frame 558, where Allen relates attempts to use Logan's letter in the election campaign. Richard Peters to John Penn, Philadelphia, October 20, 1741. "Mr. Logan in Resentment as I suppose to such Treatment [i.e. by the Yearly Meeting] caused thirty Copies to be Printed off, to save the Trouble of Copying with a design to send them to his Friends in England, but whether he will or no is now doubtful, tho' I will persuade him if possible to send one to the Proprietors. It is said but I advance this without knowing any thing from him of the matter, that either by the persuasion of Mrs. Logan or in a Conference that was had in his house with some of the principal Members of the Meeting, he has altered his mind, keeps the contents a Secret and is disposed to suppress the whole, however, he has promised the Governor, Mr. Allen and myself the reading of it but under Secrecy at this time which I can't account for," Richard Peters Letterbook, 1737-1750, Historical Society of Pennsylvania [henceforth: HSP]. With Conrad Weiser Logan did compose a circular addressed to German voters which made some use of ideas he had formulated in his letter to the Yearly Meeting. Frederick B. Tolles, *James Logan and the Culture of Provincial America* (Boston 1957), 154-156, Paul A.W. Wallace, *Conrad Weiser, 1696-1760, Friend of Colonist and Mohawk* (Philadelphia 1945), 112-15, and Richard Peters's letter to John Penn cited above.

¹⁶ Epistles Received, III, fol. 78, Friends' Reference Library London [henceforth: FRLL].

the Meetings in 1717 and 1741 opted for the suppression of public debate of the issues. This decision-making process could result in temporizing at the expense of truth; however, it ensured among members of the Society of Friends concordance in beliefs to a much higher degree than that in other churches, while at the same time ensuring that sensitive issues could still be debated *within* meetings. Put differently, the meetings' enforcement of the "Love and Unity" principle put a premium on the concerns of the body of Friends while allowing those who cherished different opinions to work quietly within the meetings for group acceptance of their views.

Southeby's position on slavery was finally adopted by the Yearly Meeting in 1774, when slave-owning Friends were threatened with disownment if they did not free their slaves. James Logan's advice in his letter to Quakers to hand over the reigns of power to those who believed all government to be based on coercion was endorsed in 1775.¹⁷ One important implication of the Meeting's procedure identifies majority views—what Quakers termed their concerns—as more important than high principles, even if those principles are pronounced by the weightiest of Friends. Although James Logan's claims to religious distinction might be doubted, this could not be said of Jeremiah Langhorne, leading Quaker politician in Bucks County; Jacob Howell, signer of the Yearly Meeting Epistle to English Friends of 1740; Henry Reynolds, delegate of Chester Quarterly Meeting to the Yearly Meetings of 1736 and 1740; and Jane Hoskins, an influential Minister from Chester. And yet they all, at least according to Richard Peters, shared Logan's views about government and coercion.¹⁸ That the Yearly Meetings ultimately concurred with Southeby and Logan reveals not "deference" to a rational and enlightened few but a growing group sensitivity to the dilemmas occasioned by Quaker ideas and political realities.¹⁹

¹⁷ Drake, *Quakers and Slavery*, 71, Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 336-337, 390, 413, 421

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 200-202, William Allen to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, July 8, 1742, TPP, roll 5, frames 603-604

¹⁹ For a different view, see Frost, *Quaker Family*, 39-40, 48-61, and Butler, "American Denominational Order," 42, Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 145, believes that "despite the potential for fragmentation inherent in the latent individualism and equalitarianism of the 'inner light' the combined weight of consensus and deference repressed such tendencies," while I would rather interpret "consensus" as a function of equalitarianism

By enforcing the principle of "Love and Unity," Quakers ensured cohesiveness even during serious political crises. In addition, particular speech patterns, characteristic dressing habits, and the strict rule against outside marriage reinforced solidarity.²⁰ Such cohesiveness occasionally brought Quakers negative comments. Richard Hockley, for instance, frustrated in his attempts at selling his imported goods, complained to his patron Thomas Penn in May 1742 that "not a Quaker will come near me for what reasons I can't tell unless the Devilish prejudice they have against particular persons and so are willing to extend it to those that are their Friends."²¹

Certainly to the outsider, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting looked like a solid block with no fissures; and only rarely before 1754 did the Society of Friends indulge in open conflict and thus prompt hopeful rejoicings among hostile observers. James Logan's letter to the Yearly Meeting of 1741, John Smith's abortive subscription scheme of 1748 to raise money "for any Exigencys of Government" such as invasions by the enemy were the most visible conflicts. And although some differences seem apparent between city and country Quakers and between the rich and the "middling Quakers," these differences certainly could not have affected the image the Society of Friends wanted to present to the outside world.²²

Because it secured cohesiveness and fellowship within the meetings, the principle of "Love and Unity" had general political implications, too. The principle prescribed a certain mode of behavior to Quaker politicians as it imposed on divergent political groups a particular mode

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 143, Frederick B. Tolles, *Meeting House and Counting House. The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia 1682-1763* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1948), Frost, *Quaker Family*, *passim*; Butler, "American Denominational Order," 39-40, where Quaker views on morality and secular behavior are linked to the Keithian schism.

²¹ TPP, roll 5, frame 588 (letter is dated May 27, 1742), for other comments see *Gentleman's Progress. The Itinerarium of Dr. Alexander Hamilton, 1744*, ed. Carl Bridenbaugh (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1948), 22, *Peter Kalm's Travels in North America. The English Version of 1770*, rev. and ed. Adolph B. Benson, 2 vols. (1937, repr. New York, 1966), II, 651-652. Kalm notes that Quaker dressing habits had lost much of their peculiarity, a point also made by Mittelberger, *Journey*, 74-75, 88-90. John Adams like others referred to Quakers as "Broadbrims," *Adams Family Correspondence*, ed., L.H. Butterfield, 4 vols. (Cambridge, Mass., 1963-1973), I, 165.

²² Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 162-163, 169-198, Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, May 11, 1748, TPP, roll 6, unnumbered.

of behavior and political tactics which profoundly influenced Pennsylvania politics. During the turbulent first three decades of the colony's history, the Yearly Meeting twice directly reprimanded those Quaker politicians who were violating church discipline by reminding them they had "been too Factious and Troublesome in the Governments, under which they ought Peaceably to Live, and [had]. . .disquieted the Minds of others, to the Making of Parties and Disturbances."²³ Pennsylvania politics in these early decades were still very much Quaker family affairs. Political disagreements abounded and were tolerated as long as they did not threaten the consensus on basic constitutional issues. But this was precisely the problem in 1701 and again in 1710. In both years the very existence of the political system seemed threatened. By enforcing the principle of "Love and Unity," the Yearly Meeting's interference in both cases restored the Quaker consensus on the fundamental issues raised in connection with the Charter of Liberty (1701) and the correct relationship between the peace testimony and the Quakers' understanding of the duties of government (1710). The Yearly Meeting Epistle of 1710 freely admitted "that many Friends are under great Exercises & Burdens by Reason of different Opinions & Actings, concerning matters of Temporal Government."²⁴ Both Epistles called not only for "Unity" on vital political issues but encouraged, in the words of the 1701 Epistle, the meetings to watch out for those violating the principle of "Love and Unity" and "wherever they find them, forthwith to deal with them, and to Acquit our Holy Profession of them."²⁵ The effects of both Epistles were remarkable. After the Yearly Meeting of 1701, agreement on the central issues of the Charter of Liberty was quickly established. A few days after the issuance of the Epistle, the elections on October 1, 1710, returned a completely new set of members to the Assembly—all of the old ones had been guilty of a breach of "Love and Unity," at least so the voters thought!²⁶ Evoking the principle of "Love and Unity" clearly had the desired effects in both cases of tuning down the controversy and closing the ranks behind the Proprietor and his supporters.

²³ Yearly Meeting for Pennsylvania and New Jersey Minutes [henceforth: YMPNJM] I, fol. 86 for a similar exhortation in 1684 see Butler, "American Denominational Order," 13, 31.

²⁴ YMPNJM, I, fol. 132.

²⁵ YMPNJM, I, fol. 86.

²⁶ Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 95.

With the increase of inhabitants belonging to other denominations after 1710, the position of Quakers in Pennsylvania changed. Although the Society of Friends easily remained the most powerful political force, it gradually lost its monopolistic position. Earlier political opponents had shared the same religious beliefs, but by 1730 most opponents belonged to other denominations. By 1730 the Society of Friends had definitely lost its all-inclusive umbrella function. With these changes the role of "Love and Unity" changed too. The urge for "Unity" and solidarity acquired a new meaning: by the time Logan's letter reached the Yearly Meeting in 1741, "Unity" meant consensus both on basic issues and on a range of practical political problems. "Love," the other component, acquired at least in the eyes of London Friends a new meaning for the style of politics. Quakers henceforth became much more aware that their political style, the language they used, and the tactics they employed had to be compatible with the required "meekness" and "mildness of temper" as expressions of "Love."

