

**Practising Peace:
American and British Quaker
Relief in the Spanish Civil War**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the work of British and American Quakers in the Spanish Civil War and its immediate aftermath. The focus is on the relief effort and the relief workers who operated in the field, but it also looks at the development of the Friends' Peace Testimony as it emerged into the modern world of civil wars and humanitarian aspirations. After examining the general history of Quaker attitudes to peace and at the early history of the two relief bodies—the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends' Service Council—the thesis takes a largely chronological approach to the history of Quaker relief in Spain. In addition to examining the work done the thesis considers the individual and corporate motivations of the relief workers and the practical consequences of their developing perceptions of the situation in which they operated.

This research is intended both as a contribution to Quaker history—moving beyond hagiography to explore the motivations behind individual and corporate Quaker action—and as a contribution to current historiography of the Spanish Civil War, which tend to focus on the military and political events. In addition this thesis should be seen as a contribution to the currently rather sparse research on the history of the modern refugee crisis and accompanying relief work.

Dedicated to Alfred Jacob,
without whom this thesis could not exist

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This thesis is based on material stored in Friends' House, London and the American Friends Service Committee, Philadelphia. Working in an archive can sometimes be a lonely business but I have been very lucky to have enjoyed the friendship of the librarians of Friends' House, London, in particular Sylvia Carlyle and Rosamund Cummings and of Jack Sutters and Joan Lowe of the American Friends Service Committee archive, Cherry Street, Philadelphia. Much of the research for this thesis was undertaken during a particularly difficult time and I would very much like to thank those friends who supported me through it, in particular Rachel Brown, Bernie and Sylvia Haviland, Wendilee, Denny, Ben, Luke and Tiller O'Brien, Margaret O'Neil, Abigail Fredricksson, Fiona Burrt, Marty Briggs and Clare Twose.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFSC	American Friends Service Committee
AFSERCO	American Friends Service Committee in Europe
FAU	Friends' Ambulance Unit
FPP	Foster Parents Plan
FSC	Friends Service Council
FUE	Federación Universitaria Escolar
GRF	General Relief Fund
MCC	Mennonite Central Committee
NJC	National Joint Committee on Spain
SCIU	Save the Children International Union
SCF	Save the Children Fund (Great Britain)
SERE	Servicio de Emigración para Republicanos Españoles
SRRC	Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign
TCE	Travailleurs Civils Etrangers
UGT	Unión General de Trabajo
UYCM	United Young Christian Movement
WILPF	Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Introduction

The relief work for Spanish refugees is one of the longest continuous pieces of work the Society of Friends (Quakers) has attempted, lasting from 1936-1942 in Europe and continuing in Mexico throughout the Second World War. The Friends' work in Spain and in France was framed by a situation which has become commonplace in the twentieth century, operating first in a country rent by civil war, and later with permanently displaced persons. The methods by which they tried to deal with these circumstances were often improvised and based on theories of resettlement which had been practised in contexts other than a civil war but some of the concerns they expressed have since become embedded in modern approaches to aid.

This thesis is an examination of the Quaker witness to peace in the Spanish Civil War and its aftermath and is intended as a contribution both to Quaker history and to the more general history of relief work in the twentieth century. The thesis explores the public declaration of faith through action made by the two Quaker organisations which sent these individuals to Spain: the Friends Service Council of London Yearly Meeting (FSC) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), an independent charity. Its focus is on one active manifestation of the Friends' peace testimony: the relief work carried out in Spain and France, 1936-1942. The relief work in Spain took place on both sides of the political and military divide: the work, therefore, helped to define the nature of the Friends' much-vaunted neutrality as a neutrality of intervention and not of non-involvement, but it was in itself a relatively new test for the Peace Testimony. In part, I hope to be able to assess to what degree the work in Spain answered that test.

Friends' relief work in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was almost always framed as work for peace and not work for social justice. However, the statement termed the Peace Testimony is fundamentally a quietist testimony of non-involvement. The conversion of this testimony to a more activist mode is a consequence of the political currents of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The increasing prominence of the Peace Testimony in the public eye has

served to obscure the degree to which the incorporation of the lesser known testimony to social justice is essential to any activist manifestation of this testimony. Without the testimony to social justice “peace” may be defined in ways which are inherently at variance with Quaker understandings of justice and equality. It is this interface which is central to this thesis which is otherwise simply about some very admirable people who went to work in famine relief.

A second line of argument in this thesis will focus on the role of both individual and group witness in the practicalities of relief. Workers’ individual witness, and that of their agency, influenced the choices they made and the paradigm within which they operated. I intend to demonstrate how, whilst missionary work rapidly disappeared from the relief workers’ short term objectives, it continued as a desired long term aim and helped to structure the mode in which the work was managed. However, I do not intend, in this thesis, to explore the reaction of American and British Friends as a whole to the Spanish Relief Mission. This decision has been taken because of the very different natures of the American and British Society of Friends. Whilst the British membership is easy to delineate as those people holding membership in Meetings affiliated to London Yearly Meeting, the multi-denominational nature of American Quakers and the ideological disparity between the denominations make it difficult to give any sense of a Society as a whole. In addition, many of the publications of the United States Friends largely ignored the Spanish crisis, focussing instead on the conflict in China where a number of evangelical missionaries were stationed.

Although there is a comparative element to this thesis, particularly when modes of organisation and ideology are discussed, this is not intended as a comparative history. Instead, the thesis is a history of one project carried out jointly by diverse groups. The insuperable obstacle in the way of writing a comparative history is Alfred Jacob himself, the central figure of the British relief effort. Jacob was born and brought up in America, but went to England to take a degree in History and Spanish at Oxford. He later took British citizenship, married an English woman, Norma Jacob, and went to Spain in 1936 as a representative of the (British) FSC, but in 1940 returned to the USA with his wife and children. Because of his pacifism and therefore his conviction that he could not defend the United

States by force of arms, he has never applied to restore his American citizenship.

The Friends' involvement in the Spanish Civil War has gone relatively unremarked. A brief account of Spanish relief is to be found in John Ormerod Greenwood's book, *Quaker Encounters: Volume I, Friends and Relief*,¹ and there is an account of the British Friends' fund-raising campaign in Jim Fyrth's *The Signal Was Spain: the Aid Spain Movement in Britain 1936-1939*.² Both suffer from an over-reliance on public sources: records of Yearly Meeting (the governing body of British Friends) and letters to *The Friend* and other newspapers, and on the pamphlet *Quaker Service in Spain, 1936-1940*, which was published by the Friends Service Council (FSC) in 1940. For both authors this was inevitable as the files of the Friends Service Committee for the Relief of Spain were not available to the public until 1989. *Quaker Encounters* spares only seven pages for the work in Spain and draws its evidence from Minutes of Meeting for Sufferings, Yearly Meeting Minutes and a number of biographies. Other publications include a report produced by the International Commission (a Quaker sponsored umbrella organisation) in 1940, when the work was as yet unfinished; and two occasional papers published by the Russell Sage Foundation.³ All are essentially institutional narratives of the work done, and none attempts to explore the personalities, motivations or ideologies behind the work. The only publications which do attempt any sort of analysis are a number of autobiographies, mainly by non-Quakers who served with the Friends. Most of these amount to little more than personal reminiscence and anecdote, but where appropriate these books have been used to explore workers' responses to their surroundings. More significant to this thesis is Howard Kershner's *Quaker Service in Modern War*.⁴ Howard Kershner, a New York Quaker, was appointed Director of the International Commission and

¹William Sessions Ltd., York, 1975.

²Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1986.

³ "In Spain, 1937-39", by John Van Gelder Forbes, and "In France, 1941-42", by the American Friends Service Committee, 1943, *Administration of Relief Abroad: A Series of Occasional Papers: Recent Relief Programs of the American Friends in Spain and France*, Russell Sage Foundation, London, 1944.

⁴Prentice Hall, Inc., New York, 1950.

Director of Friends' relief in Spain and France in late 1938. His personality was such as profoundly to influence the nature of Friends' activities and this will be discussed in depth in Chapter Six. His autobiography shows a powerful personality embodying strong views which coloured and distorted his recollections. For reasons best known to himself, Howard Kershner provided very few dates in the book and moved quickly from event to event with little reference to chronology, moving back in time as often as forwards. In addition, Kershner felt that as he could not mention all names he would mention almost none. The book is therefore interesting but misleading. Kershner's strong opinions and overwhelming conviction of the righteousness of his own actions further undermines confidence in this book.

The neglect by Quaker historians of Quaker relief work in the Spanish Civil War is part of a wider context of neglect: there has been little social history of the war written in English. English-language historians working on the Spanish Civil War have overwhelmingly concentrated on political and military events. English-language works on the Spanish Civil War usually focus on the political or military situation in Spain, or on the political ramifications of Non-Intervention. An additional distortion, to which this thesis will unfortunately contribute, has been the tendency to shape the war in terms of its impact upon those foreigners involved, for example the biographies of International Brigaders and Jim Fyrth's book *The Signal Was Spain*.

Amongst Quakers the neglect of this period is due in part to events both prior to and after the Spanish Civil War. Both the American and British Friends were involved in the very successful and very well publicised child feeding in Austria and Germany, and in famine relief in Russia in the 1920s.⁵ Most of the major figures in Quaker relief whose memoirs are frequently cited, such as Dr. Hilda Clark, Edith Pye, Ruth Fry, Clarence Pickett and others, were involved in this earlier work but only marginally in the work in Spain. Dr. Hilda Clark spent the late 1930s in Vienna and most Quaker attention in the period 1933-39 was focussed

⁵Ralph Fox, who served with Quaker famine relief in Russia, was one of three Quakers I know to have fought in Spain. He died, aged thirty-six, in 1937.

on the needs of German-Jewish refugees.⁶ Consequently Spain is at best only peripheral to their narratives. The effect is reinforced because, of all the Quaker workers in Spain and France, only Norma Jacob went on to work with the American Friends Service Committee in the post-war period although others did continue in regional Quaker relief groups. Although some of the Spanish workers were active in war relief on the home front, none of the British workers continued in overseas work with the Friends Service Council after the war.

Finally, the Spanish Civil War has generally been overwhelmed in the public memory by the impact of the Second World War, and this is no less true for Friends. Quakers were active in civilian relief on both sides of the Atlantic throughout the war. The American Friends, as we shall see, remained in France until 1942, and both the Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee returned to continental Europe in 1945 to assist with the reconstruction and to promote a message of reconciliation. In 1947 the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Service Council were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize for Peace for their work in Germany, ensuring that it would be for this work that the Friends would best remember their relief agencies.

The sources for this thesis were drawn primarily from the Archives of the American Friends Service Committee in Philadelphia and the Friends Service Committee in London; from interviews with a small number of the relief workers themselves; and from a number of autobiographies. Evidence for the internal context in which the Friends worked is drawn from *The Friend*, *The Wayfarer*, *The Evangelical Friend* and *The American Friend*, the principal news journals of the Society.

The American Friends Service Committee archive recently undertook a series of interviews with past relief workers, a number of which are employed in this thesis. These interviews, by Karin Lee, focussed on constructing a coherent narrative and proved extremely useful, but they made little attempt to go deeply into motivation, much of which, in the context of the AFSC, appears to have been taken for granted. In an attempt to investigate motivation I conducted a small

⁶John Ormerod Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters: Vol. 1, Friends and Relief*, William Sessions, York, England, 1975, p. 234.

number of personal interviews with those relief workers still alive and who were members of the AFSC or FSC units in Europe; of these, only Alfred Jacob, Alfred Cope and Lucy Ingram⁷ worked in Spain in the correct period. These interviews, as with all such oral histories, told the protagonists' own stories and did not always provide the information or serve the agenda which I, the researcher, brought to their histories. Both Alfred Cope and Alfred Jacob also provided additional personal material such as newspaper clippings and journals which whilst not always directly relevant contributed to a sense of them as individuals. Furthermore, all the interviews need to be examined carefully for the difficulties presented by fifty-year old memories, the change of focus over fifty years and the occasional misconstruction of memory.

Materials from the archives include the minutes of the Spain Committee (FSC), the Committee on Spain (AFSC) and of the Peace and Refugee committees of each organisation. The nature and form of the minutes for the two organisations differ markedly, altering their relative value. The Friends Service Council and its Spain Committee were an extension of London Yearly Meeting. As such, they follow the pattern of Meeting for Worship and Business, that is, they begin with a period of silence, and silence is expected between each contribution. All may speak but each person is expected to wait until moved by the spirit of God and to avoid phraseology which might cause contention. The aim of such a Meeting is to reach a consensus, not to gain a majority for an opinion. If such a consensus is reached it is recorded as the Minute. If it is not reached, the Clerk will simply record the absence of unanimity. No discussion is recorded and neither a majority nor a minority opinion is indicated. Although slow, this has the effect of producing a curious forcefulness and unity behind British Friends' decisions, but does obscure dissension and also motive. At the same time, it successfully recognises the validity of minority opinion. Diversity of thought in the active expression of faith is the perhaps the underlying subject of this dissertation.

The American Friends Service Committee operates under a quite different

⁷Lucy Palser (née Ingram) worked as a nutritionist in Barcelona and later became a relief worker for the International Commission in France. However, not enough material exists for an extensive analysis to have been made of her experiences.

system. It is not governed by any other body but it is responsible to a number of different Quaker denominations and organisations, not all of which share the same interests and whose Meeting and Worship traditions departed somewhat from those of the British Friends in the nineteenth century.⁸ In addition, its position as a charity with whom the United States government was willing to do business required a level of openness and accountability normally associated with public companies. Consequently, minutes of meetings accord far more with the conventions of the business world. Discussion and dissension are both recorded, providing a far greater sense of both the personalities and the motivations behind the decisions, and this is one reason why American sources have been favoured.

Useful though the minutes are, the majority of the material used in this thesis was drawn from the letter files of both societies, which contain the personal views of both relief workers and administrators. The archive of the American Friends Service Committee is intended, in part, as a resource for relief workers, and as such stores all files without selection. In contrast, the archive of the Friends Service Council is stored in Friends Library in Friends House in London where limited space has led to a winnowing of material. This was somewhat compensated for by the habit of sending copies of many documents to the AFSC; hence a number of British letters and reports are cited as from the AFSC archives. A second problem with the British files is that almost all the letters sent from Spain were written by Alfred Jacob. Whilst he was clearly the major figure in the British operation, this does lead to a dominance of his views which is difficult to correct. The contents of the American files are far more varied and more people's experiences are represented than it is possible or useful to incorporate, but the number of individuals whose letters are contained in the files is still smaller than the total number who served with the AFSC. In this thesis I have chosen to focus on those individuals who left most material, often an indication of their importance within their units, and who most clearly expressed their witnesses. These are a very small proportion of the total relief workers, and in their commitment to a Quaker witness perhaps not totally representative, but they were clearly the individuals

⁸For further detail see Thomas Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism: Orthodox Friends, 1800-1907* (University of Indiana Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1992).

who shaped relief practices in their field.

The principal concern of this thesis is with the witness which the Friends' made in the expression of their Testimonies. What has been sacrificed is any attempt at a sustained analysis of the amount of relief given. Summaries of relief may be found in the FSC pamphlet *Quaker Service in Spain* (1940) and in the International Commission Report (1940), extracts from which are included in Appendix A, but whilst financial records were kept meticulously, the Quaker field workers paid less attention to the methods by which they recorded distribution. Perhaps because of his lack of business experience, Alfred Jacob never clarifies whether his figures are per week or are cumulative, and the figures themselves are not revealing: Alfred Cope was sent to Murcia in 1938 in the hope that he would regularise Esther Farquhar's rather careless book-keeping. The tendency was to report how many meals were served, rather than to elaborate and record how many children were fed and how many times, which satisfied the field workers but was often frustrating to the Philadelphia office. However, the Friends' own understanding and valuation of their work rested on spiritual quality and not material quantity. Louisa Jacob, aunt of Alfred Jacob and an employee of the AFSC wrote,

I am frequently asked how many people are being fed daily. I always reply that the number varies and that we are attempting a qualitative rather than a quantitative job; however, I would be glad to get statistics wherever they are available.⁹

Financial estimates are also difficult to make. There appear to have been few annual reports and many of the sums are stated in pesetas. The FSC's pamphlet tells us they raised and spent a total of £95,000,¹⁰ but there is no equivalent document for the AFSC and the matter is complicated by their relationship with the International Commission. AFSC expenditure appears to have been at least twice that of the FSC at any time (their fund-raising was often affected by similar political

⁹Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 7 December 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar. Also mentions here that she is allowing ten cents a day per child in her calculations.

¹⁰*Quaker Service in Spain, 1936-1940*, Friends Service Council, London, 1940, p. 19.

pressures) but to assess it accurately would require another thesis. Consequently, because the emphasis of this thesis is on faith in practice, I have chosen to accept Louisa Jacob's concept of a "qualitative" job and to judge the relief work in terms of this notion of quality: to what extent it proved an adequate manifestation of the Peace Testimony, a work or gift of love from the Friends to the people of Spain.

To my regret this thesis refused to conform to the thematic structure which I had planned. I had originally intended to structure the thesis around the Friends' expressions of the Peace Testimony and the Testimony of Social Justice; the issues of autonomy and leadership; and the ethics and ideology which shaped Friends' relief work. Of the above plan, only the section on ethics and ideology survived as a discrete chapter although these issues also permeate the thesis. Instead, what emerged was a story which wanted to be told, and individuals whose work shone out. Consequently the thesis is essentially narrative, beginning with an outline of the historical development of the Friends Service Council (FSC) and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC), their position within their countries' respective peace movements and the domestic politics which shaped their reactions to the Spanish Civil War. Chapters Two to Five examine the development and practice of relief work in Republican and Nationalist Spain, explore the paradigms which shaped Quaker decisions, and examine the personal witnesses of the relief workers. This thesis could have stopped in 1939 when the war ended, or in 1940 when the last Quaker left Spain, but this would have been to leave the story incomplete. The Friends believed that having taken on the relief of the Spanish people they had a duty to see the work through. When the Spanish refugees moved into France, the Quakers went with them: Chapter Six details the aftermath of the war and the involvement of the Quakers in refugee resettlement. Concluding the thesis, Chapter Seven attempts to bring together many of the issues which arose, such as the decisions about who to feed and how, and the beliefs which the Friends brought to working with their Spanish colleagues, and examines the difficulties which arose when the ideological basis of the mission began to change.

In any thesis there is always material that it was not possible to include and areas it was not possible to explore. Within the word limit of this thesis it did not prove possible to examine in any detail the origin of Friends' funds. It is clear that

funds for food were raised outside of the American and British Societies, the FSC and the AFSC relying on Friends to provide the finance for administration. A larger work would benefit from a closer analysis of the dealings which the organisations had with other bodies in the United States and Britain, particularly with attention paid to the negotiations and compromises which had to be made with overtly political bodies. The relationships between the Friends and non-Quaker organisations would contribute greatly to an understanding of the Friends' witness in this period. Finally, this thesis was always intended as a study of British and American Quakerism. However, inevitably, this has led to half of the story being omitted. Any expansion of this work would need to consider seriously the Spanish reaction to Quaker intervention in Spain.

Chapter One:

Quaker Attitudes to Peace, 1660-1940

1.1 The Peace Testimony

The Society of Friends is a church without creed or dogma in the conventional sense. Although a certain standard of behaviour is required and certain assumptions are made about religious beliefs, the written creed of the Friends consists of *Faith and Practice*, a book containing inspiring extracts from Quaker experience, and *Counsels and Questions/Advice and Queries*. The latter used to be a method by which the Societies took a formal census of the spiritual well-being of its members, but it is now usually a handbook consisting of questions designed to make the reader examine her own spiritual well-being in private; each Yearly Meeting produces its own text. Detailed exploration of Friends' theology is made particularly difficult by the fragmentation of the American Society of Friends during the course of the nineteenth century.

The Friends' witness to peace has developed from the statement issued by the Society in 1660 to the government of Charles II:

We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fighting with outward weapons for any end or under any pretence whatever.¹

However, the manifestation of this testimony has differed greatly over the course of the past three centuries as the Friends have responded to changes in their own political circumstances and the demands of the wider world.

After the Restoration of 1660 the Quakers moved to divorce themselves from those elements which continued to seek the possibility of a restructured Commonwealth. The declaration on peace and war was both a compromise with those members of the society who did not wish to declare loyalty to the King and a declaration of quietism to a suspicious King Charles II.² It was in essence a

¹*Declarations of the Society of Friends (Quakers) on Peace and War 1600-1938*. Published by the Northern Friends Peace Board, Leeds, June 1938.

²Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony, 1600-1914*, Sessions Book Trust, York, England, 1990, pp. 24-31. Horace G. Alexander, *The Growth of the Peace Testimony of the Society of*

negative witness, a refusal to be involved, rather than an act of protest, although Friends felt their refusal to be an example which the world should follow. Furthermore, the testimony was also a rejection of the notion of humanity's "natural depravity"; it embraced a belief in the presence of God in all, a belief in the presence of the Divine Light of God in each individual and therefore the sanctity of the individual life, but it was not a witness against the concept of an ongoing conflict between good and evil. Quakers rejected outward strife, not inward struggle.

In the eighteenth century, as the majority of British and American Friends became respectable merchants and traders, the Peace Testimony embraced a belief in the benefits to trade of a peace-time economy and also the benefits of trade in securing peace, a belief that was to survive into the twentieth century.³ British Friends remained outsiders in political society, but by the eighteenth century American Friends were established as part of a Colonial political elite due to their dominance of the political process in Pennsylvania. During the Revolutionary war most American Friends kept the witness of the Peace Testimony (those who did not were disowned), in part because they believed it wrong to overthrow the government, even though many had been active in protesting the manner of British rule.⁴ After the Revolution the Friends withdrew their corporate presence from active politics feeling that there was something incompatible with Quakerism in the requirements of government, although individuals continued to sit in the state

Friends, Quaker Peace and Service, London, 1982 (© 1939), p. 4.

³ A typical example in a Quaker publication in the 1930s was penned by R. Ernest Lamb: A recent slogan adopted by our business leaders is World Peace through World Trade. Realistic industrial executives recognize that war is a poor business partner, and therefore seek to preserve for commercial transactions the trade routes and markets of the world. They know that war provides profits for the few at the expense of the many, and leaves the land exhausted and impoverished when peace is again restored. Trade is a matter of reciprocity, with both parties gaining by the transaction; we do not press for it at the point of a bayonet, or force our goods on an unwilling purchaser. Given fair play in commercial transactions, the cause of world peace is inevitably advanced...

R. Ernest Lamb, "Good Will—Our Good Neighbour Policy", *The Messenger of Peace Supplement to the American Friend*, 6 August 1936, pp. 329-40.

⁴Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony...*, op. cit., pp. 142-165.

legislatures. On being questioned about Quaker loyalty to the new regime Warner Mifflin, a Southern Friend, assured Washington that Quaker objection to revolution had not changed: "All that ever was gained by revolutions, are not adequate compensation to the poor mangled soldier, for the loss of life and limb."⁵

In contrast, the American Civil War marked the increasing distance between the British and American Friends, in both practice and belief. American Friends had, during the nineteenth century, been caught up in the renewal and revivalist movements which had been sweeping the United States. Although John Joseph Gurney, the leader of Quaker renewal, was an English Friend, the renewal had a far more devastating impact on American Friends. By 1860 the American Friends had already split into three parts, the Hicksites, the Wilburites and the Orthodox. These three denominations each regarded the others as non-Quakers: increasingly the Orthodox, who had adopted the creed of renewal, saw themselves as being of the world, not apart from it. They abandoned plain dress, plain speech and the tradition of separatism and began to consider themselves part of the Protestant mainstream. Ironically, the Friends' sense of justice and their assimilation into this mainstream led many young Friends to take up arms for the Union. According to Governor Oliver P. Morton of Indiana, the Friends provided more enlistments in proportion to membership than any other denomination in the State.⁶ However, few members of the Philadelphia Meeting or of the very traditional Wilburite branch enlisted. The majority of Quaker soldiers came from western states such as Ohio and Indiana where Friends had most fervently espoused renewal, and these soldiers came home not to disownment, but to a hero's welcome. The Friends who joined the Union army argued forcefully for the theory of just war; most felt they were part of an anti-slavery crusade.⁷ In contrast, those few Quakers who joined the Southern army could expect immediate disavowal.⁸

Although the majority of Friends abided by the Peace Testimony and were

⁵Howard H. Brinton, *Quaker Journals: Varieties of Religious Experience Among Friends*, Wallingford, PA, 1972, p. 65.

⁶Hamm, op cit., p. 68.

⁷Hamm, op. cit., pp. 68-69.

⁸Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony...*, op. cit., p. 178.

active in providing relief to civilians of both sides (and, controversially, to soldiers of both sides), the potential for large scale rejection of the Testimony amongst certain groups of Friends was established. After the war the society began to show signs of division over pacifism: some Friends began to argue the morality of a defensive war; others, including some prominent renewal Friends, began to assert that under some circumstances governments could, morally, take life.⁹

Thus, when by the 1870s the revival and “holiness” movement came to Orthodox American Quakerism, some Friends were ripe for a radical departure from traditional Quaker practices and beliefs. The new “holiness” movement stressed the direct experience of sanctification over the continuous presence of the Divine, or Inner Light and a gradual growth into grace. Premillennialism turned some holiness Friends against the traditional Quaker devotion to social reform and towards an ideal of saving individual souls: conversion would remove the evil and resolve the problems of the world.¹⁰ Holiness Quakers withdrew from movements for peace and international arbitration, believing that universal peace could come only after Christ returned to Earth. One holiness Quaker of the 1890s declared: “We do not believe that the world is going to be saved as a whole. Our duty is to get people to the lifeboats and be rescued.”¹¹ Thomas Hamm argues that holiness Friends, if forced to choose between Quaker pacifism on the one hand, and loyalty to their fellow holiness believers in other denominations on the other, chose the latter.¹²

In the late nineteenth century the British Friends had also experienced an evangelical revival, but they managed to avoid major secessions.¹³ Throughout this period they had sought to convince others of the value of the Peace Testimony through letters, petitions and embassies, but it was their concern for social justice

⁹Hamm, op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁰Hamm, op. cit., p. 107.

¹¹Seth C. Rees, *Fire From Heaven, God's Revivalist*, Cincinnati, 1899, pp.157-8, cited in Hamm, op. cit., p. 163.

¹²Hamm, op. cit., p. 108.

¹³Alastair Heron, *Quakers in Britain: A Century of Change, 1895-1995*, Curlew Graphics, Kelso, Scotland, 1995, 18-29.

and reform during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries which came to dominate their public image. The British Quakers were best known for their work in prison and factory reform, in the anti-slavery movement and for the building and running of model industrial communities. The extension of relief out into the political world, to famine victims in Ireland or to the victims of the Franco-Prussian War, was a reflection of an increasingly outward looking Society, one which acknowledged a responsibility to the world,¹⁴ and was prompted by concerns for social justice as much as for peace. Furthermore, British Friends were involved in peace groups, unlike the American Friends who often held themselves aloof, and like their American counterparts evangelical British Friends were actively involved in mission work at home and abroad.¹⁵

At the end of the nineteenth century both the British Friends and the American Orthodox Friends underwent another doctrinal conflict. This time the leading lights, all young men in their twenties—the Americans were historians and theologians with teaching posts in Quaker Colleges—were reacting against Evangelicalism and the holiness movement and pressing for a return to a tradition based on an understanding of the Inner Light: a religion of works not words. The rise of Rufus Jones and his colleagues Elbert Russell and Thomas Newlin in America was paralleled by the emergence of John W. Graham, Edward Grubb and John Wilhelm Rowntree in Britain. In Britain modernism revived the Society as a whole, but in America it heralded the eventual secession of the holiness Quakers into the Friends Church. The modernists “saw the Peace testimony primarily as a reflection of the Quaker doctrine of the Inner Light rather than as a biblically based injunction, and they urged Friends to join with non-Christians in the fight against war”.¹⁶ However, it is easy to over-emphasise the extent to which the theology of the modernists disagreed with that of the evangelicals. In his 1915 pamphlet for the Peace Association of Friends in America, Rufus Jones wrote:

To become a person, in the real sense of the word, is to awake to the

¹⁴John Ormerod Greenwood, *Quaker Encounters: Vol. 1, Friends and Relief*, William Sessions, York, 1975.

¹⁵Heron, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

¹⁶Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-2.

consciousness of the divine relationship, to feel the inherent possibilities of sonship with God, to draw upon the inexhaustible supplies of grace, to enter into the actual inheritance of this divine-human privilege and to live in it and practice it.¹⁷

This statement does not differ markedly from the concept of sanctification, but where Jones departed from the holiness movement was in his conception of where one should go from there. For Jones and his colleagues the awakening of consciousness to the divine should be followed by a gradual growing into grace proceeding from the exertions of the individual.

Great as is the influence of the divine operation in the realization of this higher life of man, it is forever conjoined with human assistance and with human elements.¹⁸

To save the individual was not enough and, to save the world and the individual, human as well as divine interference was needed.

In the aftermath of the First World War and Quaker service in France, whilst relief work continued in Germany and Austria, the Conference of All Friends (later known as the First Friends World Conference) met in London in 1920 to debate the Testimonies of the Society. It was the modernist approach to the business of peace and to the world which dominated. The epistle which emerged, *Friends and War: A New Statement of the Quaker Position*, adopted both the modernists' action oriented approach and opposition to the holiness movement;

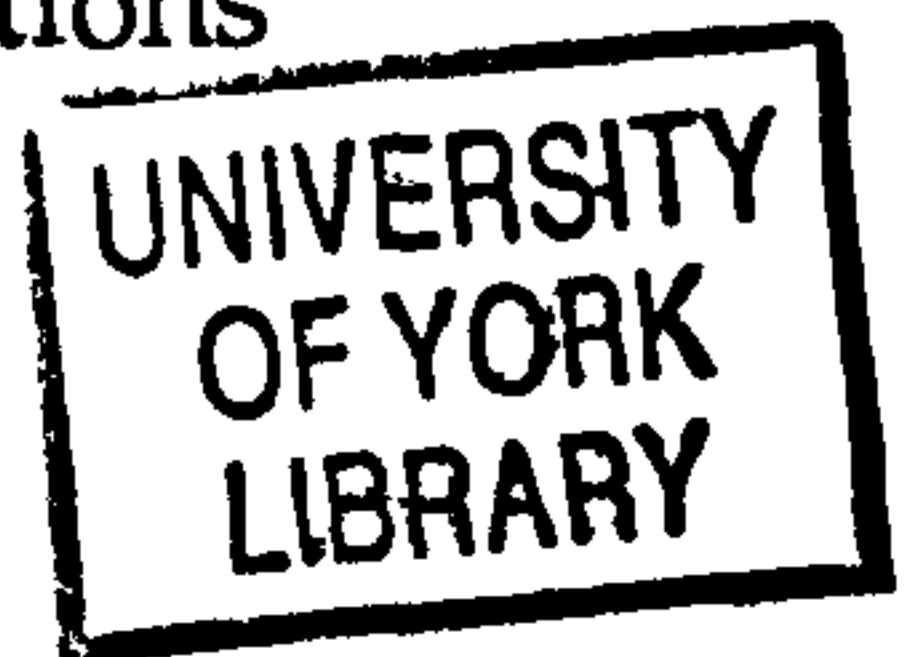
There can be no question that this substitution of theology for real Christianity is one of the great tragedies of history. It turned the gaze to another world. It made men acquiesce in the evils of this one. It cut the nerve of practical effort to transform the world here.... It made a compromise Church, with artificial functions and tasks, instead of an apostolic dynamic Church bent on overcoming the

¹⁷Rufus Jones, *The Quaker Peace Position*, Peace Association of Friends in America, Richmond, Indiana, 1915, p. 2.

¹⁸Rufus Jones, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

world.¹⁹

Although not all Friends, particularly in America, accepted this new theology and its demands, the renewed Peace Testimony meant a stronger emphasis on action and by the end of the 1920s modernist Friends were taking an ever larger part in international peace groups and in the growing peace movement. The establishment of formal Quaker relief bodies in the twentieth century—the Friends Service Council and the American Friends Service Committee—assisted this process. By 1930, in common with many others reacting against the horrors of the World War, the British Friends and their American counterparts were demonstrating a pronounced and vocal concern for peace. However, this concern was hampered by self-imposed strictures and contexts as the following sections will explore.



1.2 History of the AFSC and the FSC

In order to understand the differences in the policy and practice of the American Friends Service Committee and the Friends Service Council in Spain it is useful to understand the differences in their origins, the different internal pressures to which they had to adapt, and the wider culture from which they came. The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) was established in 1917, the Friends Service Council (FSC) in 1927, but it was the latter organisation which had the older history.

Both American and British Friends were involved in relief work at various times in the nineteenth century. The American Friends, however, focussed their efforts on the relief and assistance of free and enslaved Blacks, at least until 1860 when they became involved in war relief. American involvement in European aid was limited by distance and they often channelled their financial aid through the British Friends. Until 1870, the British Friends' involvement in overseas aid was relatively informal and chiefly concentrated on aiding such groups as Mennonites and members of the Church of Brethren whom the Friends recognised as co-

¹⁹ *Friends and War: A New Statement of the Quaker Position*, adopted by the Conference of All Friends, 1920, issued by the Continuation Committee of the Conference of All Friends, London and Philadelphia, 1920.

religionists. The principal exception to this generalisation was the extensive aid which Friends organised in Ireland to which both British and US Friends, in addition to Irish Quakers, contributed extensively. This relief, organised by concerned individuals, was not officially recognised by London Meeting for Sufferings. Like much of Quaker relief work before and since it was organised by only a small proportion of the society and Helen Hatton argues that it was consequently outside the corporate witness.²⁰ However, Friends' use of the title Minister recognised the value of individual action and it is a mistake to assume that because the Society did not make a formal effort that it refused acknowledgment of the work. A better way of approaching the issue—which affects all of the relief efforts, formal and informal, of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—is to recognise that the Society of Friends was established along a cell structure in the seventeenth century. Such a structure allowed individual and minority group effort as long as it remained within certain paradigms. As will be seen later in this chapter, it allowed for the formation of controversial bodies such as the Friends' Ambulance Unit, outside but very much a part of the corporate image of the Society of Friends.

The first official Friends War Victims Relief Committee of London Yearly Meeting was established in response to the unexpected defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian war. The devastation caused by the war and the consequences of the German occupation had mobilised a number of charitable efforts but it was clear that some form of organised and sustained activity was necessary. In particular, the Friends were aware that whilst some regions received ample attention, others were unjustly neglected. In 1870 the British Friends sent out forty-one Commissioners to investigate and begin distribution of aid and followed this up with a small group of more long-term workers who provided first food, and later seed corn and cattle. After one year both funds and fund-raising abilities were nearing exhaustion, but the Friends found it impossible to lay down the work immediately as individual field workers found ways and reasons to carry on. The Quaker presence in France eventually concluded five years later with assistance

²⁰See Helen E. Hatton, *The Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland, 1654-1921*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, London and Buffalo, 1993, pp. 6, 11.

during the harsh winter of 1875.²¹

Quaker relief in the Franco-Prussian war left a number of lasting legacies. To ensure that money subscribed by the public went to relief, the Friends set up an internal fund to raise money from the membership for expenses and administration. Most Quaker workers were unpaid, with a few receiving an allowance from the administration funds and only a very few of the French assistants receiving remuneration. This became standard practice on Quaker projects. Non-Quakers in sympathy with Quaker aims were welcomed as relief workers, and the age range of the workers spanned thirty to sixty years of age. Deviation from this practice would be rare and as the Americans later found, presented problems. Quaker relief would be distributed irrespective of race, class or creed and where possible it would be done through the encouragement of local committees whom they would aid. Although the Quakers had some success with development projects in Ireland, James Long's failed attempts to introduce communal ploughing had taught that it was often advisable to accept local attitudes rather than to enforce change from above.²² It was also established that Quaker workers would not themselves distribute food but would use local agents: recruitment of local volunteers both encouraged self-help and allowed the number of overseas workers to be kept to a minimum. A long term lesson, which was not discovered until later, was that relief work should not be *expected* to produce gratitude. When, in the 1890s, the Friends sought money for relief in the Russian famine, the Friends failed to raise any money from those areas of France which they had assisted in the 1870s.²³

The time spent in France also drew attention to the importance of the individual and the potential tensions between the relief workers and their home committee in the matter of when to extend and when to lay down a mission.²⁴ It was assumed that when the work in France was over, the War Victims Relief

²¹Greenwood, op. cit., pp. 73-80.

²²Hatton, op. cit., pp. 200-222.

²³Greenwood, op. cit., p. 117.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 49-61.

Committee would be disbanded. Its life was extended, however, after Meeting for Sufferings, the oldest committee of London Yearly Meeting, failed to respond to the need for relief in the Balkans in 1876. Four members of the Friends War Victims Relief Committee joined together to revive it and James Long eventually took a mixed party of Alsatian carpenters, Belgians and Germans to Bulgaria to help rebuild villages devastated by Turkish troops. The work was expanded further in 1896 when John and Elizabeth Bellows set out to assist the Armenians. For two years popular support brought substantial donations, after which funds dropped off. Rumours that conditions in the Balkans had been exaggerated undermined fund raising, and emphasised the need for full continual and detailed reports.²⁵ Despite the difficulties, the British Quakers were involved continuously in Eastern Europe until 1914, following a pattern of initial well-funded enthusiasm followed by public ennui and the dismantling of the project. In addition they served in a number of Russian famines from the 1870s and, in a more peripheral position, in the Boer War.²⁶ Most of the involvement of this period was triggered by the interest of one or more individuals operating "under Concern", that is, under a God-inspired impulse.

The First World War changed the nature of British Quaker relief work. The Friends were not totally unprepared, but they still had no single body responsible for coordinating relief work, nor were they in a strong position to rely on their young men to hold an absolutist position on the Peace Testimony. Although the modernists had made an impact on the Society, this had the tendency to encourage young people to action rather than steadfastness. As J. William Frost has said of the Americans in this period, "Peace meant passivity and the times called for activity", and this activity needed to be channelled if the testimony was to be maintained.²⁷ The most popular organisation to emerge was the Friends Ambulance Unit, a rather typical British Quaker group in that it was the product of individual concern. The initiative was taken by those most interested, and Society support sought in the

²⁵Ibid., pp. 80-87.

²⁶Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony*, p. 292.

²⁷J. William Frost, "'Our Deeds Carry Our Message': The Early History of the American Friends Service Committee", *Quaker History*, Spring 1992, p. 4.

aftermath, but because the unit served with the military it was never permitted recognition as an official branch of the Yearly Meeting. By 1916, when the unit was brought under army command, the majority of its senior officers were non-Quakers and many Friends had left.²⁸ Official bodies to emerge from Yearly Meeting included the new War Victims Committee (France), the Emergency Committee for Aliens, and the National Relief Auxiliary.²⁹ All were important elements of what was to become, in the inter-war period, the Friends Service Council, but it was the War Victims Committee (France) which had most to do with the emerging cooperation with the Americans.

For five years the War Victims Committee (France), with permission from the British government, operated behind the lines, assisting with ploughing when war drew manpower from the fields, distributing seeds, cabbage plants, manure, and repair services for farm machinery. Twenty-four thousand fruit trees were distributed by the British Friends. In addition, the FSC operated a maternity unit at Châlons-sur-Marne, assisted in hospitals and in convalescent homes and initiated a building scheme to provide prefabricated houses. In 1917 the FSC workers were joined by Americans, sent by the newly formed American Friends Service Council (AFSC).³⁰

American Friends' approach to provision for conscientious objectors and to relief was, from the start, professionalised. Whilst individual concern did sponsor the initial operation, it was not permitted to emerge unguided in the manner familiar to British Friends. Many American Quakers relief workers had come from experience in the settlement houses established in a number of American cities in the late-nineteenth century whilst others were products of an increasingly professionalised social work, or from the new business schools. This did not, of course, prevent many mistakes being made but it did indicate the direction in

²⁸The writer Olaf Stapledon, a non-Quaker, was accepted into the FAU in part because he could bring with him an ambulance. His pacifism was ambivalent and rested more on his belief that this was a gentleman's war which he as an ally of the working man felt he could not support. Robert Crossley, *Olaf Stapledon: Speaking for the Future*, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool 1994, pp. 129-132.

²⁹Greenwood, op. cit., p. 181.

³⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 199-205.

which the AFSC would develop.

American entry into the war was declared on 2 April 1917. On 18 May the Selective Service Act was passed and the first draft occurred on 5 June. Yearly Meeting Peace Committees had been debating throughout February and March the need for coordinating policies and for an organisation which would support Friends' work in war time. In April the Young Friends organised a joint meeting for members of the Five Years Meeting, Friends General Conference and Philadelphia Yearly Meeting³¹ to create a central clearing house for peace policies, to be called the Friends National Service Committee. Within six weeks the Committee had sent two Friends to France to investigate conditions—thus beginning a tradition of preferring their own investigations to any information British Friends in the field could send. They had also asked Henry Cadbury and Rufus Jones, two leading modernists, to join the Committee. The latter soon became chairman, consulted with the Red Cross, invited the Mennonites and Brethren to participate and changed the name to the American Friends Service Committee. An independent board was formed, composed of members from the three branches of Friends, and money raised. The British Friends War Victims Relief Committee welcomed the offer of American help, requesting particularly medical personnel, mechanics, carpenters and builders. The Red Cross, too, having appreciated British Quaker success, were keen to encourage American Friends and willing to transport their personnel and supplies to France, a necessity under the military agreements in place.³²

The American Friends, like the British, insisted that all male workers be conscientious objectors, and although the Friends recruited many Mennonites and Brethren there were no religious tests. Unlike the British Friends who were clear in their opposition to the war, the AFSC trod very carefully where patriotism and neutrality were concerned, as many Friends supported the war. Frost suggests that

³¹There were two Meetings in Philadelphia, one Hicksite (an early-nineteenth century schism) and one Orthodox. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting was Orthodox but for much of the nineteenth century had stood aloof from the internal dissension among American Quakers. At one point it communicated only with London Yearly Meeting.

³²Frost, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-11.

perhaps even a majority were at least supporters of Wilson and his policies.³³ One effect of this was a decision to say nothing about the war publicly and in the minutes there is no mention of the possibility of civilian relief behind the German lines.³⁴

The American workers were very different to the British Friends' recruits. The British relief workers were older, often in their late twenties and early thirties. Many were not Friends and many were politically on the left, motivated as much by socialist internationalism as by religious pacifism. In addition, many of the non-conformist strongholds in Britain were in urban areas. The American workers were a mixture of Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren—three churches with strong historical connections to each other—young men mostly between twenty-two and twenty-six years old, and 26% were twenty or younger. Many were from the small farming communities of the mid-west, although there was a general spread across the areas of Quaker settlement in the USA. The largest single group was 126 men and women from Pennsylvania.³⁵ Greenwood argues that in many cases their pacifism had become nominal and that they were politically naive but Frost, examining it from an American stand-point, feels otherwise, and one argument against Greenwood's assertion is that of the first ninety-two men to be sent, seventy-two (78%) had a college or professional education, at a time when less than 15% of seventeen-year-olds graduated high school. However, it was true that 64% listed farming or agriculture as work which they had undertaken at some time. Frost argues that these young men, many from isolated communities, may have been more committed to pacifism than their urban counterparts, but reports from the field indicated otherwise.³⁶

The new American Friends Service Committee, eager to have the support of a much older organisation, had decided to cooperate with the War Victims Committee and to operate a joint relief effort. In practice the result was a culture

³³Ibid., p. 4.

³⁴Ibid., p. 11.

³⁵Ibid., p. 15.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 15-16, 24.

clash which, whilst possibly at its worst during the First World War, would repeat itself later. The British relief units in 1917 were manned largely by veterans who in many ways resembled the troops among whom they served: they were cynical and war weary, some used tobacco and alcohol and many were socialists who welcomed the Russian revolution and its challenge to the capitalist “merchants of death”.³⁷ In contrast, mid-western Quakers had been taught to regard alcohol and tobacco as “of the devil”, and “the faintest tinge of pink damned a man in mid-Western eyes. The cheery irresponsibility of the American college boy was met and chilled by the dogged reserve of the Britishman...”³⁸ Frost concurs with this assessment but adds an assertion that the British Friends were “tired, set in their ways, and inefficient”.³⁹ The Americans were younger, enthusiastic, politically conservative and imbued with the new American business ethic with its premium on efficiency. Clashes were inevitable, sometimes over simple matters of perspective. Conditions which looked good to workers who had been in the war for three years was shocking to newcomers. Frequently the Americans repeated experiments, such as communal mechanised farming, which the British had already seen fail.⁴⁰ Based on very similar evidence, Greenwood and Frost simply exhibit prejudice, Greenwood in favour of the British, Frost in favour of the Americans, but both do agree that a consensus emerged in the field about the relative spiritual immaturity of the American workers. Letters from Lewis Gannet, a journalist who went to write publicity for the AFSC and the Red Cross, complained about the low standard of morals amongst the American men and the poor commitment to pacifism (one claimed adamantly that he was not a pacifist). In response the AFSC decided to change their recruitment policy to emulate the British Friends. Instead of eighteen-to-twenty year old men who had been classified as conscientious objectors but had no strong beliefs, the aim would be to send older men, committed

³⁷Greenwood, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

³⁸*Ibid.*

³⁹Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, pp. 21-24.

to their pacifism, with suitable skills for the job in hand.⁴¹

In the aftermath of the war Friends continued reconstruction work in Verdun although disgusted with the allied policy of continued blockade. They made a number of innovations, the most important of which was paying the families of the German prisoners-of-war who worked for the Friends. By 1920 the Anglo-American mission was completed but not all of the workers went home. Many went on to serve in the large-scale food relief efforts in Poland, Russia, Serbia, Austria and Germany where they were joined by female workers such as Edith M. Pye and Ruth Fry, two of the best known of the inter-war relief agents.

The obvious and continuing need in Europe ensured that the AFSC would not be disbanded and that the British Emergency Committee would continue to evolve. Within a week of the signing of the Versailles Treaty a delegation of British and American Friends visited Germany, the first civilians to be admitted after the war. The initial plan was for small-scale feeding but widespread need led to the decision to obtain governmental support. In America, this rested in the hands of Herbert Hoover, a Quaker, who had been placed in charge of rationing during the war.

Hoover felt that the Germans needed to be punished, and did not agree to support food relief until January 1920, but even this was conditional.⁴² Hoover refused to support a joint American and British Friends' relief effort forcing the Americans to concentrate in Germany and the British in Austria. When he tried to enforce the same division in Russia the AFSC refused to cooperate and he was forced to back down but the idea that Anglo-American cooperation and joint projects would be the norm was broken very quickly. Most importantly, it was Hoover who enforced the notion that adults had a lesser political, as well as moral, claim to relief, a point which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two.

In 1919, the Emergency Committee for the Assistance of Germans, Austrians and Hungarians in Distress joined with the Friends Emergency and War Victims Relief Committee. From 1924 this became the Council for International Service

⁴¹Ibid., p. 27.

⁴²Ibid., p. 36.

which in 1927 was amalgamated with the Friends domestic relief bodies to become the Friends Service Council.⁴³ In 1924 the American Friends Service Committee was placed on a more permanent footing; work in the inter-war period included feeding in Europe and in Africa. The main new development in the permanent structure of the Friends peace witness was the development of Friends Centres in a number of European capitals. Envisaged as embassies these were to become centres of small-scale relief during the 1930s, but, as much of the correspondence both American and British indicates, they were most concerned with the religious face of the Society, often manifested in a forceful stance on the Peace Witness, a concern that was passed on to the Spanish mission.⁴⁴

1.3 The FSC and the AFSC in Context

Whilst there are superficial similarities between the two organisations, the contexts from which they emerged and in which they operated were very different. In this section I intend to outline these contexts and suggest ways in which they affected the methods the committees adopted both generally and in Spain.

The internal context in which the Friends Service Council (FSC) emerged was stable and orderly. Although the drive to minister to the world's temporal needs came first from the evangelicals with their rejection of quietism in the early part of the nineteenth century, and later from the modernists, the British Friends succeeded in maintaining unity of purpose. The FSC was formed as part of London Yearly Meeting, independent of, but taking guidance from, Meeting for Sufferings, whose role it was to identify and minister to distress either within the society or, more usually in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the outside world. Whilst the FSC took its moral responsibility to its donors very seriously, its only institutional responsibility was to London Yearly Meeting. As the Yearly Meeting followed the traditional practice of conducting business meetings as prayer

⁴³The information cited is from Greenwood. J. W. Frost states that "In 1928 London Yearly meeting merged its relief and missionary activities into a Council for International Service", p. 41. However, his own footnote contradicts this statement and confirms Greenwood's chronology.

⁴⁴Greenwood, *op. cit.*, p. 231; Carl Heath, cited in Roger J. Carter, "The Quaker International Centre in Berlin, 1920-40", *The Journal of the Friends Historical Society*, vol. 56, no. 1, 1990, p. 27.

meetings, waiting for unanimity rather than majority feeling, the FSC could at least be sure of some consistency in its guidance. In addition, the FSC was expected to react quickly and with the minimum of consultation. It had its own small staff, and was empowered to establish sub-committees when it deemed them appropriate, but had a long tradition of dependence on volunteers and individual Concern, both at home and in the field. The authority of the FSC lay entirely in its ability to mobilise people and funding and in its confidence that it was respected both inside and outside the Society of Friends.

At its formation the AFSC occupied an uncomfortable place between the Quaker denominations. Although Young Friends saw the AFSC as a way to draw together the different wings of American Quakerism the AFSC had to deal with much suspicion. The largest number of Quakers in America belonged to the evangelical Five Years Meeting, but their contributions to the AFSC in its first years were substantially less than either of the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. In part this was due to a concentration of Quaker wealth on the East coast but it also reflected the suspicion that mid-Western evangelicals felt towards Eastern Quakers. Furthermore, different denominations saw the AFSC with different purposes in mind: many evangelical and Conservative Friends saw the Quakers as a “people made distinct by pacifism”,⁴⁵ whilst in the East, Hicksite and Orthodox Friends were reticent about the importance of pacifism: their emphasis was on good works. Liberals and moderate evangelicals saw the AFSC as confirming their belief in a “blend of mystical religious experience and social activism”.⁴⁶ The very existence of a number of different authoritative Meetings, one at the head of each denomination, meant that whilst unanimity might come from any one of them, it could not be expected from all of these Meetings combined.

During the war the divisions amongst American Quakers were set aside. After the war many Meetings reconsidered their commitment to the AFSC, preferring to support instead the American Friends Board of Missions. Consequently, the AFSC emerged as an independent and officially autonomous

⁴⁵Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 33.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*

corporate entity, responsible only to its Board of Directors and its General Committee. At the same time, its ability to function was dependent on the goodwill of Quakers of a wide variety of theological views and it needed to retain support from the Five Years Meeting, the more liberal Friends General Council and from the Wilburite and Hicksite Friends, as well as the two Philadelphia Yearly Meetings. Those Quakers who did continue to support the AFSC did not always do so unconditionally.

The theological diversity amongst Friends meant that if the American Friends Service Committee was to attempt to represent all Friends it could not formally merge faith and relief in the manner of the Friends Service Council.⁴⁷ Overseas work could bring the AFSC into conflict with the missionary wing of the Church: in Mexico, for example, the AFSC was seen as infringing on the territory of missionaries sent out by the American Friends Board of Missions. Domestic work could also be controversial. Although the AFSC could draw on over two centuries of Quaker tradition confronting racism and black poverty, the decision taken in 1922 to alleviate native white working class poverty and assist the children of striking miners in West Virginia and Pennsylvania was unpopular. The feeding and resettlement programmes which the AFSC initiated brought little public or Quaker support. Quakers were generally conservative and midwestern, and holiness-evangelical Friends came to feel the AFSC overly dominated by Philadelphia, by radical ideas and by a creeping secularism, a problem which affected how the AFSC approached its fund-raising. One solution to these tensions was to form a Message Committee within the AFSC, funded and managed separately, with a responsibility for printing leaflets, sending out speakers and providing funds for the Quaker Centres in Europe. However, their very lack of missionary intent made them objects of suspicion to the holiness Friends who saw in them vehicles for promoting liberal Quakerism.⁴⁸ The Message Committee became a part of the Peace division and the AFSC's emphasis settled on "silent

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 40.

⁴⁸Ibid.

witnessing for Christ and public emphasis on good deeds".⁴⁹ As we shall see, their activities in Spain clearly operated within this paradigm.

The AFSC's need to walk carefully between the different denominations, and the background of the original Board Members shaped its internal structure. From the first there was a stress on professionalism. Whilst it was important that all workers had the proper motivations and sympathies, early on it became the practice to employ non-Quaker professionals in non-executive posts. Professionalism also required the collating of statistics and the keeping of reports, invaluable to the researcher but leading to a flood of material. Whilst this habit was also consistent with previous Quaker relief practices, with their emphasis on moral probity,⁵⁰ professionalism also functioned as a defence against accusations from within the society that the AFSC might be too liberal. By consistently couching relief work in the vocabulary of social science it was possible to evade some of the theological debates. The drawback to the AFSC's desire for professionalism was the loss of spontaneity and a place for the individual with a strong Concern. Wolf Mendl, in his Swarthmore lecture of 1974, asserted:

a feature of Friends and their Peace Testimony is the persistence of individual witness and involvement in the world. Quakers may have been limited by their historical experience and cultural background, but that did not prevent individuals in each generation from standing out as pioneers in the attack on the scourge of war.⁵¹

However, it is questionable to what extent the AFSC extended this tradition of the individual pioneer. As will be discussed more fully in Chapters Two and Three, Alfred Jacob and Francesca Wilson, operating within the British tradition, each began with a personal Concern and persuaded the FSC to be led by their spirit and witness. Both stand out as rather forceful characters. In contrast when the Californian Lydia Morris attempted to interest the AFSC in her Concern for Spain

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁵¹Wolf Mendl, *Prophets and Reconcilers: Reflections on the Quaker Peace Testimony*, Swarthmore Lecture 1974, Friends Home Service Committee, London, 1974, p. 44.

she met with little response.⁵² The Board preferred to wait for advice from the FSC and, in the event, refused to act upon FSC requests for assistance until news was received from its own observer Sylvester Jones who was, perhaps not coincidentally, from Chicago, a city whose Quakers split between liberal and evangelical Quakerism. The use of Jones as an investigating witness may have been partially calculated to appeal to those otherwise hostile to the predominantly eastern AFSC. For the workers in the field this desire on the part of the committee to monitor all events and changes may have led to less autonomy and a restricted ability to respond to changes in circumstance.

The religious context for the British Quakers was straightforward. The British Friends were part of the nonconformist tradition and, although respected, were religious outsiders. In the nineteenth century, their rapprochement with the world and their position at the forefront of many nineteenth-century reform movements brought them into close contact both with other nonconformist groups—particularly the Methodists—and with paternalist and liberal wings of the Church of England; this contact was strengthened with the growth of Anglican pacifism in the inter-war period. However, there were no other pacifist churches with whom the British Friends might be automatically associated; the nearest organisation was the Save the Children Fund whose relationship with the Friends, through its founder Eglantyne Jebb whose sister-in-law was a Quaker, was extremely close. During the inter-war period, the Save the Children Fund was the body with which the Quakers cooperated most readily.

Although Quakers had not been welcome everywhere in colonial America, the American Friends were, by the American Revolution, a part of the emerging religious mainstream. By the twentieth century they were a part of the Protestant establishment, had contacts with most of the churches and were regarded as allies by the Conservative and Reform Jewish community. However, the American Quakers' closest relationship was with the Mennonites and with the Church of the Brethren, two European sects whose settlement in the United States had been

⁵²See letter to Clarence E. Pickett, 10 October 1936, Committee on Spain, Individuals: Morris, Lydia, 1936 (Box 1) and letter from Clarence E. Pickett to May Jones, 10 November 1936, Committee on Spain, Individuals: Jones, May & Sylvester, 1936 (Box 1).

assisted by the British and American Friends. The three churches held in common a witness to peace, although their reasoning and practice differed. Known as the historic peace churches of America, in the First World War their young men were granted status as conscientious objectors with relative ease and it was the coming together of these three groups to provide alternative service for their young men which sponsored and funded the American Friends Service Council in its first few years. By 1924, when the AFSC was placed on a permanent basis, the Mennonites and the Brethren had organised their own relief bodies but cooperation between the three churches was common and requests for assistance almost automatic. In Spain the Mennonites and Brethren supplied both money and personnel. Consequently they had considerable influence on the direction and nature of the mission.

The existence of these two natural allies meant that the American Friends had far less incentive to seek for additional collaborators or associates. In particular it meant that they could be rather more selective over their associates' political allegiances. In Britain, the shortage of natural allies and the desire to reach as wide a public as possible encouraged the Friends Service Council to take part in the National Joint Committee for the Relief of Spain's (NJC) public meetings. The FSC was a small body with restricted resources and the NJC could offer a far wider platform. However, involvement with the committee placed strains on the Friends' public neutrality. Although the NJC was an attempt at an impartial organisation its committee was made up of political figures, including the Liberal MP Wilfred Roberts, and it was viewed with suspicion by the parliamentary Labour party which was wary of Communist party involvement.⁵³ Invitations to speak at NJC functions frequently required representatives of the FSC Spain Committee to share a platform with representatives of other, less impartial organisations, such as the labour and trade union Aid Spain Campaign. In mid-1937 the Friends became aware of the increasingly partisan nature of the appeals made at NJC gatherings, and in conjunction with the Save the Children Fund, the only other impartial organisation, resolved to send a joint deputation to the officers of the NJC. The

⁵³Tom Buchanan, "The Role of the British Labour Movement in the Origins and Work of the Basque Children's Committee, 1937-9", *European History Quarterly*, volume 18, 1988, p. 59.

point was discussed and eventually an assurance given that all future public meetings would be prefaced with the reading of a statement emphasising the strictly neutral, non-political basis of the NJC.⁵⁴ However, the FSC appears to have never refused a donation on political grounds, and was willing to allow, although it did not encourage, earmarking for one side or another.⁵⁵

The AFSC was in a position to be rather more selective in terms of its alliances and associations, and was also constrained by its internal circumstances to be circumspect. The existence of a number of natural allies, including both the Peace Churches and such neutral organisations as the Red Cross, gave the AFSC an automatic constituency for fund-raising. As the American Red Cross declined to become involved in fund-raising for Spain, having already experienced difficulties in raising revenue for relief in China, any donations received by the American Red Cross were channelled to the AFSC and in 1938 the International Red Cross designated the Quakers as its agents in America, in Murcia and in Barcelona.⁵⁶ The AFSC was also requested by a number of other organisations to handle the finances they raised and to endorse their campaigns. As the AFSC did not conduct street level fund raising, preferring to approach wealthy individuals for large donations, this theoretically provided the AFSC with a greater reach. However, the organisation was extremely cautious about the political bias of those with whom they associated and were extremely reluctant to lend their name. In particular, the AFSC was alert to any association with communism.⁵⁷ This caution had two origins: although by 1936 the AFSC was relatively well established, many mid-western Quakers still eyed its "radicalism" with suspicion. In addition, the Red Scare of 1924 had left its mark on the Friends as much as on any group, and anti-communism was common within the peace movement generally which tended

⁵⁴FSC: Spain Committee Minutes, #177, 11 May, #194, 26 May, #206, 15 June 1937.

⁵⁵It was made clear from 1938 onwards that all subscriptions specifically ear-marked for use in Nationalist Spain would be sent to the American Friends Service Committee. Spain Committee Minutes, #36, 20 January 1938,

⁵⁶Foster Rhea Dulles, *The American Red Cross: A History*, Harper and Brothers, New York, 1950, pp. 343-345.

⁵⁷When the left-wing Spanish relief organisations began to fragment in 1939 this became a particular concern for the AFSC.

to emerge from the liberal Christian tradition, without the socialist overtones evident in its British counterpart.⁵⁸ Although the AFSC never joined in Red-baiting, it did regard communism and socialism as inconsistent with Quaker testimonies and was suspicious of trade unionism which many American Friends regarded as a disturbing and potentially revolutionary force: the AFSC itself was not unionised until the 1960s, and its statement on worker employer relations (1923) resembled the Fascist model of the organic state. All this was in contrast to the British Friends, a large minority of whom in the 1930s would have described themselves as socialists, and who on the whole were sympathetic to British trade unionism with its emphasis on welfarism and its direct association with the parliamentary process through trade union sponsorship of the Labour Party. As the AFSC did not generally take part in large scale meetings, preferring to stage its own events or send individual speakers to church and college groups, the issue of platform sharing was less urgent. As non-party organisations, both the FSC and the AFSC regarded themselves as non-political and continually stressed their political neutrality. However, both organisations were engaged in activities—pacifism and peace campaigning—and embraced an ideology which to the modern mind seems extremely partisan. Furthermore, as has been discussed above, many western American Friends did perceive the activities of the AFSC as too “political”.⁵⁹

Although both organisations were essentially relief bodies, both regarded their relief work not as a humanitarian effort but as a central part of their peace witness, an issue to which I will return repeatedly in this thesis. As a consequence, both maintained Peace Committees and were active in the peace movements of their respective countries. The international peace movement had been swelling since the late nineteenth century. Whilst the First World War interrupted its growth, it also provided impetus for a mass expansion in the 1920s. The growth of this movement provided the Friends on both sides of the Atlantic with a wider audience. In the United States it ensured the survival of the Peace Testimony by

⁵⁸Charles Chatfield, *For Peace and Justice: Pacifism in America, 1914-1941*, University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1971, p. 158-9.

⁵⁹In the 1930s these fears were fuelled by the AFSC’s good relations with the Democratic Party, and in particular with Eleanor Roosevelt.

allowing the modernists to sponsor a return to the traditions of Quakerism whilst continuing to emphasise the place of Friends in the world, rather than as apart from it. In Britain the Peace Testimony was also strengthened, elevating it to the best known of the Friends' testimonies.⁶⁰

In Britain, whilst the absolutist nature of the Quaker Peace Testimony may have alienated many peaceable individuals who continued to envisage an imperial, if anti-militaristic role for Great Britain, it struck a chord among others still war-weary and fearful of the possibilities of a second "great" war. Obviously the Friends were not the only group working for peace in the 1930s: a wide range of organisations were active from the absolutist through to the merely anti-imperialist. To the peace campaigns of the inter-war years the British Friends, along with other religious groupings, offered an additional, spiritual element.

The Fellowship of Reconciliation was part of a wider international organisation, a loose coalition of Christian pacifists from a number of denominations seeking to act as "leavening" for society rather than providing for a new social order. The No More War Movement, in contrast, was a predominantly secular off-shoot of the defunct No Conscription Fellowship of the Great War. After the election of 1923 it had sixteen MPs in Parliament. Its connection with the labour movement, however, proved to be its weakness as the events of the late thirties, in particular the Spanish Civil War, led much of organised labour to abandon its pacifist sympathies.

The War Resisters International formed one of the more radical groups. Although not strictly associated with any particular political organisation, it was obviously secular and associated with the politics of class struggle. In contrast the Peace Pledge Union, led by Canon Dick Sheppard, although also an essentially secular organisation, had little fixed ideology other than vocal opposition to the war; its main appeal was to youth.⁶¹ The largest of the organisations was the

⁶⁰The Yearly Meeting of 1912 issued an epistle entitled "Our Testimony for Peace" which declared that the Peace Testimony formed "an organic outgrowth of our faith as Christians and Friends, which cannot be abandoned without mutilating our message for the world." Peter Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony, 1660 to 1914*, Sessions Book Trust, York, 1990, p. 294.

⁶¹Peter Brock, *Twentieth-Century Pacifism*, Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, New York, 1970, pp. 104-153.

League of Nations Union, organised in the 1920s as a support and educational body for the League's activities. Its very clear and direct aims enabled it initially to raise a level of support never seen before or since. By 1931 it had registered 406,868 annual subscriptions.⁶² However, its very specificity of purpose led it to move away from the main body of the peace movement as the direction of the League altered. Of all the groups it was probably the least pacifistic but perhaps the most concerned with peace education.

The American peace movement divided rather differently. Although the Fellowship of Reconciliation was an international organisation with a strong presence in America other lines of division were distinctively American and there were many areas of overlap; people tended to belong to more than one group and a number of organisations shared officers. There were numerous organisations to choose from: in 1938 the Peace Year Book listed one hundred and nine international organisations, not including those groups who promoted peace between only two nations.⁶³ The most important division in terms of long term developments was that between isolationists and internationalists. Although it was not uncommon for isolationists and internationalists to band together on such matters as the Neutrality Act (1935) they were very different movements. Isolationists were concerned with keeping America out of any European conflict: they were not interested in efforts to prevent such a conflict. The internationalists saw America's peace as tied inextricably to world peace; as such, they generally strove to involve America as closely as possible with such organisations as the World Court and the League of Nations. Internationalists tended to come from fields such as law, education, banking, business and politics. Consequently, this section of the peace movement was more oriented to meeting with Congressmen than labour leaders and more accustomed to writing to individuals than producing leaflets. They tended to be north-eastern and college educated and viewed themselves as a minority voice within rather than outside the establishment. They also tended to

⁶²Martin Caedel, "The Peace Movement Between the Wars: Problems of Definition", p. 50, in Richard Taylor and Nigel Young (eds.). *Campaigns for Peace: British Peace Movements in the Twentieth Century*, Manchester University Press, 1987, pp. 73-108.

⁶³Chatfield, op. cit., p. 95.

see little conflict between American interests and a new world order: free trade policies would relieve economic pressure, reduce the need for conquest and enable poorer countries to develop, an approach which many friends shared.⁶⁴ In 1937 a number of these groups banded together as the Emergency Peace Campaign, with the aim of influencing Congressional elections. After its conclusion, a coalition of the Socialist Party, the Peace Section of the AFSC, the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the World Peace Commission of the Methodist Church, the US section of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the National Council for the Prevention of War and the War Resisters's League, combined to form the Keep American out of the War Congress in March 1938. The Congress' platform called for withdrawal from such "imperialist" activities as the stationing of American ships and marines in China's war zones, the scrapping of plans for industrial mobilisation, conscription and foreign alliances, the termination of the arms trade and the staging of a national war referendum prior to any declaration.⁶⁵

Although a part of this movement, the AFSC tended to focus on the behaviour of the individual rather than the reform of institutions which interested most internationalists. The success of the AFSC in securing audiences with congressmen and with the President stemmed from their similar status as members of the establishment, and the ideologies which they took with them abroad were firmly grounded in their understanding of the benefits of American culture. In particular, the AFSC shared with the internationalists their belief in collective responsibility for the maintenance of world peace. However, many internationalists rejected pacifism in favour of "collective security", the notion of the League of Nations being in a position to police with force—a concept that the British Friends at least could not accept, and over which American Friends were divided.

The internationalists themselves divided into a number of different groups,

⁶⁴Harold Josephson, "The Search for Lasting Peace: Internationalism and American Foreign Policy", in Charles Chatfield and Peter Van Den Dungen (eds.), *Peace Movements and Political Cultures*, The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1988, p. 208-10; Richard R. Wood, "The Crisis: A Glimpse of the Way Out", *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend*, 3 October 1935, p. 401.

⁶⁵Justus D. Doenecke, "Non-Intervention of the Left: 'The Keep American Out of War Congress', 1938-41", *Journal of Contemporary History*, volume 12, April 1977, p. 222.

usually congruent with an individual's social class, religion and broad political allegiance. Many of these groups were associated with the churches, although Chatfield argues that in many cases it was the clergy rather than the laity that turned to pacifism in the inter-war years.⁶⁶ However, the main trend to cut across these allegiances was the great success in America of women-only peace organisations. Societies with an exclusive focus on peace included the Women's Council for Education in International Relations, the Women's Peace Union and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), in addition to a number of international organisations such as the World Young Women's Christian Association and the World Women's Christian Temperance Union whose concern for peace was peripheral but active. The best known and most important of these organisations, for the simple reason that it contained most of the leaders of the American feminist movement, was WILPF. By 1930 it had 9,514 members and in the mid-1930s its membership fluctuated between 13,000 and 16,000. Only in 1940 did the membership begin a sharp decline. WILPF had strong connections, through a number of its officers, with the American Quakers, and unlike other many of the mixed and predominantly male internationalist groups the American branch tended towards an emphasis on moral education rather than international organisational change, although it was active in making international connections and agitating for the support of the League of Nations. However, as an international body it began to divide in the 1930s as women in the European branches began to weigh up the attractions of pacifism against the growing fascist threat.⁶⁷

Behind the activity of these groups lay public opinion, insubstantial but ever-present, and it was this public opinion which the peace groups sought to channel. The notion of orienting the public to peace through formal education was a relatively modern concept, although its roots were clear in the nature of Christianity itself. However by 1936 it was one to which the AFSC (though not the

⁶⁶Chatfield, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

⁶⁷Barbara Miller Solomon, "Dilemmas of Pacifist Women" in Elisabeth Potts Brown and Susan Mosher Stuard (eds.), *Witnesses to Change: Quaker Women Over Three Centuries*, Rutgers University Press, New York, 1989, pp. 128-9.

FSC with its more limited resources) was committed. Through its Peace Caravans, by which young college students were sent out to proselytise, through its work camps in ghettos and its speakers in schools and colleges, the AFSC hoped to educate America for peace and peace keeping. The move to "peace education" was framed by the AFSC as non-political and in theory was intended to be uncontroversial amongst the diversity of American Quakerism. Rufus Jones declared:

There must be no withdrawal from the complicated life of the world into any of the subtle forms of cloistered piety... every opportunity must be seized for directing and perfecting methods of public education, and for raising the moral tone and quality of the press; and a full share of responsibility for the character of local and national government must be taken up and borne with the same fidelity that the Quaker has always shown to the inner voice in matters of intimate, personal duty.⁶⁸

By the early twentieth century the focus of the peace education movement had settled on the revision of the curriculum in the interest of international understanding. In the aftermath of the World War this plan gained a measure of public support assisted by the moral though not financial reinforcement of the League of Nations. Although many Americans did not wish to be a part of the League, it was still regarded as a good thing for European peace.⁶⁹ Peace education became one of the main fronts of the international peace movement. However, this was not a cohesive movement: Elly Hermon points out that the aim of peace education towards "moral disarmament" could be interpreted in two ways, either as an exercise in the transformation of human behaviour, or as an attempt to reform international organisation.⁷⁰ The Friends, both in Britain and the United States, were firmly committed to presenting an example of the transformed behaviour of

⁶⁸Rufus M. Jones, *The Quaker Peace Position*, Peace Association of Friends in America, Richmond, Indiana, 1915, p. 4.

⁶⁹Elly Hermon, "The International Peace Education Movement, 1919-1939", in Charles Chatfield and Peter Van Den Dungen (eds.), *Peace Movements and Political Cultures*, University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, 1988, p. 127.

⁷⁰*Ibid.*

people who worked for peace, but were more ambivalent when it came to issues of international politics. Unease with such coercive measures as sanctions and blockades—the child-feeding in Austria and Germany had begun as a protest against allied blockades after the war—meant that the Friends were uncomfortable with governmental mechanisms to secure peace, at the same time as they felt no compunction about soliciting the government in the cause of neutrality. Consequently, the Friends supported non-intervention but rejected Government arguments that neutral shipping should stay away from Spain to avoid running the Nationalist blockade, an action which would prevent food and clothing getting through to the people of Spain.⁷¹

1.4 Friends and Sanctions

The matter of coercion, its legitimacy or otherwise, was central to the peace debates taking place in the British Society of Friends in the 1930s. This manifested itself in endless, and by Quaker standards ferocious, debates in the Society's journals, *The Friend* and *The Wayfarer*, on the morality of economic and military sanctions as a means of coercing and controlling an aggressor. In contrast, the American Friends, placed at some distance from the debate, appear to have been less concerned.

To the British Friends sanctions could be both an act of war and a step in that path to war known ironically as *collective security*. Nancy Bell, a correspondent in *The Wayfarer*, stated her view unequivocally: "...supporters of Collective Security are really at bottom the advocates of World Law, with the weapon of war retained to enforce respect for this."⁷² Sanctions were a warning shot, a step short of the last resort but in effect an admission that war remained an option if deemed politically necessary. This debate on the inevitability or otherwise of war in a system of Collective Security was considered extensively in the pages of *The Wayfarer* in a series of articles in 1936. This was initiated as a consequence of the publication, in January, of a document on Collective Security from the Friends' Centre in Geneva. The document contained the following paragraph:

⁷¹Jill Edwards, *The British Government and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939*, Macmillan Press, London, 1979, pp. 109, 114-115.

⁷²Nancy Bell, "Defending Pacifism", *The Wayfarer*, September 1937, pp. 210-211.