The 1720s and early 1730s marked the transition to a new stage of political behavior. In the 1720s leading Quakers condemned the politics of Governor Sir William Keith not only for their social and economic implications but generally for their breach of "Love and Unity." As late as 1731, Isaac Norris, Sr., reported to Thomas Penn that "for some years before Sir William was Superseded, the Province was in Confusion, partys made & Encouraged against your Interest, and ye Peace of ye Country, Tumults frequent Love & Sociall Blessings very much decay'd & almost lost among ye People—the sober & quiet part of ye Inhabitants could hardly think themselves safe." The situation was still not the same as before Keith's arrival, Norris continued, but "in appearance Good neighbourhood & peace is revived and propagated & a Temper Growing among ye People by a steady, moderate & impartiall procedure in ye Government."²⁷

Thomas Penn's politics and the onset of the War of Jenkins' Ear disrupted endeavors by Norris and other Quaker politicians to steer Pennsylvania politics into quiet waters.²⁸ Again, controversy reigned high. Richard Hockley saw a "Devilish Prejudice" in the Quakers

²⁷ To Thomas Penn, November 15, 1731, TPP, roll 4, frame 411.

²⁸ Cf. below n. 71.

against the Proprietors, while William Allen's only consolation in the autumn of 1741 was that he and his friends had succeeded in blocking the candidacy of Quakers for the Philadelphia Common Council: "It was a matter of laughter to see that these men of peace were capable of being made so angry." He added with bitterness, "the truth is they are so malicious and proud that they can not bear to see any body in office who will not truckle to them,"²⁹ clearly indicating a lack of "meekness" and "mildness of temper" in some Quaker politicians.

There was some truth in Hockley and Allen's charges at least in the eyes of London Friends. Dr. John Fothergill reminded Israel Pemberton on April 8, 1742, that in the present controversy about money appropriations for military purposes Quaker politicians "discover a little more warmth than is quite consistent with the moderation we profess. . . . There is a rock which many of you know where to seek but to which he [the Governor] discovers himself to be a perfect stranger." The Assembly's arguments Fothergill thought right, but, "he [the Governor] justly accuses you of too much acrimony. Truth never appears more agreeable than when dressed with mildness and temper."³⁰ It had indeed been galling to the Assemblymen to be asked by Governor George Thomas whether their "odious Insinuations and bitter Invectives" were really consistent with their "Meekness and Moderation" or even with the "Reputation of the religious Society" to which they belonged.³¹ The riots in Philadelphia on election day, 1742, and the arrival of Penn's prudent order to appoint Speaker John Kinsey Chief Justice of the Supreme Court effectively ended the controversy for the rest of the decade, without, however, removing the causes of it. Yet, an elated Richard Hockley wrote from Philadelphia in May, 1743, to Thomas Penn that "all Animosity and Party differences seem to be pretty well over. . . and good Harmony subsists in general."³²

²⁹ Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, May 27, 1742, TPP, roll 5, frame 588; William Allen to same, Philadelphia, October 24, 1741, TPP, roll 5, frame 559.

³⁰ Dr. John Fothergill to Israel Pemberton, Jr., London, April 8, 1742, Pemberton Papers, vol. 34, fol. 2, HSP.

³¹ *Pennsylvania Archives. 8th Series: Votes and Proceedings of the House of Representatives of the Province of Pennsylvania*, ed. Gertrude MacKinney, Charles F. Hoban, 8 vols. (Harrisburg, Pa., 1931-1935), IV, 2747-2748 [henceforth: *Votes and Proceedings*].

³² Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, May 5, 1743, TPP, roll 5, frames 664-665.

This harmony became increasingly threatened in the early 1750s as the Assembly insisted on the Proprietors' contribution to the costs of financing Pennsylvania's Indian policy and the Proprietors in retaliation pushed their demand that their Governors be involved in the disposition of funds arising from newly issued paper money. By early 1753 all these issues were fused into one: the problem of the prerogative.³³ At this point Governor Hamilton resigned. Thomas Penn now decided to pick a successor who by character, experience, and knowledge of colonial affairs would be willing to face the prolonged and bitter fight Hamilton and the small proprietary band predicted should Penn and his new Governor try to regain some control over public funds. Yet the Proprietors' choice, Robert Hunter Morris, even amazed some of their staunchest friends. In Philadelphia, so Richard Hockley reported, this appointment was taken as an open declaration of war:

the most modest say 'tis the most unfortunate thing that's happen'd to Pennsylvania, he shall sitt in hott Water if he shews his Jersey Airs, you cannot conceive Sir how they are all alarmed in general. . . and publicly declare he shall do no good here, tight bound instructions from your Family will suit his disposition as he is a great stickler for prerogative and many other ill judged expressions of the like kind.³⁴

As the debate over the appropriation clause in Morris's instructions deteriorated into a mud-throwing match, uneasiness among Philadelphia Quakers outside the House increased. By May, 1755, Israel Pemberton, Jr., felt it was time for action. At first, his suggestion of a letter from the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting to the London Meeting for Sufferings encountered opposition because some Friends "were fearful of our entring into the vindication of the Conduct of the Assembly."³⁵ Indeed, in their letter of May 5, 1755, the weighty Friends avoided just that, for their letter was remarkable in its expression of complete agreement with the Assembly's policies³⁶ and disagreement

³³ Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 165-168, 220-224.

³⁴ Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, August 4, 1754, TPP, roll 8, frame 65, 63.

³⁵ Israel Pemberton, Jr. to Dr. John Fothergill, Philadelphia, November 27, 1755, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 7, HSP.

³⁶ The authors, however, strongly disagreed with the rumor circulated in Pennsylvania, that Quakers were trying to interest the Crown in taking over the colony.

with its "conduct" in the controversy. The epistle first explicitly laid down three principles which, when violated, would induce Friends to bid farewell to politics, namely, "fearing God, honouring the King, and promoting Peace and good Will among Men." It continued that some Assembly members had voluntarily resigned their seats "as they found themselves incapable of preserving the Peace and Tranquility of their own Minds."³⁷ Two weeks later Israel Pemberton reiterated this point in a letter to Dr. Fothergill: "as a Society we have this point most constantly in view to approve ourselves the Peaceable Disciples of Christ. . . and faithful Subjects of the King." Fothergill understood well the uneasiness of Philadelphia Friends; he agreed that "a good cause may suffer by too passionate a vindication," wished that "all acrimony may be kept down," and in general sympathized with Pennsylvania Friends in these difficult times.³⁸

Braddock's defeat in July, 1755, and the first Indian incursions into Pennsylvania established a new context for Pennsylvania politics as well as for Quaker attitudes. Earlier, however, the stress on the principle of "Love and Unity" at the expense of religious principles had had disquieting implications in the eyes of some ministering Friends. For Samuel Fothergill from England, and for William Brown, John Pemberton, and others from Philadelphia, a close attention to politics was sure proof of too much worldliness, an attention reversible only through a revival of the "Ancient Testimonies" of Friends. In their view, the behavioral aspects of the principle of "Love and Unity" were directly responsible for the decline they so much bemoaned.³⁹ Yet, this behavioral aspect had maintained the Society of Friends' control over provincial politics, kept inviolate the Quakers' "most valuable Privileges," brought despair to Thomas Penn's friends in the colony and

³⁷ Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings [henceforth MfS] Minutes, I, fols 11-19. The letter expressly recorded agreement with the Assembly's habit, "to provide for the Exigencies of Government," the formula used to describe the granting of money which the governor could use for military purposes, cf. Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 204-205, 222-229.

³⁸ Israel Pemberton, Jr. to Dr. John Fothergill, Philadelphia, May 19, 1755, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol 2, HSP, Dr. John Fothergill to Israel Pemberton, Jr., August 18, 1755, *ibid.*, fol 4.

³⁹ Viewed from the agitation of the 1750s, the establishment of an "hierarchical authority" of ministering Friends and Elders between 1690 and 1720 described by Butler, "American Denominational Order," 31-43, was obviously not a thing to last but quickly deteriorated in the 1720s.

caused the development of rather radical schemes to oust Quakers from the seats of power.

In May, 1732, when Thomas Penn arrived in Pennsylvania, his primary aim was to reorganize proprietary affairs as a pre-condition for retrieving the family's fortune. With pride he informed his brother John of his success on April 9, 1740: "the Sums I have remitted. . . will intirely clear us of debt and will make the Remittances. . . since January last Year near fifteen Thousand Pounds of our Currency."⁴⁰ This was a remarkable accomplishment, but his success meant that many Pennsylvania settlers for the first time experienced the concrete significance of living in a proprietary colony. Political debates there had been, but since 1715 most conflicts centered around economic problems related to the currency issue. The vital constitutional issues relating to the distribution of power between Governor, Assembly, and Council had been settled before 1710 and had since become customary.⁴¹

People had indeed habituated themselves to these privileges and liberties to an extent which worried at least James Logan. He confessed "to have really no opinion of a Dependance on any Sort of Publick Affairs where the caprices & humours of the Populace (which is always the Case in Countrys where they enjoy great Liberties) have so great an Influence and are therefore to be so much regarded." Half a year later Logan feared Sir William Keith's friends might succeed in creating such chaos as to induce the Crown to take over the colony. Penn should take this seriously, so his father's secretary lectured, considering "what the multitude is, when their Passions are fired and they scarce feel any Reins of Government at all." All the government's efforts were bent towards "reducing the People to the good and peaceable disposition," Logan told Penn just before this gentleman prepared for his visit to the colony.⁴²

⁴⁰ Thomas Penn to John Penn, Philadelphia, April 9, 1740, TPP, roll 5, frame 481.

⁴¹ See Nash, *Quakers and Politics*, chaps. 6-7; Roy Norman Lokken, *David Lloyd. Colonial Lawmaker* (Seattle, 1959); Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 63-118, Richard A. Lester, "Currency Issues to Overcome Depressions in Pennsylvania, 1723 to 1729," *The Journal of Political Economy*, 46 (1938), 324-375. Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 135-140, probably downplays these controversies of the 1720s too much.

⁴² James Logan to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, October 25, 1728, TPP, roll 4, frames 282-283; same to John and Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, April 24, 1729, TPP, roll 4, frames 303-306. Cf. generally Tolles, *James Logan*.

Thomas Penn's political attitudes and in particular his conceptions about the proper distribution of power in Pennsylvania may have been reinforced during his long stay from 1732 to 1740 by conditions in Pennsylvania and by what Logan and politicians like Isaac Norris, Sr., had told him. By spring 1739/1740, at any rate, Thomas Penn had clearly formulated a long-term political program which he spelled out in a letter to his brothers John and Richard. Confessing his "sovereign. . . Contempt for their [Quaker politicians'] understandings and the Principles on which they act," Thomas Penn announced his determination "to regain all the powers our Gouvernors were justly intituled to before Sir William Keith and our faint-hearted Council gave them up" and asked his brothers "to suggest to the Ministry. . . the Expulsion of Friends from the Assembly."⁴³

Both parts of this longterm program, of which Thomas Penn never lost sight, reflect a "court" ideology resting on assumptions and a concept of government which were shared by only a few supporters in Pennsylvania. Penn's aim of re-establishing his view of a proper balance of power essentially by securing the Governor a share in the disposition of the public money rested on an exalted view of the governmental role of the Proprietors, a view rather out of touch with Pennsylvania political realities. In the final analysis, it was based on an autocratic concept of government akin to that cherished by James Logan. At the same time, it implied a complete rejection of the colony's political creed as it had evolved since the passage of the Charter of Liberties and Privileges in 1701. The second part of his program, the expulsion of Quakers from the Assembly by act of the British government, however, can only be understood on the basis of Penn's acceptance of political realities in the colony. Though the majority of electors belonged to other religious denominations, Quaker politicians had established such complete control over the colony's electorate that it was a hopeless endeavor to work for changes *within* the colonial political structure. The "caprices & humours of the Populace" were, to use James Logan's words once again, "so much regarded" by the Assembly

⁴³ Thomas Penn to John and Richard Penn, Philadelphia, March 23, 1739/40, TPP, roll 5, frames 473-475. Penn added that he did not "desire to exclude them [i.e. Quakers] from Offices they can discharge. . . but 'tis ridiculous to pretend to hold a Government by the Means of People that will not defend it."

and the unanimity between the two so solid and close that Penn must have realized a change in the Assembly's composition either in the short or in the long run was impossible.

The few friends the Proprietors had in the colony did not share Penn's pessimistic assessment of the possibilities for changing the complexion of the Assembly. Both in 1741 and in 1742, William Allen, William Plumstead, and Richard Peters made strenuous efforts to build up a following in hopes of getting at least some of the Proprietors' supporters elected. Sadly Allen reported on October 24, 1741, that he "could not prevail on Jeremiah Langhorne nor hardly any other to Join with." Despite this stunning defeat, Allen wrote Penn in July, 1742, that his friends "are resolved to have another tryal. . .this next election." He hoped that they would be able to organize not only an opposition but "a warm one if we can secure the germans or divide them I believe we shall outnumber them."⁴⁴

His prediction about a warm contest on election day proved truer than Allen cared for; the election day riot effectively ruined Allen, Andrew Hamilton, Plumstead, and Peters's reputation for the rest of the decade and put an end to efforts to dislodge Quakers from the Assembly. The crucial feature in this as in earlier elections had been the German vote.⁴⁵ Allen's realization that it would be impossible to break up the German-Quaker voting alliance prompted him immediately after the election of 1742 to adopt Thomas Penn's insight of March 1739/40: "Except they [i.e. Quakers] Receive some Check from England, I see no Possibility of having Peace or any Order in Government restored in the Province." The efforts in building up a proprietary party had failed.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ William Allen to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, October 24, 1741, and July 8, 1742, TPP, roll 5, frames 558-559, 603-604.

⁴⁵ On the election day riot, see Richard Hockley to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 1, 1742, TPP, roll 5, frame 631. For modern conflicting interpretations cf. Norman S. Cohen, "The Philadelphia Election Riot of 1742," *PMHB*, 92 (1968), 306-319, and William T. Parsons, "The Bloody Election of 1742," *Pennsylvania History*, 36 (1969), 290-306; Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 33-34. Dietmar Rothermund, *The Layman's Progress. Religious and Political Experience in Colonial Pennsylvania 1740-1770* (Philadelphia 1961), 73-74, errs in dating the decisive role of the German vote from 1742 onwards.

⁴⁶ William Allen to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 20, 1742, TPP, roll 5, frames 638-639; Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 36-37.

And these efforts continued to fail. Richard Peters' report of October 20, 1748, that the Assembly had been "reelected without Opposition it appearing manifest that had there been a Contest there would be no hopes of Success" applied with equal strength to all elections between 1743 and 1753. Significantly, however, he continued to report to the Proprietors that "they [i.e., Quaker Assemblymen] are now firmer than ever and cannot be removed unless they quarrel with one another." The unity of the Society of Friends and the close rapport of Quaker politicians particularly with their German electorate practically made the colony a one-party-state. This "harmony," which Peters reported in September 1749,⁴⁷ was the cause of despair to Governor James Hamilton six months later. The Quakers' tactics "to make such Use of that Spirit among the people to render themselves popular" were based on an "involute Spirit of Hatred against Magistracy." This "inveteracy . . . against Magistracy," Hamilton confessed three weeks later, was so strong, that Assemblymen refused to accept appointments as Justices of the Peace for "fear of losing their popularity."⁴⁸

Hamilton believed the electorate that hated magistracy was not of English origin but of German extraction. Having escaped the slavery of the German principalities, these immigrants "upon their coming hither" had, according to Hamilton, become "more impatient of a just Government than any others." Their attitude had the sad consequence that "the most turbulent and seditious of the people" were "chosen into the Assembly." Here as in later letters, Hamilton, (Peters, too) gradually began to use the terms "people" and "Assembly" interchangeably. Lawyers were agitating for a Court of Chancery and yet refused to apply for one to the Governor unless such courts were established by "Act of Assembly: in which case the People might probably aim at laying your Governors under such restrictions as you would not be pleased with."

⁴⁷ Richard Peters to Thomas and Richard Penn, Philadelphia, October 20, 1748, September 11, 1749, November 6, 1753, TPP, roll 6, unnumbered, roll 7, frames 780-784.

⁴⁸ Gov. James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, February 3, 22, 1749/50, February 22, 1750/51, TPP, roll 6, unnumbered, roll 7, frame 6.

Clearly, in this case, he meant "Assembly" by the word "People."⁴⁹

Two years later Richard Peters lamented the fact that the few friends of the Proprietors were "content to see the enormous powers of the people encreasing every day, so that whenever they shall be disposed to use violence, they may do it with out resistance"—a description in which the term "people" clearly stands for Assembly and electorate.⁵⁰ Hamilton confirmed this analysis. A defense of proprietary policy automatically exposed the defender "to the resentment and reproaches of the whole Province and that for a long tract of Time," he stated, and he wished to be released from this burden. Three days later Peters was more specific. He informed Thomas Penn, "you have very few friends in this Province, hardly any of influence, the Governor and Mr. Allen, Mr. Shoemaker and Mr. Strettell and perhaps two or three more in the Town and Mr. Growdon in the Country." It was indeed a singular situation: "the People knowing their Power insult the Magistrates, contend with their Governors oppose the Proprietaries, influence Courts of Justice, in short settle Lands without the Proprietaries Consent and the Sheriffs dare not meddle with them."⁵¹

Peters might well have been puzzled, for to even such a knowledgeable observer it was not clear what was tail and what was head, who the leaders and who the duped. Peters concluded his report about the 1750 election with remarks which clearly demonstrate his bewilderment: "From these Names neither the Proprietors nor Governor can expect any thing good, whatsoever the People put into their heads they will do." Did he really mean that the Assemblymen were led by the

⁴⁹ Same to same, Philadelphia, September 24, 1750, TPP, roll 6, unnumbered. Richard Alan Ryerson has suggested that the confusion between "Assembly" and "people" was probably quite common in eighteenth-century British North America. That is probably true, although I suspect that in other colonies the term "people" was more often used in a negative sense (meaning "rabble") than in Pennsylvania. Hamilton and Peters, however, implied something quite different, which I think is important. They used the term synonymously because they believed the two to be one and the same, thus ascribing to Quakers and their supporters a concept of representation radically different from the one shared by Peters and Hamilton.

⁵⁰ Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, June 12, 1752, TPP, roll 7, frames 411-412.