In principle, they [sanctions] differ from war in that they constitute police action by the community for social order, as against anarchical action by the individual state for selfish aggression. They constitute public war for defence of the community against private war for the advantage of one state at another's expense. Even if, at the very worst, this involved some form of military or naval action, that would be preferable in a world where armed force rules, to allowing the aggressor to work his will freely.⁷³

There are several points here that are contentious for a Quaker audience. First, it is essentially a defence of the concept of just war, as Carl Heath, a respected British Friend, did not hesitate to point out:⁷⁴ a move away from the belief that war in itself is evil, to a belief that the purpose for which it is fought may be evil. In addition, sanctions are presented not as an independent tool, but instead stand in place of a formal threat of war; in effect they *become* that threat. In reply Heath declared, "... once you have established the power of the League to enforce its will (even to the point of public war), in future 'the effect would be obtained by the *threat* of sanctions.'"⁷⁵ Whether this would be successful Heath questioned.

Even where sanctions were referred to only as the final option prior to a declaration of war this enshrined the assumption that sanctions are in themselves legitimate, a *peaceful* tool of diplomacy, hence their popularity amongst anti-war groups. The nature of the Friends' absolutism caused many to challenge this notion and it is unusual to find it appearing in a document of an official nature. For Carl Heath, and many other Quakers, sanctions were an act of war. War "is destroying innocent people... and destroying them by a combination of methods from attrition, starvation and mechanized force."⁷⁶ There was no useful distinction to be made

⁷³Cited in Carl Heath, "Sanctions and the More Excellent Way" , *The Wayfarer*, March 1936, pp. 56-57.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 56.

⁷⁶Ibid.

between the methods of death.⁷⁷ In part, however, the Geneva document, produced by American Friends, marked the difference between the two societies: an editorial in the American publication *The Messenger of Peace* expressed the view that:

...while we may question some of the motives behind the League action, and while we may disagree with the policy of sanctions as applied, let us remember that for the first time in history some fifty nations of the world are actually banded together in common program to bring an aggressor to time and call a halt to international banditry.⁷⁸

The British and Orthodox Quaker antipathy to coercion in any form is based in a belief of “that of God in every man” and the consequent respect of the sanctity of the individual and of the ability of the faithful to speak to his or her heart. This imposes upon the Quaker the duty not to impose his or her beliefs upon others, but rather to *convince* through the power of the spirit. As Nancy Bell wrote, “all improvement comes from encouraging the little seed of good in every human being.”⁷⁹

The above quotation is representative of the sentiments expressed in *The Friend* and *The Wayfarer* during the 1930s, but what then of those who felt this to be either impracticable or contrary in action to the urgings of the spirit? Bertram Pickard, an American Friend and one of the architects of the Geneva document, deplored the tendency of Quakers—as he saw it—not to recognise their own very small place in the world and to tailor the manifestation of their peace testimony to a practical programme which might be a step in the direction of a more absolute peace.

...whilst as Quaker pacifists we are trying to live and propagate by

⁷⁷Although more modern Friends support sanctions as a political tool than did in the 1930s they remain controversial. Throughout the 1980s the British Society never felt able to take an official stand either for or against sanctions against South Africa, avoiding their usual outright opposition only because of the ANC call for sanctions. In the 1990s, the British Friends have consistently opposed the sanctions in force against Iraq on the grounds that sanctions are an act of war against the people of Iraq.

⁷⁸Editorial, *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend*, December 1935, p. 513.

⁷⁹Nancy Bell, *op. cit.*, pp. 210-211

word and example an active peaceableness which is able to minimize fear, hatred and anger in ourselves and others, as Quaker citizens we are also co-operating in the complex political task of eliminating outward violence (notably the institution of war) by changing human behaviour in the direction of international co-operation, and towards the establishment of a framework of law and order, without which setting mass human passions are beyond control.⁸⁰

British and American Quaker action during the Spanish Civil War, therefore, can be seen in two ways. For the British Friends their action was both an expression of love for the Spanish and a protest against the politics of collective security which came into play. For the American Quakers, it was equally an expression of love, but the American Friends also perceived relief as a way of preserving world neutrality and taking part in the international politics which the British Friends abhorred.

1.5 The Spanish Civil War

The Spanish Civil War did not in itself lead to the crumbling of the peace movement in Britain and America. The process had already begun with the Sino-Japanese War and the Abyssinian crisis: the outcome of both damaged confidence in the effectiveness of the League of Nations. However, feelings in the United States and Great Britain ran in different directions. During the 1930s, the failures of the League of Nations dampened the recruiting power of the internationally oriented peace groups. Those who rejected international cooperation as tainting Americans with European deceit and corruption were more successful in keeping and attracting members, and American security was seen as a product of the actions of Congress, rather than of International conferences.⁸¹ As the constituent elements of the Keep America Out of the War Congress illustrates, internationalist feeling tended to be liberal rather than left-wing and placed a heavy emphasis on the diplomatic method rather than on the justice of the outcome. The AFSC, whilst

⁸⁰Bertram Pickard, "Sanctions—A Political Way", p. 87, *The Wayfarer*, April 1936, pp. 86-87.

⁸¹Richard P. Traina, *American Diplomacy and The Spanish Civil War*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis, 1968, pp. 13-14.

resolutely opposed to war anywhere, adopted the immediate goal of keeping the US uninvolved. Thus, in electoral politics fear of the Catholic clergy's ability to mobilise the Catholic electorate and the reinforcement lent by generally Protestant peace campaigns led Roosevelt to acquiesce to the British and French governments' policies.⁸² In Britain, in contrast, much of the peace movement found its support amongst the Left and in the trade-union and working class rhetoric of international brotherhood. In this context, peace without social justice was unappealing, and a popular front or war against fascism appealed as a greater indication of international brotherhood than the rhetoric of appeasement and compromise. Thus in Britain the Spanish conflict undermined the peace movement, but in the United States it appears to have reinforced it.

American and British Quaker reactions to the Spanish Civil War and to the Republican Government were mixed. Assessing the concern of Orthodox American Friends is difficult. The distance of the conflict diffused interest and although *The Messenger of Peace...* devoted one editorial to the matter—sympathetic to the claims of the Republican Government for sole legitimacy—this does not appear to have aroused the passion of American Quakerism.⁸³ The East Coast American Friends, wary of the aggressive nature of fascism, were also sympathetic, although members of the western Friends Church, to judge from the complete absence of discussion in *The Evangelical Friend*, were simply uninterested, their energies channelled towards the missionary and relief needs in China.⁸⁴

Although it is not the purpose of this thesis to analyse this matter in any detail, it seems fairly clear that the British Friends, generally aligned with the left, were far more sympathetic to the Republic and generally deployed a greater

⁸²It is not clear to what extent the American Catholic Church influenced the Roosevelt administration's decision to maintain an embargo, but there is some agreement that the influence of the Catholic clergy was exaggerated. A December 1938 poll indicated that 39% of Catholics were pro-Franco whilst 30% were pro-Loyalist. In 1939, a Gallup poll put the figures at 38% pro-Franco and 29% pro-Loyalist. J. David Valaik, "Catholics, Neutrality and the Spanish Embargo, 1937-39", *Journal of American History*, 1967, p. 83.

⁸³"It Happens Again in Spain", *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend*, 15 October 1936.

⁸⁴Jaime Mendez, "Spain is Saved From Fascism", *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend*, 2 April 1936, pp. 134-5.

passion. In August 1936, an extremely partisan article was published by Alfred Jacob in both the British journal, *The Friend*, and its American counterpart, *The American Friend*.⁸⁵ This provoked little debate on the issue of Spain and what Friends could do, but it did trigger a debate in Britain about the place of the Peace Testimony in a civil war, asking pointedly how British Friends would feel if in a similar position or subject to invasion. One correspondent, P. Mabel Unwin, asked,

Could we take the complete pacifist position if an armed rising took place in our own country, a conflict of ideas which neither sanctions nor a system of collective security could affect? Must we not consider the possibility of such a situation, and take the same attitude to it in another country as we should in our own?⁸⁶

The letter aroused passionate response. The following week, Charles Edward Gresham wrote in to declare, "The Christian Pacifist position is not conditioned by circumstances; it regards the method of war as an infraction of the Divine Law."⁸⁷ However, the following week, P. L. Dobrashian contributed a rare example of a Quaker suggesting the possible inadequacy of the Peace Testimony.

To those Friends who still entertain illusions as to the innate goodness of civilised man...

Once we recognise that Christian humility is no deterrent to the worshippers of brute force, we have no option, if we are concerned for the propagation of our faith, but to condone the use of coercion for the specific purpose of preserving those liberties which are indispensable to our very survival. Aldous Huxley's warning that Means determines Ends is a splendid tonic in our contemporary world, but it must not deceive us into believing that the defence of the Spanish democracy is in any way comparable to the crime of voluntarily waging the Great War to prove to our

⁸⁵Alfred B. Jacob, "The Roots of Spanish Unrest", *The Friend*, 7 August 1936, pp. 735-6 and *The American Friend*, 20 August 1936, pp. 348-9.

⁸⁶P. Mabel Unwin,, "Letters to the Editor", *The Friend*, 14 August 1936, p. 767.

⁸⁷Charles Edward Gresham, "Letters to the Editor", *The Friend*, 21 August 1936, p. 786.

Imperial rivals that "Might is Right".⁸⁸

The most extensive and thoughtful exposition of the usual British Quaker stance was written by Mabel King Beer: "... the Christian realises that the tyrant is powerless in the spiritual world—which is no merely verbal or nebulous conception..."⁸⁹ Although marginal to this dissertation the reply from H.E. Edwards must be noted for the virulence with which it challenged Jacob and offered a defence of Accion Popular, the Right and "the Fascist organic state".⁹⁰ It is easy to forget that not all British Friends, however great their generosity in matters of relief, supported the Republican cause. However, what is most important is to recognise that the British Friends did not actually oppose non-intervention, rather they opposed the refusal to acknowledge a legitimate and democratic government, the motives which lay behind non-intervention, and the obvious lack of will to enforce it.

Reactions to the Spanish conflict amongst the constituencies the Quakers hoped to appeal to also differed and this affected fund-raising strategies. The British Quakers could be relatively certain of financial support from the Left which, whilst sometimes suspicious of communism, did not regard the government of Spain as necessarily the tool of either communism or the Soviet Union. Partially because it was the usual British Quaker mode of fund-raising, and in part because of this visible public support, the British Friends were able to campaign for funds publicly on the streets and at large (and often political) public meetings. They also succeeded in mobilising schools and church organisations in the fund-raising efforts. However, the FSC relied on Quaker donations to cover administrative costs. Paul Sturge, Secretary of the Friends Service Council (FSC) Spain Relief Committee, wrote to all Preparative Meeting (PM) Clerks in November 1936 warning that:

No service in Spain could easily be undertaken by Friends if it were not for the existence of the Friends Service Council, and the need for maintaining the ordinary work of the Council should therefore

⁸⁸P.L. Dobrashian, "Letters to the Editor", *The Friend*, 4 September 1936, pp. 822-824.

⁸⁹Mabel King Beer, "Letters to the Editor", *The Friend*, 11 September 1936, pp. 846-848.

⁹⁰H. E. Edwards, "Letters to the Editor", *The Friend*, 14 August 1936, p. 767.

clearly come first.⁹¹

Appeals were thus not sent out to Friends individually, but directed towards Meetings, where it was hoped group fundraising would bring in more substantial sums from outreach and much of the relief was paid for by donations from non-Quaker individuals.

In America the Red Scares of 1924 had left a trade union movement and socialist party which were seriously weakened and terrified of association with communism. Although many socialists did rally around the Spanish cause, the campaign for relief funds in America was factionalised. Many American liberals were suspicious of the Republican government and although Progressive, anti-Catholic sentiment may have aroused some American support for the Republicans it did not succeed in wholly assuaging fears of both communism and atheism. Unlike the situation in Britain and despite apparently heated passions, the majority of Americans appear never to have desired active intervention in the Spanish Civil War.⁹² This might have affected the AFSC campaign more had the AFSC been accustomed to rely on street collections and private charity as did the British Quakers. However, the Philadelphia office rejected street collections on the grounds that they were not cost effective, although a number of the local branches may have employed this tactic. Instead, and in contrast to the FSC, the AFSC operated mainly as an umbrella organisation soliciting substantial donations from other charities including the Greater New York Federation of Churches, the Unitarians and the Association to Save the Children of Spain, whose names appeared on the letter-head of the "Spanish Child Feeding Mission".⁹³ In addition, the AFSC also took substantial donations from the North American Committee for Democracy in Spain, another umbrella group consisting of largely left-wing organisations, but it is noticeable that this association was not publicised.

In the international arena, the failure of the League of Nations either to enforce sanctions or successfully to mediate in Abyssinia was one justification, had

⁹¹#10, 27 October 1936, FSC Minutes of Spain Committee, 3 September 1936-11 July 1940, p. 10.

⁹²Traina, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

⁹³See sample letter-head from 1937 of the "Spanish Child Feeding Mission" of the AFSC. Committee on Spain 1937: Finance, Fundraising by Wellington Tinker (Box 4).

any been needed, behind the decision to move negotiations on the politically delicate issue of the Spanish Civil War from the public arena of Geneva and the League to the private diplomatic circles of London, Paris and the *in camera* Non-Intervention Committee. Furthermore, neither Italy nor Germany took part in League meetings and thus another mechanism was needed to pull them into negotiations. In addition, Spain held the Presidency of the League of Nations Council, and although in the long-term this did them little good,⁹⁴ it did mean that any debates on Spain in the League were vehicles for the Spanish government, something which Britain seems to have been anxious to avoid. The Non-Intervention Committee, in contrast, excluded Spain, emphasising the effective non-recognition of the Republican government implied by the arms embargo.⁹⁵ Throughout the war, with the exception of a greater willingness to provide humanitarian aid, the American government followed the lead of Great Britain.

In order to prevent the Spanish Civil War from escalating into a European conflict (the notorious "first criterion" of the Non-Intervention Committee⁹⁶) it was necessary not actually to halt foreign intervention but merely to provide a mechanism whereby diplomacy might be employed to slow down potentially hostile moves between the European powers. This allowed those who wished to intervene actively—Russia, Italy and Germany—to do so, whilst Britain and France—concerned to secure their existing interests in both zones and in France's case to preserve internal order—could indicate to their electorates that something was being done. Simultaneously they endeavoured to avoid internal controversy and preserve at least an outward show of neutrality. In Britain this failed to appease many sections of public opinion, particularly on the Left. The wide variety

⁹⁴Veatch points out that of the total membership of the League (fifty-one states) only twenty had liberal democratic systems and that "Conservative governments, of one kind or another...were in power in the great majority of the League's member countries". Richard Veatch, "The League of Nations and the Spanish Civil War, 1936-9", *European History Quarterly*, volume 20, 1990, pp. 188-9.

⁹⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 182 and 194.

⁹⁶In the House of Commons, December 21, 1937, David Grenfell MP asked, "Was not the object of Non-Intervention to stop Intervention?". Chamberlain replied, "The policy was designed with the object of confining the policy to Spain." *Hansard*, 330 H.C. Deb. 55, p. 1808; Wm. Laird Kleine-Ahlbrandt, *The Policy of Simmering: A Study of British Government Policy During the Spanish Civil War*, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1962, p. 105.

of political opinion within the British peace movement meant that active peace campaigners were as likely to campaign for intervention in Spain as not. The opposition to Non-Intervention came from those on both the Right and Left of British politics, many of whom saw in Spain the seeds of a future threat, either fascist or communist. Many in the British peace movement saw in Non-Intervention the abdication of responsibility in matters of mediation, conciliation and an abandonment of humanitarian ethics.⁹⁷ In America, however, the less left-wing peace movement was content to see some form of neutrality preserved and was more concerned that it should be enforced, however poorly, than with protesting the partiality of this official neutrality in both theory and practice.

Between 1936 and 1940 the British Society of Friends participated in calls for Government, Church and League-sponsored reconciliation in Spain, but in the face of the British and French Governments' unwillingness to explore public channels of debate and the deliberate marginalisation of the Spanish conflict from the rest of the "international situation", the opportunities for peace campaigning were limited: the Spanish Civil War quickly slipped from the minutes of the FSC Peace Committee, to be mentioned only once after December 1937. Although the AFSC had a Peace Committee, its main concern had been consistently for peace education as this was less controversial than political campaigning might have been. In addition, whilst the AFSC did make use of its political networks to support congressional peace initiatives, it was far less prone to putting out public statements and leaflets which might have brought it into conflict with large elements of American Quakerism.

For the Quakers on both sides of the Atlantic the imposition of an economic blockade and the hardships this imposed on Republican Spain, cut off from its main food supplies now in the Nationalist zone, was an obvious area to be of

⁹⁷The League of Nation Refugee Convention (1938) had failed to include Spanish refugees within its definition of refugees, both because it did not specifically name the Spanish as a special group in the same way as it identified the Russians, but also because refugees were defined as people without nationality—White Russians had been stripped of theirs in 1922—and therefore without government protection. As both the Republic and the Nationalist authorities claimed responsibility, the Spanish did not benefit from the few conventions the League had put in place by 1938, such as international travel papers. See Claudena Skran, *Refugees in Inter-War Europe: The Emergence of a Regime*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995, pp. 72, 76, 99 and 86.

service. The Friends turned towards vociferous agitation for relief and the right of volunteers to serve with relief agencies in Spain, permission for which was slow to come from the Foreign Office and the State Department.⁹⁸ The consequent stress on the humanitarian aspects of the war challenged the ideological dominance of “international considerations” over individual needs but Spain was still, partially as a consequence of British and American government assessment of the situation, to be approached as discrete from other issues. The manner in which the Friends approached work in Spain, emphasising their practical neutrality and playing down individual workers’ attitudes and political beliefs, inevitably reinforced this notion at least until 1940 when, for the American Friends, the consequences of the Spanish Civil War became inseparable from the other events they dealt with in Europe.

⁹⁸ The US State Department did not begin to issue passports for relief work until March 1937. This might explain the relatively late start of the AFSC relief effort—see, Richard P. Traina, *op. cit.*, p. 189—except that Sylvester Jones began his mission of enquiry in December 1936 and that there is no mention of any difficulty in securing passports in either the minutes or the letters.

Chapter Two:

The Friends Service Committee in Barcelona

2.1 Arriving in Spain

In 1935 an expatriate Quaker, Russell Ecroyd, informed the Society of Friends that with the increasing toleration of Protestantism in Spain the opportunity existed for a Quaker mission. In 1936 the Friends posted an internal advertisement calling for a Spanish-speaking volunteer. The advertisement was answered by Alfred Jacob, a Quaker student who had recently taken a history degree at Oxford and spoke Spanish.¹

Alfred Jacob was born in West Chester County, Pennsylvania, and raised in the United States. Although educated primarily in the USA, he took his undergraduate degree at Oxford, took British nationality and married an English Friend and convinced pacifist, Norma Jacob.² By 1936 the Jacobs had two small children. It was the feeling of Meeting for Sufferings, the responsible body, that the pair were both too young and too inexperienced to be sent as missionaries into a new field, but the shortage of Spanish-speaking Friends ensured that the Jacobs were selected.³

It was originally intended that the Jacobs would travel to Awakening and there establish a small hostel which would serve as a Quaker Centre, similar to the centres in Geneva, Berlin and Paris which served as Quaker "Embassies" or mission houses. The original programme expected Alfred Jacob to raise the bulk of his own funds, and £150 was quickly raised to support a trial year. Should the

¹ "Outlook and Outreach: Opportunities in Spain", *The American Friend*, 21 March 1936, p. 102. Alfred B. Jacob to Ruth E. Outland, 14 July 1936, AFSC: Committee on Spain (CoS), 1936, Coms. & Orgs.: Friends Service Council, General.

² Alfred Jacob suggested that had he not been a pacifist Norma would not have agreed to see him. As it was, it was one of the first things she asked. Interview with Farah Mendlesohn, January 1994.

³ Norma Jacob, "The Spanish Civil War", in *Bio of an Ogre*, by Piers Anthony, Ace Books, New York, 1988, p. 229. *Personnel in the Field*, Report of Committee held at the Priory Rooms, November 24 1936, to meet Paul Sturge of the London Committee: Warwickshire Monthly Meeting Spain Committee: Letters and Minutes.

initial project prove successful, the AFSC planned to provide staff to form a joint venture similar to that operating in the other Quaker centres.⁴

The military rebellion in mid-July, and the rapid escalation to civil war by mid-September, precluded the idea of the Jacobs, with their two small children, travelling to Spain as a family group. It also cast doubt on the wisdom of siting a Quaker embassy in Madrid, due to the danger of Madrid coming under attack, and engendered further doubt within the FSC that the original idea of a Quaker centre remained viable. Instead, Alfred Jacob travelled with John W. Harvey, a member of the newly established Spain Committee, to explore opportunities for Quaker work outside Madrid. It was assumed that this would be a short war and that material aid would be unnecessary. Instead, the Quakers would offer spiritual support for those attempting to maintain a pacifist witness. The evangelical and Protestant nature of the proposed Quaker presence ensured that the Friends would not be welcome in Burgos, the Nationalist capital, although enquiries were made. Instead, Jacob and Harvey turned their attention to Catalonia, an area not at the fore-front of the fighting and therefore relatively safe, but which as a consequence of its relative safety was taking a major role in the housing and maintenance of refugees, and thus might offer openings for future Quaker work. Although this project had clear missionary intent, the FSC entered upon it with an awareness that conditions and needs might change.

The level of need which Harvey and Jacob found in Catalonia hinted that food shortages could not be far away and whilst Jacob remained to establish himself, Harvey returned to London. In response to John W. Harvey's report the members of the Spain Committee began to visit those individuals in London whom they felt might prove of importance in any future work, including both the Spanish Embassy and representatives of the Insurgents.⁵ One traditional contact renewed was with the Save the Children International Union, based in Geneva. The Friends had strong contacts with the Union—a non-partisan organisation—through

⁴FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 3 September 1936.

⁵Norma Jacob eventually joined Alfred in 1937, once the work was established, and by late 1937 had become an integral part of the unit; FSC: Minutes of the Meeting for Sufferings, October 1936: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 17 September 1936.

personal connections to Eglantyne Jebb,⁶ the founder, and through shared work in Germany and Austria. The Friends also moved to establish links with other organisations including the Council of Action (Women's Section) and, at a later date, with the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief, a left-wing organisation which ensured public neutrality with a cross-bench parliamentary presence on its committee.⁷ The most important decision taken as a consequence of John W. Harvey's report was that FSC activity would not concern itself with the refugees who had fled to France and appeared to be adequately cared for by relatively sympathetic French authorities.⁸ This policy was maintained until 1940.

In late October 1936, Alfred Jacob was residing in a YMCA centre and hosting gatherings of young men anxious to hold to a pacifist witness. Jacob was concerned to assist them to alternative service, a mission in which he had some success. By October 1936, however, refugees were entering Catalonia at an estimated average of 600 per day, with as many as 3,000 refugees entering on some days. The vast majority of these refugees were children. Most were evacuees from Madrid, but others came from Valencia, where there would be little provision for refugees until the arrival of the AFSC in April 1937. Whilst all efforts were being made by the local authorities and indigenous charities to settle these children it was clear that if the situation extended for more than a month or so, external assistance would be needed.⁹ Although the League of Nations had, by this time, established a regime for the treatment of refugees, it did not apply to internal refugees and thus could not immediately assist those refugees who remained in Spain.¹⁰ The

⁶Jebb's sister-in-law, Dorothy, was a Quaker. See Francesca Wilson, *Rebel Daughter of a Country House: the Life of Eglantyne Jebb, Founder of the Save the Children Fund*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1967, p. 212.

⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 28 September 1936.

⁸FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 3 October 1936. Skran, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-61.

⁹Pro Infancia Obrera, for example, had been established in 1934 to assist refugees from the Asturias rebellion.

¹⁰Under the terms of the Franco-Spanish Convention (1932) Spanish aliens were accorded the same status as nationals and extended special benefits to refugees who were old or very young, pregnant or nursing, or who had large families. In 1936 Léon Blum's Popular Front government recognised the "right to work". This is one reason, apart from its proximity, that many refugees fled to France. Skran, *op. cit.*, p. 129-130.

Republic's Health Department made it clear that any assistance would be appreciated, but that the emphasis should be placed on tinned or dried milk, milk foods, cod-liver oil, dried eggs and sugar. The supply of milk had already failed by October as most of the dairies and factories were located in insurgent Spain; furthermore, the Non-Intervention agreement, with its refusal to recognise the Republic as legitimate, discouraged the extension of credit to the Spanish government for food purchases, and included food aid within a broad definition of intervention.¹¹ The British Quaker response was to begin raising funds for a supply of milk and dried foods for children in the Barcelona region, in association with the Save the Children Fund (SCF), the British section of the Save the Children International Union (SCIU). From the start, Jacob held two budgets, one for relief purposes designated by the Committee, the second for the management of his personal Concern. From this second budget Jacob proposed that he attempt the protection and support of those members of the Right trapped in Republican Spain, possibly through the maintenance of a Government-controlled hostel. Nothing came of this, but Jacob did succeed in establishing a scheme to supply food parcels to those of the Right and British expatriates who could be found sponsorship in Britain.¹² This particular scheme was to prove a useful means of acquiring Spanish currency as the war proceeded and the blockade took hold.

The arrival of donations in kind from a number of sources enabled the SCIU and the Friends to begin relief work in Barcelona almost immediately, and in December Alfred Jacob was able to distribute enough milk for 200 children. Arguably, this was more in the way of moral than nutritional support, but this was crucial to the Quaker understanding of aid as an expression of a shared humanity in God. In the meantime the Geneva committee of the SCIU despatched 200 cases of condensed milk with the intention of distribution to 500 children in Barcelona for three months. Mrs. Small, the SCIU investigator, returned to Geneva leaving Alfred Jacob with seniority and effective autonomy.

In December 1937, Alfred Jacob was authorised to obtain a warehouse and

¹¹FSC: circular letter, 21 October 1936, attached to Minutes of the Spain Committee, 27 October 1936.

¹²Spain Committee Minutes, no. 29, p. 11.

office space as rapidly as possible.¹³ The FSC and SCIU agreed that they would cooperate on joint projects but were to feel free to raise money independently for other work; an agreement which proved open to a number of interpretations.¹⁴ By the end of the month Alfred Jacob had carved out a space for Friends' aid in Spain, the SCIU had appointed Dr. Miette Pictet, a Swiss with professional experience in child protection, as their agent in Spain, and Alfred Jacob, with the help of a Catalan Protestant, Domingo Ricart who was to prove crucial to the success of the mission,¹⁵ had established himself in an office in Calle Caspe, Barcelona.¹⁶ Fund-raising was under way and it was planned that a number of people would visit Spain over the Christmas period to report back to local fund-raisers on needs and conditions. In the same cause it was also decided to issue a bulletin to all regular donors.¹⁷

2.2 The Spiritual Witness of Alfred Jacob

The modern Society of Friends tries to manifest a group witness; however, the prominence of Alfred Jacob as a correspondent and in the letters and records of the Spanish relief mission cannot be ignored. Jacob had a very personal Concern for Spain as a place and the Spanish as a people and was very clearly partisan. It is difficult to assess the extent of Jacob's missionary zeal because it was so rapidly

¹³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 December 1936.

¹⁴One such project which the FSC agreed to support was to supply Russell and Maria Ecroyd with materials and foodstuffs to maintain a hospital at their home in Castellón, a project which was supported continuously until Russell Ecroyd's death in 1938. FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 December 1936.

¹⁵There is not enough primary material on Domingo Ricart to enable adequate consideration of either his role or personality—his papers at Haverford College consist of his academic writings. A short summary drawn from the available secondary material is included as Appendix B.

¹⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 22 December 1936.

¹⁷These visitors included Edith M. Pye, a respected relief worker and member of the Birmingham Spain Committee, and Horace A. Alexander, who had served in India, was a member of the FSC Spain Committee and served as Chairman of the Birmingham Spain Committee, the most active of the regional Quaker campaign groups. The Birmingham Committee would send a small but steady stream of observers in the next two years in order to provide material for its fund-raising efforts. See the Minutes of Warwickshire Monthly Meeting.

swamped by events, but there is evidence that Alfred Jacob's initial Concern was not for relief—which appeared less urgent in the autumn of 1936—but for the spiritual enlightenment of the Spanish people. Jacob had been to Spain for the first time in 1928 and had five subsequent visits to his credit.¹⁸ What made him particularly useful to the Friends was far less his “beautiful, formal Spanish”,¹⁹ which was of limited use in Catalonia, but his expressed concern for the spiritual future of the Spanish people. In the talk he gave to the Friends Service Committee in March 1936, he declared his belief that there existed in Spain “a keenness, alertness, thirst for new institutions, new knowledge, and real progress”.²⁰ His fear was “whether a country which is going through half a century of progress in a very few years is to leave God behind because it cannot find him in the Church?”²¹ He viewed the Spanish Republic and the rise of secularism as an opportunity for the Spanish to reject the hegemony of the Catholic Church and turn towards a more individualistic form of Christianity and in an early article on the Spanish conflict for *The Friend* in 1936, although he stopped short of justifying Church burning, Jacob offered an apology for the actions of people oppressed over centuries, “in which the Church has opposed all significant efforts to improve the lot of the poor”.²² More positively he noted with approval many of the reforms of the new government, particularly the efforts to improve literacy, and the move to land reform and noted that the Protestant churches had been left unmolested.²³ Jacob's support for the leftist policies of the Republic may have helped to fuel AFSC fears that the mission was not as impartial as it ought to be.

¹⁸Alfred Jacob, “Talk to the Friends Service Council, 5 March 1936”, transcript, p. 1, in Alfred Jacob's personal journal. Jacob's journal is not a good source for this thesis. Due to both pressures of work and to a lack of interest, as well as the need to send constant reports to London, personal record-keeping fell into abeyance before the end of 1936.

¹⁹Domingo Ricart, cited in “Domingo Ricart: A Life of Seeking and Serving”, by Nancy Dawson, in *Friends Journal*, February 1988.

²⁰Alfred Jacob, “Talk to the Friends Service Council, 5 March 1936”, transcript, p. 1.

²¹Alfred B. Jacob. “The New Spain”, *The Friend*, 8 May 1936, p. 410.

²²Alfred Jacob, “The Roots of Spanish Unrest”, *The Friend*, 7 August 1936, p. 736.

²³*Ibid.* p. 735.

Jacob's suspicion of Catholicism was not unusual amongst either British or American Friends,²⁴ but his vehemence was couched in traditional Quaker objections to the interference of institutions between the individual and his or her deity—as applicable to Anglicanism as to Catholicism—rather than anti-papist rhetoric. His Quaker paradigm inevitably shaped his understanding of what he saw.

In the sphere of real religion, as opposed to church organization, there is no doubt that Spaniards as a nation have a very deep sense of religion, an almost mystical outlook and an unusually genuine sense of consciousness of human brotherhood. Religion is fundamental, and is always a personal relationship—with God, and with men.²⁵

But as long as Church and religion remained synonymous, Jacob felt that religion as practised in Spain was a “hoax”: “... you have an alert and promising people with an innate though unconscious sense of real religion, who have been obliged to reject the church.”²⁶ With this primitivist and essentially orientalist approach to the “Spanish character”, Jacob and his one Spanish recruit to the Society of Friends, Domingo Ricart, believed that the Quakers had the potential to catalyse this rejection into something else: “...if there are any... who would benefit by a religious fellowship such as ours; any who are tired of empty forms and want reality in worship, it is part of our mission to unite with them.”²⁷ However, whilst Jacob's language and calling came from the American Quaker missionary tradition, his religious practice did not. In rejecting the rituals of the Catholic Church, Jacob also implicitly rejected the tradition of programmed meetings, supervised by paid ministers, which marked the Western Quakers, those most active in missionary endeavour. His description of Quakerism is far more in accordance with that of North-East American and British Friends. Alfred Jacob appears to represent the

²⁴Quaker relief work in Ireland, however, had been notable for its impartiality and its refusal to blame the famine on the inhabitants' adherence to Catholicism.

²⁵Alfred Jacob, “Talk to the Friends Service Council, 5 March 1936”, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

²⁶*Ibid.*

²⁷*Ibid.*

convergence of two traditions. What tempered his evangelical fervour was a belief in the rightness of the Catalan cause: better education, greater social justice and the abolition of poverty. Whilst this did not shake his pacifism, it did temper his personal neutrality and brought him perilously close to what a later generation would call liberation theology.

A believer in practical Christianity, in the mode of the twentieth-century Quaker reformers Henry Cadbury and Rufus Jones, Alfred Jacob looked quickly for a means to begin his work. His first and most fortunate contact in Barcelona was Domingo Ricart, a local officer for the YMCA. This contact provided Jacob with lodgings in the Ricarts' home, and office space in the YMCA as a base from which he could engage those around him on the issues of pacifism.

Jacob had been relieved to find that the Protestant churches had been left relatively untouched by the upheavals, although no churches in Barcelona were holding public worship.²⁸ This reinforced his belief that in the religious vacuum left by the Catholic church "there might conceivably be in the future the starting point of a unified Spanish Protestant Church,"²⁹ a confidence supported by the initial success of study groups among the young men who attended the YMCA. It was vitally important to nurture those who might prove the "nucleus of a new spirit",³⁰ and Alfred Jacob asked the FSC to provide financial aid to the YMCA, in order that it could keep in touch with its members and encourage them to maintain their testimony.³¹ A number of young men attached to the YMCA and ordered to the front had succeeded in securing non-combatant duties, reinforcing Jacob's belief in the essential liberality and spirituality of the Republic. For Jacob, Attempts to extend the message from alternative service to conscientious objection, however, were less successful: "It is hardly ever opportune to go into the question of conscientious objection, but I believe that many who now refuse to shoulder a gun

²⁸Karin Lee interview, "Alfred Jacob: Spain 1936-1940 Friends Service Council", *AFSC Oral History Interview, Alfred Jacob, Spain*. American Friends Service Committee, 1989, pp. 24-25.

²⁹Reports and Letters, Alfred B. Jacob to Frederick J. Tritton, 3 October 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

will in time refuse to participate in war.”³² However, with the exception of Domingo Ricart, Jacob does not mention the existence of any absolute pacifists and this section of the mission clearly enjoyed the least success. Despite this, by securing the financial support of the FSC for the YMCA, Jacob ensured himself a respected base from which to begin operations; in securing the support of Domingo Ricart, he assured himself of an invaluable adviser, interpreter and friend.

In the first months of the war Alfred Jacob saw himself as principally as an example: a living witness to peace and a peace maker not a relief worker. However, within a few months the need for material relief was to dominate the correspondence. By February 1937 Jacob was writing to the FSC, concerned that the Quaker relief workers should not be stigmatised as “rice Christians” in their desire to have their work distinguished from “mere” relief work. Much later he would express his concern:

There are great needs and a great will to meet them ... it is not true that assistance of outside bodies would be unacceptable. We have found rather the contrary—so long as we do not propagandize, and remain under the direction of competent heads, I have met with no rebuffs, rather with every assistance.³³

The visit of Sylvester Jones in December 1936 and January 1937, whilst appreciated for the AFSC assistance he would bring in his wake, reopened this issue of the supposed distinctive and religious nature of Friends’ work. An admonitory note from Sylvester Jones unleashed passionate irritability from Alfred Jacob:

I am glad Sylvester Jones recalled the need to remember the fundamentals of our work here, and the elements that should distinguish it from mere relief work. At the same time I am eager to avoid ulterior motives, because for so many centuries Spain has been the victim of organisations who give one thing in order to gain another, and I am quite content to see the work confined exclusively

³²Ibid.

³³Meeting for Suffering Minutes, no. 9, March 1938. This is in noticeable contrast to the missionary work being undertaken at the same time by American Evangelical Friends in China (see Appendix C).

to relief as long as may be.³⁴

The speed with which the Friends in Spain resigned themselves to the loss of an evangelical mission is commendable. The rapidity with which other needs and other goals superseded and eventually encompassed the proselytising element of their work was integral to the relief workers' response to the challenge which was Spain. There were very few further references to missionary work in the letters of either Alfred or Norma Jacob, or, after January 1937, in the pages of *The Friend*. This may be the Quaker equivalent of the "depoliticisation" of the Spanish Civil War which took place in government circles. In the face of great need, Jacob made it clear that he was quite content to see the work confined exclusively to relief as long as need be. The name "Cuáquero" would become known by its association with the milk canteens, thus fulfilling the notion of a silent witnessing for Christ and a public emphasis on good works.³⁵ Looking back on his work many years later Jacob commented:

... when we were thinking of going to Spain in the hope of creating an international center, we did have a printed statement of the nature of Quakerism that could be circulated in Spanish, but it never was. So those people who worked with us must have formed their own notion of what we stood for by the way we worked, not by anything we said. It wouldn't have been right to use the relief services. Our mission was to feed the hungry, and that's [...] out of simple justice. Men have no right, even in the midst of war, to create lifelong problems that children in no way have brought on themselves.³⁶

Implicit in this was a rare recognition that to influence children in a spiritual path other than that of their parents could create lifelong difficulties, but one consistent with previous Quaker practice on the continent and in Ireland. The Quakers were proud of their reputation of faithful, non-proselytising relief work. However,

³⁴ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 12 February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

³⁵ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 12 February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

³⁶ Karin Lee interview, op. cit., pp. 24-25.