⁵¹ Gov. James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, February 9, 1753, March 18, 1752, TPP, roll 7, frames 600-601, 354-355, Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, February 12, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 592-593.

people?⁵² Strangely, by late 1752 Governor Hamilton agreed that "Whatever influence sound reason and argument might be supposed to have on some few of Our Representatives, when acting in a private Capacity, Yet as Assembly Men, they seem to have made a full and perfect surrender of their Understanding to the humours of the people grown drunk with licentiousness." Yet upon second thought he suggested "that the present Clamour [for paper money] is rather the effect of artful infusing into the people by some of the Leaders of the Assembly in order to secure their own power and popularity."⁵³ But again Peters suggested the reverse relationship in February, 1753. He declared that Assemblymen "dare not disoblige the People thro' fear of losing their Seats in the Assembly."⁵⁴ "Purity of intention and uprightness of Conduct avail a Man nothing here, unless He will also gratify the People in all their inordinate Desires," Hamilton wrote in November, 1753, possibly recalling his earlier theory that John Kinsey had sold his soul to German voters for precisely that reason.⁵⁵

Clearly, Hamilton and Peters faced a political reality which belied all their conceptions of proper political structures; the members in the Assembly *ought* to have been leading the people, probably deluding them, manipulating them for their own crafty ends—that would have been within the range of their view of politics and experience. But Assemblymen, being in the position of exercising power, never ought to have given the impression of being led, subservient to the electorate, dependent on the people's will. And yet they seemed so inseparably linked to the electors that their opponents' analysis wavered over whether to talk only about the whole people, since the Assembly seemed but an inseparable part of them. And indeed so the Assembly thought itself. In answer to Governor Thomas' charge that the Assembly's tactics were to divide the people, the Assemblymen retorted curtly, "we

⁵² Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 17, 1750, TPP, roll 6, unnumbered.

⁵³ Gov. James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 17, 1752, TPP, roll 7, frame 531.

⁵⁴ Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, February 12, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 592-593.

⁵⁵ Gov. James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 26, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 799-800.

answer: The Party we are of is our Country."⁵⁶

The surrender of men of "Understanding" and large property to the whims of the populace created a serious deviation from the political norms of the British Constitution—and on this Peters, Hamilton, Allen, and Attorney General Francis agreed⁵⁷—that balance could be restored only by extraordinary measures. At first Allen, then Peters, and finally Hamilton strongly advised Thomas Penn in 1753 to secure the help of the Crown or at least that of Lord Halifax, President of the Board of Trade. Shortly thereafter, the new Governor Robert Hunter Morris, after a brief but vitriolic encounter with the Assembly, subscribed to this view, too.⁵⁸ Within six months, the other supporters of Thomas Penn agreed with Governor James Hamilton's bland assessment that the "people. . . are all devoted to the Assembly, and as much as possible adverse to you" and made an open appeal to the British government to interfere in Pennsylvania. This was the intention and the primary aim of an address to the crown and of the Rev. William Smith's pamphlet, *A Brief State of the Province of Pennsylvania*, published in London in spring, 1755.⁵⁹

In ethnic diversity, religious variety, and regional economic differences Pennsylvania rivaled New York as well as Maryland. And yet, between 1739 and 1755, its political structure was radically different from these as well as from most other colonies.⁶⁰ While these non-Quaker neighbors enjoyed permanent disputes between well-en-

⁵⁶ My argument runs counter to the theory that Pennsylvania politics were controlled by a small ruling elite in this period. Had that been so, Hamilton and Peters would not have been so perplexed. For a somewhat confused discussion of this problem and the function of "deference" in Pennsylvania revolutionary politics, see John K. Alexander, "Deference in Colonial Pennsylvania and That Man from New Jersey," *PMHB*, 102 (1978), 422-436, *Votes and Proceedings*, IV, 2802.

⁵⁷ Reported by Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, February 7, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 594-596, and by Gov. James Hamilton to same, Philadelphia, February 9, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 600-601.

⁵⁸ Peters' letter of February 7, 1753, n. 57, same to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, February 12, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 592-593, and for Morris's attitude Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, December 16, 1754, TPP, roll 8, frames 102-104.

⁵⁹ Gov. James Hamilton to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, November 26, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 799-800, for the motives behind the address and the pamphlet cf. Rev. William Smith to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, May 1, 1755, TPP, roll 8, frames 160-163.

⁶⁰ Patricia U. Bonomi, *A Factious People. Politics, and Society in Colonial New York* (New York, 1971), Aubrey C. Land, *Colonial Maryland. A History* (Millwood, N.Y., 1981).

trenched political groups, Pennsylvania's political landscape was graced by but one large monolithic block. Even if we agree with Alan Tully that the Society of Friends managed to maintain its unity until the middle of the 1750s, this will explain only part of this strange phenomenon. Proprietary politics—or rather the heavy-handed attempts to enforce them—played into the hands of Quaker politicians. But that does not account for the coherence of this politically unified block between 1743 and 1753, when the Proprietors and their Governors suspended their attempts to get control of the appropriation of the public funds. What caused the majority of non-Quakers to vote against candidates allied with the Proprietors?

The possible answer—and this is the best that can be given now—might be found in the frequent charges of proprietary supporters that Quaker politicians were courting popular measures, were seeking popularity, were, in other words, orienting their policies to the political expediency—Peters would say, licentiousness—of the electorate. Put differently, ample evidence shows that Quakers extended their concern for the views of the majority within meetings to the electorate at large when politics were concerned.⁶¹ In secular terms, the principle of “Love and Unity” meant taking the “concerns” of the electors seriously, accepting the fact that German-speaking local officials would be elected, consulting leading Germans before settling the ticket for the next election rather than high-handedly presenting them with a *fait accompli*.⁶² The willingness to compromise, to accommodate, and thus to establish unity was a principle of Quaker behavior within their Society and outside as well.

⁶¹ This hypothesis is confirmed for Warrington Monthly Meeting, Daniel Snyder, “Kinship and Community in Rural Pennsylvania, 1749-1820,” *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 13 (1982-83), 41-61, esp 58-60. Too little is known about the interrelationship between religious beliefs and behavior in communities.

⁶² Joan de Lourdes Leonard, “Elections in Colonial Pennsylvania,” *WMQ*, 11 (1954), 385-401, esp 398-400, William T. Parsons, *The Pennsylvania Dutch: A Persistent Minority* (Boston, 1976), 75-91, stresses economic cooperation between Quakers and German settlers as an important factor influencing political cooperation, Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 196-197, Tully, *Penn's Legacy*, 63-64. For a more thorough discussion of the German-Quaker relationship cf. Alan Tully, “Ethnicity, Religion, and Politics in Early America”, this issue. The behavioral consequences stemming from the principle of “Love and Unity” were, however, not consciously applied to politics.

The working of this religious principle not only reshaped Pennsylvania's political structure, supposedly turned the proper relationship between rulers and ruled in the minds of Richard Peters and James Hamilton upside down, but in the last analysis caused the small Proprietary group to turn to the British government for help. The very success of the Society of Friends in unifying the electorate made the appeal to the mother country the only possible means to change the colony's political setup and thus curb the "people's inordinate desires," curb, in short, the dangerous tide towards republicanism. Thomas Penn had reached that conclusion as early as 1740; William Allen had briefly agreed with Penn in 1742. By spring, 1755, the small band of proprietary followers unanimously and whole-heartedly embraced an appeal to England as the only means to succeed. It was a remarkable tribute to the working of the principle of "Love and Unity."

"Unity" indeed was the keyword for the strange political situation that taxed Hamilton and Peters' political perceptions. They were fighting for the establishment of a proper balance between constitutional powers, for the establishment of a well-ordered "magistracy." They stressed the interdependence of the people's and the Proprietors' interests and struggled hard to have the Proprietors' interests represented in the Assembly. In short, they were in true "court" fashion pursuing what seemed a perfectly intelligible policy. They sought to accomplish their political ends by linking them to what they believed were the true interests of the people. These they equated with the necessary function of government to defend private property. The Quakers' peace testimony was not the real problem, as they knew full well; for until 1754 the Assembly had always, albeit grudgingly, granted the King money to use for military and defensive purposes.⁶³ The real problem that caused Peters to "get no rest neither night nor day" was the shameful backwardness of the "Men of Estates" who did not support the Proprietors' policy of acquiring a share in the disposition of the public money. For, so Peters continued, such a policy was so perfectly right, was "a cause so near, so interesting so absolutely necessary and agreeable to their [the Proprietors'] Judgement" that it had to be realized even if the "Men of

⁶³ Hermann Wellenreuther, "The Political Dilemma of the Quakers in Pennsylvania, 1681-1748," *PMHB*, 94 (1970), 135-172. For a definition of the peace testimony cf. below n. 71.

Estates" did not subscribe to it. Only such a policy, Peters thought, would, once accomplished, turn the propertied men's "fears. . . on the right Side, I mean that they may be brought under an Obligation to regard the Administrators of the Government as well as the Representatives of the People."⁶⁴

But why had "Men of Estates" to be forced "to be brought under an Obligation to regard the Administrators of the Government?" The only explanation Hamilton and Peters gave—and here they both indulged in "country" rhetoric—was that these men lacked virtue and that people generally were licentious and refused magistracy the respect due to it. Clearly, the configuration of Pennsylvania politics transcended the political scenarios underpinning "court" as well as "country" ideologies. For even the most extreme "country" positions in the eighteenth century—at any rate, before the 1760s—accepted the necessity for a true balance of power and a strong magistracy (yet one controlled by elected representatives of freeholders) and rejected the idea of "an Obligation to regard. . . the Representatives of the People" only.⁶⁵ Neither the model of the English constitution nor the prescriptions for proper political behavior fitted Pennsylvania political reality before 1754. The peculiar secular consequences of the principle of "Love and Unity," no doubt reinforced by other factors, had created a new political structure defying definition along lines of traditional English political terminology and concepts. But that came to an end with the outbreak of the Seven Years' War. After 1755 Pennsylvania politics gradually inched back toward the fold of the other colonial political systems without, however, completely losing its distinctiveness.