Alfred Jacob's public rejection of the missionary label was somewhat disingenuous. Although conversion was not part of the outward practice of the Barcelona unit, Jacob abandoned neither the practices nor the paradigms of the missionary movement of the period. By the 1930s the purpose of missionary work and its practice was under scrutiny by many of the mission societies. In particular, some missionaries were concerned to distance themselves from the concerns and ambitions of the secular world and were particularly concerned not to be identified with a spirit of political or cultural colonisation.³⁷ Missionaries were accepting a more subtle understanding of their work, one which "opened doors to an understanding of the Gospel in many places where preaching was quite unavailing".³⁸ Alfred Jacob, for all his disavowal of proselytising, saw Quaker relief both as a service valuable in itself, but also, in common with many medical missionaries, an "object lesson" in what Christianity should be.

2.3 Child Feeding as a Spiritual Witness

Alfred Jacob's principal motive for becoming involved in child-feeding in Spain was no more complicated than the desire not to see children go hungry, but, as the previous section indicated, this desire was shaped by the paradigm in which he operated and thought: the need to do a work for peace; the need to make a stance for neutrality; and the desire to do a work peculiarly Quaker. In describing his work and ambitions to an enquirer in 1936, Jacob declared; "Our effort is simply to do the works of peace in the midst of war, affirming the right of the human personality which war denies."³⁹ This affirmation involved a moral as well as physical dimension: war relief as practised by the Society of Friends was meant to be more than humanitarian aid. Relief workers were asked to give something spiritual, to experience the essential unity of the peace testimony, the testimony to social justice and their efforts in the field and to develop in the process an active and living spiritual witness.

³⁷H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, Edinburgh House Press, London, 1938, p. 37.

³⁸Max Warren, *Social History and Christian Mission*, SCM Press, London, 1967, p. 94.

³⁹Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Judith Corcoran, British Youth Peace Assembly, 8 December 1936.

In the political tension which ensued on the outbreak of war it became essential that those targeted for relief should be as uncontroversial as possible in order to gain as wide as possible a response. For Friends, a further step needed to be taken to force people to examine the consequence of warfare. The obvious decision was to focus publicity and relief efforts around the needs of children.

We have begun with the children, because no one regard children as reds or anti-reds, and they can be fed and clothed without in the least helping the progress of war. However, by mobilizing masses of public opinion on behalf the children we cut across barriers of party and creed both outside Spain and inside.⁴⁰

Traditionally, until the end of the First World War, Quaker relief programmes had been impartial and according to need. In the American Civil War, the Franco-Prussian War and in France in 1917, the Friends had provided aid to both adults and children, with children taking priority, but there had been no conscious decision to separate children out for any political reasons.⁴¹ The involvement in “Hoover relief” at the end of the First World War changed the conventions. Despite widespread hardship amongst adults in Austria and Germany, Herbert Hoover and the American government were adamant that food relief should be granted only to children because they had not been the enemy.⁴² Adults were to be excluded on specifically political grounds. To secure American funding—and it was the largest single amount available—the British and American Friends had to go along with this decision in order to ensure the widest possible support from the American people. But because Hoover was himself a Quaker he effectively set a precedent which American Quakers would be less likely to challenge.

However, Hoover cannot bear the entire responsibility for the decision to focus relief on children. The message that children were different, entitled to different treatment and a greater portion of compassion had been gathering weight throughout the nineteenth century as philosophies of child-rearing had changed.

⁴⁰Alfred B. Jacob to Fred Tritton, December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴¹Greenwood, op. cit., pp. 47-80 and 95-149.

⁴²Francesca M. Wilson, *In the Margins of Chaos: Recollections of Relief Work in and Between Three Wars*, John Murray, London, 1944, p. 119.

With the moral emphasis of the British Poor Law on the relief of the incapable and the forcing of the able-bodied adult into work, children emerged as a body to be protected from the system of laissez-faire. By the turn of the century, the condition of children was being considered separately from that of adults, as an area in which compassion was appropriate and moral reform a possibility. Eglantyne Jebb's contribution was to both internationalise and to codify this growing understanding. In a 1906 Booth study of Cambridge she drew attention to the hidden misery of the children of the poor, pointing out that the abolition of child labour did not automatically resolve all distress. During the First World War her publicising of the plight of women and children in Germany and Austria was treated indulgently, and welcomed for the favourable propaganda it provided. When, however, Jebb continued and extended this campaign against the continued blockade of Germany and Austria after the Armistice, she was reviled in the press and eventually prosecuted and became a cause célèbre.⁴³ Her success at mobilising aid for the children of Europe lay in her ability to tap into the growing belief in the sacredness of childhood, and the importance of children to a nation's future. In 1923 this was embedded in article three of the Save the Children International Union's charter, and the following year was incorporated into the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child. This was formally accepted as a guiding principle, but not as a binding regulation, of all members of the League of Nations.⁴⁴ The declaration set up a "principle of first call", which it would be difficult for subsequent agencies to ignore.

The decision to feed children only also catered to the need to harness the support of those who advocated neutrality, without forcing British Friends to support Non-Intervention which to many implicitly denied the responsibility of one individual for another in the sight of God.⁴⁵ Friends were happy to advertise work on both sides of the lines, and to cope with the loss of some support as a

⁴³Francesca Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

⁴⁴Murray Last, "Putting Children First", *Disasters*, volume 18, no. 3, 1994, pp. 192-202.

⁴⁵In the absence of any over-riding imperative the Friends also leaned towards supporting a recognised and established government, a precedent set at the Restoration and reinforced by Quaker actions during the American Revolution.

consequence, but it was accepted that for the most part only children could be considered as neutral recipients of relief, since to feed adults would be to risk accusations of partisanship should those adults prove to members of political or religious organisations.

The method, the mode and the choices made in the Quaker relief effort were all integral to the Quaker witness; including the decision not to evangelise, who the Friends chose to work with and the types of relief they offered.

2.4 Distribution and Decision Making

The need for dairy products emerged early in the war. With Santander, the main dairy supplier, cut off from the Republic, it was clear that milk was going to be scarce. Inevitably, refugees began to congregate in the best organised areas. By late November 1936, and with the removal of the Republican Government to Valencia, 15,000 children arrived in the city and another 8,000 evacuees were sent to Catalonia (most to Barcelona and its villages). By December, however, no SCIU or Quaker supplies had arrived and it was still unclear whom the Friends intended to assist. Most refugee children were initially placed in fertile country districts, billeted in farms and agricultural communities which it was felt were able to bear the additional burden, but reports of milk shortages had come in from the colonies and from Barcelona, and other foods were reported scarce.

The welfare of the refugees was the responsibility of local refugee committees who were funded by the central government and the authorities of Barcelona. Whilst there was little available, this little was directed to the refugee colonies which initially took priority and which were guaranteed supplies by the government.⁴⁶ The children who were most at risk were those in the city of Barcelona itself, a city with a peace-time population of approximately one million inhabitants. By late December there was no dried milk available on the open market and the production of tinned milk had declined by at least 40%. Mothers with children under eighteen months old were entitled to receive milk from the Casa Maternologia, a municipal feeding station, but only 400 mothers could be

⁴⁶ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 10 October, 15, 19, 24 and 27 November, and 5 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

supplied and for these, rations had been cut from five tins a week to two.⁴⁷ In order to supply milk to those assessed with special needs, both tinned and fresh milk was withdrawn from the general market, but this left many children without access to milk. In response to this Alfred Jacob asked if the remit of the mission might be extended to deal with the non-refugee children who were in want.⁴⁸

In late November 1936 Alfred Jacob, in association with Mrs. Small of the SCIU the provision of a daily milk ration to 200 of the neediest children in the city (to be selected by the Government Refugee Committee) and in the government run children's colonies.⁴⁹ If possible, this milk would be given with a doctor in attendance, and under the supervision of the Quakers.⁵⁰ This plan did not, however, find favour with the authorities. Señor Alcalà, the representative with whom Jacob dealt, reported that, "to select a group of children for special treatment is out of keeping with the order of things and amounts to creating a little hierarchy": the Syndicates which organised much of the rationing were unlikely to approve and might appropriate the milk for those children they personally identified as needy.⁵¹ Implicit in this fear was the knowledge that it would be easy for the Friends to become caught up in political bargaining, should one group or another feel that its followers were excluded from relief. This situation reinforced Jacob's desire to work with rather than for the Spanish, and where possible to reinforce their arrangements. However, Jacob was still concerned that the Friends take on a work which could be clearly identified as their charge:

I called his attention to our desire to do a work which forms a sort of unity over a period of time, ...we cannot raise funds if the only report we can make is "200 cases of milk turned over to the

⁴⁷"What is happening is that all the mothers not getting condensed milk must go to special stations, eight of them in the city, where a car delivers fresh sterilized milk once a day to them according to [doctors'] cards which they present. This is of course increasingly difficult for mothers who have anyway to stand in line for bread, coal, meat, sugar and other things...", Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 12 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴⁸Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 10 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴⁹Alfred Jacob to Edith Pye, 28 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵⁰Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 27 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵¹Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 12 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

authorities at Barcelona". We wanted to know the children and regard them as our special charges. And he reminded me that was favouritism or would be interpreted as such by the [Refugee] Committee, and that we must not make distinctions of that sort in these days.⁵²

The Friends' relief work in Spain was, like much aid work before and since, constrained by its need to use relief work to raise the funds for further assistance: balancing publicity-friendly projects with less attractive operations was a necessity. Where possible, Quaker funds were used for the routine administrative functions which might otherwise impair the emotional appeal of the campaign. Furthermore, the Quakers' constituency of donors was sufficiently ambivalent towards the Republic that the British Friends could not become involved in direct donations to the Republicans—in 1939, direct donations to the Nationalist authorities would cause the American Friends to lose a number of their contributing agencies. It was equally important to the Friends that they maintain a closeness of care, that the relief work not become distant charity but instead it should be marked by an association between the giver and the receiver. Direct relief would also allow the Friends to ensure impartial distribution.

The solution was for the Friends to tackle a problem previously neglected and for whom no individual or group as yet had responsibility but which as a work had publicity potential. Children were arriving almost continuously at the railway station. If they arrived at meal times they were fed, otherwise they received nothing until they were distributed to refugee colonies and foster homes.⁵³ Whilst the discussion between Señor Alcalà and Alfred Jacob was in progress, a message was received that 250 children were due to arrive on the midnight train and that there was no provision for them. Jacob suggested to Mrs. Small that this was the piece of work which they take on until such time as they had the materials to create a mass feeding programme. A canteen could be established in the Casa Misericordia where the children were usually brought to rest prior to distribution,

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Alfred Jacob to Mr. MacKenzie, 7 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

and hot drinks could be dispensed from there at any time of the day or night, under Quaker aegis and under direct Quaker control.

This plan has certain advantages: it is a task universally regarded as a work of mercy, particularly by those whose task it has been to receive children after a long train journey—anywhere up to three days—without being able to offer them a warm drink: it enables us to conserve the individual character of our work, and gives us something to report on, to photograph...⁵⁴

Jacob was clear that publicity was a necessity and did not regard this decision as a politicised compromise: the project allowed Jacob to monitor the children, to offer medical care if required, and provided a base for expansion from where milk might be given to those in the city with medical prescriptions.

The feeding station began with the provision of twenty-five drinks on 25 December 1936.⁵⁵ Quite quickly the proposed distribution of milk was moved from the Casa Misericordia to the railway station, once it was realised that many children were sent on to their billets directly from the train.⁵⁶ The usual provision was hot milk, but with donations of cocoa powder from the British Quaker firm Cadbury, hot cocoa rapidly became a tradition in the FSC canteens, in part because even when it could only be made from water it was felt to be particularly nourishing. However, once the distribution began the workers ran rapidly into the first of many ethical dilemmas:

We are prepared to give hot cocoa to all refugee children arriving. But they come so tired and dazed that they simply come in and sit down by their mothers, never stirring, and wait for something to happen. We carry the cocoa to the children, but since the old people do not of course understand that it is for the children alone, they sometimes stretch out their hands for what they believe is their drink, and it is brutal to say no. Those who have not worked with us

⁵⁴Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 12 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵⁵Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 7 January 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵⁶Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 18 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

at the station [...] believe that we should insist on giving only to the children; but all of us who have worked there see it is impossible to do oneself, and less so to ask Spanish helpers to do so. The old people come sometimes unfed, sleepless, ill... to sort out the children alone and put a steaming cup in front of them where all the others can see and smell it is not consistent with charity.⁵⁷

Politically neutral though child-feeding might be, to the Quaker relief workers it quickly demonstrated itself to be potentially cruel, placing an emotional strain on both giver and receiver. This was an early recognition of the points which Nancy Scheper-Hughes was to make in the 1990s, that children's relief cannot, without cruelty to all involved, be separated from that of the family or community unit.⁵⁸ However, Alfred Jacob believed that resources donated for children could not be diverted to adult relief without undermining the financial probity of the FSC in the eyes of the donors. Instead he requested that the Spain Committee secure alternative donations for mothers and the elderly, two groups who could also be delineated as "neutral": in order to live up to the spirit of the mission, drinks should be given to all refugees arriving at the station.⁵⁹ The potential controversy which a public campaign for adult relief might have caused encouraged the Friends to solicit private gifts for this endeavour; later, when Kanty Cooper, a British sculptor, was added to the unit, part of her work would be assisting the elderly to whom would be diverted some of the gifts in kind, including a donation of coffee from the Brazilian government.⁶⁰ This and like incidents does emphasise the point that the witness to peace could be most effective only when linked to a sense of social justice, but consistency on this point was not always maintained, and was often balanced against the need or the desire to accommodate the sensibilities and ideology of Catalan co-workers and the authorities.

⁵⁷ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 30 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵⁸ Nancy Scheper-Hughes, *Death Without Weeping: the Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1992, p. 551, n. 4, cited in Murray Last, op. cit., p. 198.

⁵⁹ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 4 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁶⁰ Dorothy Thompson, Assistant Secretary, Spain Committee to Alfred Jacob, 30 December 1938. General Files, 1938, Foreign Service: London Letters, copies, 1938.

Although Jacob indicated that in the case of the station canteen, the Spanish assistants wished to extend beyond child relief, both he and Esther Farquhar (leader of the AFSC unit in Murcia) found that, overall, the Spanish were in agreement with the principle of children first; however, selection of children when left to the local authorities was sometimes biased by cultural and political factors such as the need to retain the support of powerful groups or to accede to local prejudices. By mid-January 1937 the success of the station canteen, and of the fund-raising campaign in Britain, had encouraged Alfred Jacob to consider expansion into supplementary feeding in the city.⁶¹ As the supply of milk to the poor was in government hands, Alfred Jacob decided to consult Martinez Cuenca, the Minister in charge of the milk supply, and secure advice as to which area contained the greatest levels of need. Cuenca suggested that the unit begin its wider campaign of child feeding in the Fifth Quarter of the city, an area notorious for its poverty. Domingo Ricart, however, pointed out that it was notorious not only for poverty but also for vice. Jacob reported:

...there were more pressing needs in the more honest working class districts where we should be more certain of doing maximum good. This may sound prudish but I think he is right, and I think any Friend who cared to walk through the Fifth Quarter would agree.⁶²

Reinforced by his desire to accommodate the judgments of his principal Catalan co-worker, Jacob allowed his prejudices to overcome other factors, imposing a moral judgement on the nature of poverty that was absent from other Quaker relief missions and uncharacteristic even within the general trend of the relief work in Spain.⁶³

With little money available at the start of the mission spending decisions were crucial. Following the advice of the authorities, and with his own impetus to spread spending as widely as possible, Jacob at first concentrated on providing milk to newly arriving refugees. Although at this early stage of the relief effort, in

⁶¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 14 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁶²Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 16 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁶³Helen Hatton observed that "There is not a word in their 1843 relief papers castigating the destitute Irish for the unspeakable misery of the industrial slums...", Hatton, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

1937, the milk was being given in amounts below even supplementary feeding, the type of milk to use for child feeding was an early concern. Jacob was particularly anxious to provide as much nutrition as at low a cost as possible on the basis of what was known about the nutritional benefits of skimmed versus full-fat milk, condensed versus powdered milk. As there was little money to spend, Jacob turned to the Cadbury Analysts who produced a report on the milk contents of preserved milk, after the water and sugar had been subtracted. This report was careful to cite a League of Nations report which had recently reported on the nutritional qualities of skimmed milk. However, Mrs. Small of the SCIU, in charge of the unit, had apparently taken no time to read the report and—partially in response to the reported sugar shortage and despite the higher cost—despatched in the first shipment tinned, sweetened milk. The tinned milk cost £60 per ton, a reasonable price compared to fresh milk, but there was also 275 pesetas of freight to pay on top of this, “which makes me wish the water and tin content could be reduced so we could pay freight on the milk alone”. The sugar content was also an issue, although on grounds of cost, not nutrition, as sugar was believed to be an important part of the diet.⁶⁴ If sugar was to be sent it should be sent separately, and of a cheaper grade than was used for tinned milk.⁶⁵ Although the FSC, advised by Jacob, eventually settled for powdered skimmed milk (which kept longer than full fat), the continuing decision of the SCIU to send in tinned milk annoyed Jacob who saw it as an unconscionable waste of money. A related issue in this argument was whether to send full fat or skimmed milk and contemporary nutritional beliefs were marshalled to support the importing of the cheaper skimmed milk.

Although many people still believe that the *cream* is the only really good part of the milk, one finds more and more the opinion that it is the non-fatty part which contains the proteins and mineral salts which cannot so readily be found in other foods, whereas the fat can easily be supplied from other sources such as butter, margarine, nuts or olive oil. Others think that whole milk must be

⁶⁴Farah Mendlesohn, interview with Alfred Jacob, 15 January 1994.

⁶⁵Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 20 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

used because of the vitamin A in the fatty part; but they forget that the vitamin content of preserved milk which passes a sterilisation process is far too low to justify the extra cost.⁶⁶

If vitamins were required it was felt better to make sure of them by importing oils and supplements with a known vitamin content. The issue was resolved in part by the response of the children themselves. Many of the children arrived too exhausted to cope with a rich drink and could barely swallow even the skimmed milk. After feeding with condensed milk many children were observed to ask for water, the mixture having left them thirsty. The doctor in charge of the Casa Maternalogia, which gave out milk to mothers of young babies, felt that he would prefer to receive both full fat and skimmed milk in order that each child might receive the most suitable balance. Jacob's recommendation that the FSC and SCIU opt predominantly for dried milk, despite its relatively more complicated preparation process, was essentially an ethical one. Pound for pound, it was possible to send more milk. Its drawback was that this milk required time to mix, special equipment for large quantities and was more likely to turn rancid if stored than was tinned milk. The speed of consumption, however, may have rendered this last point unimportant.⁶⁷

Alfred Jacob was adamant that the personal convenience of neither himself or the volunteer workers should be taken into account. A later decision by Mrs. Small of the SCIU to revise the quantities of dried and condensed milk for the Barcelona canteen—allocating 125 children to dried milk and 1,575 to condensed, the reverse of the usual ration—led to unusually concerted opposition from Jacob, and the SCIU agents Dr. Pictet and Mrs. Petter, who pointed out that one English pound would buy either 178 litres of milk made from powder, or 85 litres of milk from the condensed product. As in the latter case some 12 kilos of sugar was included, the condensed came out at around twice as expensive.⁶⁸

Similar concerns were to arise in the AFSC mission in Murcia. As mixing

⁶⁶Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 30 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁶⁷Louisa M. Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 2 July 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, letters to Esther Farquhar.

⁶⁸Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 7 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

machines were available from the local Puericultura Institute which was hosting the work, the labour of mixing was not a major factor and powdered milk was preferred for its longevity once opened.⁶⁹ However, the condensed milk, which had been rejected in Barcelona as too sweet, was in demand. Esther Farquhar reported that although children were taking the evaporated milk that formed the bulk of the early supplies, they all preferred the sweeter condensed milk. In part this may have been simply local tastes, but an alternative explanation for this preference for condensed milk may lie in the conditions in which the children were being fed. In Barcelona, many of the children were receiving their milk as a drink at the conclusion of a long journey and the water content of condensed milk was not high enough. In Murcia the condensed milk was a form of supplementary feeding to children who had an adequate if not always too clean water supply. Hunger rather than thirst was the issue, and as cans could be recycled into bottle caps and cups, in shorter supply in Murcia than in industrial Barcelona, the importation of the heavier condensed milk could be justified.⁷⁰ What was a consistent stance in both Barcelona and Murcia, however, and which divided them from the SCIU, was that feeding should be spread as widely as possible and that some assistance for all was better than complete support for only a few. In a hand-written addition to this letter Jacob commented: "the Spanish point of view is definitely that it is better give the *good* to many children than the *best* to some."⁷¹ The only exception to this was a later request that full cream condensed milk should be sent for children under two years.⁷²

The fall of Málaga to the Nationalists in February 1937 put more refugees on the road and the Friends unit was forced to restrict aid to refugees arriving at the station canteen to clothing distributions and to the gifts of milk and sugar to the

⁶⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Boxfile 3).

⁷⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 27 July and 10 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Boxfile 3).

⁷¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 30 December 1936 and 24 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁷²Alfred Jacob to O. F. Olden (FSC), 24 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

institutions already mentioned.⁷³ As the authorities began to assume responsibility for the refugees, the unit began to provide milk for Barcelona children under six years old, giving half a litre a day at two centres, Gracia and Sans, each capable of feeding 1,000 children a day. Food was limited to occasional biscuits and a quarter a kilo of sugar a week—believed nutritious and essential to health. The emphasis on nutrition and scientific monitoring had crept in early. The canteens doubled as children's clinics, with prospective clients receiving health visitors, and with a person trained in child welfare (usually Spanish), and authorised to give out the limited supply of food supplements, in attendance during the feeding sessions.⁷⁴

As shortages of staples other than milk emerged, the Friends in Britain persuaded McFarlanes and McVities to send biscuits as a contribution to the canteens. Handed out with the milk, biscuits substituted for breakfast for many of the children.⁷⁵ Later, by judicious liaison with a Mr. Park of the General Relief Committee, an organisation of expatriates, it was possible to swap biscuits for rice in order to provide some variety. The rice could be cooked into a milk pudding which suited American and British notions of suitable children's fare and appeared to be well-liked, but milk had become the priority.⁷⁶ There was no longer any sort of milk to be bought in Barcelona, and the condition of the refugee children, hitherto satisfactory, had begun to deteriorate by July 1937: it was still better than that of other children in the city, but remained unsatisfactory by any other point of view. The only improvement was that the number of new refugees entering the city had reached a temporary hiatus.⁷⁷ In August, the Friends' Norwegian canteen, supervised by Elise Thomsen, a Danish Friend, finally opened with a total of twelve Spanish volunteer workers to mix the milk and with a capacity equal to the canteens at Sans and Gracia. In addition, the workers now had "Quaker Star badges which firmly identified the origin of the work and contributed to a growing sense

⁷³Alfred Jacob to Peter Rhodes (FSC representative in France), February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 15 February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁷⁶Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 12 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁷⁷Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, addendum dated 13 July to letter of 7 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

of unity".⁷⁸

As the war worsened, a number of problems faced the unit in Barcelona. Some difficulties were not financial—in late October Alfred Jacob wrote home that he wanted to move all canteen feeding to the early mornings to minimise the risk of black-outs and bombings⁷⁹—but the majority were. Keeping the projects in Barcelona stocked with provisions was not easy. As the Nationalist blockade on the ports deepened in 1937, and France and Britain declined to intervene,⁸⁰ it became difficult for even relief agencies to ensure sufficient deliveries for the many colonies and canteens which had been established. By the end of September 1936 the Quaker canteens were short of dried milk and had only a month's supply of tinned milk. Stocks in Barcelona were so low that children were re-evaluated, and those recovered from illness were excluded from the lists; milk was restricted to those below the age of two years; what milk the unit had was mixed at a weaker concentration; and tins were no longer issued to be used at home (even pierced they were finding their way on to the black market). The only improvement in the situation was the decline in the number of new refugees, which allowed the Friends to close down the station canteen and to open one in Puigcerdá on the French border where the colonies were reporting shortages of food.⁸¹ Pilfering was also a problem and Elise Thomsen requested that goods be secured tightly for transit.⁸² Controversial decisions had to be made about further expansion of work, which was dependent on fund-raising at home, and the way in which work would expand. It was decided, for example, to begin supplying food to the Public Assistance Department of Barcelona which no longer had access to internal food supplies and which found it difficult to purchase from abroad. The Department would sell the food to those with special needs at controlled prices: it would then

⁷⁸Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1937; Elise Thomsen to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁷⁹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 27 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁸⁰Jill Edwards, *op. cit.*, 114-115.

⁸¹Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁸²Elise Thomsen to FSC, 29 September 1937 and to Mrs. Small, 29 September 1937. Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 29 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

pay to the National Joint Committee—whose particular niche in Barcelona was as the transport corps of the various relief agencies, including the Friends—and to the FSC approximately 30,000 pesetas to be used for internal expenses such as paying the growing cohort of Spanish workers, and purchasing vegetables and other goods still available in Spain. In November 1937 the decision was taken to reduce the ration to half a litre a day for children between six months and two years of age. In this way, the canteens at Sans and Carmen could extend a minimum ration to *every* child between six months and two years of age and thus feed almost double the number of children. As conditions in the city deteriorated, the difficulty of selecting those children worst off grew and each individual request was heart rending. Sometimes, faced with a particular case, the unit felt the necessity of circumventing their usual rules. In early November Norma Jacob reported a request from an elderly German man—a refugee—to assist a school which he was running for thirty children “in an area notorious for desperate poverty and vice”. Determined to refuse, Norma went to visit the school and found thirty children who, although they were coming to school unfed, were learning French, German and Russian, as well as arithmetic. These were the only children Norma had met who spoke anything of another language: “Alfred’s instructions were ‘don’t promise anything’ but the man assumed (rightly) that no one could see his children without straining every nerve to help them.”⁸³ Estimating the cost at 30/- per week, Norma Jacob requested that money be found to help this school if Dorothy Thompson had to solicit contributions from every person who walked through the office door. “He reminded me of the woman in the Bible who worried the judge till she got what she wanted.”⁸⁴ Two days later, the school, including the children of the woman employed to do the mixing, was receiving its first milk.⁸⁵ This small example demonstrates admirably the nature of the Jacobs’ witness in Barcelona. They were willing both to create rules to ensure as wide a distribution as possible, and to admit the possibility that their rules might not cover all eventualities or secure the

⁸³Norma Jacob to Fred Tritton, 1 November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 3 November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

interests of justice. In addition, they operated under a system in which they identified need and then attempted to secure funds, using the need as the lever. As we shall see in the next chapter the American pattern was rather different, need being identified specifically only after funds were available to allow action. This incident also illuminates the enormous level of autonomy and decision-making authority which the Jacobs acquired. Within the limits of the funds that could be raised, the Jacobs had a free hand as to how it might be spent. However, this autonomy was hard fought for and was a matter of principle argued out not with the home committee, but with their collaborators, the Save the Children Union. The British Friends themselves had a long tradition of field-worker driven projects.

2.5 Working with the Save the Children International Union (SCIU)

From the beginning of FSC involvement in the Spanish Civil War, the Spain Committee's activities were marked by the enthusiasm with which they cooperated with other organisations and people. The manner of this cooperation, and its place in the Friends' spiritual paradigm influenced the relative success or failure of different arrangements.

When the FSC decided to begin relief in October 1936, they recognised that they were a small organisation with limited financial and personnel resources, already overstretched in maintaining current commitments in Europe. It was thus necessary that the Friends secure co-operation from another large body. The AFSC was the most obvious choice, but the Americans refused to commit themselves at this point.

London Yearly Meeting had few obvious allies. Most action on behalf of Spain was coming from political and trade union groups, and although the FSC did eventually become a part of the National Joint Committee for Spanish Relief, it was both uneasy with too close an association with manifestly partisan organisations, and unwilling to tie itself to groups with little experience of relief. However, one obvious partner did exist: the Friends' work in Germany and Austria after the war, and in Russia during the famines, had been supported and more than matched by the Save the Children International Union. The presence of the Save the Children Fund in Britain offered the additional attraction of an experienced fund-raising

partner at home.

It is unclear what the SCIU gained from the partnership in Spain, except initially a foothold in Barcelona, but the FSC gained a responsible partner with international links which it hoped would be used for the benefit of the Spanish mission. The SCIU was to take charge of most of the purchasing and provision of supplies from Geneva and undertook to provide expert and experienced workers to organise and supervise the feeding stations, to survey the area and to decide on policy. The FSC was to provide funds through its campaign and to send suitable volunteer workers. Alfred Jacob, who had never been intended to act as a relief worker, was to focus on his original mission of fact-finding, making contacts and publicising the effort in Spain and abroad. The SCIU appointed Dr. Pictet to take charge of the relief work in Barcelona and Alfred Jacob was to serve as the link between the Friends and the work they were paying for: he was specifically not to have executive capacity.

The SCIU were involved in operations in other parts of Spain, and concentrated their efforts in Burgos and Madrid, the capitals, respectively, of Nationalist and Republican Spain. This required SCIU representatives to travel extensively, and in practice Alfred Jacob was frequently left in physical charge of the canteens, but Dr. Pictet retained executive authority.⁸⁶ The effect was to draw Alfred from the publicity work which was his remit and to involve him directly in the distribution process. As petrol shortages deepened, transport became more complicated and Dr. Pictet's absences were extended. One consequence of this was that the system of seniority was undermined as the local authorities turned to Jacob for assistance. Concerned with the effects of this, he wrote to Fred Tritton: "I am afraid that it sometimes looks to Dr. Pictet as if I were trying to push myself ahead. The fact is that since I am here constantly, the Refugee Committee and others naturally expect me to be able to take the necessary decisions."⁸⁷ Without executive authority it was difficult for Jacob to know what course to take: whether to defer to Dr. Pictet and delay decision making in her absence, or accede to the requests for

⁸⁶ Alfred Jacob to Peter Rhodes, February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁸⁷ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 15 February 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

decisions from the local refugee committees. It was inevitable, in these circumstances, that Alfred Jacob would come to feel proprietorial over the work he had initiated and supervised. By March 1937 difficulties had emerged with regard to both differing management styles and philosophies.

Although a number of works had been set in process by March—the canteens at Sans and at the Station—Jacob felt that the large-scale relief work which he had hoped to see in place was still missing. Whilst some of this could be put down to “numerous small difficulties”, he felt that none were insuperable and that neither were they a consequence of a lack of local co-operation or of supplies. His most forceful complaint was that it was actually during those periods of Dr. Pictet’s absence that the current projects had got underway: the canteen at Gracia was organised in under a week, the one at Sans in less than two weeks in response to both demand and an assessment of stocks. The distribution of second-hand clothing from Britain had also begun in Dr. Pictet’s absence. Such a development of local autonomy might not have mattered—it was fully in accordance with FSC traditions and appears to have been standard practice for many missionary societies—but Jacob felt that Dr. Pictet returned only to find fault with whatever arrangements had been made. In March, a month after feeding had begun at Sans, Dr. Pictet presented proposals for a drastic re-arrangement of the work. The SCIU wished to see a smaller number of children receive a greater amount of food; the clash was between amateurs (the Quakers) wishing to spread their assistance as rapidly and as far as possible, providing a little for everyone and incidentally—but crucially—extending their spiritual impact, and professionals, who increasingly wished to monitor the improvement of children and to provide a “proper” diet and were less concerned about their relationship with the Spanish. To reach all was a failure by SCIU standards if that resulted in all being undernourished. Furthermore, although the Friends had abandoned evangelising, they continued to lay emphasis on the spirit of the gift; good science was admirable but rather dispassionate. “No one would say that she is not a perfectly conscientious worker” Jacob wrote,

or that she lacks professional qualifications and so on. She is careful, cautious, methodical, confident—but meanwhile the children need

milk. My single aim all this time, and I believe the aim of Friends in general, has been to get food into children speedily and without waste. I am naturally impatient where I see any willingness to delay or nourish less children than a number we conveniently could. Dr. Pictet wants above all to do a work worthy of her profession, and prefers to proceed slowly and be sure of her ground.⁸⁸

The growing professionalism of social work over the previous fifty years, with its increasing emphasis on the need for careful investigation and long term planning and the move away from the voluntaristic, philanthropic model had brought with it methodology more reminiscent of business practice. The difficulty in Spain was that the model to which Dr. Pictet was working required a careful and slow approach with the idea, presumably, of expanding in the long term. It also brought with it a disparagement of individual initiative. Alfred Jacob responded in part with the impetuosity of the young but also in recognition of the fact that the war in Spain promised to be a short-term crisis with no guarantee of any future continuation of the work into peace time nor, perhaps, any need for it. His model was voluntaristic and fundamentally depended upon the initiative of the individual and the ability of that individual to inspire local effort. It reflected past FSC experience; offering a speedy and wide response to an immediate crisis, whilst searching for openings for long term work. The Friends Service Council, although an efficient organisation, was still essentially an amateur one, called to provide relief in too few cases, and employing too few individuals to develop the type of professional and technocratic ethos which had shaped the SCIU or, as we shall see, the American Friends Service Committee, both bodies which had been providing domestic and foreign relief continuously since 1917. The FSC's underlying ethos rested on its witness not on scientific method.

The differences between Alfred Jacob and Dr. Pictet extended from issues of professionalism and the decisions which emerged from this, to managerial style and the philosophy behind it. For Jacob, there was discomfort in what he observed of Dr. Pictet's relationship with the Spanish volunteers and his position in this arrangement. Whilst Dr. Pictet's travels ensured that she could construct a wide

⁸⁸Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 3 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

picture of Spain's problems, it also prevented her from building up close relationships with any of the volunteers. Further, Dr. Pictet chose to reside in hotels, rather than in private homes, which Jacob felt shielded her from the worst of the privations experienced by the average citizen. In contrast, Alfred Jacob's residence with the Ricart family enabled him to acquire an intimate connection with the welfare of the Catalans, a connection which he treasured. That Dr. Pictet did not, apparently, value this experience caused resentment. The crucial difference, however, may have been that whilst Alfred Jacob saw himself as working *with* his volunteers, each of whom brought skills and expertise, Jacob felt that Dr. Pictet saw all the workers, himself included, as employees who should follow her instructions. Jacob felt deeply that Dr. Pictet was in the habit of issuing orders without reference to the previous experiences of the workers, and then returning some days later to check that her instructions had been carried out. Whilst nothing fundamental was affected, Jacob believed it provoked tension.⁸⁹

The expansion of the work and Alfred Jacob's growing sense of isolation from Dr. Pictet led him to ask for another Quaker worker; a request consistent with the understanding that the FSC would provide volunteers for Barcelona, but intended in this instance to bolster the witness which Jacob wished to offer, a rare occasion on which missionary intent was expressed. "Friends' motives in taking up this work are rather different from those of other bodies, including the SCIU; and our testimony would rest better on two pillars than on one."⁹⁰ Spreading the spirit of Friends' work remained crucial to the mission. However, Dr. Pictet refused the offer of a second Quaker and placed a Miss Petter, who did not speak Spanish, in charge of the Sans canteen, taking Sans out of Jacob's hands altogether, and altering the scheme of distribution without prior consultation with either Jacob, the volunteers, or the city authorities.

I am given the impression, along with Ricart and Rosa Poy, that we are no longer needed; and you cannot have reliable helpers who are given that impression. They have sacrificed themselves in ways Dr.

⁸⁹ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 3 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁹⁰ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 16 January 1937, FSC/SP/1/1.

Pictet does not conceive. Moreover they have never failed us, so long as the work was done in a spirit of mutuality, of intrinsic togetherness.⁹¹

The numbers of volunteers began to drop off, and at Sans the unit was forced to ask the Urban Guards for assistance, a move which overtly identified the canteen with the local authorities and jeopardised its neutrality in the eyes of both the workers (some of whom were Nationalists) and observers.

Crucial to Alfred Jacob's philosophy was a belief that the spirit in which things were done was as important as the method. This meant both working with, rather than for the Spanish, and entering into negotiations as informally as possible. Fundamentally, Jacob saw himself as a facilitator and funder of local initiative; Dr. Pictet, on the other hand, saw herself as there to initiate projects. For example, according to Alfred Jacob:

... given 12,000 pesetas to start up a clothing workshop in Barcelona, she threatens to take it to Tortosa when the Refugee Committee suggest that her money be employed by a local committee with similar plans.⁹²

Alfred Jacob was not unconscious of the fact that some of the tension between himself and Dr. Pictet was personal, but by this stage he felt that much of the publicity work he was doing was being undermined by Dr. Pictet's public statements to such people as Sr. Figueras of the city council and Sra. Lain of the visiting nurses, to whom she reportedly declared, "You must understand that things are going pretty badly."⁹³ This dismissive attitude was a personal blow to the morale of the workers. It was reiterated at the end of October; Norma Jacob wrote to complain of a visit which Mrs. Small had made, "in the spirit of fault-finding and after just the merest glimpse began giving orders turning everything upside down without consulting us."⁹⁴

⁹¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 5 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁹²Ibid.

⁹³Ibid.

⁹⁴Norma Jacob to Fred Tritton, 29 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

Obviously, Dr. Pictet had her reasons for such an approach, and one can assume that they related as much to accountability to her funders as many of Jacob's decisions did. However, the Quaker practice had been to involve established local organisations and to solicit interest from as many local bodies as possible, the Quaker workers saw themselves as facilitators. Had the two organisations been working independently along side one another these differences might not have mattered, but the agreement which they had entered into meant that the two names were associated with one another in the public eye. Alfred Jacob was increasingly uncomfortable with this, "... in some mysterious way the conduct of the work here in Barcelona has slipped off the plane I feel Friends would most approve of; yet Friends are just as much identified as ever with it in the eyes of those outside..."⁹⁵. That this mattered so much is an indication of the value the Friends placed upon their public image. The biggest issue, and the one which was to escalate, remained Dr. Pictet's belief that smaller numbers of children should receive larger amounts of milk. The first canteen had given out ½ litre of milk to each child. In March 1937 Dr. Pictet doubled this amount and fed fewer children despite Jacob's feeling that this was inconsistent with the needs of the many. The growing pressure of the number of children in need of milk eventually resolved the situation and the canteens returned to a wider distribution,⁹⁶ but smaller matters also got in the way of smooth cooperation, such as whether to use powdered or tinned milk.⁹⁷ Dr. Pictet felt that the tinned milk was most nourishing as it contained sugar. Alfred Jacob felt that it was more cost effective to purchase powdered milk and sugar separately and mix the two. With most of the supplies being sent in from the Geneva headquarters of the SCIU, it became difficult for Jacob to feel as if he had much input into the ordering and selection of stock, despite being the most senior and experienced field-worker stationed in Barcelona. By the middle of March Jacob's letters were becoming increasingly frustrated as he became ever more concerned both about the work and the spirit in which it was

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶The canteens resumed the ½ litre per child Alfred Jacob had initiated. Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 15 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁹⁷Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 8 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

being undertaken.

"[Norma] has reminded me too of the mis-step of suggesting what foods should be sent, when Dr. P. was the expert, *even if I was right*. I see that I was mistaken, led perhaps too little by patience and expediency and too much by my desire which first led me into this relief work, of getting as much nourishment into as many undernourished children as possible. Mistaken, I mean, in having given expression to what I knew both about milk and Spain in the circumstances. It would have been equally mistaken to say nothing, and I can't tell whether I chose the lesser evil...the work...tends to be known as Quaker relief when in spirit and in fact it has little relation to us. Perhaps when American Friends come it will be possible to associate with them..."⁹⁸

Hardly an apologetic or humble letter, its tone clearly illuminates Jacob's state of mind. For Jacob, it was impossible to separate the spirit in which the work was approached from the outcome. The distant relationship which he felt was maintained between SCIU workers and the Spanish volunteers disturbed him. The SCIU station in Madrid was being run with an entirely Spanish workforce and without any permanent foreign presence, but under the peripatetic authority of Dr. Pictet. Whilst Jacob was anxious to point to the competence of the Spanish, he was equally anxious to preserve the sense that relief was a cooperative effort, a joint endeavour between those who cared for one another, rather than charity from the rich to the needy, and he felt strongly that this was best achieved when both foreign and Spanish volunteers operated together, although later he was to express doubts about the cost-effectiveness of foreign volunteers.⁹⁹ Increasingly, Jacob questioned whether it was advisable for the Friends to be connected with the work being done in Spain.¹⁰⁰ In one of the rare letters which Norma Jacob wrote from Spain, she attempted to clarify the significance of these issues.

⁹⁸Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 14 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁹⁹Norma Jacob to Fred Tritton, 17 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰⁰Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 14 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

From what Alfred says it seems perfectly clear that his work, however effective as relief, is not coming up to what Friends would wish on the *human* side. It does appear as though Dr. P. has not the knack of getting willing service from those under her. The question of whether she antagonises the voluntary Spanish helpers may be trivial from the relief point of view, but from the Friends' point of view I feel it is of enormous importance (since in Spanish eyes our work and theirs are completely identified). Wouldn't Friends feel that the most important aspect was the willing cooperation of everyone concerned, from the highest to the lowest, even if this meant a certain waste of time and energy? [... If] we are identified in people's minds with someone who uses the methods of dictatorship and impairs good relations with lack of tact, our chances of usefulness here in the future will be very much handicapped. Human nature—especially Spanish—being what it is, people will forget the babies fed and clothed and remember just the complaints and the snubs administered to those whose help wasn't on quite the right lines...¹⁰¹

Although Norma Jacob reinforced Alfred's argument that the SCIU and the FSC had fundamentally different missions, her focus on style, like that of her husband, failed to address some of the deeper issues. The SCIU was both a more professional organisation than the FSC and a larger one. As it grew, professionalisation became a necessity, as the AFSC had found, and individual autonomy more a hindrance to the smooth-running of the agency than an aid. Far from valuing local initiative, to Dr. Pictet, responsible for a much larger field, the Barcelona unit may have felt like a unit out of control: with each visit new unauthorised changes would be found which had then to be brought under the organisation's umbrella. To be morally responsible for this would *require* Dr. Pictet to set reforms in motion. The Jacobs, whilst acknowledging the wide scale of the work for which Dr. Pictet was responsible, failed to assimilate the relatively small role which their own unit played in this picture.

¹⁰¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 14 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

In March 1937 the FSC began to find new, smaller allies who would eventually facilitate the re-organisation of the relief work in Barcelona and the separation from the SCIU. The first of these allies were overseas Friends. Quakers in Norway and Denmark decided to sponsor both relief and their own representative, Elise Thomsen, a Friend from Denmark.¹⁰² This appointment effectively by-passed Dr. Pictet's earlier refusal of an additional FSC worker. Elise Thomsen joined the unit in order to set a canteen sponsored by the Norway relief committee and to provide Jacob with spiritual support, but there is a question, impossible to answer definitely, as to whether she was also brought in either to back Alfred Jacob up, or to control him.¹⁰³ Jacob hoped he could persuade Dr. Pictet to grant some level of autonomy to Elise Thomsen, but by June it was clear that relations between the Jacobs and the SCIU representatives had deteriorated beyond repair. At the beginning of June, after a short stay in London, Alfred and Norma Jacob wrote to Paul Sturge (secretary of the FSC) to say that neither of them wished to continue as representatives of the Society in Spain whilst the work there was under the direction of the SCIU.¹⁰⁴ Mrs. Small's and Dr. Pictet's decision to renegotiate many of the arrangements Jacob had made with the authorities undermined much of Jacob's authority.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰²In an undated general letter sent out some time in June 1937, from Elise Thomsen, Patrick M. Malin (FSC) and R. Ogliati (Comité de Suizo), Elise Thomsen is listed as a Danish Friend. FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰³Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 23 March and 17 April 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰⁴Alfred and Norma Jacob to Paul Sturge, 6 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰⁵A practical affect of this was that arrangements already made for the import of goods without cost and the transportation of these good free from the docks through Asistencia Social—the principal aid agency in Barcelona—was renegotiated by Mrs. Small. The SCIU representatives were also keen that arrangements should be made to ship goods through Valencia, an approach with Jacob found unnecessarily complicated for the supply of Barcelona, and likely to annoy the Catalan authorities with whom he already had arrangements. One ship-load brought in this way became held up at customs until duty could be paid. This, Jacob reported, Mrs. Petter eventually placed in the hands of the Chief Officer of Health on the principle that since the canteens were in the service of the municipality it was the city's business to get the milk in, or the canteens would shut down. The ministry did pay enough of the customs to release half of the milk, but were forced to wait for a refund from Valencia before they could proceed and complained of an approach that bordered on coercion. Goods passing through Asistencia Social had previously been exempt from duty. Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 10/11 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

The bad feeling between FSC workers and the SCIU, began, in Jacob's opinion, to spill over to affect the setting up of the Norwegian canteen. Whilst Alfred Jacob clearly did not relate well with Dr. Pictet, her seniority was never in doubt, but difficulties were exacerbated when Dr. Pictet began to appoint subordinates whose relationship with Alfred Jacob was not clearly defined. The Norwegian canteen was supposed to be under Quaker aegis—it was a Norwegian Friends' operation in alliance with the FSC—but Jacob reported that, in Dr. Pictet's absence, Miss Petter refused to become involved with a non-SCIU project, although Domingo Ricart did eventually persuade her to lend necessary advice. This had the effect of holding up the establishment of the canteen at San Andrés. Once established, the SCIU representative, Mrs. Small, appeared to attempt to publicly appropriate the Norwegian canteen, and made a number of statements to the ministry both guaranteeing the supply and indicating how much milk would be distributed daily. As both these matters were in the hands of the Norwegian Committee, Alfred Jacob felt these to be superfluous.

Identification of relief work, an issue previously settled, again became grounds for contention. The design of new ration cards for use in the canteens bore the insignia of the SCIU but not the Friends. Similarly, at the Sans Canteen the name of the Comité de Ayuda—a previously agreed title for the joint operation of the SCIU, the FSC and the General Relief Fund for Distressed Women and Children in Spain—was removed and replaced by one headed "Union International de Socorro a los Niños". Mrs. Petter, when this was discussed, explained that she had not realised that Mr. Park of the General Relief Fund had anything to do with them; she also made it clear that she took her orders direct from Dr. Pictet and Mrs. Small and did not accept that there was a state of joint responsibility.

From Alfred Jacob's point of view, there seemed to be little prospect of collaboration in the canteens; the tension was such that Elise Thomsen was forced to act as an intermediary between Mr. Park, Alfred Jacob and Mrs. Petter.¹⁰⁶ Jacob had arranged for the Asistencia Social to pay custom charges, but SCIU shipments continued to arrive directed instead to the Ayuntamiento of Barcelona or to the Campejo de Menores, neither of which were willing to accept financial

¹⁰⁶Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 10/11 June and 15 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

responsibility. This caused problems beyond slowing imports down; when a supply of soap was received by the Ayuntamiento in July, they naturally assumed that it was intended for their work and in order to retrieve the larger portion Mrs. Petter was obliged offer them a share.¹⁰⁷

Feeding policy remained an issue. In the Norwegian canteen, Alfred Jacob had argued that Friends' policies should predominate, as he believed that the cooperation between the Norwegians and the Friends fell outside the rubric of the SCIU agreement (the SCIU disagreed, although they also took on agreements elsewhere). Mrs. Small had written to state that the canteens should give milk to "well-chosen" children. Alfred Jacob wrote, "Our aim in the Norwegian canteen is to make a distribution which is satisfactory to the local authorities, to the women and children concerned and to ourselves." Clearly, Jacob was attempting to differentiate Friends' work from that of the SCIU.¹⁰⁸ This extended to the type of people Jacob felt were appropriate for the work. Increasingly, Alfred Jacob felt that it was like-minded administrators that were required for the feeding stations, and not necessarily the medical expertise which the SCIU could offer.¹⁰⁹

By June 1937, the AFSC was active in Valencia and in Nationalist Spain. In an attempt to diffuse tension it was decided to hold a relief workers' conference which would bring together workers from the Swiss, Swedish and Danish Committees, with the AFSC, FSC and SCIU workers. The object was to discuss relations both with each other and with the Spanish authorities.¹¹⁰ In the event, the conference did not consider the arrangement between the Friends in Barcelona and the SCIU, but in private discussion with Patrick Malin (the AFSC representative in France), Alfred Jacob accepted Malin's interpretation of the cooperation agreement: that it did indeed give the SCIU "very great freedom in the field to make its own dispositions with or without the agreement of our representatives". However, he felt strongly that the time had come to revise this agreement. Mrs. Petter had

¹⁰⁷ Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 17 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰⁸ Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 17 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁰⁹ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 15 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹¹⁰ Undated letter from Elise Thomsen, Patrick M. Malin (AFSC) and R. Ogliati (Comité de Suizo). FSC/R/SP/1/3.

already handed in her resignation suggesting that the SCIU were coming to similar conclusions. Dr. Pictet was over extended, spending much of her time travelling to other SCIU projects, including a large one in Madrid, and she confessed that Barcelona, with all of its tensions, was not a great concern because so many other matters had arisen.¹¹¹ As a face-saving compromise it was agreed that the canteens should be handed over to Elise Thomsen at the end of August, independent of any other change in the bipartite agreement.¹¹²

In August 1937 the unit, anxious to become independent of the YMCA, moved from their respective residences to a rented house from Ayuda Infantil which they named Hogar Luis Vives.¹¹³ The new house became both an office and the official residence of the entire unit (consisting of up to twelve people at any time, of varying nationalities), including the Ricarts. The acquisition of a central base allowed Alfred Jacob to take on responsibilities from a number of different agencies. Although not the official representative of the Paris Committee (that was Werner Droscher in Puigcerdá) he took on a large amount of administration for them. He also represented the NJC over matters concerning the lorry service which had been transferred from Valencia, and managed the NJC colonies' budget. In return, the NJC lorries transported the Quaker relief supplies.

A number of smaller agencies also passed their work through Hogar Luis Vives, and Alfred Jacob was in a position to keep an eye on most of the work being done in Barcelona. The household itself, with most of the principal workers in residence, helped to create "the kind of spirit that makes a solution possible".¹¹⁴ With Elise Thomsen taking over the canteens from the SCIU, Norma Jacob was able to applaud the high level of autonomy which the FSC field workers now enjoyed

¹¹¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 30 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹¹²Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 14 July 1937, Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹¹³The house was rented to the Quakers on condition that some part of it be used for the care of children. Until the fall of Barcelona in 1939 this condition was fulfilled by the presence of a day nursery in one section of the building, caring for children in need of special help. FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 12 January 1938.

¹¹⁴Norma Jacob to Fred Tritton, 27 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

in comparison to the workers of many other agencies.¹¹⁵

Had the supply of the canteens gone smoothly, much of the difficulty with the SCIU might have been over-looked, but the canteens, like the children's colonies which the Friends later supported outside Barcelona, suffered from a shortage and irregularity of supply. Part of the problem was the condition of the frontiers. The Port-Bou frontier was more or less continuously bombarded in October 1937, whilst the Puigcerdá frontier involved a climb of 2,000 metres to fetch the goods. On neither route were shipments of goods normally accepted and any attempt to use these routes would require arrangements with the Republican Asistencia Social. However, as the Paris Co-ordination Committee (an allied relief organisation), using a transport service offered by the Spanish embassy, appeared to be able to keep its shipments steady, Alfred Jacob increasingly felt the irregularity of deliveries to be unreasonable. Whilst the FSC was partially responsible for this in that orders tended to be filled only at the last moment, most of the milk was supplied from Geneva and Jacob had the distinct impression that they had not acknowledged the problem. The supply received in October had arrived in time mainly because the FSC had brought some pressure to bear on the SCIU committee in Geneva to speed up ordering and deliveries. The children assigned to a programme of individual sponsorship which Ricart had been running for the SCIU for a year, had not received food parcels between August and November 1937. In response, Alfred Jacob suggested that he and Mr. Park take on the colonies as joint FSC and General Relief Fund projects without relating to Geneva. This would allow food to be ordered directly from England through channels which the FSC could monitor.¹¹⁶ The delay caused by transport times needed to be accommodated by planned deliveries and a strategy of always maintaining a month's reserve stock. From October Alfred Jacob and Mr. Park requested that new orders were placed immediately one was received, thus giving plenty of time for the delivery to arrive.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 12 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹¹⁶Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 27 October 1937; Norma Jacob to DT, 3 November 1937, FSC./R/SP/1/3.

¹¹⁷Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

In late November, much to the relief of the Barcelona unit, the arrangement with the SCIU came to an end and new alliances were brokered.¹¹⁸ The canteen at Gracia was to be the sole funding responsibility of the General Relief Fund (GRF), San Andrés was to come under the aegis of the FSC, acting for the Norwegian Committee and the canteens at Sans and Calle Carmen were to be financed and administered jointly by the GRF and the Society of Friends. The technical management of these two canteens was to be in the hands of Elise Thomsen who would have the final decision on all matters, but was required to consult the committee at all times.¹¹⁹ Both organisations agreed that it was important that they maintain personal contact with the canteens, and visiting rights at the canteens were to be assured.¹²⁰ It must be emphasised that throughout all the difficulties with the SCIU, relations in Britain between the FSC and the Save the Children Fund had remained healthy, but that increasingly these organisations had both entered into the fund-raising programmes of the National Joint Committee. In the future, the unit in Barcelona would select its own allies and establish reciprocal arrangements with other relief organisations already in Spain; the FSC in London would make agreements only for joint fund-raising.

The conclusion of the co-operation agreement had a positive affect on the workers. In April 1938 after an absence of about two months on leave, Jacob was pleased to report that: "The impression is one of endless and complex activity, in which everyone knows his part and gets ahead with it, maintaining the most cordial relations with the others."¹²¹ The end of the agreement with the SCIU at the end of November 1937 left the unit much freer to decide how to distribute what milk was available.¹²² After some discussion with local doctors—reinforcing the

¹¹⁸ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 22 November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ "Barcelona Milk Canteens: Suggested Scheme for Joint Management by General Relief Fund and Society of Friends", November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹²¹ Alfred Jacob to Paul Sturge, 26 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

¹²² "Barcelona Milk Canteens: Suggested Scheme for Joint Management by General Relief Fund and Society of Friends", November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

Friends' insistence on local input—the unit decided to mix the dried milk at a rate of 1:10 which would use 250 pounds of milk per month rather than the previous 300 pounds and would therefore feed more children. Additionally, the decision was taken to proportion the milk allocation for babies so that a nine month old would receive more than a one month old child.¹²³ Only the very neediest children could now be added to the current cohort despite the fact that in the markets only vegetables and a limited amount of fish were available.¹²⁴

At the end of December 1937 the first of the large scale relief deliveries from the AFSC began to filter through. The first donation of \$1,000 was sufficient to feed 3,00 children daily if 10% of the funds were deducted for administrative costs. Each child would receive half a litre of milk containing 12% butterfat and milk distribution could be extended to the large refugee centres at Sabadell, Terrassa and Grabollers. The first two of these three sites were large industrial centres near Barcelona with few agricultural resources of their own and unsuited to sustaining large refugee populations. Left to make their own decisions, the workers in the Barcelona FSC Unit moved quickly to expand their reach.

Throughout 1937 the FSC was fully engaged supplying milk canteens in Barcelona, Tortosa and Alcazar. In addition a distribution centre for food and clothing had been set up in Madrid with warehouses in Barcelona, Valencia and Madrid. As work progressed it became easier to assess the rapidly expanding needs of the Spanish urban population. With the expropriation of many vehicles to military purposes, for example, it became clear that the Friends would need to provide trucks, both for material distribution and to aid the evacuation.¹²⁵

The main direction of policy throughout 1937 and 1938 was to feed Spanish children in Spain itself, whether from canteens or in children's colonies. In May 1937 Alfred Jacob returned temporarily to England, both to take part in fund-raising and to explain his plans for the expansion of relief work. His attention was turning to the possibility of Quaker sponsorship of children's refugee colonies in

¹²³Elise Thomsen to Fred Tritton, 29 November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹²⁴Elise Thomsen to Dorothy Thompson, 12 December 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹²⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 13 January 1936.

Catalonia. These colonies were intended as safe-havens for refugee children where they might receive both food, health care and education away from both the war zones and the unhealthily over-crowded refugee hostels. The ability of private organisations to continue supporting these establishments was in doubt, but Jacob felt that with the help of outside funds they might be maintained. Feeding children in colonies rather than at home would concentrate resources—fifty children could be installed for a start-up cost of £150—and would enable medical practitioners to keep watch on the children's health.¹²⁶ The colony work expanded as it became clear that sponsorship of colonies was an attractive expenditure for potential donors. As a consequence of a rearrangement of work with the SCIU, Alfred Jacob took over the colony work as an exclusive FSC project, the canteens coming under the authority of Elise Thomsen, the Friend from Denmark.¹²⁷ The Friends decided not to become involved with the plans of the National Joint Committee—an umbrella organisation sponsored by a number of British MPs—to establish colonies of children in England, for reasons which will be discussed in detail in chapter seven.¹²⁸ However, the expansion of the colony work created its own problems. The colonies were kept dispersed and isolated in order to provide greater safety, but this required improved and expanded transport facilities a need which was only ever partially satisfied by the use of National Joint Committee trucks.¹²⁹ The changes in the working arrangements of the FSC continued through August, but the station canteen in Barcelona was closed at the end of the month, the majority of refugees having arrived and been settled.

By October 1938, with the loss of Republican territory in the north, a new exodus of refugees from Santander and the surrounding areas began to head towards Barcelona. The FSC sent out a lorry-load of milk to meet the refugees on the road but it was evident that the situation had gone beyond the ability of private charity to cope. On a visit to Barcelona, an AFSC worker, Emily Parker reported

¹²⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, p. 57, "Proposal for Supporting Children's Colonies".

¹²⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 22 July 1937 and 17 August 1937.

¹²⁸FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 27 April 1937.

¹²⁹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 22 July 1937.

that the Catalanian government had started to feed children from four to fourteen years of age a noon meal for the price of one peseta. Four canteens were each feeding 2,500 children and another was feeding 6,000. Cinemas had been taken over, the seats replaced with tables and feeding spread over two hours.¹³⁰ In late 1937 the needs of Eastern Spain had become acute, and shortages of petrol and coal were making what relief there was available hard to transport.¹³¹ However funds remained scarce; a particular problem for charities was the generally deteriorating international situation which was placing conflicting pressure on a number of charitable activities. In the USA, the Federal Council of Churches (a Protestant body) suggested a joint Christmas appeal in 1937 to raise funds for German refugees and for relief in China and Spain in order to minimise this conflict.¹³² The FSC and the SCIU, both operating across Europe, sponsored a similar joint campaign.¹³³ Although this project did raise money for all three campaigns it was clear that the crisis in China drew American philanthropic attention away from the problems in Spain. A call for the League to help with relief led to the appointment of an International Commissioner, but no immediate help was forthcoming, whilst the British Government offered only to contribute in proportion to the generosity of other nations.¹³⁴ However, negotiations were in progress between a number of charities to organise an international programme of charitable relief which might be able to command the attention of governments. In consultation with the Foreign Office, Edith Pye drew up a draft scheme for what was to become the International Commission on Child Refugees in Spain. In order to get it off the ground, the Spain

¹³⁰Emily Parker to "Girls", 21 October 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Parker, Emily (Box 9).

¹³¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 13 October 1937.

¹³²Although the AFSC was active in Berlin and were involved in resettlement projects for German refugees in Latin America, they were little involved in China relief, in part because the American Friends Board of Missions, the evangelical wing of the American Friends societies, already had representatives in China. AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 6 October 1937.

¹³³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 28 October 1937.

¹³⁴FSC: Minutes of the Committee on Spain, 13 October 1937.

Committee agreed to guarantee £100 to finance the planning meetings.¹³⁵ By 1938, the Barcelona unit was feeding approximately 19,000 children financed through their own fund-raising, by the Swiss Committee and by the General Relief Organisation, but the continued failure of resources to match needs restricted possibilities for either expansion or the opening up of new areas of relief by the Barcelona Unit. Consequently the unit continued to operate on the outline laid down in this chapter until the fall of Barcelona in January 1939.¹³⁶ The expansion of Quaker work in Spain, came not through the expansion of the FSC unit, but with the arrival of the American Friends Service Committee in Eastern Spain in April 1937.

¹³⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 18 November 1937.

¹³⁶Clarence Pickett to Emily Parker, 18 July 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

Chapter Three:

The American Friends Service Committee in Republican Spain

3.1 Francesca Wilson and the Quaker presence in Murcia

In February 1937 Nationalist advances set many refugees from Málaga on the road to Murcia but there was little assistance waiting for them. Until the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) arrived in south-eastern Spain in April 1937, very little in the way of formal relief could be done. The FSC and the SCIU had agreed to a regional division of responsibilities, but neither had the personnel for extensive expansion outside the major cities. The FSC had installed a representative in Valencia, Barbara Wood, a British Friend, whose role was facilitate the distribution of supplies from the ports to local organisations in the interior, but she was not employed to dispense relief.¹ In 1937, Francesca Wilson was appointed as an observer.

A Birmingham school teacher, Francesca Wilson was an experienced relief worker. She had begun her involvement with the Friends in 1914. Although she was not herself a Friend she served with them in Belgium, France, Corsica, Serbia, Austria, Russia, France and Hungary over a period of twenty years.

In 1914 Francesca Wilson had volunteered to work with Friends' relief for French civilians, but, in a rather instructive interview, was turned down. At the time, she had been housing two refugee girls and was working as a journalist.

Ruth Fry, in charge of the Friends' London office, granted me an interview, but it was in vain that I stressed my fluent French and willingness to do any work. She pricked my bubble when she remarked—"You are engaged in a useful task here. What is your motive for wanting to leave it? Is it a genuine concern for Friends' work and the relief of the unfortunate, or only love of excitement?"²

¹Esther Farquhar to John F. Reich, 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3); Francesca Wilson, *In the Margins of Chaos: Recollections of Relief in and Between Three Wars* (John Murray, London, 1944), p. 174.

²Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 40.

With the exception of Emily Parker, of whom more later, we have little information as to how relief workers were selected by either the FSC or the AFSC except that provided by Francesca Wilson in her memoirs. These memoirs are unusual in that they are not suffused by “quakerliness”, and are marked by a more worldly assessment of motivation and ideology. Francesca Wilson was unusually open about her own desire for adventure as a motivation for her present and past relief activities. In the above extract from her memoirs, she acknowledged that Ruth Fry had seen the truth of the matter; she was indeed attracted by the promise of adventure; but Wilson felt strongly that a desire for adventure should not be grounds for rejection

Motives are so complex. How can one explain to Serbs the love of excitement and adventure, the itch to meddle in other people’s affairs, the nostalgia for foreign countries and for increased scope for one’s powers, which drive the British abroad, to administer either their own Empire or a small slice of somebody else’s?³

Francesca Wilson was clearly an unabashed imperialist with an insouciant acceptance of British competence and superiority. This in itself was not unusual amongst the Friends in Spain. There was a standard assumption that British and American ways were more “progressive” and scientific, particularly with regard to child care and nursing. However, Wilson did not disguise this with the language of compassion, liking or of evangelism, nor the desire to do a scientific work of the professional relief worker. All these were secondary factors:

[My] motives do not sound very sublime, but once on the job other emotions quite often come into play—compassion perhaps, or the desire to help, affection for the people helped, or if it is mainly ambition to do a piece of work properly, there is still some merit.⁴

Her understanding of the range of motivations suitable for an aid worker clearly departed markedly from either the official expectations of religious commitment

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid.

or Jacob's oft-reiterated request for people who cared specifically for Spain.

Despite her enthusiasm for relief work, in 1937 Francesca Wilson's first reaction to the need in Spain was hesitant. At the time, she was teaching in a Birmingham girls' school and could secure only half a term's leave. Almost fifty, she also felt that "her relief-working days were far in the past."⁵ However, the FSC felt that she could do some useful publicity work, and she herself was attracted by the prospect of viewing first hand the consequences of revolution:

A friend of mine who knew Spain intimately urged me to go. It would be interesting to see the experiments in collectivisation and in education. Good heavens! I thought. Social experiments, educational reform—it was not my idea of a civil war.

"But what do you think the Government is fighting for?" she said. "It has something it values. There is a whole Spanish Renaissance at stake." I often thought of her words when I saw Spain.⁶

Like Jacob, Francesca Wilson was not the strict neutral the FSC claimed to prefer; nor did she travel to Spain with an open mind about what she saw. She went looking for social experimentation and "progression" and where she found it she was quick to comment, both in bulletins and letters to the FSC and in her memoirs.

[The children's colonies] were thoroughly modern, both in buildings, equipment and methods, and were like our newest and most brilliant schools. The difference was that in Spain there was no charge—the children of the poor were having the same chance as the children of the rich with us.⁷

Like her American counterparts, she was concerned that relief work and child care be undertaken in as modern a fashion as possible and was impressed by the efforts she felt the Republicans to be making in this direction.

What startled me in Spain was to see so much that was

⁵Ibid., p. 171.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 172.

extremely modern and advanced, side by side with dirt, degradation and medieval conditions. It was light struggling with darkness. The Republic had committed a thousand errors, but it was on the side of light.⁸

Her partiality was as clear as Jacob's, but Wilson, a Quaker worker but not a Quaker, may have felt less necessity for prevarication. Although an opponent of military intervention, she clearly felt no compunction in identifying herself with the fortunes of the Republic.

When Francesca Wilson arrived in Murcia it was to find a town with a peace-time population of approximately 60,000 inhabitants in only barely controlled chaos. Approximately 20,000 refugees were packed into the few billets left vacant by the evacuation of wounded from the front, and more refugees had been sent to the provinces. Aware that an AFSC worker would arrive in April, with only a few weeks leave and despite her remit to observe and identify need, she determined to initiate work as rapidly as possible, in the tradition of other British Quakers. She discovered that whilst four of the refuges were receiving two meals a day, the worst of the shelters—Pablo Iglesias—had only suppers, with milk in the morning for babies. Half of the refugees had no money with which to supplement this ration, and there was little left to buy in the town because the needs of the city hospital received priority of supply.⁹ Whilst the municipalities were willing to try to provide milk for the smallest babies, nothing was provided for older children, and Francesca Wilson determined to provide milk or chocolate to the smaller children and the nursing mothers.

The first feeding at Pablo Iglesias, however, did not go well. This was not Barcelona, where an efficient municipality combined enthusiastically with keen volunteers and an educated population. From the beginning, Francesca Wilson was warned off attempting a canteen system on the lines of Barcelona or Vienna, on the grounds that the Malagans were too wild. The local committee, however, united behind her in the belief that the children of Pablo Iglesias needed breakfast, and

⁸Ibid., p. 200.

⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

with the lorry loads of food—milk, cocoa and biscuits—sent from Valencia by Barbara Wood this was possible. In order to assess the number of breakfasts which would be needed a local man was sent around to make up a list and give out tickets to the children who would need a meal.

I was astounded at the result. There were only sixty names. “Well, you see, companyera,” he said, scratching his head and trying to put the matter delicately, “they saw you going up and down the other day and they thought you looked a little foreign, so the rumour went around that every child on the list will be taken to Mexico or to North America or to Russia.”¹⁰

Many refugee parents preferred to keep their children with them rather than risk their loss to a safer place; many families had been broken up in the flight from Málaga and few were willing to take further risks. Others, less politicised perhaps than their counterparts in Barcelona, distrusted the motives of outside agencies. The distrust, however, broke down as soon as the first meal was served: the second morning Francesca Wilson arrived at Pablo Iglesias to find the area near the kitchen alive with children. When they attempted to feed the children in relays they were mobbed. The situation was compounded by the initial difficulty of finding local volunteers to assist. In Barcelona, the Jacobs engaged those of strong religious or political (both Right and Left) commitments. In Murcia and Valencia Francesca Wilson, and later Esther Farquhar, found a society essentially untouched by the Republic. Both workers noticed the lack of women willing to engage in voluntary work,

The handful of enterprising women in Murcia were run off their feet and my suggestion that others who were doing nothing might come and help their countrymen was received with a contemptuous smile. Go into a refuge, mix with filthy Malagans, catch their vermins and diseases? They knew better.¹¹

The need for relief in Murcia, although urgent, was initially on a smaller

¹⁰Francesca Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 174. The authorities did accept a number of offers to take children abroad, discussed briefly in Chapter Seven.

¹¹*Ibid.*, p. 175.

scale than in Barcelona, and the productivity of the surrounding countryside made the initial situation look less daunting. Food was clearly available in Murcia at this time, the difficulty was distribution. In addition, Murcia was further from the public eye: the Friends could afford to deviate from the neutrality of child relief, to assist other needy groups, whilst maintaining a belief in children first. Once a supply of milk to the refugee shelters was established, Francesca Wilson moved quickly to extend her reach beyond simple child-feeding and into the realm of facilitating self-help. Francesca Wilson's previous work in Serbia had been in rehabilitation and resettlement and it was this experience she brought to bear on the situation in Murcia. Concerned about the destitution of refugees entering Murcia, and the idleness of the inhabitants of the refugee shelters, Wilson decided to open workshops with the joint aim of meeting a portion of the demand for clothing, and providing occupation for some of the refugees. Two sewing machines were donated by the Mayor and two modistes were found to teach refugee women to cut and sew clothing for themselves and their children.¹² The sewing workshops proved successful, and Wilson established ten workshops in Alicante and Murcia. When she returned to Spain in August 1937 (after a two month break), she provided the women with books and games and was surprised to discover that most of the women were illiterate. The workshops quickly became educational centres, but this discovery fuelled Wilson's hostility to the Catholic church.¹³

The workshops did not remain a priority for funding, in part because of their success in attracting sponsorship. Popular with an American public who believed in self-help and the work ethic, gifts of cloth continued to arrive for the workshops throughout 1937. Esther Farquhar, the AFSC worker who took over Francesca Wilson's work in April 1937, decided in the light of this that it was better to reserve AFSC funds for food, consequently their success appears to have rested mainly on Francesca Wilson's periodic visits in the Easter and Summer vacations.¹⁴

¹²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 11 June 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 3).

¹³Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 191.

¹⁴Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 27 July and 21 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

In September 1937, for example, she established a number of workshops making rope soled shoes, but in the long term these were to be kept supplied by the local *Asistencia Social*.¹⁵ By September 1937, there were three workshops active, one for alpargatas, one for plain sewing such as clothing and another for fine embroideries. This latter workshop was to produce goods to sell to raise funds for further relief work.¹⁶

In addition to the formal help from the AFSC once it arrived, Wilson proved adept at securing assistance from others. Keen to widen Friends' influence, Francesca Wilson contrived to secure the support of the ex-patriate, Sir George Young, for the establishment of a children's hospital in Murcia. After some discussion with the Mayor—the same Mayor who had provided the sewing machines—an appeal was made, a house secured, and donations of crockery, cutlery and medicines began to arrive. Wilson was apparently unperturbed by her knowledge that many of the donations had been looted from the homes of the absent and self-exiled wealthy.¹⁷ The International Brigade in Murcia also proved particularly co-operative, sending their lorry drivers to search for fresh meat, fish and vegetables for the hospital.¹⁸ In June 1937, the AFSC, in the person of Esther Farquhar, finally arrived to take over Francesca Wilson's projects, allowing her to return to her teaching job from which she had already exceeded her leave of absence.

The other work which Francesca Wilson established in Murcia were children's vacation colonies. Returning to Spain in August 1937 she established a series of short-stay colonies in the town of Benidorm which proved so popular with the mothers that she was forced to find a means to extend their duration.¹⁹ The one intentionally permanent colony she established was at Crevillente, under a young

¹⁵Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 23 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

¹⁶Esther Farquhar to Barbara Wood, 3 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Workers in Spain [internal] (Box 3).

¹⁷Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

¹⁸Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

¹⁹Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-211.

engineer called Rubio. The Crevillente colony was unusual. It catered only for boys, for whom Francesca Wilson felt nothing was being done. At fourteen they were considered too old for the children's colonies, and unless they joined the army, something which Friends were at pains to discourage if possible, they seemed to gravitate into gangs. However, Rubio and Don Pedro, the school master Wilson secured, were anxious that the colony be more than simply a holding station. They wished to make it the "Eton-Harrow" of farm colonies and requested that Wilson select the boys on the basis of their ability to read and write. Wilson stuck to this rubric in her selections despite her own doubts and despite her pity for a number of illiterate boys without parents or means of support, in order to accommodate the ideologies of her Spanish co-workers. However, her intentions were undermined when the four boys concerned simply walked to the colony on their own. Given the opportunity Wilson insisted that they be admitted, but Crevillente was an uncomfortable illustration—as was the issue of the canteen for the Fifth Quarter of Barcelona—that the Friends would sometimes allow their own principles of egalitarianism to be over-ridden by the desires and principles of their Spanish co-workers.²⁰

3.2 The Arrival of the AFSC in Spain

In contrast to all this activity, in September 1936 the AFSC had informed Inez Muñoz, a Spanish woman recently arrived in the USA that they were not yet planning to take action in Spain, although they were monitoring the situation.²¹ They gave a similar reception to Lydia Morris, a Californian who had toured Spain and was anxious to see Friends offer a witness. Although Mrs. Morris was keen to offer her own services, the AFSC were not inclined to support her individual Concern. Mrs. Morris, an enthusiastic amateur, did not fit the apparent requirement for a trained observer or relief worker.²² For the AFSC, corporate responsibility had come to supersede the function of individual initiative both as part of the drive

²⁰Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-203; Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 19 January 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

²¹AFSC: Minutes, Foreign Service Section, 25 September 1936.