The distinctiveness was largely the result of the workings of the principle of "Love and Unity." Granted, little evidence demonstrates that this principle was consciously evoked and enforced. The workings of "Love and Unity" are demonstrable mostly from perception of political reality by the Quakers' opponents. Yet, how reliable were these observations? As far as the "one-party" structure of Pennsylvania politics in the 1740s and early 1750s is concerned, these comments certainly agree nicely with other facts like the low turn-over rate of the

⁶⁴ Richard Peters to Thomas Penn, Philadelphia, June 1, 1753, TPP, roll 7, frames 665-666.

⁶⁵ Cf. Wellenreuther, "Korruption und das Wesen der englischen Verfassung."

Assembly, but they of course tell us nothing about the reasons for the preservation of "Unity" within the Society of Friends as a political body. Three reasons account for the absence of such direct evidence: the principle of "Love and Unity" was an attitude that shaped communication with potential political allies but needed little comment in normal times. Only in severe crises threatening the well-being of the Society of Friends as in the crises of 1701 and 1710 did the principle of "Love and Unity" get discussed, evoked, and enforced. There was no such crisis in the period before 1755 and thus there simply was no reason to evoke and comment on this principle. But in 1755 that was to change almost overnight.

An irony of Pennsylvania history is that at the very moment that the small proprietary band finally gave up hope of ever achieving their ends within the framework of Pennsylvania politics the basis of the Quakers' control of the Assembly was being eroded by the turn of military events as well as by forces operating within the Society of Friends. In the summer of 1755, or at the latest in the autumn, a number of ministering Friends made their first determined push to change the order of things, to relegate the principle of "Love and Unity" to servants' quarters and elevate other religious principles to the prime living sectors of the House of God. Even worse, in the process of setting new priorities, the ministering Friends with the help of some Elders radically changed the definition of the peace testimony as well which put them at odds not only with large segments of the Pennsylvania Society of Friends but with the English Yearly Meeting.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 258-269, chaps. x-xi; others have emphasized different aspects in discussing the crisis. Ralph L. Ketcham, "Conscience, War, and Politics in Pennsylvania, 1755-1757," *WMQ*, 20 (1963), 416-439, stresses the general political aspect; Jack D. Marietta, "Conscience, the Quaker Community, and the French and Indian War," *PMHB*, 95 (1971), 3-27, essentially sees the crisis as a cleansing process within the Pennsylvania Society of Friends; Richard Bauman, *For the Reputation of Truth. Politics, Religion, and Conflict Among the Pennsylvania Quakers, 1750-1800* (Baltimore, Md., 1971), 22-139, the most detailed analysis in English, who assigns no significance to transatlantic factors (*ibid.*, 26), ignores the rank and file membership of the rural meetings in the 1760s but stresses like I do the divisive tactics of the revival group and its political implications for the 1760s and 1770s.

Once the act for allowing £60,000 in bills of legal tender largely for military purposes to be sunk by a tax on all property had passed the House and received the Governor's assent in the autumn of 1755, the conflict within the Society of Friends spread rapidly. Some twenty Friends, including Samuel Fothergill, William Brown, and John Churchman who had been visiting meetings "thrashing the lofty mountains"—meaning Friends not up to their standards—"to pieces, and to bow the sturdy oaks," hurried to Philadelphia. After a fruitless discussion with members of the House on November 6, they submitted a petition to the Assembly, whose Quaker majority in Samuel Fothergill's eyes now had become "backsliding people." That this petition was styled "an unadvised and indiscreet Application" by the committee of the House did nothing to narrow the rift.⁶⁷

In their petition to the Assembly this small group of Friends raised two issues central to the Society of Friends' role in politics, to their concept of authority, and to their peace testimony. First, did the Assembly's appropriation of money for the King's use violate the peace testimony *if* there were a clear understanding that part or all of that money was being used for military purposes, and second, did the payment of taxes for raising such money likewise violate the Quakers' peace testimony? On both issues the traditional position of the Society of Friends was perfectly clear, as the Assembly pointed out in its answer. It reproached the petitioners on November 14 for not having duly considered "what has been heretofore transacted in the Assemblies of this Province, particularly in relation to the Act for granting Two Thousand Pounds for the Queen's Use, passed in the Year 1711," implying that in 1711 an act comparable with the one passed in November, 1755, had been agreed to together with a tax for raising the money granted for the Queen's use for paying expenses incurred in connection with the expedition against French Canada. What had been agreeable to the

⁶⁷ Samuel Fothergill to Susanne Fothergill, Maiden Creek, Berks County, October 20, 1755, Portfolio 22, fol. 53, FRL; same to same, Philadelphia, November 6, 1755, *The Friends' Library: Comprising Journals, Doctrinal Treatises, and Other Writings of Members of the Religious Society of Friends*, IX, ed., William and Thomas Evans (Philadelphia 1845), 165-166; *Votes and Proceedings*, V, 4173.

religious principles of Quakers in 1711 remained compatible in 1755.⁶⁸

In November, 1755, the twenty-eight Quaker Assemblymen had even stronger arguments on their side. They could point to the uninterrupted practice of their English brethren in paying taxes clearly raised for funding military establishments. But their most important argument was that in September, 1755, the Yearly Meeting had refused to endorse the views of the petitioners. In view of the importance of the issues involved, the Yearly Meeting had arranged for a special meeting of all the committees. The only source for what went on at that meeting is a letter written by Israel Pemberton to Dr. John Fothergill reporting that:

for want of previous Consultation and opening of our minds first in a more Select Number, and being strained for time. . . it was judged most prudent to refer the Consideration to the first suitable Opportunity. . . afterwards it was proposed to the Meeting to consider whether the payment of Such a Tax under our Circumstances would be consistent with our Principles. . . but the fears of some, least a debate on the Subject should not terminate to satisfaction, and the opposition in the minds of others to have any question made of a matter in which they thought the Example of

⁶⁸ *Ibid.* Marietta, "Conscience," 15, thinks the critics of the Assembly were right, "for the Assembly controlled the disposition of the money in 1755, whereas it did not in 1711." This is quite true, but the surprising fact is that this argument, strangely enough, was used by neither side in the whole debate. The ambiguity was clearly expressed in that the Assembly appropriated the money "to the King's use" on the one hand and then disposed of it through commissioners, who were nominally the King's officers. There is some disagreement about the definition of the peace testimony. Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 9-15, 163-165, 245-246, assumes that between 1681 and 1755 the peace testimony was gradually being influenced by the Quakers' concept of authority, thereby changing its theological contents and narrowing its range, until it was radically broadened again by the revival group's definition. Traditional opinion as expressed by Peter Brock, *Pacifism in the United States. From the Colonial Era to the First World War* (Princeton, 1968), 81-158, and J. William Frost, "Religious Liberty in Early Pennsylvania," *PMHB*, 105 (1981), 418-451, esp. 441-445, believes that the revival group's concept of the peace testimony had held sway since the founding of Pennsylvania.

our predecessors and of our Brethren in England was sufficient to determine us, prevented our entring deeply and weightily enough into it.⁶⁹

Two things are clear: in this meeting two different concepts of the peace testimony clashed, but the new concept proved unacceptable to the majority of those present. William Forster, who adhered to the traditional interpretation of the peace testimony and who had been present at that special session during the Yearly Meeting, offered John Smith the following reasons for his attitude:

When the Roman Emperor's Collectors querried of Peter: Doth your Master pay Tribute, Peter answered yes. . . and as we understand, the Roman Emperor was at that time in a war, it seems to me difficult, to distinguish Between paying the Emperor's Tax at that time, and the King's now. . . Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.⁷⁰

Grasping the depth of the crisis that shook the Society of Friends in Pennsylvania in the autumn of 1755, requires an understanding of the

⁶⁹ Israel Pemberton, Jr., to Dr. John Fothergill, November 27, 1755, Pemberton Papers, II, fols. 20-21, HSP. Jonah Thompson to John Smith, Nether Compton, June 26, 1756: English Friends, so Thompson reported upon his return to England, were annoyed about this new peace testimony and "look upon it as a Reflection on the Conduct of our Friends here. . . as we have always cheerfully paid all Taxes imposed for the Support of Government," Correspondence of John Smith, 1740-1770, I, fols. 103-105, HSP. Samuel Fothergill was, not surprisingly in view of Thompson's letter, severely criticized upon his return to England—not only by Members of the English Meeting for Sufferings but by the delegates to the Yearly Meeting too. After what seems to have been a discussion mainly concerned with attacking Samuel Fothergill, the English Yearly Meeting inserted the following passage into its Annual Epistle: "For though we cannot for conscience sake, actively comply with some things enjoined by human laws, yet the principles we profess, as well as the Holy Scriptures, require that we should, 'render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's', and be punctual in the payment of every tribute which we can justly do, without acting in opposition to that sacred illumination bestowed upon us by the Father of light, not only to teach, but also to enable us to perform every duty with uprightness and integrity, both to God and to those, who in the course of his providence are placed in authority." *LYME*, 1, 303; Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 318-319; Marietta, "Conscience," 19, underestimates the cleavage between English and Pennsylvania Friends on this central issue. It certainly was not just a few rich Merchant Quakers from London who disagreed with the revival group's new peace testimony.