²²AFSC Minutes: 2 December 1936.

towards professionalisation and away from the more individualistic impetus of philanthropy and in its efforts not to encroach upon the remit of the American Friends's Board of Missions. Although this approach did not entirely replace the personal witness, it did shape the way in which this was framed and understood. At times, as the section on Emily Parker will demonstrate, personal enthusiasm was felt to deviate substantially from the "proper" motives to the point of rendering useless the individual involved. Increasingly, AFSC volunteers were encouraged to come through the youth summer Peace Caravans, training first at Pendle Hill, or with experience in either missionary or social work.

In response to Alfred Jacob's presence in Barcelona, the AFSC had agreed to be "largely guided by the investigation and counsel of the English Friends".²³ John W. Harvey returned to London from his fact-finding mission in November 1936, and the FSC's report, forwarded to the American Friends, prompted the AFSC to discuss the prospect of a fund-raising drive. Individual mailings were planned, but it is not clear that these mailings were ever issued.²⁴ In late November and early December 1936, the AFSC also held a series of meetings to assess the situation in Spain.²⁵ However, in marked contrast to their assertion that they would be guided by the FSC on all matters, it was decided that the first step would be to send a representative to Spain to investigate the need for relief and openings for reconciliation work. It was felt strongly that "just" a relief mission would not adequately justify AFSC intervention; there had to be space for a distinctive Quaker witness, but this distinctive witness was understood, rather than defined on paper.²⁶

The delegate selected was Sylvester Jones, a member of 52nd Street Meeting in Chicago who had previously served as a missionary in Cuba and spoke fluent Spanish. His membership of a mid-Western meeting may have been an additional factor in his selection since the AFSC continued to remain conscious of the need to

²³AFSC: Minutes, Foreign Service Section, 22 October 1936.

²⁴AFSC: Minutes, Foreign Service Section, 15 November 1936.

²⁵AFSC: Minutes, Foreign Service Section, 24 November, 2 and 17 December 1936.

²⁶AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, December 1936.

elicit Western Quaker support. In the meantime, the Foreign Service Section would begin collecting food and clothing in order that a material response might follow immediately Sylvester Jones' recommendations were received. Until separate lines of distribution were established, the committee would utilise those already established by the Friends Service Council. The Foreign Service Section, in view of the widespread need, and the general inability to supply that need, suggested that emphasis should be placed on the relief of nursing and expectant mothers and the needs of young children, reiterating again the emphasis of mothers and children first which had been established in the relief work in Austria and Germany. A separate committee, the Committee on Spain, was to be established with a remit specifically directed to the raising of funds and distribution of relief.

Inevitably, this committee proved to have its own agendas, and one of the first decisions was to suspend fundraising until Sylvester Jones' recommendations had been received. Although Sylvester Jones' report proved to corroborate the evidence submitted by Alfred Jacob, and was preceded by a number of telegrams requesting urgent assistance, the AFSC Committee on Spain chose to wait for the report to be delivered in person, in February 1937. Preliminary conversations were to be held with those groups or individuals who might be interested in supporting such an undertaking, but no major effort to raise funds was made until February, delaying the despatch of the first of the American relief workers.

It was initially intended that Esther Farquhar would join Alfred Jacob in Barcelona; instead, apparently independently but probably in response to the number of refugees moving from Murcia to Barcelona, Farquhar chose to travel to Murcia where she took up the work initiated by Francesca Wilson. It was decided that the AFSC would take over responsibility for relief in the South-East; the FSC would focus its efforts in Barcelona and Catalonia, whilst the SCIU concentrated on Madrid, Trespaderne, Corales and Málaga, but with the entry of the AFSC cooperation between the SCIU and the FSC would wind up. The joint canteens would continue as long as joint funds existed, and representatives would be maintained on each other's committees, but the joint project was to cease.²⁷

²⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, p. 101, "Friends Service Council and General Relief Fund; Proposals for the Future Management of the Joint Canteens in Barcelona at Sans and

3.3 Esther Farquhar and Relief Work in Murcia, Almería and Alicante

The selection of Esther Farquhar as their first representative in Republican Spain is illustrative of the AFSC's understanding of the qualifications for a professional relief worker. Farquhar was a trained social worker with a background in missionary work. Brought up in the Friends Church, the evangelical denomination of American Quakerism, Farquhar had been introduced to the unprogrammed tradition of East-coast Friends at Westtown School in Pennsylvania. After graduating from college in 1916 and training as a teacher, Farquhar had volunteered with the Friends Board of Missions and been sent to Cuba for three years. In Cuba, in addition to learning Spanish, Farquhar had recognised her discomfort with the Friends Church and transferred her commitment to the unprogrammed and less evangelical tradition. After three years Farquhar left Cuba for Vermont where she taught Spanish, and eventually sociology, at Middlebury College. As her interest in sociology deepened, she decided to take up charity work and left, first for a post with Cleveland Associated Charities and later for a place at the School of Applied Social Sciences at Western Reserve (now Case-Western). She volunteered for Spain in 1937.²⁸ However, Esther Farquhar's missionary experience in combination with her social work training may have continued to influence her style of operation and helped to position the AFSC—organisationally—mid-way between the SCIU and the FSC.

The letters we have from Esther Farquhar, although voluminous, are not as helpful as one might suppose. Unlike Francesca Wilson or Emily Parker, Esther Farquhar was not inclined to discuss her motives, perhaps because these were already clear to those to whom she wrote. Most of the letters are between five and ten pages—the intention was that John Reich would reproduce them and circulate them to her friends and family in Chicago—but, where not taken up with practical matters of food stock and distribution plans, Esther Farquhar's principal interest, particularly in the early letters, was to describe the landscape and surroundings to her correspondents. From the letters a sense of a warm and high-spirited woman

Carmen", also Minutes of the Spain Committee, 16 December 1937.

²⁸ *Oral History Interview #14, Wilbur Kamp, France 1919 and Esther Farquhar Kamp, Spain 1938*, American Friends Service Committee, 27 February and 30 March 1989, pp. 3-5.

emerges, but unlike the writings of Alfred Jacob, and later, as we shall see, the Mennonites, no great spiritual depth is easily evident. This is not to imply that it did not exist, but the professional tone of her work-related letters provides little personal context, and the more personal elements are rarely related to her experience as a relief worker. She does not appear to have interpreted her work, in and of itself, as a witness in the way in which Alfred Jacob, Emily Parker and Levi Hartzler clearly did. It is possible that her more evangelical experience in Cuba served mainly to emphasise the apparently secular nature of the operation in Spain.

Emulating the Barcelona unit, Esther Farquhar began with the provision of milk to the most vulnerable portion of the population, the small children. Her approach, however, had more in common with that of the SCIU than with Alfred Jacob. A trained social worker and a product of the professionally structured AFSC, Esther Farquhar was more sympathetic to the notion of a scientific and structured relief programme and less concerned to introduce a sense of religious mission to her work, in part because, the AFSC needed to avoid visible evangelism in order to secure the support of the evangelical Quakers, suspicious of the AFSC's liberal theology. Furthermore, professionalism did not need to be imposed upon the Murcianos: the impetus came in part from Spanish co-workers.

...last evening we had our conference. Sr. Montalban, Dr. San Miguel, Mrs. Wood, Miss Imbelli and I. We were very much delighted when the physicians said that they would like to set up a milk station for the babies and do the thing scientifically.²⁹

This meant establishing a system of triage administered by local doctors and nursing staff from the Puericultura. As supply was uncertain the centre would begin with 100 babies and focus on feeding those few babies well until a larger amount of milk was assured.³⁰ This approach had been rejected by Alfred Jacob, ensuring that the Barcelona feeding stations lurched from one shortage to the next. It was possible in Murcia, in part because of the larger scale on which the AFSC operated, which meant that supplies could be despatched before the results of

²⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

³⁰Ibid.

fund-raising were known. However, like Jacob, Farquhar desired that the canteen should meet local perceptions of need as well as the need itself and Esther Farquhar was keen that local doctors should be the ones to decide which children were to be fed.³¹ The local authorities, also rationing milk, had arranged for a milk on prescription scheme which Esther Farquhar followed, but many other children also needed milk and were unable to secure prescriptions. Whilst milk supplies were relatively plentiful, the Murcia canteens gave out milk to those assessed as needy—but not in receipt of local authority prescriptions—in return for donations. A straightforward sale was avoided as it was feared this might encourage a black market economy.³² Once milk shortages set in, it still remained important to the Murcia Unit to try and provide older children with something, and Eleanor Imbelli (who transferred from the SCIU) and Esther Farquhar agreed to try and provide raw tomatoes to the children (at a cost of around 90 centimes or 2 American cents per pound) in an effort to provide some vitamin content to the diet. There was not yet any thought of providing an adequate diet for older children.³³ The children of Murcia were not, as yet, starving, but malnutrition-related diseases had begun to appear and few children were fat.

The expansion of the milk canteens in Murcia was far less problematic than it had been in Barcelona. To begin with, there was no second international organisation such as the SCIU with whom the AFSC had to bargain. Also, whilst changes in the political balance within Murcia could and did cause problems, it was nothing like on the same scale as the disruption which could occur in Barcelona. When in June 1937 the government dissolved the Asistencia Social only a few days before the first milk canteen was to open, the Mayor of Murcia offered to provide funds until the government could be induced to step in. The close relationship which Francesca Wilson had established with the Mayor of Murcia continued to operate to the unit's advantage long after her departure. The impression from

³¹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 11 June 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

³²Levi Hartzler to Orrie Miller, Chairman of the Mennonite Relief Committee, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence- Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to) (Box 3).

³³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

Esther Farquhar's letters is often of a rather cosy organisation who "met around a table in the lobby, in order to discuss the proposed station for babies."³⁴

Some facilities already existed which could be applied to the relief programme. The local Puericultura Institute was able to provide pasteurising and mixing machines which in Barcelona had had to be bought in; before the war lectures on infant care had been given and the infrastructure existed for some of this to be continued.³⁵ The local Asistencia Social, prior to its dissolution, had been impressed by the initial work done by Francesca Wilson and was prepared to pay for a doctor and a nurse for the first feeding station, leaving Esther Farquhar to request 500 baby bottles from the FSC. The feeding nipples were to be bought by the mothers as, despite the inherent difficulties of maintaining standards of hygiene under poor living conditions, it was felt that the nipples would be better cared for if owned by the users. However, the feeds were given out in prepared bottles to ensure that the mixing itself was done in the sterile conditions which could not be secured in the overcrowded refuges.³⁶ This was done until September 1937, when bottles were in short supply throughout Spain and it was decided to give instead packets of powdered Glaxo and trust to the intelligence of the mother to ensure that hygiene was maintained in often unpromising conditions. It was, however, determined that the milk stations should move back to bottles as soon as they could be imported from London by the Joint Committee.³⁷

Living conditions varied from refuge to refuge. The condition of Pablo Iglesias, for example, made it desirable that it should be completely emptied as it was considered too expensive to repair and maintain to an acceptable standard but in June 1937 1,800 people were still housed there even though many children had been relocated to the surrounding villages. During feeding sessions, Esther

³⁴Esther Farquhar to John Reich, Committee in Spain: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 3).

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 4 May 1937 and 1 July 1937, Committee in Spain: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 3).

³⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 23 September 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

Farquhar observed the mental as well as the physical health of the children.³⁸ "Some of the children come in creeping along as if they were afraid of the whole world."³⁹ The contrast with those who seemed unaffected was a powerful argument for going beyond milk relief and removing these children to some form of remedial care. Like Alfred Jacob before her, Esther Farquhar began to look favourably on the establishment of separate children's colonies, where previously she had preferred to keep families together. Most of the colonies both in Barcelona and in Murcia were intended simply for the care and protection of children away from the fighting and had taken in children from an organised evacuation. Now the colonies were dealing with children who had actually fled war zones with their parents. Many were reluctant to be separated from parents for long, and the parents were equally reluctant to part with their offspring. One solution which the field workers in Murcia came up with was the part-time colony. Eleanor Imbelli, a young American woman who had been living in Switzerland and was a member of the Swiss unit of the SCIU, had by this time attached herself permanently to Esther Farquhar and the Friends and was keen to undertake play-work among the children of Murcia.⁴⁰ Her first action was the creation of a children's camp in which parties of children could be entertained. The idea appealed to the mayor and the doctors and it was decided to take groups of children up to cabins at Mor Menor for a week at a time. The success of this camp quickly led to the adoption of a summer hotel nearby which could accommodate between fifty and two hundred children. Furnished and ready to live in (presumably abandoned by its pre-war owners) it was also ideal for a convalescent home as it contained a swimming pool and its own water supply.⁴¹

Space for children was good, but a particular concern for Esther Farquhar was the lack of playthings she saw in the nurseries and orphanages. Dolls' houses

³⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, Committee in Spain: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 3).

³⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, Committee in Spain: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 3).

⁴⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴¹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

and dolls were in evidence but out-door toys, such as balls and hoops were not, and few of the children seemed to be engaged in what she would have described as play.⁴² The concern for play was not entirely an American one and does not appear to have been imposed upon the Spanish: Esther Farquhar was able to report that two of the Murcian officials, "agreed that one of the biggest contributions America could make to Spain was to teach her children how to play" and asked if "well trained group workers who had an understanding of the Spanish people" and of Spanish games could not be found. Surprisingly, the evident trauma which Esther Farquhar observed in some of the children was not always viewed as an explanation for the absence of play.⁴³ Instead, the absence of organised games was viewed by the American workers as a lack of cultural play skills, although Francesca Wilson observed evidence of play amongst male children and both Spanish, American and British workers shared assumptions about the role of female games as a socialising process. The Committee for World Fellowship responded to this concern with goodwill suitcases containing toys and clothing collected by children's groups. In the meantime practical pursuits such as basketry, weaving, and reading were taught to the children.⁴⁴ It is noticeable from the lists that requested toys tended to be of the type associated with boys' activities: balls, nets, rackets and bats. Whilst girls are of course not precluded from these activities it is interesting that no request appears to have been made for dolls. Description of girls' activities frequently refer to domestic duties and the learning of sewing and cooking. Equivalent activity for male children was uncommon, only in Rubí did the boys appear to have been engaged in market gardening. This pattern suggests certain fundamental assumptions about the nature of play for the two groups which accord with the American construction of gendered play of the late

⁴²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 7 May 1937 and following letter, undated with front page missing, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴⁴Esther Farquhar to John Reich 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.⁴⁵

A secondary but compelling concern was that play work should be carried out by the “right” people. Although the establishment of a nursery would require more personnel than the AFSC were accustomed to send—preferring a policy of maximum supplies and minimum people—Esther Farquhar felt that this was preferable to some of the alternatives:

The International Brigade has started a playground, and I think she [the Inspector of the Refugee Evacuation Office] is afraid they will also start a nursery if some one else does not, and naturally she would rather it be in the hands of social workers rather than soldiers.⁴⁶

Whether this was an expression of misgiving about handing child care to military personnel, or simply a fear of amateurism on the part of the officer is unclear, but it encouraged the Friends.⁴⁷ This need was eventually met by the despatch of Emily Parker in January 1938.

As fund-raising in the USA gained momentum and supplies became assured, Esther Farquhar could plan for expansion in both the level and the type of relief provided. An outgrowth of the Gota de Leche (the milk station) in Murcia was the provision of children’s dining rooms. In a reversal of the situation in Barcelona, where larger children had been fed from the first until supplies became too scarce, in Murcia they had only received some help in terms of fresh vegetables, and were automatically excluded from the milk supply. Once supplies were assured in Murcia Esther Farquhar reconsidered extending supplementary feeding to larger children, making available milk for soups and rice puddings. As the

⁴⁵Karin Calvert, *Children in the House: the Material Culture of Early Childhood, 1600-1900*, North Eastern University Press, Boston, 1992, 97-121; Miriam Formanek-Brunell, “Sugar and Spice: The Politics of Doll Play in Nineteenth Century America”, pp. 107-124 and Victoria Bissell Brown, “Golden Girls: Female Socialization Among the Middle Class of Los Angeles, 1880-1950”, pp. 232-254, in Elliot West and Paula Petril (eds.), *Small Worlds: Children and Adolescents in America, 1850-1950*, University Press of Kansas, Lawrence, 1992.

⁴⁶Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 10 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴⁷Esther Farquhar to Alfred Jacob, 17 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Workers in Spain [internal].

supplies increased it was expected to expand this side of the feeding.⁴⁸ Once the Murcianos had schools established for the refugee children it was planned to provide dining rooms as an incentive to school attendance.⁴⁹

The dominance of the AFSC in this area was not without drawbacks. The AFSC was committed to sending nothing but milk during the summer of 1937, in part because the vacation month saw a hiatus in much fund-raising activity, but with the arrival of the AFSC other agencies such as the SCIU proposed to move out of Murcia. A visit to Barbara Wood in Valencia confirmed that from July 1937 and for the next three months the SCIU had directed all joint SCIU and FSC funds to supplying milk to Madrid, as had the National Joint Committee in England.⁵⁰ A problem for Esther Farquhar, and for other AFSC workers, was that initially, as a result of the State Department's "neutral" stance, shipping from America proved difficult. Until the American government became involved in the International Commission for Child Spanish Refugees in 1938 it was easier to purchase supplies in Europe through either the British Friends or the SCIU.⁵¹

Not all work was directed at children. Although the AFSC had initially accepted that children should be the sole recipients of relief, their location in a reception area for refugees where there was little in the way of work for the able-bodied led them quickly to explore other possibilities for relief work, without compromising their neutrality. The elderly could also be considered neutrals, and as the Barcelona Unit had discovered, in war-time they were likely to find themselves responsible for the the children. Feeding the children but not their often equally vulnerable care-givers led to mental and moral discomfort for the relief

⁴⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 25 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁵⁰This type of decision was a contributory factor in the breakdown of the agreement with the SCIU: it left both Alfred Jacob and Esther Farquhar without supplies at times when the work was expanding often, ironically, with refugees from Madrid. Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, addendum 24 July, 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁵¹Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 27 August 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar. Robert A. Divine, *The Illusion of Neutrality*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1963, pp. 122-28; Traina, op. cit., pp. 46-99, 178-239.

workers. Thus, breakfasts for old people were started in Almería at the beginning of April 1938, consisting at first only of cocoa, obtained by exchanging excess milk from the children's breakfasts for chocolate from the the *refugios*.⁵² Later two biscuits were added, "...and you should have seen the expressions of appreciation for the biscuits the first morning they were given,"⁵³ a salutary reminder that for all its concerns about nutrition, the work of the Friends and their associates was always intended to mean more than the supply of material well-being.⁵⁴ The availability of flour from the new International Commission from May 1938 meant that bread could be added to the breakfasts.⁵⁵ A cable of 22 June put the amount being used at six tons monthly.⁵⁶

For the able-bodied, the AFSC unit also decided to interfere on moral grounds. Whilst older refugees were harder to label as neutrals, strong arguments could be made to an American public reared on the work ethic that it was essential that something was done to prevent moral lassitude. Francesca Wilson had needed no such reasoning for establishing the clothing workshops, she rarely paused to justify her work, but for Esther Farquhar, to be able to argue that the workshops both aided moral regeneration and assisted the Spanish to supply their own needs facilitated the flow of donated material, cotton and needles. However, although some clothing could be provided by the workshops, the large numbers of destitute refugees created a great need for clothing. The closure of the clothing room at the AFSC during the summer months exacerbated the difficulty as there was no one available to sort what clothes did come in, too much of which was winter weight for it to be possible to simply send it on to be sorted on-site. The vacation period meant also that regular suppliers could not easily be reached to be informed of the

⁵²Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 6 July 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁵³Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 16 May 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁵⁴Ibid.

⁵⁵Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 4 June 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁵⁶Levi Hartzler to John Reich, cable, 22 June 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

new requirements.⁵⁷ Another factor was cultural differences: although Esther Farquhar asserted that for the most part “nobody could be conspicuous in ordinary American clothes”, the need for black summer dresses was one which could not be met from abroad.⁵⁸ Children’s clothes were always needed—although not as much babywear as donors appeared to think—print dresses for small girls were appreciated as they were suitable for school wear, but there was always a shortage of boys clothing.⁵⁹

An additional area which Esther Farquhar wished to assist were the “preventoriums” established for children in the colonies in the early stages of TB.⁶⁰ Children placed in the Friends supported hospital at Espuña were seen to gain weight and health rapidly.⁶¹ In late 1937 she took over the administration of Sir George Young’s English hospitals in Almería, Alicante and Murcia. The Alicante hospital was concentrating principally on typhus cases and skin infections, although TB was a constant problem. In March they had approximately thirty children although the number fluctuated. All the children were assessed as suffering from malnutrition which was only partially alleviated by the provision of fresh vegetables from the vegetable garden of the hospital.⁶² The hospital work was valuable for more than its direct treatment of children. Emily Parker reported the remarks of one visitor:

“It has given the people an entirely new idea of how to treat sick children. Before, if they got sick, well, they did what they could but

⁵⁷Louisa M. Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 23 June 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Letters to Esther Farquhar.

⁵⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁵⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 7 September 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar.

⁶⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁶¹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 15 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁶²Emily Parker to John Reich, 22 February 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

now an ambulance comes and gets the child, it is taken to the hospital where it receives good care and when it comes home again it is well and smiling. And they say we never saw such a thing before...⁶³

The children received more than medical care: they were obvious recipients of the small suitcases of clothes and toys from the Committee for World Fellowship, which had always had the drawback of being difficult to divide but impossible, ethically, to hand out to individual children selected from a large group. These children were selected by their status as invalids, and the games and toys which the suitcases contained, in addition to the much needed clothing, helped to keep the children entertained. Emily Parker, the play specialist sent in by the AFSC in 1938, observed that many of the children had to be taught to play with the games, both because they were unfamiliar, but also because of the apparent lack of play culture observed.⁶⁴ Toys came in as donations from a variety of places, and Parker was keen to see that all bed-bound children had something and that those who were mobile were encouraged to share. Some of the toys and games were kept for the use of supervised groups as she was keen to encourage cooperative rather than competitive team games. In addition, a school was established for the hospital, for which two Spanish teachers were found. Some suitcases included pens, paper, crayons and pencils, both unavailable in Spain by 1938, and these were kept back for the use of the teachers and group projects.⁶⁵

At the end of 1937, the still small Murcia unit had considerably extended its geographical and financial authority. The AFSC was rapidly becoming the dominant relief group in the area, a channel for other agencies relief supplies and a centre for other workers and smaller organisations. Its sector extended approximately 200 miles along the coast, from Alicante to Almería, and inland at least forty-five miles.⁶⁶ As the government allowance was only two pesetas a day

⁶³Emily Parker to John Reich, 1 March 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶"Dan West's Report", 1 February 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Reports, General (Box 9).

per person, a sum which would not feed anybody well, and the ill and convalescent required better nutrition, the hospital take over required additional money—\$500 a month was approved in late September—and new personnel. In particular a Spanish-speaking *responsable* was needed for the Murcia hospital; in Almería, Margaret Hope, an English nurse was already in charge.⁶⁷

One of the problems with the hospitals was in defining their tasks. As relief conditions worsened, the notion of the hospitals treating only the seriously ill became increasingly restrictive. Levi Hartzler, one of the Mennonite workers, wrote that the hospitals, rather than releasing their patients to further hardship and perhaps repeated exposure, were keeping many child patients after their cure.⁶⁸ This growing reluctance to release patients was at least part of the impetus for the convalescent homes and some of the short-term children's colonies which Esther Farquhar established, but it also increased the need for soup kitchen style feeding for the hospitals who needed more than milk.⁶⁹

Although expansion was taking place rapidly, by early 1938, Murcia was, like Barcelona, feeling the strain of growing need and restricted supply. In April, Emily Parker felt that Murcia was perhaps the last place on the coast towards Almería which still had anything like enough.⁷⁰ Funds were adequate, with the AFSC receiving some \$12,000 in December,⁷¹ but increasingly the situation was hampered by poor communications and the difficulties of lorry transportation. With very little milk in Spain, the Murcia Unit was forced to import milk, mainly from Holland; this system could not guarantee delivery. As the only organisation working in Almería, through the Gota de Leche and the hospital, there was ample

⁶⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 6 October and 4 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937, Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁶⁸Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 15 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence — Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to).

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Extract from composite letter from Emily Parker, circulated by Grace Rhoads of the AFSC, February-March, 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Parker, Emily (Box 9).

⁷¹John F. Reich to Esther Farquhar, 20 January 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

incentive to try to process orders with more rapidity.⁷²

The great problem was how to get milk into the south of Spain. The railway network was used and controlled by the government and the military authorities and few other organisations had access. The relief agencies relied heavily on each other, borrowing trucks and making deliveries to their neighbours. However, as Hartzler pointed out, although it was nice to receive surprise deliveries, this was not a dependable system. By the beginning of February 1938 the Murcia unit had temporarily exhausted its milk stocks, despite having ordered from London in December.⁷³ One solution was that all European orders be shipped through the Paris Coordination Committee with which Esther Farquhar made arrangements, but this introduced yet another factor into the equation.⁷⁴

By March, and into the second year of the war, the Murcia unit was finding it impossible to meet the rapidly escalating demand for relief. Relief workers were being stopped in the street by people asking for help which the Friends did not have the resources to offer. When it was announced that bread would be given to children in schools, enrolment increased from 2,500 to 3,500 children.⁷⁵ Resources generally were short and it continued to be important to maximise the use made of any delivery. Hence, an order for powdered milk in April 1938 requested that it be bought in tins rather than cardboard boxes. This kept the milk in better condition and reduced pilferage and, although the extra weight had to be paid for, the tins could also be used for heating water.⁷⁶ In May 1938 the unit requested that butter and vitamin tablets be sent out for the children who were being fed mainly

⁷²Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 19 January 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

⁷³Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 7 February 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 20 February 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

⁷⁶Esther Farquhar to Gilbert MacMaster, 6 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Spain (Box 8).

on milk, chocolate, white bread and boiled vegetables.⁷⁷ Extra money was forthcoming in May to make up for earlier shortages, but with the depression biting into fund-raising efforts, it was becoming harder to fund anything but milk and bread.⁷⁸ Despite this, in May it was decided to provide breakfasts for an additional 4,000 school children, a task taken on by Emily Parker. With eleven tons of powdered milk ordered and two tons of flour available it would be possible to provide milk and cookies to all of the children. With the cooperation of the local Mayor and the directors of schools, a mixing station was established in a large military hospital and on 23 May the first milk was mixed and sent out to the schools. As initially the mixing team was not large enough, many children received lunch rather than breakfast. Each child received fifty grams of bread and a glass of milk.⁷⁹ If there was extra bread left the older children were given two pieces, but many were observed to take the second piece home for a parent or ineligible elder sibling.⁸⁰ Once the system was organised, mixing began at 6:30 in the morning. With eight people mixing 1,000 litres of milk, the first delivery went out at 9:00 in the morning and the last at 10:30.⁸¹

By May 1938 the Murcia unit had coalesced around Esther Farquhar, Emily Parker, Levi Hartzler and D. Parke Lantze as the four American workers. Cooperation with the Murcianos was good and the relief work, despite the growing difficulties with fund-raising, was expanding rapidly. The entry of the International Commission into relief during 1938 would ensure that the unit could continue. However, in May 1938 Esther Farquhar's increasingly poor health resulted in her recall to the United States, effectively ending one phase of the relief work in Murcia.

Esther Farquhar's illness provides rather more insight into her character

⁷⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 6 May 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹"Breakfasts for 4,000 Children", 5 May 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid.

than we might otherwise get from her rather impersonal letters. Whilst her symptoms were very real, they almost certainly had their roots in her character and the circumstances in which she found herself. One of the more startling aspects of Esther Farquhar's letters is how concerned she was for her own comfort, in particular her food. The lack of sweets and her desire for sugar is a recurring theme. Bemoaning the fact that they are never served sugar—but not mentioning that by this time it was rationed in many areas—she writes that in spite of this, “you can still buy candies in the shops if you *need* them” [my italics].⁸² The condition and comfort of the beds and the condition of the hotels are also areas for comment in her early letters, but very little time is spent on the conditions around her. Esther Farquhar chose to live in a hotel, protected from the worst of the rationing and with little personal contact with the Murcianos, restricting her own personal contact with the prevailing conditions. In one letter she described sitting down in Valencia to “a lovely dinner with butter and everything” but this commentary was the nearest she came to indicating personal involvement with the increasing hardship in Spain.⁸³ Of course, none of this necessarily indicates that she was an uncaring person. Her commitment to Spain was clear, but she was less single-minded than Alfred Jacob and less adept at infusing her letters with a depth of emotion. The frequency with which she discusses food may be the first indication of her failure to acculturate.⁸⁴

A further problem for Esther Farquhar may have been the spiritual and physical isolation she experienced in her first months. Initially, she was without another permanent worker of either her own faith or from her own organisation — in a letter to Elise Thomsen in Barcelona, 22 August 1937, she expresses her disappointment that she did not see the Jacobs. “I had all kind of things I wanted

⁸²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 7 May 1937 and following letter, undated with front page missing, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁸³Ibid.

⁸⁴Emily Parker to John Reich, 1 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

to talk over with Alfred.”⁸⁵ As a woman she may have found it more difficult to develop personal contacts with the Spanish she met, and unlike Jacob she does not seem to have stumbled upon any congenial Spanish Protestants. It may have been with this in mind that the AFSC sent over Emily Parker in January 1938.

By 1938 Esther Farquhar was having problems with her digestion. This was not her first bout of illness, as she had left Cuba in part because of ill-health, but this second bout of illness she later ascribed to eating contaminated cheese.⁸⁶ Whatever the cause, her aversion to olive oil, whether a matter of taste or digestion, was a serious handicap for a relief worker in Spain, where olive oil was by 1938 the only form of fat available. In August 1937 she was hospitalised for the first time with the “grippe”.⁸⁷ Taken ill again on a trip to Paris at the end of the year, a Parisian doctor recommended that she should eat only grated, raw vegetables. Whilst this may have assisted her digestion, it was a diet almost impossible to follow under the circumstances.⁸⁸ In addition, the diet almost certainly left her feeling weak and drained. By January 1938 she was in the American hospital in Paris, having started a sinus infection, hardly fatal but guaranteed to do little for her morale.⁸⁹ The obvious remedy would have been for Esther Farquhar to return to the USA, but this was resisted both by herself and, for all their concern for her, also by her co-workers. Levi Hartzler reported that her return from Paris prompted a lift in the general morale. Like Alfred Jacob, she had become a symbol of the work; John Reich, writing to express his concern, declared “we have been profoundly moved by the success that has followed your efforts, and we have felt

⁸⁵Esther Farquhar to Elsie Thomsen, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, workers in Spain [internal] (Box 3).

⁸⁶*Oral History Interview...Esther Farquhar Kamp...pp. 4, 5.*

⁸⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁸⁸Esther Farquhar to AFSC, 2 February 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

⁸⁹Esther Farquhar to John F. Reich, 22 January 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

that you are representing the finest spirit we have known in the Committee."⁹⁰ Naturally, the AFSC were reluctant to remove this element.⁹¹ However, on her return from Paris to Murcia she went straight to bed at the house of a widow where private accommodation had been arranged.⁹² In May, Hartzler cabled to the AFSC that Esther should be recalled for the sake of her health.⁹³

At times, Esther Farquhar comes over as frankly frivolous, an attitude that does not sit well with her responsibilities nor the competence with which she carried them out, but she was apparently conscious of this contradiction:

In the meantime my life is full of thrills and satisfactions that I wonder if it is really I. The sadness of the suffering and depravation which I see among the refugees often brings tears to my eyes and an ache to my heart, but the joy that comes with ability to alleviate it is very satisfying.⁹⁴

There is something uncomfortable about this statement. It lacks the passionate commitment of Alfred Jacob, substituting instead sentimentality. This is not to deny the efficacy of Farquhar's work, but although she desired to assist and indeed to modernise Spain, she was rather more fascinated with the customs and the ruins she saw around her.

What an accumulation of the past enters the life and breath of these people. And now we say they have torn down the monuments Church [*sic*], and have cast off Christianity, but the Spanish people can't do that (for it is part of them) any more than they could cast off these others [Moorish traditions such as the methods of irrigation in

⁹⁰John Reich to Esther Farquhar, 3 February 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

⁹¹Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 9 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹²Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 16 May 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹³Levi Hartzler to John Reich, cable, 19 May 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁴Esther Farquhar to John Reich 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

use], or they can stop the bull fight by ordinances....In the long history of Spain a hundred years are but as a day, so we cannot expect it all to happen in this generation or tomorrow as some of the Spaniards seem to want.⁹⁵

Esther Farquhar was both fascinated by the Spanish and yet repelled by the Spanish Church. Her determination to separate the two undermined her belief in neutrality, but may have assisted her support of a Republic which might otherwise have seemed too extremely left-leaning for a liberal American, but it is not clear that she had any particular commitment to the Spaniards. However whilst Esther Farquhar may have lacked the passion for Spain with which Alfred Jacob inspired his workers, the reluctance of both Levi Hartzler and Emily Parker to see her leave Spain suggests that she was a capable leader. From the evidence, one suspects that Esther Farquhar's passion was for her work in its very concrete sense, and that it was here that her spirituality lay. Her desire was to do a very professional, that is, American, piece of work, and within this a work worthy of the AFSC, but there is no sense that she consciously saw this as a *Quaker* work within the paradigm in which Alfred Jacob framed his task.

The immediate reaction to the loss of Esther Farquhar was to speed up the arrival of three new relief workers, Alfred and Ruth Cope, who would manage the business and household accounts respectively, and Martha Rupel, a nurse. Clyde Roberts, a Quaker businessman, was also directed to Murcia where he was expected to take on the leadership of the unit. However, the AFSC in Philadelphia clearly felt that some of the difficulties which Esther Farquhar experienced could be attributed to the living arrangements of the workers in Murcia. Clarence Pickett, Executive Secretary of the AFSC, drew attention to the need for greater closeness within the unit, perhaps on the model of the very successful Barcelona unit. Such a familial structure might provide more than support for those it assisted: "there could be developed out of this experience an illustration of the power of a group which had a strong cohesion as well as being representative of a wide variety of

⁹⁵Ibid.

talents and programs."⁹⁶ John Reich persisted with the issue, raising the possibility of an "American home life" as well as the economy which this "more pleasant way of living" might bring. "Please remember that we want you to be comfortable and to take time off for recreation. Do not allow yourselves to get run down from overwork or worry."⁹⁷ He was particularly concerned that no one stayed on the job so long that "she cannot recapture her vitality." From this point on, regular leaves of absence were to be programmed into schedule. With the addition of the extra workers, this became more feasible.⁹⁸

An agreement with the State Department that only those strictly attached to relief work would be sent to Spain, limited the number of workers which the AFSC could despatch.⁹⁹ Until May 1938 this edict was interpreted narrowly to imply that only relief workers could be sent, in contrast to the FSC's ability to send observers and short-term volunteers from Friends' schools.¹⁰⁰ The evident failure of Esther Farquhar's health, however, encouraged the AFSC to consider sending another kind of worker, the accountant (Alfred Cope) and the housekeeper (Ruth Cope). If few workers could be sent, those who were had to be selected carefully for their professional skills, their dedication and their suitability in a number of practical capacities. However, finding these attributes in one package was not easy. There is little documentary evidence, as the recruitment files do not appear to have been archived, but the impression is of a limited number of volunteers for Spain. The much vaunted desire of the AFSC to send professionals may have undermined the search for skills, as traditionally, it was businessmen who were best in a position to take leave from work. Equally, the search for professional social work

⁹⁶Clarence Pickett to Emily Parker, 11 July 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁷John Reich to Murcia Unit, 19 July 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁸John Reich to Clyde E. Roberts, 4 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁹AFSC: Minutes of AFSC General Meeting, 9 June 1937.

¹⁰⁰Young adults from Friends' schools were sent to Puigcerdá children's colonies to assist in preparing agricultural land in the summer of 1937 (FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 July 1937).

experience may have led to the rejection of others with the motivation and dedication that previously would have suggested their suitability, a growing trend in American social work generally.¹⁰¹ The desire to balance these factors may have also obscured the need for other considerations to be taken into account, such as ability to adapt to a foreign culture and the ease with which workers would interact with each other. In practice, however, the AFSC evidently felt constrained to despatch those workers who were available and enthusiastic, taking skills where they found them.

3.4 Emily Parker

Emily Parker arrived as assistant to Esther Farquhar in the spring of 1938. Her despatch was both in response to Esther Farquhar's need for an assistant, but also a consequence of Emily Parker's importunate requests to be sent. Of all the AFSC workers, it is Emily Parker who most demonstrates the traditional motivation of Concern. In December 1937 she wrote an article for *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend* in which she argued against the politics of convenience, the ease with which people "join the great and ever-increasing ranks of those who find it easy to justify any change of attitude or action on the grounds of crisis". Instead, she demanded a living witness and that "the ideals we declare from the mountain of vision are proved true on the actual test."¹⁰²

Emily Parker came to the relief work in Spain with a strong reference from Louisa Jacob, aunt of Alfred Jacob. Florence Conard, an American who later joined the AFSC unit in Murcia and was herself the daughter of a Quaker missionary. described her as "a tremendously energetic girl about four feet ten and in her late twenties".¹⁰³ A Young Friend, Emily Parker was also an active member of the United Christian Youth Movement, an interdenominational Protestant Movement.

¹⁰¹See Regina G. Kunzel, *Fallen Women, Problem Girls: Unmarried Mothers and the Professionalization of Social Work, 1890-1945*, Yale University Press, New Haven, 1993, pp. 114-144, for a discussion of the exclusion of unqualified but experienced voluntary workers.

¹⁰² S. Emily Parker, "If Love is Put Into Action", *The Messenger of Peace, Supplement to the American Friend*, 9 December 1937, p. 526.

¹⁰³Florence Conard to AFSC, 5 September 1938. Committee on Spain 1938. Individuals: Florence Conard, Personal letters Box 9).

Having succeeded in interesting them in Spain, the UYCM designated Parker to represent them (and their funds) in Spain under the aegis of the AFSC. However, Emily Parker spoke only a little Spanish, which she had acquired in an effort to prepare herself for the task; neither was she regarded as very businesslike, and for these and other reasons the AFSC was doubtful of the wisdom of sending her.¹⁰⁴

John Reich, the man in charge of the administrative side of the Spanish mission, had doubts about both her character and her motives and wrote a cautionary epistle to Esther Farquhar:

You will find her an extremely energetic, dynamic person, capable of hard work and abundant cheerfulness. At the same time, you will find she is inclined to ramble off on vague intangibles. The thing to do is give her a real job with children, and see to it that she settles down and delivers the goods. It is not the purpose of the Committee for Emily to travel about the country, but to confine herself to the work of recreation instruction in some children's colony.¹⁰⁵

In particular, Reich was concerned that Emily Parker would use her position as a representative of the UYCM to obtain greater autonomy in the unit. Worried, Reich asked that the Committee be given a frank report of Emily's progress. Emily Parker, herself, was not unaware of this concern:

I hope thee does understand how anxious I am to fit in with the spirit of Friends in this kind of work. I suppose my insistence on the UYCM part has made thee feel that I was over emphatic in my personal interests and that perhaps I might not see the whole program so clearly. I hope by now that thee understands that it was my great concern that American Christian Youth take some practical action on the basis of an ideal held only in the abstract that made me so insistent.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 8 October 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar.

¹⁰⁵John F. Reich to Esther Farquhar, 3 January 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

¹⁰⁶Emily Parker to John F. Reich, July 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Emily Parker (Box 9).

It could not have been easy for Emily Parker to feel constantly on probation, but this attitude appears to have been held only by the workers in Philadelphia. Esther Farquhar felt that she provided "a great strength both spiritually and practically".¹⁰⁷ As it happened, Emily Parker could not be assigned to a colony, as her experience in organising children's activities was too generally valuable to Esther Farquhar. Instead, she initiated children's activities in a variety of feeding stations, catering to that need for play which Esther Farquhar had earlier identified.¹⁰⁸

Both the content and the language of Emily Parker's letters suggest a traditionally *Quakerly* Concern. Her use of "thee", already rare amongst Friends by 1938, is unique amongst the relief workers. Although its significance as an indication of inner spirituality is minimal, it does serve to reinforce Emily Parker's personal identification with the more conservative Friends' traditions; it is not surprising therefore that Emily Parker was sensitive on the issue that her first loyalty might not be to the AFSC and its mission:

Thee will remember I sent on first of all my concern as a Friend. If thee re-reads my application thee will perhaps see my purpose more clearly. My only fear is that I might not be able to really translate the message of Friends to these people adequately. My joy in the work has only been marred by an occasional sense that I was sent more to satisfy me than because it was considered useful. This was due of course to the conversation with both thee and H.T. Brown.¹⁰⁹ But I felt the work to be done and the challenge to Youth groups which it might bring was more important than any sense of personal hurt I might have felt. I have worked hard here and tried in the work to

¹⁰⁷John F. Reich to Esther Farquhar, 20 January 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

¹⁰⁸Esther Farquhar to John F. Reich, 22 January 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

¹⁰⁹Chairman of the Spain Committee, died 1937.

outgrow this feeling.¹¹⁰

Emily Parker had two concerns: the first, to bring the message of Friends to the Spanish, and the second to bring the challenge of Spain and the Quakers to the Young Christian Movement. The message which she brought to the Spanish might be roughly divided into a social ministry and a ministry for peace; she served both in the same unselfconscious manner which we saw first in Alfred Jacob, but her missionary and evangelical motives were rather more foregrounded than those of her Quaker co-workers.

On arrival, Emily Parker took over the workshops first initiated by Francesca Wilson. This type of work, Parker felt, "gives an opening for sharing our ideas of friendship and goodwill."¹¹¹ In particular, they had the advantage of bringing the Friends into contact with established projects and people with tried and tested ideas which could be shared.¹¹² In addition, the workshops appealed to her belief in empowerment; the workshops also housed schools, and she was concerned that these should continue as they provided perhaps the only opportunity for adult women to learn to read and write.¹¹³

It is the type of thing I am especially interested in as you well know for it represents more than mere relief, important as that is. Education must go on no matter what the conditions are and in fact conditions such as now exist make carrying on still more important. It is through such groups as this that the spirit of friendship and goodwill can be transmitted.¹¹⁴

As far as possible, she hoped that teachers could be provided from the local students and that these would be willing to start educational centres in the refuges. These students came from the FUE (the Federación Universitario Escolar), the main

¹¹⁰"Special interests and responsibilities of S. Emily Parker in connection with the work of Friends in Spain", Emily Parker, May 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Ibid.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Extract from composite letter from Emily Parker, circulated by Grace Rhoads of the AFSC, February-March, 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Parker, Emily (Box 9).

students' organisation. This approach was made both for utility and because, as representative of a youth church organisation, Emily Parker felt strongly that it would provide an opportunity for Spanish and American youth to "cooperate in a constructive project for Spanish children."¹¹⁵ Such a project would appeal to the young people of the UYCM.

Emily Parker's work was not free of ideology. She combined a belief in "modern" educational procedures with a firm insistence that no new workers be sent out; all the teachers were drawn from the local population. Concerned again for empowerment and for the maintenance of local independence she wrote of one school she established with the aid of the FUE:

...the work must be planned so that if at any time for any reason I have to leave, the school can carry on just the same. I have seen the rather tragic result of what happens when a thing is completely run by outsiders. The International Brigade had a Campo de Niños which took care of about 300 refugee children.... Well, suddenly and with no warning, as all things in war time occur, the I.B. was evacuated from Murcia leaving the Campo de Niños with no leadership. It is being carried on at the moment but it remains to be seen whether or not it can actually continue. Besides the fact that it is very bad to be responsible for something which is helpless without one it seems wrong to me to feel that one is doing the best for a people by imposing an outsiders idea of education on the children. If the desired end is to help develop the Spanish culture and life it seems important that Spanish teachers and leaders be used.¹¹⁶

This did not prevent Emily Parker expressing the hope that she would be able to introduce: "a good bit of expressional work into the classes ... there certainly is not much included in Spanish education. Those things which we simply take for

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶"Special interests and responsibilities of S. Emily Parker in connection with the work of Friends in Spain", Emily Parker, May 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

granted in American education are not included here at all,"¹¹⁷ but it is clear that she perceived this as sharing new skills, sponsoring indigenous development and not an attempt to impose a colonial mentality on the population.

Whilst practical work was crucial to Emily Parker's witness, she also believed the AFSC to have a role in lifting morale:

I am sure it is important for us all to help all of those here with whom we work daily to remember how to smile and laugh. I feel if we can keep up our own morale and that of those who help in our work, be they Spanish or the various foreign workers, the work we do will have twice the value.¹¹⁸

The ability to maintain her optimism was in itself a spiritual act—"The constructive always has to give place to the necessities of the destructive. The thing is to believe that the light does shine on in the darkness and that the darkness has never overpowered it and keep on trying to build as permanently and constructively as possible..."¹¹⁹—and within this context, it was necessary also to consider how one performed one's mission. The "joy and strength of fellowship" was not enough for Emily Parker if performed in the wrong way.¹²⁰ On her initial route to Murcia, she passed through Barcelona where she was taken to see some of the children's colonies:

It is far more pleasant visiting the colonies than the refuges because there you may see something which is more constructive, and less of personal misery. I shall never again go to a refuge just to see what it is like. If I can go to help in anyway I will go gladly but those whose homes have been shattered have quite enough of misery and bitterness to bear without the additional embarrassment of having people gaze upon you even though it may be with great

¹¹⁷Ibid.

¹¹⁸Ibid.

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid.

sympathy.¹²¹

Even when assistance could be provided the experience could not be seen as wholly beneficial to either party. Presenting a dress to a woman who had lost her husband and found her children in a refuge, the woman "cried she was so glad and kissed my hand. One feels terrible to be in such a position."¹²² Over all this rises Emily Parker's continued belief in pacifism. However, this was not a simplistic belief. In a late letter of February 1939 Emily Parker wrote of her continuing belief in the "futility and waste of war",

... a waste one can hardly comprehend, though looking at these babies in our hospitals, or watching them being carried out, sometimes two and three a day in little coffins made from powdered milk boxes... or seeing children faint as they stand in line waiting for the bit we have to give!¹²³

Yet, whilst for Alfred Jacob the work in Spain was a pacifist witness, a practical witness to peace, it is not clear that it fulfilled this role for Emily Parker.

All of this creates a struggle in one's inner being that will not be stilled by any of the stock answers of pacifists, which, by the way, are also no answer to death by air raids on civilian villages or starvation by blockade. There will be many, many questions that I shall have to bring back to UYCM groups.¹²⁴

For her, the project was "no answer to the problem of what a Christian Youth should do in such a crisis", but it was "a practical opportunity to discover what the real problems of being a Christian in these days are".¹²⁵ Neither did Emily Parker feel that democracy had answered the call. Impartiality was difficult for her to

¹²¹Emily Parker to Mary Elmes, February 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Emily Parker (Box 9).

¹²²Emily Parker to Mildred (unknown correspondent), 1 March 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Emily Parker (Box 9).

¹²³Emily Parker to Grace Rhoads, 24 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Individuals: Parker, Emily (Box 13).

¹²⁴Ibid.

¹²⁵Ibid.

maintain when she believed in a "brave, courageous people, people who love peace as much as we, and who only long to live free of domination of either Church or State."¹²⁶ But despite a belief in the inadequacy of her witness, when Murcia was taken by the Nationalists, Emily Parker chose to honour the neutrality in which she had initially believed.

Well, it has happened! I am now working on the other side or is it this side now? For better or worse I shall have become a completely rounded out non-partisan relief worker. For the sake of that phase of the cause to which I have committed myself and for the sake of the UYCM which wanted to make it completely N.P. I shall stay but many times over personal preference would drive me off and quickly....¹²⁷

For Emily Parker, her saddest observation was the transience of human loyalties as many of the Spaniards she had known as ardent supporters of the Republic quickly let go of their cause and began to accommodate themselves to the inevitable. "One sees not only how difficult but how nearly impossible it is to help to educate people to the idea of a democratic and cooperative society."¹²⁸

After leaving Spain in 1940, Emily Parker went temporarily to live with her sister in Richmond and worked with summer youth camps and later as secretary at Ohio State University. Throughout 1939 and 1940 she continued to raise funds for the work in Spain and France.¹²⁹ Her offer of service in France was turned down by Howard Kershner but during the Second World War she went on to provide assistance to displaced Japanese Americans.

¹²⁶Ibid.

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Ibid.

¹²⁹John F. Rich to Emily Parker, 25 October 1939. Committee on Spain, 1939, Individuals: Parker, Emily (Box 13).

3.5 The Mennonites: a Different Witness

Since 1917, with the establishment of the training camps for conscientious objectors, the AFSC had maintained close connections with the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC). The MCC had its own projects but it was keen both to assist the AFSC with fund-raising and, where appropriate, to send its own workers into fields established by the AFSC.

The arrival of the Mennonites Levi Hartzler and D. Parke Lantz in Murcia in early 1938 provided both additional personnel and assured the unit of continued help from the Mennonites. In particular, the Mennonite Central Committee was keen to send clothing through their agents. Whilst this may have been a low priority in Barcelona, the general poverty of the Murcia region ensured that there was a need. Writing home to John Reich, Levi Hartzler reported seeing many very young children with only enough clothing to cover them to the waist, in the middle of January.¹³⁰ But although these men, D. Parke Lantz and Levi Hartzler, were sent to cooperate with the AFSC, it became clear to both sides that they would have a separate agenda and perhaps a different way of doing things. All that was asked was that both the spirit and the manifestation of the work be in accordance with AFSC expectations. Initially, at least, the Mennonite representatives felt that it would be better to work as a part of the organisation than to begin independent work which might not prove sustainable.¹³¹ While the Friends could make suggestions as to where these relief workers might fit, the final decision lay in the hands of the Mennonite Central Committee. As Louisa Jacob underscored, "The point is that they represent the Mennonites and thus we do not have great freedom in their appointment."¹³² In the event, both young men were assigned to work with Esther Farquhar.

For the AFSC workers, cooperating with the Mennonites meant accepting both their nomination of relief workers and their accompanying agendas. Up to a

¹³⁰Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 19 January 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General: January to September (Box 7).

¹³¹Levi Hartzler to John L. Horst (Scottsdale, PA. Mennonite), 27 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence — Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to) (Box 7).

¹³²Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 8 October, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

point, both organisations had similar ideas of what made a good relief worker. Levi Hartzler and D. Parke Lantz had both served as missionaries in Latin America and spoke Spanish, Levi Hartzler was a young business man and both men had been ministers in the formal sense, and wrote letters home containing more obviously spiritual language than their Quaker colleagues. However, Esther Farquhar noted that the Mennonite Central Committee saw their workers operating separately but cooperatively. Many Mennonites had little sympathy with the work because it could not be openly missionary work although Levi Hartzler contacted local Protestants and engaged in Mennonite evangelism. Working with a religious group whose forms of worship were very different from the Mennonites, Hartzler believed that the only point of likeness between Friends and the branch of Mennonites which he represented was the belief in pacifism.¹³³ Consequently, whilst Hartzler and Lantz made clear that whilst they wished to cooperate closely with the Friends, they also desired to maintain a sense of individuality so that their supporters would feel them genuinely representative of the Mennonite church, in much the same manner that the FSC in Barcelona had wished to distinguish themselves from the SCIU.¹³⁴ For example, Esther Farquhar reported that Levi Hartzler particularly wished to drive the truck because he wanted to use it as a symbol to create a spirit around the work.¹³⁵ However, this proved inadequate; in late April Esther Farquhar wrote to John Reich to say that Levi Hartzler, after much prodding from Emily, had admitted that he was not happy with the wording on the truck. The wording had been according to very specific instructions from Patrick Malin, the AFSC representative in Paris, whilst he had been in Spain the previous year, but Hartzler, in addition to his own discomfort, was under pressure from his church.

...This morning he brought me his last letter from Orrie Miller in which he says that you had assured him that the ownership of the

¹³³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 25 April 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

¹³⁴Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 1 November 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

¹³⁵Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 15 April 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

truck would be indicated on the truck itself. If I had instructions which I did not follow I am terribly sorry, but I think you just expected me to have enough sense to know that it should be. I seem to be the kind that has to be told. Anyway, this morning we learned that the aluminium paint of the lettering can be removed, so we are having the "AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE" on one side changed to read "MENNONITE RELIEF COMMITTEE", leaving the other side as it is. This, Levi thinks, is all their Committee would want, but if you find out that it does not satisfy please let me know immediately.¹³⁶

A number of points stand out: first, the desire for semi-autonomy and for public recognition which had not been clear to the AFSC at the beginning of MCC involvement. The position had been assumed to be roughly similar to that of Emily Parker, who as a representative of the United Young Christian Movement reported to them, but in all other ways was an AFSC worker. Rather it was closer to the relationship that the FSC had assumed they had with the SCIU, that of equals, and clearly the issue of labels mirrored the difficulties experienced in Barcelona. The second point is the clarification of the aims of the Mennonite workers. Although both the FSC and the AFSC work in Spain had a missionary element, the stress could be said by a non-Quaker to be on the political elements of the Quaker profession. Thus Alfred Jacob was anxious to avoid incurring the epithet "rice Christian" but remained keen to witness to peace, social justice and to the simple message that people should care for each other's welfare. Similarly, Esther Farquhar's mission could be framed in a political paradigm as a witness to peace and to modernising child-care. Although both were uncomfortable with, if not actively hostile to Catholicism, both refrained from attempting to convert the local populace, although Alfred Jacob, like Levi Hartzler, seems to have been active in recruiting the small number of Catalan Protestants as assistants. Alfred Jacob had initially been despatched to Spain as a missionary. That he was allowed to drop public proselytising was a comment on the type of sect which British Quakerism had become—committed to the efficacy of Quaker witness to the presence of God

¹³⁶Ibid.

in the world rather than to active winning of souls. Levi Hartzler, however, came from a tradition that had retained a strong allegiance to evangelism and the MCC expected to receive evidence of this in his reports. However it rapidly became unclear how Hartzler could provide evidence of specifically Mennonite work. The clothing distributions were relatively easy as much of the clothing had been collected by the MCC and was identified as such by the labels on the bales. Reporting distinctive food distribution was less easy as food was bought by the AFSC with the assistance of Mennonite funds. As there was no Mennonite canteen, there did not exist any easy way to distinguish the AFSC and the Mennonite distributions. Writing to John Horst, a Mennonite elder, Hartzler suggested that the Mennonites simply accept this: "It seems now that the best way is to report on various projects that are being carried on by the organization as our own work, keeping in mind the Mennonite interests".¹³⁷

However, this did not always work. Although Levi Hertzler felt that the work which Esther Farquhar was to take charge of in the hospitals could be subscribed to by "our folks" without difficulty, other projects were not so amenable to Mennonite wishes. The lack of religious instruction in either the schools or the hospitals was a particular source of sadness for Hartzler, visiting the children in hospital he noted sadly, "how I would like to tell them Bible stories and teach them choruses, but that would not be wise now, even if I could do it".¹³⁸

In the face of these restrictions, the Mennonites became more concerned to contact and assist any Spanish Protestants they might find. One successful contact was established with Don Miguel Aguilera, President of the Spanish Branch of the World Evangelical Union, who was already involved with the AFSC. This contact was particularly helpful to the Mennonites as it provided them with access to organised worship. Sunday evening prayer was held each week at Don Aguilera's home and also placed them in a position to support coreligionists, perhaps assisting them with rent for a hall. But the Mennonites did recognise the constraints which existed;

¹³⁷Ibid.

¹³⁸Ibid.

I am not sure that it is just the time now to do much public work of that kind, but we can always do any amount of work in our closets before God, that he might open the way for the preaching of the gospel. We find no direct opposition here, although it not doubt exists among certain classes, but many folks have the idea that anything that has to do with the church is fascistic, and as long as the war continues there is no need of aggravating that feeling.¹³⁹

Although the possibilities for evangelism were limited, the Mennonites can be distinguished from the Quaker workers by their continued desire to find an opening for a missionary endeavour. Most Friends had by 1937 postponed it as a post-war possibility mainly predicated on a Republican victory. Additionally, the Mennonites contrast with the Quaker workers in their emphasis on the power of prayer. Although we know that Alfred Jacob attempted to organise a Meeting, and Emily Parker was clearly maintaining the more traditional forms of Quaker address, mention of prayer and its efficacy is remarkable by its absence. This is not the case for the Mennonites. Concluding his lengthy epistle, Hartzler wrote:

We hope that folks at home will be patient with us as we try to meet the needs which are peculiar to this time and this particular place. The Lord knows we have spent much time in prayer and in trying to find that which is nearest and neediest to be done. Most of the pioneer work was done before we came, except what new situations may arise yet. We appreciate your prayers and continue to need them. Word from anyone at home is always appreciated...¹⁴⁰

In contrast, the Friends sound positively secular, a reflection perhaps, of their more mainstream position in both British and American life.

The Mennonites' relationship with the Murcia unit was a difficult one. The Mennonites wished to see themselves as a separate, self-contained unit, apart from the AFSC. At the same time, they wished to cooperate very closely with the AFSC

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Levi Hartzler to Orrie Miller, Chairman of the Mennonite Relief Committee, 31 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence- Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to).

and receive their shipments through AFSC channels.¹⁴¹ Until this was established formally, relatively late in the process in November 1938,¹⁴² the presence of the Mennonites was a source of some tension. Whilst Esther Farquhar was in residence, the chain of authority was fairly clear and apparently acceptable to Levi Hartzler. Once she returned to America in May 1938, however, Hartzler seems to have been unhappy with Emily Parker as a possible leader, and the issue does not seem to have been settled with the arrival of Clyde Roberts in late 1938. In fact, the arrival of five new Quaker workers at the same time as Roberts may have exacerbated the situation, pushing Hartzler to maintain a separate ministry in order to emphasise the distinctiveness of the Mennonites. The motives were relatively simple and have been already discussed. The Mennonites' commitment to prepare the ground for missionary work remained intact until very late in the process, far longer than that of Alfred Jacob, which dissolved in the very first months of the war, and the multi-denominational AFSC was not and could not be a missionary body.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹John F. Reich to Clyde E. Roberts, 7 November 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁴²John F. Reich to Levi Hartzler, 10 November 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁴³This role was taken by the American Friends Board of Missions, a mid-western organisation dominated by the programmed meetings.

Chapter Four:

The American Friends Service Committee in Nationalist Spain

In April 1937, when Esther Farquhar entered Republican Spain, she was accompanied by Wilfred Jones, son of that Sylvester Jones who had made the AFSC investigation in the winter of 1936/37. Wilfred Jones made his way quickly to the Nationalist sector and established an agreement with the Nationalists that would enable the AFSC to operate in a culturally hostile environment. However, Wilfred Jones stayed only six months, setting a pattern which was to plague the AFSC unit in Burgos. In part because of this rapid turnover of staff, there are no overwhelming personalities or individuals who conspicuously shape the mission.

By 1938, the Friends Service Council had failed to secure visas for Nationalist Spain and had decided that the best way to ensure their own impartiality was to support the Nationalist Zone through AFSC workers.¹ The principal purpose of the AFSC presence in Nationalist Spain was to preserve an image of neutrality. The Nationalist zone did not initially require additional food supplies, and would not until such time as the Nationalists took over large tracts of the Republican zone. Furthermore, in order to ensure a steady supply, Franco moved in 1938 to create a National Wheat Service to manage the marketing of grain. Farmers sold at fixed retail prices to the services which fixed prices and administered distribution. When rationing became necessary, a mechanism was already in place.² However, manufactured goods were in short supply and the AFSC decided to divert some of the clothing collected in Philadelphia to the children of Nationalist Spain.

¹John Reich to Dan West, 5 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8); FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 15 August 1938; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 October 1938.

²Richard Herr, *An Historical Essay on Modern Spain*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, p. 220.

4.1 Working with the Nationalists

Earl Smith (Methodist) and Dan West (Church of the Brethren) arrived in Burgos in June 1937, and were immediately obliged to register with the police and with the Banca de Bilbao.³ Although the team was peripatetic and actually spent little time in Burgos, for ease of reference I will describe them as the Burgos unit.

All relief work in Nationalist Spain had to take place in association with Auxilio Social, the Nationalist women's relief organisation. Initially lack of transportation and of other suitable relief partners encouraged this alliance, and as the work developed a structure and direction the association with Auxilio Social became more rather than less useful. Although a warehouse and office was secured in Bilbao, the AFSC Mission in Nationalist Spain was far less rooted to place. Needing to store large amounts of goods in safe places whilst they themselves were absent either identifying potential recipients or delivering goods encouraged ever greater reliance on the services of the Auxilio Social for basic administration and supervision. The Auxilio Social in Bilbao was able to provide storage space, some transportation and a number of women to assist in sorting through the goods.⁴ This brought West and Smith into contact with rather different attitudes than those of either Esther Farquhar or Alfred Jacob's co-workers.

The three ladies who helped us divide it [the first delivery] for different places were surprised at the quality of the shoes and underwear. One said the shoes were too good for the children of the Reds—not with malice, but because they are poor. She said, "These are good enough for anybody." We think so too, rich or poor.⁵

The unit also relied on the Auxilio Social to direct them to often distant and inaccessible villages which the authorities felt needed help. Once there, the practice

³Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 24 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁴Dan West to John Reich, 21 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8). The relief workers do not indicate from where the female work force was drawn, but Stanley Payne suggests that some service was demanded from every able-bodied unmarried woman in Spain who was not otherwise employed through the Falange Sección Feminina. Stanley G. Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1979, p. 203.

⁵Ibid.

was to work either through the Auxilio Social, as indicated above, through the Mayor, or through the school teachers. This potentially legitimised Auxilio Social's public agenda, but there is evidence that the unit was aware of this problem and that the impression of impartial assistance from representatives of Auxilio Social may have been assumed for the sake of the censors. Earl Smith was careful to emphasise the positive aspect of such interaction: sharing a meal with the officials of Vallamanin, Smith commented, "Eating together is always a good thing for it pulls down the barriers and makes one group of many differing people".⁶

AFSC operations in Nationalist Spain were shaped to a far greater extent by the political colouring of the zone. Government relief in the Republic was partisan, but on the whole, the exigencies of the situation restricted the degree to which the authorities could take the time out to supervise non-governmental and foreign relief agencies. In contrast, the feeding stations which Dan West observed were clearly Falangist: although the children were selected "without prejudice" and a number were the children of "Red" fathers, orphaned by the war, Smith and West noted that on the wall was a picture of General Franco, surrounded by laurel. This was surrounded by flags of the various political groupings of the Nationalists, and below that hung the emblem of the SCIU.⁷ A later letter suggested that West and Smith found the general atmosphere rather militaristic;⁸ in one orphanage where boys predominated, the children entertained their visitors with a Falangist song.⁹ In order to distinguish themselves from this work, West and Smith displayed the Quaker Star and the words, "Sociedad de Amigos Quáquaros: Servicio Internacional" on the sides and the windshield of the truck they borrowed from the SCIU, prompting the sorts of enquiries which enabled them to explain the mission

⁶Earl Smith to John Reich, second letter, 15 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁷"The New Comedors at Los Corrales", by Dan West, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers (from and to) (Box 8).

⁸Dan West to John Reich, 8 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁹Earl Smith to John Reich, no date (received 13 December 1937), Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

further and emphasise their distinctiveness and their neutrality.¹⁰ In the heavily politicised context, defining and maintaining a visible neutrality was not always easy. Earl Smith explained,

Many people can hardly believe that Americans are helping them because they think that most of their sympathy is with the other side. We have been asked if this is one of the ambulances that was taken from the "Reds". We have had to explain that we are the Quakers and we are doing work on the "White" side too. . . They suspect us because we are Americans. They suspect us because we are democratic. They suspect anyone who is liberal. We have done everything we could do to dispel that suspicion. We feel that part of our mission is spiritual and we are willing to let them realize that though we are helping them we are not endorsing entirely the Phalangist regime.¹¹

However, as the units in Murcia and Barcelona had discovered, all too often Earl Smith found that his sympathies were assumed. His talk at Santiago University, to be held under the auspices of the Friends of Spain, was called off after Smith had a talk with the Spanish ambassador, "...and disillusioned him on his hopes that I could help convince people to support their war. I said I was with him politically but not militarily. They told me they were unable to get the auditorium. And I believe them. But if I had supported their war, they would have found some place".¹² Smith's assurance of political sympathy would be more disturbing if it did not run parallel to Jacob and Parker's identification with the Republic. The AFSC seem to have accepted that neutrality could best be achieved by balancing the interests represented, rather than attempting to secure political neutrals.

¹⁰Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 9 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8); Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 22 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

¹¹"Earl Smith's Report", June 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Reports, General (Box 9).

¹²Earl Smith to John Reich, 1 October 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938. Individuals, Earl Smith (Box 9).

Assessing levels of need was not easy, particularly as the Nationalists, from whom most information had to be drawn, had their own agendas which were often contradictory. The Nationalists were anxious both to prove their expertise and efficiency at maintaining their own population, but were also keen to emphasise the iniquities of the Republican government and the deprivation it caused in the Nationalist zone. For example, in a letter to Wilfred Jones, Count de Vallellano, President of the Spanish Red Cross in Burgos, expressed his gratitude for the interest which the Friends were taking in the Nationalist zone, but continued:

I well know the sentiments of justice which animate the Quakers; it is for this reason that I permit myself to call your attention to the fact that the Marxists have seized all of the gold of the Bank of Spain, also all funds belonging to the Red Cross,¹³ and to bring to your attention the fact that the territory and the population of the Nationalist zone are much larger than those of the Marxists. . . that is to say that we have less means and more need than the Marxists.¹⁴

How this was received is best summed up by the \$1,000 per month assigned to Dan West and Earl Smith in the Nationalist zone in September, as compared to the \$2,500 a month assigned to Murcia alone, with yet more AFSC money going to Barcelona.¹⁵ The reality was that the Nationalist zone had the majority of the agricultural land and very few of the refugees. Those refugees who had headed into Nationalist territory tended to be the better off, in a position to support themselves to some degree in an area which still had food for sale. Whilst the advance of the Nationalists did move real cases of hardship into the Nationalist zone, two factors mitigated the effects of this. As areas were occupied they were brought back on to the "right" side of the agricultural/industrial divide and it

¹³The Spanish Red Cross had continued activity in the Republican zone, assisted by the Swiss Red Cross.

¹⁴Count de Vallellano, Spanish Red Cross Supreme Assembly, Burgos to Wilfred V. Jones, June 14 1937 (translation), Committee on Spain 1937: Delegation to Spain, E. Cadbury and Wilfred Jones.

¹⁵John F. Reich to Earl Smith and Dan West, 23 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

became theoretically possible to for them to gain access to food supplies. In practice, this varied according to local geographical, political and economic considerations. Secondly, in many areas occupied by advancing Nationalist troops, people did not wait to be "liberated" but moved deeper into the Republican zone, placing an ever larger burden on the area of the country least able to feed them. The accusation about the gold ignored the Republican government's agreement to accept responsibility for all relief related debts incurred by the Nationalists. The reverse was not the case.

Some of this disparity was reflected in the reports which West and Smith sent back to the USA. On a return trip from Santander they stopped at Caldas, a village between Reinosa and Santander. Although there was a good deal of destruction to be seen there were very few children, most of them had been evacuated.¹⁶ Furthermore, the pre-war religious, charitable infrastructure in the Nationalist zone remained largely intact. In Santander, for example, West and Smith saw a colony of eighty boys and sixty girls, more than forty of whom were orphans, although it was not made clear whether they were war orphans. These children were in the care of nine nuns at the local convent; only a few looked very thin and with three cows on the property the convent had its own supply of milk. Rather than food supplies, West and Smith requested vitamin supplements.¹⁷ The convent children were experiencing the general shortage of clothing and skin complaints were prevalent, but there was none of the typhoid or tuberculosis prevalent in the Republic. Although Earl Smith observed many ill-clothed children and destroyed villages, he did not record evidence of starvation.¹⁸ Where local charities did not exist, the activities of Auxilio Social ensured that most urban areas were well catered for. West and Smith were directed to take material aid out into the more isolated villages and regions where more centralised agencies might be unable to reach, and in this cause they secured the use of a car offered by Mrs.

¹⁶Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 9 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (box 8).

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Earl Smith to John Reich, 16 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

Small of the SCIU, which was active in Nationalist as well as Republican Spain.¹⁹

4.2 Relief

The main cause for concern in Nationalist Spain was the shortage of clothing for children up to fourteen years of age. Cut off from industry, and with a predominantly military government which concentrated on the purchase of arms and the arrangement of alliances, civilian industrial produce was in short supply.²⁰ Under clothing and shoes were in particularly short supply.²¹ Other requirements were blankets and medical equipment. However, it is in the provision of clothing that the Friends most deviated from their stated aim of assisting only children. All clothing offered to the Philadelphia office was accepted, and whilst that for children was actively solicited, none was refused.²² In addition, the \$1,000 per month that Philadelphia made available to the Burgos unit was allocated to the purchase of clothes for the coming winter, rather than food. After the first shipment which was expected from the USA in November, Earl Smith anticipated that where the money was used to purchase clothing, this would be done in Britain in order to save shipping costs.²³

The clothing originated from two main collecting points: the clothing room of the AFSC itself and the Mennonite Central Committee.²⁴ Drawing on a wide contributing constituency (the AFSC solicited non-Quaker organisations and had a number of long standing connections on which it could rely, such as the

¹⁹This tends to support Alfred Jacob's allegation that Mrs. Small was over-stretched. See Chapter Two.

²⁰Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 2 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to).

²¹Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 24 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to).

²²Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 26 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to).

²³Earl Smith to John Reich, 16 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

²⁴John Reich to Earl Smith and Dan West 1 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

Fellowship of Reconciliation and the Council for World Friendship amongst Children), the AFSC could guarantee around 200 pounds of clothing per bale and the Mennonites around 100 pounds.²⁵ In common with their co-workers in Republican Spain, West and Smith were keen on the philosophy of self-help, even in war-time and amongst children, and they proposed that a new independent orphanage being established which did have some shoemaking equipment, be provided with leather and needles rather than shoes. Wool would be provided for the stocking machines the orphanage possessed so that they might knit stockings both for themselves and for the AFSC workers to distribute elsewhere.²⁶

The small unit in Nationalist Spain was in a poor position to develop overall criteria for relief. As the unit travelled from area to area, rarely repeating a call, direct comparisons between different villages could not be made, and it was impossible to rank areas without visiting before hand. In order to ensure good will, visits might have to include some dispensation of relief to people who proved to be relatively secure in comparison to the inhabitants of the next village. In the event it was easier to simply visit each place once and give to the most needy, irrespective of any comparisons that might be made subsequently, but the unit was compelled to operate a rather parsimonious policy on the assumption that the next village would be worse than the last. In Ubidea, a small village which had been near the front until the previous Nationalist advance, there appeared to be little war damage, but "need aplenty". A young school teacher helped round up seventy-five children and Smith and West, assisted by the newly arrived David Blickenstaff (Church of the Brethren), gave out nineteen pairs of shoes, a dozen pairs of underwear and eight blankets.

It cut deep to have to refuse the appeals of those who got nothing, but we felt we had to do it. We are not here to meet all the needs of everybody; we want our limited supplies to go to the neediest.²⁷

²⁵John Reich to Dan West, Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff, 13 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

²⁶Dan West to John Reich, 21 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

²⁷Dan West to John Reich, 8 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

However there is no indication that the unit ever defined or identified the "neediest". One small point which West noted was that the school teacher who assisted them was unemployed as the new regime had not yet re-opened the schools, an indication of the relatively low value placed on general schooling in comparison to the Republican authorities who strove to keep the schools going both as places of learning and as centres of relief.²⁸ At Dima, another small town, eight pairs of shoes and underwear for twenty-six children were left with the Mayor's secretary for distribution and, at Ochandiano near Bilbao, West and Smith watched whilst the Mayor made a list of those most in need and handed out the clothing. In Santander, the clothes were given to the Mayor who handed them over to the young woman who headed up the Falangist work in the community, potentially granting Auxilio Social a propaganda coup.²⁹ This approach, whilst making the most of local cooperation, and allowing the unit to cover a wide area (at least the three provinces of Burgos, Viscaya and Asturias) undermined the AFSC commitment to making personal connections with the recipients of relief, and severely reduced the extent to which the relief workers could ensure impartiality.