⁷⁰ William Forster to John Smith, Evesham, New Jersey, October 14, 1755, Correspondence of John Smith, 1740-1770, I, fol. 94, HSP. Note the striking parallel in the arguments used by Forster and the English Yearly Meeting cited in n. 69.

precise meanings associated with the old and the new peace testimony. The *old peace testimony* forbade Quakers personally the bearing and using of arms under any pretext whatsoever. This principle also applied to Quakers in authority. But it did *not* forbid Quakers in government to agree to measures which provided government with the means to carry on war, *provided* the authority the Quakers belonged to was not identical with the authority responsible for these military measures and for the disposal of the money granted. There was solid theological reasoning behind the Quaker Assembly's appropriating money for military purposes "for the King's use." Taxes granted for raising such money had to be paid according to the biblical injunction to "Render. . . to Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

The *new peace testimony* extended the old principle to consequences of political actions agreed to by Quaker politicians, rejected the distinction between colonial and imperial authority, and explicitly excluded taxes for military purposes from the general biblical injunction to "Render. . . to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." In consequence, the new peace testimony by implication forbade Quakers to participate in government in wartime. Thus the advocates of this concept of the peace testimony demanded from their brethren a radical re-orientation in their attitude toward the secular world in general and toward government in particular. Those who stuck to the old peace testimony were unable to understand why Quakers should relinquish positions in the colonial government during the Seven Years' War, provided governmental functions did not require direct military duties.⁷¹

The defenders of the old peace testimony based their case on historical precedents and the example of English Friends; the authority on which the new peace testimony was based is less evident. Its proponents certainly could not cite earlier decisions of Yearly Meetings, and the

⁷¹ This is a summary of material brought together in Wellenreuther, *Glaube und politik*. The definition of the old peace testimony was of course largely shaped by the historical context in which it was formulated in the 1650s and 1660s. At that time it was of great importance to stress (a) the peaceable disposition of Friends and thus put distance between themselves and more violent religious sects like the Fifth Monarchy Men, and (b) the law-abiding character of the Friends in all other matters, which lead to more stress being put on the concept of authority than probably would have been otherwise. But while it is certainly true that the peace testimony in the seventeenth century did not imply a fundamental critique of the behavior of governments, it certainly implied such criticism in North America after 1755.

Yearly Meeting in 1755 had thus far refused to endorse their new definition. Neither were they able to claim George Fox or other ancient Friends. Instead, they justified their understanding of the peace testimony by citing "Truth's Judgment" and "tender consciences," thus evoking the principle of direct revelation of truth by the Inward Light as their authority. In doing so they went beyond all historical precedents directly to the source which served as ultimate authority for all Quaker religious principles. Confident that their new understanding of the peace testimony represented divinely inspired truth, this small group of Friends proceeded as if their new definition had always been part of Quaker beliefs. To them, enforcing the new peace testimony became a matter of church discipline.

The procedural implications involved in such reasoning, however, implied the flagrant violation of the principle of "Love and Unity." For despite the Yearly Meeting's refusal to endorse the new definition of the peace testimony in September, 1755, a small group of twenty Friends, among them Anthony Morris, Israel and John Pemberton, Anthony Benezet, John Churchman, and John Evans, only a month later publicized their interpretation of the peace testimony in their petition to the Assembly. Less than a month later John Churchman in a letter to Israel Pemberton suggested calling together the two newly created Yearly Meeting committees, the one on church discipline and the other a standing committee of correspondence, "to Confer and Consider whether there was not Something Necessary to be done either by way of Caution to friends here or to Represent our Case to friends in England."⁷² After a series of meetings a group of twenty Quakers, thirteen ministering Friends and seven Elders, signed an "Epistle of Tender Love and Caution" on December 16, 1755, in which they criticized the money bill of November, 1755, and cautioned Friends against paying the taxes levied in that bill.⁷³

⁷² John Churchman to Israel Pemberton, Jr., Nottingham, December 1, 1755, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 24, HSP.

⁷³ Text in Philadelphia Monthly Meeting Minutes, 1751-1756, fols. 202-205; the consultations of the meeting from which the Epistle was issued are reported in Israel Pemberton, Jr., to Dr. John Fothergill, December 17, 1755, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 8, HSP, and Samuel Fothergill to his sister in London, same date, *Friends' Library*, IX, ed. Evans, 170.

This letter was now clothed with an institutional authority that upon closer inspection, however, it did not have. For the Yearly Meeting had only authorized the standing correspondence committee "to appear in any Case and manner they may think necessary wherein the Reputation of Truth and the supporting our Religious Liberties may be concerned," while the committee on church discipline had only been assigned the duty "to visit the several Monthly and Quarterly Meetings and inspect into their Care and Conduct in the Discipline and where they see Occasion for it to Advise and Assist them therein."⁷⁴ Yet, only one of the signers of the Epistle was a member of the standing correspondence committee which alone had been authorized to make public statements, while fifteen of the twenty signers had been appointed to the church discipline committee.⁷⁵

The "Epistle of Tender Love and Caution" indirectly branded the Quaker members of the House as renegades. A day later Israel Pemberton pronounced the union between the Society of Friends and Quaker members of the Assembly at an end: ". . . thou wilt be sensible," he wrote to Dr. John Fothergill, "of the Separation they have now made of themselves from their Brethren, and as our strength consisted much in our Union that being dissolved, the Consequence to be expected is obvious."⁷⁶ At least in the eyes of Samuel Fothergill the Society of Friends was now divided into two camps. Returning from a tour through all the Pennsylvania meetings in March, 1756, he styled the one group as "libertines, worldly minded, and opposers of the reformation in themselves and others" and the other camp as "the seed" and "honest hearted."⁷⁷

Within half a year the unity within the Society of Friends, the precondition for the peculiar political structure of Pennsylvania, had been shattered and the functioning of the principle of "Love and Unity"

⁷⁴ YMPN JM, II, fol. 75, 77, DRP.

⁷⁵ This was Joshua Ely of Buckingham Monthly Meeting, who was a member of both committees.

⁷⁶ Israel Pemberton, Jr., to Dr. John Fothergill, Philadelphia, December 17, 1755, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 8, HSP

⁷⁷ Samuel Fothergill to John Churchman, Burlington, March 1756, *Friends' Library*, IX, 178, letter to his wife, January 19, 1756, *ibid.*, 173.

was at least for the time being suspended. The solid block which had long dominated Pennsylvania politics, which by extending its principle to the large German segment of the colony's population had given Pennsylvania politics such a uniform character, had crumbled. Within the Society of Friends at least four distinct groups emerged. Of these we have already mentioned the small but most vocal group of ministering Friends and Elders; this group had its greatest sway in the Philadelphia Meetings, in the Buckingham Monthly Meeting, and in the Nottingham Monthly Meeting, Chester County.⁷⁸ This group managed to strengthen its basis in the Yearly Meeting in 1755 by pushing through a recommendation that all monthly meetings should establish monthly meetings for Ministers and Elders whose most important duty would be "to maintain the Discipline of the Church in every part thereof."⁷⁹ This group was able to improve its position within the Society, reaching the apex of its influence in the Yearly Meetings after 1758.⁸⁰ In that year the Meeting resolved that such "Persons should not be allowed to sitt in our Meetings for discipline nor be employed in the Affairs of Truth" who continued "in the Exercise of any Office or Station in civil Society or Government by which they may in any respect be engaged in or think themselves subjected to the necessity of enjoining or enforcing the Compliance of Brethren or others with any Act which they conscientiously scruple to perform."⁸¹ In the Yearly Meeting of 1763 it became obvious, however, that the revival group had overplayed its hand. The reports of the several Quarterly Meetings made it evident that this

⁷⁸ Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 241-369, 448-449.

⁷⁹ YMPNJM, II, fol. 172, 174, DRP.

⁸⁰ Efforts to get the Yearly Meeting to endorse the new peace testimony in 1757 failed badly. The Yearly Meeting had asked a committee, in which all three groups were represented, to report on the "Subject Matter of the said Tax." Initial failure of the committee to reach agreement prompted the Yearly Meeting to sharply increase the revival group's strength in the committee by adding to it John Churchman, Anthony Benezet and Joshua Ely. Yet on September 24, this committee could only report "a diversity of Sentiments" and were "unanimously of the Judgment, that it is not proper to enter into a public Discussion of the Matter." Instead the committee recommended "that it is highly necessary for the Yearly Meeting to recommend that Friends everywhere endeavour earnestly to have their minds covered with fervent Charity towards one another", YMPNJM, II, fols. 105-107.

⁸¹ YMPNJM, II, fols. 119-120; Marietta, "Conscience," 25, notes that "no Quaker officeholder was disciplined between 1758 and 1775."

group had failed to convince almost all the meetings outside Philadelphia of the righteousness of its position.⁸² Within the next two years the ministering Friends of Philadelphia as the core group of the revival movement had practically to give up their most important point—the demand of a retreat from politics. Henceforth their activities were concentrated on the slavery issue.

The second important group, consisting of the great majority of Friends in the colony, was centered in the rural areas and can best be characterized as those who refused to consider office-holding generally as inconsistent with Quaker principles unless the office involved direct military duties. Most of the Assemblymen who resigned in May, 1756, and who refused to stand as candidates after October, 1756, belonged to this group, which included as well those who, like Aaron and George Ashbridge, refused to lay down their offices as Justices of the Peace or resign their seats as members of the House. After 1762 members of this large segment gradually regained control of the Yearly Meeting and the Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings. At the same time they filtered back into higher political offices as soon as the war had ended. By September, 1765, this group had effectually watered down the Yearly Meeting's resolution of 1758 to the recommendation that those "who are concern'd in the Executive or Legislative part of Civil Government" should "be careful that they do not deviate from our Religious Testimony in any Branch thereof."⁸³

⁸² Only the Philadelphia Quarterly Meeting reported progress, all the other Quarterly Meetings either reported efforts about whose success "they cannot say much" (Chester Quarterly Meeting), or reported "not much success" (Western Quarterly Meeting), while Bucks Quarterly Meeting returned the following report: "That as there appears an Uneasiness in several of their Monthly Meetings with the Minutes of the Yearly Meeting of 1758 as it now stands, respecting the treating of such as hold offices in the Government, they desire that the said Minute may be returned to this Meeting for reconsideration," YMPNJM, II, fol. 177.

⁸³ YMPNJM, II, fol. 219; an indication of how determined Quakers were to get back into the Assembly is James Pemberton's candidacy on October 1, 1765. After a fierce contest, Pemberton polled the same number of votes as his opponent George Bryan; in the repetition of the election ordered by the Assembly Pemberton had a majority of 171 votes, see Hugh Roberts to Benjamin Franklin, October 12, November 27, 1765, *The Papers of Benjamin Franklin*, ed. Leonard W. Labaree *et al.*, vols. 1-[22] (New Haven, Conn., 1959-[1982], XII, 312-314, 386-388; James Pemberton to Dr. John Fothergill and David Barclay, December 17, 1765, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, fol. 137, HSP.

A brief look at the percentage of acknowledged members of the Society of Friends in the Assembly confirms this broad outline. Between 1757 and 1760, Friends represented just over a third of all members; in the election of October 1761 as well as in the following year according to James Pemberton "there were. . . very near an Equal number of the Representatives of our Society in the Assembly and a large majority of such who do not qualify by the oath." After 1765 for the rest of the decade Quakers accounted for slightly fewer than half of the Assemblymen.⁸⁴

There was a third group within the Society of Friends who opted for compromise between the two positions. They accepted the position of the revival group to the extent that they refused public offices yet at the same time within the "Friendly Association" they gratified their political instincts by busying themselves with Indian affairs. Most of this group, like James Pemberton after 1762, gradually reverted to normal political activities within the colony's institutions.⁸⁵

One last group has to be mentioned, and that was the English Society of Friends. For the members of the London Meeting for Sufferings, and—as Samuel Fothergill had to find out to his dismay upon his re-

⁸⁴ James Pemberton to Dr. John Fothergill, Philadelphia, December 10, 1762, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, fol. 121, HSP. In figures: In 1759/60 there were 11, in 1760/61 14, and in 1762/63 16 Quaker Assemblymen. These figures make it clear that there was no general "Quaker withdrawal from the Assembly in 1756", as Frost, *Quaker Family*, 202, and others maintain. Brock, *Pacifism*, 147-148, interprets the events of 1756 as a gradual retreat from direct political participation, but ignores somewhat the theological issues raised by the revival movement.

⁸⁵ Theodore Thayer, *Israel Pemberton, King of the Quakers* (Philadelphia, 1943); "The Friendly Association," *PMHB*, 67 (1943), 356-376; Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 297-298, 315-317.

turn⁸⁶—the large majority of English Friends in the Yearly Meeting rejected the new peace testimony of the Pennsylvania revival group;⁸⁷ advocated restraint in the controversy with the Proprietors in 1763/1764, frequently reminding Pennsylvania Quakers of the principle of “Love and Unity” as measure for their political conduct; and, in 1770, even encouraged Friends in Pennsylvania to accept a larger share of political responsibility.⁸⁸ As such, the English Quakers represented an important factor for the Pennsylvania development.

The real significance of the events of the winter of 1755/56 on the role played by the Society of Friends lay in the serious rifts and divisions that continued to plague Friends until 1775. “Love and Unity” were lost not only with respect to important religious principles but to central political issues. The Pennsylvania Yearly Meetings and the Meeting

⁸⁶ Samuel Fothergill was sharply criticized by English Friends upon his return, Samuel Fothergill to John Churchman, Warrington, October 26, 1756, and April 24, 1757, *Friends' Library*, IX, ed. Evans, 187-189, n. 69 above. Marietta, “Conscience,” 17-20, rightly stresses the divisions between English and Pennsylvania Friends. But in doing so, he ignores the fact that the English Friends remained in agreement with the large body of Pennsylvania Friends who stuck to the old concept of the peace testimony. Part of the problem stems from Marietta's tendency to greatly overestimate the influence and success of the revival group within the Pennsylvania Meetings. In doing so, he then assigns the resignation of Quaker Assemblymen on June 4, 1756 to the effects of the revival group's agitation. This is unlikely for three reasons. The letter of the standing correspondence committee of the Yearly Meeting of May 21, 1756 clearly stated. “But as many Friends, and other have thought it necessary from divers Considerations to continue those of our Profession in the Assembly we have judged it prudent to condescend and bear with one another respecting those different Sentiments in Order that the Unity in the hidden Root of Life and in the essential Parts of our Doctrine and Principles might as much as possible be preserved”, Pennsylvania MfS, I, fols. 8-10, DRP. Secondly, this letter as well as the resignation of six Quaker Assemblymen reflects the influence exerted by letters which arrived from London on May 14, 1756, and which reported an agreement reached between Lord Granville and the London MfS, see Dr. John Fothergill, London, March 16-19, 1756, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 10, same to Samuel Fothergill, London, March 18, 1756, *ibid.*, fol. 9, all HSP. The first bears the endorsement “Received P. Mesnard 14. 5mo.” The negotiations and agreement with Lord Granville are recorded in “A Brief Journal of the Travel, and Labours in the Gospel, of Peter Andrews, whilst in England—Written by Himself,” FRLL (a copy likewise in Quaker Collection, Haverford College), under date February 26—March 3, 1756. Finally, of the six Quakers who resigned their seats, only three had voted against the £ 60 000 money bill, Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 274-293.

⁸⁷ Cf. Dr. John Fothergill to Israel Pemberton, Jr., London, August 2, 1756, Etting Collection, Pemberton Papers, II, fol. 16, HSP.

⁸⁸ London MfS to Pennsylvania MfS, London, August 24, 1770, Letters To and From Philadelphia, I, fols. 61-62, FRLL.

for Sufferings were hopelessly divided over the application to the Crown to take the colony under her immediate care. The draft of a letter on this "change-of-government" issue prepared by John Pemberton and Anthony Benezet, two outspoken members of the revival group, was debated an entire day on September 1, 1764. After two further days of acrimonious and difficult discussions the Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings finally agreed "to decline appearing in Support thereof, nor do we," they informed the London Meeting for Sufferings on September 3, "choose to interfere further, than our Duty and Interest appear to require," admitting in other words, that the central executive Meeting of Pennsylvania had been unable to reach a consensus on the most important political problem Pennsylvania was facing.⁸⁹

The conflict over the campaign to make Pennsylvania a royal colony produced strange coalitions within the Society. Isaac Norris gave up his Assembly seat in disgust with Franklin's tactics. He thus found himself suddenly in the same political camp with John and George Churchman and John Pemberton, leading members of the revival group, and with the English Meeting for Sufferings, between 1755 and 1764 the harsh critic of revivalists. James Pemberton, on the other hand, was one of the most prominent of those who together with other Friends supported Franklin's course of action.⁹⁰ Not even Quaker merchants agreed on this issue. John Reynell, William Logan, and Israel Pemberton, for example, explicitly disagreed with James Pemberton. Next year, however, the sides were again changed on the new issue of English-colonial relations. Reynell was now the most outspoken critic of English policy, James Pemberton was decidedly critical of English policy and American agitation, but the Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings, now dominated by members of the revival group, four years later protested against "any Attempts to Contend for Civil Liberty, or Priviledges, in a

⁸⁹ Cf. for an excellent general analysis of this problem Hutson, *Pennsylvania Politics 1746-1770*, I disagree with Hutson's analysis (pp. 123-171) of the Quakers' attitude to the change of government. Discussions and letters of the Pennsylvania MfS can be followed in Pennsylvania MfS Minutes, I, fols. 236-239, and Letters To and From Philadelphia, I, fols. 45-49, FRL.

⁹⁰ The Quakers' petition for a change of government, *Votes and Proceedings*, VII, 5605-5606, James Pemberton to Dr. John Fothergill, Philadelphia, March 7, 1764, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, fols. 125-128, HSP. The wording of this letter contains striking parallels to the Quaker petition.

manner unbecoming our peaceable Profession.”⁹¹

Politically the Society of Friends in the 1760s remained divided, while as a religious Society avoiding the divisive issues related to the new peace testimony after 1763. What had been unthinkable before 1755 was now almost the rule: Quakers were unable to reach agreement on all central political issues. But the changes went deeper than that. For the crisis which had shaken the Society of Friends between 1755 and 1763 resulted in a re-orientation of a considerable portion of Friends away from politics to social ills like Indian rights, slavery, luxury, theatres and dancing schools.⁹² At the same time, Quakers as a body lost their consensual approach to religious as well as political problems. Instead, they became prone to suffer from excessive fears of Presbyterians outside as well as from supposedly worldly-minded Friends inside their religious camp. George Churchman’s commentary about the Yearly Meeting of 1763 indicates the state of feelings between members of the revival group and their religious opponents: “Many well concerned Friends being assisted to unite their fresh Endeavours, to promote the Cleansing of our Camp from Disorder, and the filth and rust contracted thro’ fleshly Ease, and the Love of the World, among the Members of our Society.”⁹³

⁹¹ John Reynell to Henry Groth, Philadelphia, February 2, 1769, John Reynell Letterbook, 1767-1769, fols 90-91, HSP, James Pemberton to David Barclay and Dr John Fothergill, Philadelphia, December 17, 1765, loc cit n 83, Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 398-409, Pennsylvania MfS to London MfS, Philadelphia, February 21, 1771, Letters To and From Philadelphia, I, fol 71, FRLl

⁹² Cf Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 389-392, Sydney V James, *A People Among Peoples Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1963)

⁹³ Cf Hannah Logan to Jonah Thompson, Stanton, January 9, 1759 “We seem to be a People much divided in Spirit and not that Love and Unity as was in the beginning when they were willing to offer up Body for Body there are some among us so hot in their own Zeal in carrying on the Reformation that they are in Danger of Judging all who don’t think as they do,” S C Thompson MSS, 11mo 19/ 1mo 9, Friends’ Historical Library, Swarthmore On November 3, 1761 George Churchman noted in his Journal “Matters begin to appear dangerous, as to the Progress of Discipline in the Spirit thereof, for want of some not in low Station, more fully uniting with the Yearly Meeting’s directions A Spirit akin to Ranterism begins to appear,” Journal of George Churchman, I, 1759-1766, fols 26-28, 43 (quotation in text above), Quaker Collection, Haverford College On the Presbyterians cf James Pemberton to Samuel Fothergill, Philadelphia, June 13, 1764, Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, fols 130-132, HSP

Even most members of the revival group, however, did not lose all interest in politics. Between 1763 and 1776 the Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings issued, on the contrary, more political statements than in any other comparable period. Yet social and political views expounded in these letters and "Testimonies" were now not shaped by the concern of electorates but by visionary and sectarian principles. Taken as a whole these projected a different world in which in a strange way religious and secular worlds seemed re-united. Thus the veneration of "Ancient Testimonies" had its counterpart in the ever greater admiration of the "ancient privileges;" the stress on church discipline had its worldly equivalent in the advocacy of "order" and of "orderly proceedings." The newly acquired importance of ministering Friends and Elders had its worldly opposite in a new appreciation of the role and importance of magistracy.⁹⁴

But this was of course a different "unity" from that which had so largely influenced Quaker attitudes before 1755. It drew its justification and forcefulness not from the concerns and interests of the secular world but exclusively from the demands stemming from the world view of the "New Adam" of the revival group. The new basis was intensely religious. Yet at the same time it had profound political repercussions. For it implied a radical shift from "country" to "court" ideology and contributed immensely to the conservative image Pennsylvania was to acquire in the years after 1765 in North America. This shift colors the Meeting for Sufferings' response to revolutionary activities in Philadelphia in 1769 and 1770. In their letter of July 29 to August 5, 1769, they confessed themselves "fully convinced of the Imprudence of thus assuming the Authority to call together the People the greater Part of whom are incapable of judging prudently on a matter of so great Importance." In concluding the letter the Philadelphia Meeting expressed its desire "to approve ourselves both in Principle and Practice. . . loyal Subjects to the King, and peaceable members of Civil Society." In the same year the Meeting for Sufferings sent out a circular letter to all

⁹⁴ The shift to more conservative political concepts which largely resemble those of the proprietary group of the 1740s and of James Logan in the 1730s is most clearly expressed in the long letter from the Pennsylvania MfS to the London MfS, Philadelphia, July 29-August 1, 1769, Portfolio 37, fol. 96, FRLl, cited *in extenso* in Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 403, n. 1.

Friends in which they warned "that some of the members of our religious Society by joining with the measures publicly proposed for the support of our civil liberties may be drawn into a conduct inconsistent with our religious liberties." The Yearly Meeting agreed in September 1770 with the Pennsylvania Meeting for Sufferings that "Entering into Associations and Measures. . .for the asserting or maintaining their Civil rights and Liberties. . .are frequently productive of Consequences inconsistent with the Nature of the Gospel, and our peaceable Testimony thereto." Half a year later, James Pemberton on May 3, 1771 criticized those "Clamourers. . .among us who with the greatest vociferations for Liberty under a temporary power give proofs of the most tyrannical disposition and have been a great cause for the increasing of the late disturbances in this and other provinces." Not all Quakers followed this trend as the examples of David Cooper and Samuel Foulke demonstrate. Although Foulke was Clerk of his Meeting, he continued to practice politics as it had been done before 1755, thus agreeing with David Cooper's political maxim of 1762, "to study the good of my Constituents, (& next to my duty to my Maker) preserve it with all my Might. They have reposed a great Trust in me, and betray it would be hateful to both God & Man."⁹⁵ Pushed by the course of political events on the one side and by the unceasing efforts of the revival group on the other, more and more of the old-type Quaker politicians faced the choice of either leaving the Society of Friends or mending their political ways.

Even John Reynell returned to the fold, admitting to Mrs. Groth three weeks before the signing of the Declaration of Independence, "I very much desire my dependance may be more and more fixed upon him, and come to a total resignation to the divine will in all things." James Gibbons, one of the last Quaker members of the old Assembly, sadly noted under date of September 26, 1776, that the old legislature was breaking up, that it finally adjourned "*sine die* the Government

⁹⁵ Portfolio 37, F 96, FRLl, Pennsylvania MfS Minutes, I, fols 290-291, YMPNjM, II, fol 271, James Pemberton's letter is in Pemberton Papers, XXXIV, fol 159, HSP, "Fragments of a Journal Kept by Samuel Foulke, of Bucks County," *PMHB*, 5 (1881), 60-73, esp 65-71, "Reflections on Being Chosen into ye Assembly 1762," in Diary of David Cooper, fol 21, and two following pages, No 968, Folder David Cooper, Quaker Collection, Haverford College, Wellenreuther, *Glaube und Politik*, 403-407

totally subverted." As the political order Quakers had come to appreciate so much was crumbling and being replaced by Revolution, the Society of Friends finally found its peace again, albeit as a persecuted religious group.⁹⁶ "Love and Unity" were re-established.

* * * *

In summary, one important element of the setting for colonial Pennsylvania politics was provided by the religious and secular implications of the Quaker principle of "Love and Unity." Either directly or indirectly this principle contributed much to the shaping of political behavior, to the structure of politics, and to the development of certain political tactics. The influence this principle exerted on Pennsylvania was not restricted to the times of its positive role for the Society of Friends but carried over to the days when "Love and Unity" had been conscientiously discarded by the members of the Quaker revival group. In the years before 1755 this principle shaped the Quakers' consensual approach to politics and contributed much to the immensely unified political structure of the colony, to the dismal failure to organize a proprietary group, and finally to the appeal to the British government to exclude Quakers from the Assembly. The serious divisions within the Society of Friends after 1755 had heavy repercussions on the politics of the 1760s: they helped defeat Franklin's policy for a change of government and contributed to the special role Pennsylvania held during the unfolding Revolutionary drama after 1765.

In this process the principle of "Love and Unity" exerted much direct and indirect influence on the political terms with which contemporaries like Richard Peters, William Allen, and James Hamilton interpreted political events and helped define political aims and underlying principles. Similarly, the disjointed politics of the 1760s can to a considerable extent be explained as a consequence of the serious violations of the principle of "Love and Unity" by the revival group.

⁹⁶ John Reynell Letterbook, 1774-1784, unnumbered, HSP, James Gibbons, "Attendance on Assembly", in School Account Book, 1781-1783, Gibbons Collection, Folder James Gibbons, 1781-1783, HSP, Sydney V. James, "The Impact of the American Revolution on Quakers' Ideas about their Sect," *WMQ*, 19 (1962), 370-382

The consensual approach to politics before 1755 induced Quaker politicians to downgrade "magistracy," (at least in the eyes of their opponents,) to forge a union between the Assembly and the "people" considered dangerous to the well-being of the British constitution but suggestive of a new understanding of the concept of representation. The suspension of the principle of "Love and Unity" after 1755, however, implied discarding the consensual approach to politics by the revival group and breaking up the happy union of political and religious attitudes of earlier days. Increasingly, the revival group after 1765 began to stress values like "order," "orderly procedure" and, as the Revolution approached, the concept of due subordination to authority rightfully established.

Thus, key political and religious terms and concepts like "people," "representation," "peace testimony," "magistracy," and "order" acquired different meanings in England and in Pennsylvania in the course of the eighteenth century, meanings shaped by social and economic developments and by religious affiliations and their particular political contexts. In Pennsylvania, religious factors account for much more than has hitherto been assumed. An understanding of such factors helps us understand Pennsylvania's relationship with England. For the same forces that shaped Pennsylvania's political structure forged the ties between William Penn's colony and England.

Göttingen

HERMANN WELLENREUTHER