The first real war related need West and Smith met was in the city of Oviedo. Much of the town was uninhabitable, only three buildings in the city were undamaged yet many thousands of people remained and returning refugees were adding to their number. Many were living in basements and cellars. Oviedo's children were scattered in temporary and permanent orphanages for seventy miles around, and housed in very poor conditions.

One of our experiences that tugged at our heart strings was that of giving out forty blankets to 652 children. Several of the little ones who did not get blankets walked up to them and felt them; one child petted the blankets and then walked outside into the night cold. Forty—or more likely eighty—no doubt slept warmer that night; but we fear that nearly six hundred must have passed an even less

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Ibid.

comfortable night than before.

These 652 children were being fed twice each day by Auxilio Social, but although AFSC workers observed the total lack of milk, they continued to direct their effort towards the provision of substantial clothing and blankets for these children. Apparently the unit decided to respond to the general need, rather than to specific incidents of localised hardship.³⁰ During visits to some of the orphanages they saw little signs of malnutrition, but adequate clothing, particularly shoes, were very scarce.³¹ In February 1938, in Bilbao, the Burgos unit handed out 300 baby garments, from a donation by the SCIU, to the residents of a children's home. From the same donation, several hundred pieces of cloth were given to the local Auxilio Social, and several more bolts of cloth were taken to an orphanage which had fifty nuns able to sew for the children.³² In the large feeding stations of the Falangists in Oviedo the unit gave out 400 cakes of soap and pairs of shoes to 400 children, and underwear to seventy of them.³³ An indication of relative levels of need is that in late February 1938 David Blickenstaff reported that there was a growing shortage of meat and, "upon the recommendation of the provincial Auxilio Social we have just ordered \$350 worth of tinned beef".³⁴ This contrasted sharply with the situation in Barcelona where the emphasis was on bread, rice and milk.

Need in Nationalist Spain appears to have been defined by region rather than any movement of population. Those villages in more inaccessible areas clearly suffered, but the worst need was in the "liberated" zones. In Amorebieta, Guernica and Durango, a year after the war passed through them, there were still severe

³⁰"Dan West's Report", 1 February 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Reports, General (Box 9).

³¹Earl Smith to John Reich, no date (received 13 December 1937), Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

³²Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 24 February Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

³³Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 22 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

³⁴David Blickenstaff to John Reich, no postal date, received 4 March 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

shortages of basic clothing and bedding, as well as evidence of malnutrition.³⁵ In areas which fitted into both categories the need was particularly severe. After a day driving in the mountains, the unit came to the town of La Arboleda. Although undamaged by bombs or shells, the absence of most of the men (in prison, fighting on the other side, dead or missing) had reduced many large families below the poverty line. Malnutrition was rife, despite the presence of the Auxilio Social, and the unit promised to try to bring in cod liver oil.³⁶ Four barrels of cod liver oil were received from Norway: two were sent to Oviedo and the schools of Bilbao and two were divided into smaller consignments and sent to other cities.³⁷

Having, in Earl Smith's opinion, fulfilled their promises to the provinces which they had been visiting, the unit decided to turn its attention to Aragón. The consensus of opinion between the Red Cross and the Auxilio Social was that it was in this area that the need was greatest. This change of direction however, also required a change in supplies as Aragón needed foodstuffs more urgently than it needed clothing. Luckily, condensed milk and dried fish formed part of the stock waiting in customs in early April and the switch was one that could be made speedily.³⁸ In late April, however, when David Blickenstaff returned from a stay with his father in Marseilles, the unit was still distributing blankets and clothing in most of the villages they visited.³⁹ So far, the Burgos unit had received around 1500 pounds of clothing to distribute and were feeding 2,000 children in Aragón, but the poor fund raising which affected Murcia in the early months of 1938 had a similar effect upon Burgos.⁴⁰

³⁵Earl Smith to John Reich, 31 March 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Earl Smith to John Reich, second letter, 15 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

³⁸Earl Smith to John Reich, 4 April 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

³⁹Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 21 April 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁴⁰Ibid.; John Reich to Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff, 11 May 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

From May 1938 the Burgos unit began to receive funds from the International Commission, a Quaker initiated international effort based in Geneva.⁴¹ Funding from Philadelphia had been cut from \$1500 to \$1000 per month, but it was hoped that the International Commission might be able to pick up some of the slack.⁴² Once the funds were flowing, and news came through in May that they were, it was expected that 5,000 children on the Nationalist side would be fed by this means.⁴³ This was particularly helpful as Nationalist advances westward had engulfed the civilian populations of Teruel, Zaragoza and Huesca, creating a new relief problem. In the tradition of Friends' relief work, Earl Smith began to anticipate post-war reconstruction work. Many of the farmers the unit visited in Zaragoza in June had lost two if not three crops and were dependent upon charity and credit until such time as another crop could be brought in.⁴⁴

On the surface, the unit seemed to approve of the work undertaken by Auxilio Social. Smith felt that the work was carried on efficiently, with two hot meals each day given to some 150,000 children in feeding stations. Many more were receiving rations to be eaten with their families, and the work of the SCIU and the AFSC was officially welcomed as supplementary.⁴⁵ Unofficially, however, the story was slightly different: in a letter sent from France and which Earl Smith cautioned should not be quoted from, he explained briefly that the International Commission canteen which was to have been established in Burgos by June had been held up and that preparations had been suspended as the local Auxilio Social, jealous of their status and anxious to be seen to meeting all local needs, had placed

⁴¹Hugh Thomas wrongly suggests that the International Commission was a Quaker organisation. Although the initial impetus came from the Friends, particularly Edith M. Pye, the International Commission was a coalition of different agencies and interests. Hugh Thomas, *The Spanish Civil War*, Penguin Books, Harmondsworth, 1986, p. 863.

⁴²John Reich to Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff, 11 May 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁴³John Reich to Earl Smith, 25 May January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁴⁴Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 2 June 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁴⁵Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 9 May 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

difficulties in the way of its establishment. This pattern was to be repeated, hampering the good which might have been done and giving cause to worry for the success of the International Commission mission.⁴⁶ In a report written when Earl Smith returned to the USA (and therefore uncensored) he wrote:

...in one of those districts where many of the bread winners are missing... there is a Phalangist canteen where they feed some 250 children per day. There is need for food for at least 500 children in addition to these 250 children... We intended to provide one meal a day for 300 children... When we got to Burgos we heard that several days before all preparations had been suspended because word had been received from headquarters that the Red Cross would not be permitted to have a canteen there without the aid of the Phalangist Aid. Later they said specifically that they would not allow a canteen there... That is political. It is part of the program that all people must be taken care of and so the pretenses are that all people are being cared for...this man came and told us that there was no need for Franco is the father of us all.⁴⁷

Although the unit was prepared to work through Auxilio Social canteens, Smith felt there to be some severe drawbacks. Any money which went direct to Auxilio Social would be potentially substituting for money already being spent by the State. "We would have to pay the State for a place where they would normally have a station,"⁴⁸ and there was little evidence that it would increase the number of children being fed. The other problem was Smith felt that the Auxilio Social was not always willing to help those towns which had just been taken if no good looking building could be found to use, "Fifty per cent of the purpose of the Phalangist canteens is to educate children at the table to get them to be good Phalangists. If they cannot provide nice places, they will let them get their

⁴⁶Earl Smith to John Reich, 2 June 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁴⁷"Earl Smith's Report", June 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Reports, General (Box 9).

⁴⁸Ibid.

subsistence as best as they can."⁴⁹ Auxilio Social's unwillingness to emulate the Republicans and simply appropriate suitable buildings hindered operations.

As the war shifted further into Republican territory, evacuated populations were returning to their homes in the new Nationalist zones, but returning evacuees often found their homes destroyed, and their equipment, furnishings and livestock stolen along with their grain supply. Republican currency was now worthless, leaving refugees penniless and unable to secure supplies. In spite of this one mayor asserted, "We can provide for ourselves the rest of this year; but next year, who knows?"⁵⁰ Reflecting on this, Charles Ewald, a Chicago Quaker who replaced Clyde Roberts in August 1938 and David Blickenstaff asked that as large a proportion of the available wheat from the Red Cross as Reich deemed wise be made available to the Burgos unit. The principal problem now was not actually shortage of food, but the wherewithal to purchase it, thus the Nationalist expansion threatened to exacerbate shortages in the following year and there was no guarantee when the wheat would arrive. Farm lands had been fought over after they had been plowed and sown and the local crops were often destroyed.⁵¹

In September news came through that 60,000 barrels of American flour were to be made available to Nationalist Spain via Red Cross.⁵² David Blickenstaff crossed the border and went to Geneva to consult with M. De Lillihöök and the International Commission about arrangements for their planned canteens. Writing from Geneva, and hence free of the fear of censorship, Blickenstaff wrote:

After seeing what splendid cooperation the workers receive from the Republican authorities on the other side, it is clear that we have a few problems to solve that for them do not exist. As is so characteristic of Spain, where our relationships are of a personal

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 11 July 1938. Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁵¹Charles Ewald and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 1 August 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁵²John Reich to Charles Ewald and David Blickenstaff, 26 September 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

nature they are fine. But one cannot help coming to the conclusion that officially we are not too welcome. No doubt Charles has written you about the military order that was brought to attention the day before I left by the national officials of the Auxilio Social, saying that in future we could not be allowed to make any personal distributions of supplies. If this means what it says (and we were assured that it did) it changes many aspects of the work.⁵³

The Nationalists remained unwilling to countenance the establishment of non-Falangist (and non-Catholic) canteens, and as Nationalist hostility deepened it appeared that the best plan would be to supply the authorities with the materials available, and monitor its distribution. The lack of Nationalist cooperation might have led to an AFSC withdrawal, but the evidence of growing need in the region halted such drastic action. Blickenstaff believed that, aside from the issue of maintaining non-partisanship, the political situation in itself required the AFSC presence.

...our work in Nationalist Spain has found real justification in the fact that we have been able to meet some of the need in places where the politically minded official relief organization has not done anything... It is a political organization and we have had to come to the regrettable conclusion that although one finds many fine people connected with it, it is an organization for the purpose, primarily, of furthering a political movement. Children sometimes go hungry where this purpose would not be served. Our opportunity to be of service has been in such "gaps" in the Auxilio Social program.⁵⁴

Any suggestion that the AFSC become simply financiers of Falangist projects threatened this justification. Although assurances were given that the AFSC representatives might make inspections to assure themselves that the distribution was in accordance to AFSC wishes, Blickenstaff expressed some scepticism: "This order is nothing more than a part of their plan to see to it that all social work done

⁵³David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 4 October 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁵⁴Ibid.

in Spain will reflect to the glory of the Nationalist movement (and it hurts my conscience a bit to have our help turned to such ends)."⁵⁵ In response Philadelphia cabled that whilst distribution might go through Auxilio Social and Cruz Roja (the Spanish Red Cross), the AFSC would not relinquish freedom of oversight.⁵⁶

In October Charles Ewald wrote to the Sub-Secretary of Foreign Affairs in Burgos confirming that the Nationalist Government was dealing directly with the Americans in arranging for shipping of the flour, and that the Nationalist Government would be responsible for transporting it from Bordeaux to Spain and for the handling charges involved. On reaching Spain, the flour was to be handed over to the Auxilio Social whose plan for distribution was to be cleared by David Blickenstaff who was to be stationed in Bordeaux.⁵⁷ In the event, the French dock workers refused to handle wheat intended for Nationalist Spain. When this matter was settled with a written commitment from Blickenstaff that the wheat was intended for the civilian population, they unloaded the wheat into the warehouses but refused to transfer it to the German ship chartered for the purpose. The German government issued an edict that the ship was not to leave Bordeaux without the cargo and that the crew were not to be given shore leave. When this was finally settled word came through that the Nationalist government was disputing its responsibility for handling charges which again delayed the loading. The money arrived only after a considerable delay and whilst David Blickenstaff was prepared to suggest that it *might* have been a genuine mistake, Allen Hole, AFSC representative in the Paris Center and the handling agent for relief supplies for Spain, preferred to believe that the Nationalists were attempting to avoid spending any more foreign currency than they absolutely needed to, but acknowledged that "no one on this side knows more than a part of the story."⁵⁸ This incident pointed

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶AFSECO (American Friends Service European Relief Committee) to Bilbao, (cable) 19 October 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁵⁷Charles Ewald to His Excellency, the Sub-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, 21 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Spain, Letters Exchanged in... (Box 8).

⁵⁸John F. Reich to Allen Hole, 25 October 1938; David Blickenstaff to John F. Reich, 5 December 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8); Allen Hole

to a need for greater centralisation. Allen Hole felt that a full-time administrator was needed in France, whatever was done in Spain, and suggested for this purpose an office in the Paris Center, "a first-rate secretary", equal authority with Philadelphia and London and immediate control over a sizeable amount of money. He should also be able to act as a central clearing house for information from all three countries, Spain, America and England.⁵⁹ In November the Committee on Spain decided to appoint a businessman, rather than an experienced relief worker or missionary, to head up the work in Spain, partially in the hope that it would improve communications with the Nationalist authorities.⁶⁰ Summarising the situation in late 1938, Hole wrote, "Nationalist officials never know anything or else it is always somebody else's responsibility... it would be a great advantage to know what the respective governments agreed in writing."⁶¹ This last point was particularly applicable to the Nationalists who continued to insist to David Blickenstaff that they were not responsible for the payment of port and loading bills at Bordeaux as previously agreed.⁶² In the meantime, however, Paul Bowman, another young man and member of the Brethren, was sent out to assist David Blickenstaff.⁶³ David Blickenstaff, despite his desire to begin graduate work, had been encouraged to stay on and promises were made that the AFSC would endeavour to support him when he eventually began his studies.

to Clarence Pickett, 30 November 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8).

⁵⁹Allen Hole to Clarence Pickett, 30 November 1938; Allen Hole to John Reich, 2 December 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8).

⁶⁰John F. Reich to Allen Hole, 29 November 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8).

⁶¹Allen Hole to John Reich, 2 December 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8).

⁶²Ibid.

⁶³John Reich to David Blickenstaff and Paul Bowman, 25 November 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

4.3 The AFSC Field-Workers in the Nationalist Zone

As is evident from the rapid change of names in the previous sections, the AFSC experienced difficulties maintaining any continuity of workers in Nationalist Spain. Very few of the workers in the Nationalist zone were actually Quakers and, although keen to participate in the mission, had commitments elsewhere to Church and family to which they often became anxious to return. After Wilfred Jones (a Quaker) departed, he was replaced in June 1937 by Earl Smith (a Methodist missionary from Paraguay) and Dan West (of the Church of the Brethren); David Blickenstaff (a young member also of the Church of the Brethren) joined them in October 1937. However, none of these men intended an extended stay. That both West and Smith left their wives at home seems indicative of this intention, but it may also be a difference in the attitude of the Churches; of the married relief workers, all the Quakers worked as couples but all the non-Quakers left their wives behind.

In January 1938 Earl Smith began to think of returning home to see his family, and to return to his mission in South America. As Dan West travelled home on 5 January to conduct a speaking tour to raise funds for the relief effort, this jeopardised the continuity of the mission.⁶⁴ David Blickenstaff, the only representative in the Nationalist zone to stay any length of time, was a man in his early twenties, and it was not felt suitable that he should stay alone despite the manifest competence of Alred and Norma Jacob, both in their late twenties. Consequently, pressure was brought to bear on Earl Smith to extend his stay until June 1938;⁶⁵ however, Earl Smith had made clear from the beginning that he only intended to serve six months, and in mid-December he requested that a replacement be found so that he might leave in February. Smith was to return to his mission in Paraguay in June and wanted time to think, study and write.⁶⁶ This

⁶⁴John Reich to Dan West, 5 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁶⁵John Reich to Earl Smith (cable and letter) 12 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁶⁶Clarence E. Pickett to Methodist Episcopal Foreign Mission Board, 23 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8); Earl Smith John Reich, no date (received 13 December 1937), Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence,

letter caused great anxiety in the Philadelphia office. The main problem was that Dan West did not speak Spanish, indicative of the surprisingly low status apparently given to language skills in the selection of relief workers.⁶⁷ John Reich wrote concerned that Smith's resignation would be a "grave blow" to the work; as far as Reich could see, no alternative worker of equal calibre was available. If companionship were the issue, then the AFSC would be happy to arrange for Mrs. Smith to travel to Spain. "We feel it is exceedingly necessary to keep in the field a seasoned administrator who both knows the language and represents to the highest degree the spirit in which we seek to work."⁶⁸ Dan West was also planning to return to the USA, desiring to spend more time with his family and to work directly with his church.⁶⁹ Worries about potentially rapid political changes in Spain only made the AFSC's concern more urgent and with this in mind Clarence Pickett applied to the Methodist Episcopal Foreign Mission Board for Smith to remain in Spain until June of 1938.

I know that we are asking a good deal of you to accede to our request. We only feel justified in making it because of the unusual contribution that Earl Smith is making. But since we are all attempting to bear a Christian testimony to a pagan world, we felt that it was at least right to state our concern to you...⁷⁰

Although Earl Smith was prepared, with his wife's approval, to extend his stay he made the interesting comment that "Dan [West] and I have thought that six months was a good term. Less was too little; more might also have some

Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁶⁷I am not sure whether David Blickenstaff spoke Spanish, but Alfred Jacob asserts that he was a young man, who left college in order to go to Spain. Personal correspondence, Alfred Jacob to Farah Mendlesohn, 11 December 1995.

⁶⁸John Reich to Earl Smith 14 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁶⁹Dan West to John Reich 5 March 1938, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West (Box 7).

⁷⁰Clarence E. Pickett to Methodist Episcopal Foreign Mission Board, 23 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to).

disadvantages."⁷¹ clearly there existed a difference of opinion between the respective missions and missionaries as to the proper length of stay; with the exception of Charles Ewald, a very recent convert, none of the Quaker workers saw their mission as for anything other than the duration. Only Francesca Wilson, a non-Quaker with strong familial connections to the Friends and who was bound by her school vacations, had any notion of cutting short her service; for the others, the "natural" length of service was the period of need. In Barcelona, all the short-stay volunteers were non-Quakers.

In the event, the Methodist Board of Missions refused to extend Smith's contract past June 1938, stating that his services in South America were such that they could not spare him longer, an occurrence which suggests that the AFSC could not count on their allies' continued willingness to prioritise AFSC projects.⁷² Smith ended by writing: "Let me say in conclusion that I shall always count it as a privilege to have been permitted to work and have fellowship with the Quakers and the Church of the Brethren." In particular he stressed that his departure was not due to a lack of interest in the work, but he felt strongly that his regular mission posting required his presence.⁷³ The difficulty may have been the clash of different traditions: both the AFSC and the FSC assumed that they could call on those in mid-life to drop their worldly commitments to witness to their testimonies. Traditionally their relief workers had been in their forties and fifties, mature businessmen with time to spare. Young people were usually employed on domestic projects. The Methodists appeared to make no such assumptions and clearly expected the contribution of the established man to be sporadic and of short duration. Both the Mennonite (Murcia) and Brethren representatives were young, the type of individual who had time, but whom the Friends regarded as untested and immature, suitable for small summer projects but not large-scale relief efforts. As I have already discussed, the British Friends shared similar views but had a

⁷¹Earl Smith to John Reich, 15 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁷²John Reich to Dan West 8 March 1938, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West (Box 7).

⁷³Earl Smith to John Reich, 9 April. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

smaller pool from which to draw.

Because he intended to leave in June 1938, Earl Smith was anxious that a suitable replacement be found as quickly as possible, but was also concerned that this be a well qualified candidate; once again, language skills were secondary to other qualifications. Smith declared, "personally, if you have to choose between that and the spiritual I would advise the latter".⁷⁴ Clyde E. Roberts (a California Quaker) was announced as the replacement for Earl Smith: "a mighty fine man—quiet, steady and with good judgement", and best of all, he expected to stay for at least a year, promising an end to the rapid turn over of workers.⁷⁵ When he returned home, it was hoped that Earl Smith would go to meet the Brethren at their headquarters in Illinois in order to report back on the work. In the meantime, Roberts arrived in Bilbao at the end of May, and Earl Smith crossed the International Bridge into France at the beginning of June.⁷⁶

Clyde Roberts was one of only three Quakers sent to the Nationalist unit. There is no documented evidence but it is possible that he was selected because of his west coast origins. As a California Quaker, he would most probably originate from a programmed meeting, indistinguishable from other mainstream American Protestants, his politics would tend to be more conservative than those of East Coast Friends and hence he was potentially more amenable to both the Burgos unit and the political context in which he found himself than would have been the Quaker workers in the Republic, none of whom came from further west than Chicago, and all of whom seem to have had liberal leanings.⁷⁷ It is hard to ignore

⁷⁴"We need people with experience and some knowledge of the language. New workers are almost a liability for the first six months, especially on the Nationalist side, which has been so irritated by the frequent coming and going of short term people. Since Ewald can only remain four months, we are all the more anxious for David to remain, if he will": *ibid.* John Reich to Dan West, 20 June 1938, Box 7: Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West.

⁷⁵Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 9 May 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁷⁶Earl Smith to John Reich, 2 June 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁷⁷See Hamm, *The Transformation of American Quakerism*, *op. cit.*, for discussion of the regional distribution of different Quaker practice.

the fact that until the end of the war and the appointment of Howard Kershner as overall director of the joint mission, only three Quakers, Clyde Roberts, Wilfred Jones and Charles Ewald were sent to the Nationalist zone. As there is no documented discussion on the matter one can only speculate, but the tendency of Friends from East Coast unprogrammed Meetings (those most likely to volunteer) towards political liberalism may have prompted a preference for politically conservative mid-western candidates from allied churches.

The need to replace Esther Farquhar in Murcia led to some redeployment and at the end of June 1938, Charles Ewald, of Chicago joined the Burgos unit, his offer of only four months accepted almost certainly because of his fluent Spanish, administrative experience and the chance for a Quaker presence in the Burgos unit.⁷⁸ Just before leaving for Spain Ewald, already an attender, had joined the 57th Street Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, the meeting of which Sylvester and Wilfred Jones were members. John Reich noted: "we feel his action will greatly strengthen him in his work."⁷⁹ Clyde Roberts went into France and thence to Murcia whilst David Blickenstaff was offered his choice of either returning to the USA after a year, or continuing, his fluent Spanish and mounting experience increasing his value to the AFSC.⁸⁰ Conscious of the difficulty of securing replacements the AFSC endeavoured to persuade Ewald to stay longer: "We need a man who can travel freely in Europe and on both sides of the battle lines in Spain. He should have the experience and judgment of a man like Charles."⁸¹ A letter from Mrs Agnes Ewald indicates that Charles had been active in some strenuous duty some time before the work in Spain and she felt strongly that he deserved a rest.⁸² Victor, Charles

⁷⁸John Reich to Dan West, 3 August 1938, Box 7, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West.

⁷⁹John Reich to 57th Street Meeting, Chicago, IL., 5 July 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Personnel, Individuals, Charles Ewald (Box 9).

⁸⁰John Reich to David Blickenstaff, 28 June 1938; David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 29 June 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁸¹John Reich to Mrs. Charles J. Ewald, 28 September 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Personnel, Individuals, Charles Ewald (Box 9).

⁸²Mrs. Agnes Ewald to John Reich, 2 October 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Personnel, Individuals, Charles Ewald (Box 9).

Ewald's son, was also asked but felt unable to go to Spain.⁸³ Clearly, Victor Ewald's refusal of this post precipitated the decision to bring in Howard Kershner, but in the meantime David Blickenstaff was to operate alone. Having decided to stay, by late 1938 David Blickenstaff had picked up a great deal of seniority, and in recommending a replacement for himself, Ewald suggested that they no longer try to find a mature man with the expertise to take over control, but instead look for a younger person who could work as junior associate with Blickenstaff, who had by this time established working relationships with a number of officials. Charles Ewald's report on the intrinsic stress of the post emphasised that the amount of travel required in this predominantly rural area argued for a young and vigorous representative. A robust middle-aged man, Charles Ewald noted "I have climbed more steps since I reached Spain than in any 10 years of my life". Relief work in Nationalist Spain was clearly a job for the young.⁸⁴

Ironically, by September the AFSC was beginning to worry about the effect of overlong assignments on both health (see Chapter Three on Esther Farquhar) and on the political susceptibilities of the field workers. A letter from the AFSC's Geneva representative suggested that David Blickenstaff was both lonely and beginning to be influenced by Francoist propaganda. No further evidence was supplied to support this suggestion—a letter earlier in the year, posted whilst Blickenstaff was in France began "What a great feeling it is to be in a free country again!"⁸⁵—, but Dan West began to argue for bringing David Blickenstaff home for his own good.⁸⁶ Reluctantly, John Reich agreed to consider it, but as it soon emerged that David Blickenstaff actively did not want to return, and as there was no queue of workers wanting to go to Spain, the matter was dropped. With Charles Ewald returning and the unavailability of any other Spanish speaker, David

⁸³John Reich to Mrs. Charles J. Ewald, 14 October 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Personnel, Individuals, Charles Ewald (Box 9).

⁸⁴Charles Ewald to John Reich, 19 August 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁸⁵David Blickenstaff to John Reich, no postal date, received 4 March 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁸⁶Dan West to John Reich 20 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West (Box 7).

Blickenstaff was simply too much needed, despite the later posting of Paul Bowman (also of the Church of the Brethren). The problem was that without the provision of a new truck, a third member of the team could not increase the amount of work carried out, despite the influx of International Commission and American supplies, and there was a commitment to send no more workers than were necessary.⁸⁷ Reich remained concerned, however, that a “mature” man be found to supplement this otherwise unusually young team.⁸⁸

4.4 An Alternative Witness

Although the AFSC was extremely active in Nationalist Spain, whilst the war was being fought there were only ever three Quakers in the Nationalist zone. Instead, Quaker relief in the Nationalist zone, was conducted almost entirely by members of the Church of the Brethren (Dunkerds) and Methodists. The Brethren were a traditional ally of the Friends and with the Mennonites had already cooperated on matters of relief work and to secure conscientious objection on religious grounds in the First World War. As already discussed, it is not clear from the documents whether the absence of permanent Quaker workers in Nationalist Spain was a deliberate policy (the short appointments of Roberts and Ewald suggest not), but it did alter the nature of the AFSC witness as practised in the field.

None of the workers in Spain manifested publicly the type of witness that emerges so strongly from the letters of Alfred Jacob or Emily Parker. In part this is simply due to the short duration most of them served. It is unfortunate that David Blickenstaff, the most long serving member of the team, was its most junior member until late 1938 and therefore took little part in the official correspondence—we rarely hear his voice in the letters. His span as senior member lasted only a few months until the appointment of Howard Kershner as Director of the entire mission in December 1938, but despite this he was often described in glowing terms

⁸⁷David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 24 August 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁸⁸John Reich to Dan West, 22 September and 10 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West (Box 7).

as an "excellent representative of the AFSC".⁸⁹ Earl Smith was a Methodist minister who had been director of a settlement house in Montevideo, under the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for a long time. His time in Spain was a period which ordinarily was granted for sabbatical leave to give the missionaries a chance for study and recuperation;⁹⁰ helpfully, he was also a pacifist.⁹¹ Dan West was a member of the Oakland Church of the Brethren but his peace-time occupation is not mentioned in any of the correspondence. Neither man spent a great deal of time discussing his motives, but occasionally their approach to the work emerges.

Like Alfred Jacob, the field workers in the Nationalist zone were keen to involve local workers when they began to open International Commission canteens in October 1938.

This first demonstration showed the local folks that children can be cared for. And within a week *they* had put into operation in the same building another comedore for one hundred and forty other needy youngsters from the same locality. And they followed Mlle. Müller's plan, even down to the arrangement of the tables....show the local leaders how it can be done. They will take courage and do more themselves. After a while they will carry the whole burden themselves.⁹²

However, whereas the Friends in both Barcelona and Murcia made close friendships among their Spanish colleagues, it is noticeable that there were far fewer personal contacts between workers and Spaniards in the Nationalist zone. There are few discussions of specific individuals in the letters and the impression given is that those who worked in the Nationalist zone had a difficult time both with the

⁸⁹Earl Smith to John Reich, 31 March 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

⁹⁰John Reich to Earl Smith, 15 June 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938. Individuals, Earl Smith (Box 9).

⁹¹Esther Farquhar to AFSC, 2 February 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

⁹² "The New Comedors at Los Corrales", by Dan West, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers (from and to) (Box 8).

authorities who resented their presence and were reluctant to admit need, and with individuals who were cautious about becoming friendly with Protestants. In letters written from Paris, workers on leave were cautiously condemnatory of the situation in the Nationalist zone with its rejection of conciliation, but there was little evidence of actual sympathy with the Republic.

The disorganisation that the Burgos unit frequently found in the Nationalist zone did little to endear the Spanish to their hearts. Already mentioned are goods left on the docks for lack of financial authorisation, but in addition West and Smith found that the general attitude left room for pilfering; they were alarmed to receive complaints from the Red Cross that much of the sixteen bales of clothing delivered to Bilbao were worn out and unusable.⁹³ An inventory taken at the Bilbao hospital suggested fewer poor quality goods than had been intimated, but as Dan West pointed out, the shoe pile appeared to have diminished during the time he took a break. He observed: "I had a feeling that this counting business was not the most desired activity."⁹⁴ This was not intended to cast moral opprobrium upon the workers in the hospital: most, if not all would have been in need of some material aid and Earl Smith was anxious to stress what hospitality and generosity they did meet.

...everywhere we find good people, among the rich and powerful as well as among the poor. Some are making great sacrifices, and the experience is doing them good. Some have caught an ideal and they feel it worth living for. (Many are offering their lives for God and Country.) Some work long hours without pay that human needs may be met. Most are very courteous and kind. And now and again we find an all-including loving heart, a veritable spiritual treasure.⁹⁵

Alternatively, as John Reich suggested, various cargoes had been confused and this

⁹³Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 24 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁹⁴Dan West to John Reich, 27 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁹⁵Earl Smith to John Reich, no date (received 13 December 1937), Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

was not in fact the AFSC shipment; of sixteen bales of clothing sent from Philadelphia only 627 pounds was second-hand. The solution was to have the inventories taken in the USA forwarded to the relief workers rather than asking them to take it on trust, and to distribute the clothing themselves. This was important also because with only the reluctant cooperation of Auxilio Social it was too easy for goods to slip through unsupervised.⁹⁶ However, for both West and Smith need had to be understood as mutual. In an appeal for more assistance from North and South America, they argued, "we of North and South America also need: we need this attitude and experience of of general brotherliness, which partakes neither of partisanship nor of selfish aloofness."⁹⁷ In this model of charity, the need of the donor to give was vital and might make up for any deficiencies in impact, "A great wave of loving kindness on American's part will not win or lose the war for one side nor the other, but it may save some child from pneumonia and it will surely mitigate the winter sufferings of a war inflicted good people."⁹⁸ However, in writing of the type of work which they were facilitating in their "statement of policy", Dan West was clear that neutrality and charity were not sufficient: "All we do must fit with our way of life."⁹⁹ In this vein, the members of the Burgos unit appear to have been more willing to express their faith on paper than were their opposite numbers in the Republic. For Earl Smith, prayer was as much a part of his work as was the relief effort:

Their need is not exclusively physical. Frequently we catch a glimpse, a hint, a strain of spiritual need so great that we are depressed ourselves and must return to prayer in order to live fully and perhaps to help.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁶Ibid.

⁹⁷Earl Smith and Dan West to John Reich, 2 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

⁹⁸Ibid.

⁹⁹Dan West to John Reich, 21 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

¹⁰⁰Earl Smith to John Reich, no date (received 13 December 1937), Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to) (Box 8).

The religious context in which the Burgos workers operated almost certainly enhanced their awareness of their own religious faith. Surrounded by a hostile Catholic population, who looked on them with as much suspicion as welcome, it is unsurprising that the workers were self-conscious about their faith, and there is evidence also of a deep rooted anti-Catholicism, similar to that of the Friends in Murcia and Barcelona, and dressed in the garments of rationalism. Dan West attended a Catholic mass and was touched by the "simple faith" of the worshippers, but viewed the ritual as exotic, alien and ultimately exploitative. Earl Smith wrote:

The lights, the incense, the robes, the forms, the dressing, the ornate fixtures, the sober faces, the images, the pictures of important religious events, of battleships, the tables and statues—certainly do something. Dave is reminded of similar things in India. . . The money and labor and perhaps hope, put into visible form might be justified if the priests who came through their training had been really helpful to the problems of people. . . I can understand the fury of those who want to be rid of it.¹⁰¹

It is not clear that these feelings made of West a Republican sympathiser. He noted warmly a meeting with a Miss Catherine Fitzgibbon on his return to the USA, she "is an ardent Catholic, but anxious to stop the fighting. She thinks there is not much difference between Communism and Fascism," a comment which indicated that not all American Catholics were pro-Franco, in part, perhaps, because the American Catholic Church had already defined for itself a new relationship between Church and State which had little place for the European hierarchy.¹⁰²

Perhaps the greatest difference manifested by the Burgos team was their attitude to the poverty they met. Although all the participants shared a witness to peace, there are differences in the nature of their testimonies. The Friends also held a testimony to social justice which frequently involved the Friends in domestic

¹⁰¹Earl Smith to AFSC (from Newville, PA.), 18 February 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938. Individuals, Dan West (Box 9).

¹⁰²Dan West to John Reich 5 March 1938, Box 7: Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West.

politics. The Dunkerds were firmly rural, far less involved in domestic politics and were more conservative than their Quaker allies whilst the Methodists were politically very varied, depending in part on regional origin. The AFSC unit in Burgos concerned itself with distinguishing “natural” poverty—which either could not be helped or was caused by inefficiency and poor working habits—from the poverty caused directly by war. Unlike either the Murcia or Barcelona Friends, the workers in the Nationalist zone felt disturbed when their aid went to areas suffering from long-term poverty rather than the effects of war. Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff reported a relief delivery to Loreda: “We were told of great need there, and it is true that there are many needy families. But the need is due almost entirely to seasonal employment and bad management. We saw no destruction in the town.”¹⁰³ No such qualms appear to have been felt by the Friends. The Quaker Clyde Roberts, who served first in the Nationalist zone and was then stationed in Murcia suggested that to “discriminate between the town’s people and refugees is almost inhuman and raises local difficulties.”¹⁰⁴ But it is not evident that the unit in Nationalist Spain found any difficulty in making such decisions. Unlike the units in Murcia and Barcelona, the Burgos unit did not connect deprivation in war-time with peace-time poverty, and preferred to attempt to establish what was suffering due specifically to war. Returning from a trip through Asturias, Smith and Blickenstaff assessed it as the neediest province, with a need directly due to war: “as the natural resources of the province seem to be abundant, ... economically the district will doubtless get on its feet again.”¹⁰⁵ However, despite this tendency to make moral judgements there remained a general desire to spread the gifts as far as possible.

¹⁰³Earl Smith to John Reich, second letter, 15 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

¹⁰⁴Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

¹⁰⁵Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff to John Reich, 22 January 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers from/to (Box 8).

Chapter Five:

The Last Year of the War

In the last year of the war conditions in the Republic deteriorated rapidly. There were increasing food shortages in Republican territories, and in Barcelona the unit was seeing children too undernourished to attend school. Every town and village was crowded with refugees for whom there was little extra food and a shortage of bedding, clothing and medical supplies. Transport problems were increasing: Elise Thomsen, in Barcelona, found it difficult to get permission to use the Citroën, and petrol was scarce.¹ In Nationalist territories, deprivation was growing in the northern villages, particularly in the mining areas of Asturias. Combined Quaker relief in Republican Spain was now well over \$6,000 monthly, supplemented by gifts in kind. AFSC workers in the Nationalist zones were spending \$1,500 monthly with gifts in kind approximating as much as \$2,000 per month.²

In Britain, Edith Pye reported that there were still 2,800 Basque children in the country who needed financial support. The National Joint Committee, experiencing the same shortage of funds as other organisations, reported that only one month's money remained for this purpose.³ Many of these children were either orphans, or their parents were already refugees. By February, the Basque Children's Committee, the main organisation responsible for their welfare, had decided to return another one thousand children to Spain. Edith Pye made it clear to the Spain Committee that she did not think this to be in the best interests of the children, but the problem was aggravated by Home Office insistence that the children should not be placed in private homes but kept in colonies.⁴ And yet, with the diminishing availability of funds, the Salvation Army and a number of Catholic

¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 12 January 1938.

²AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 28 January 1938.

³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 25 January 1938.

⁴Ten shillings per child per week had to be guaranteed by the Basque Children's Committee and all children had to be housed and educated in private institutions rather than British homes: Dorothy Legaretta, *The Guernica Generation: Basque Refugee Children of the Spanish Civil War*, University of Nevada Press, Reno, Nevada, 1984, p. 102.

groups had been forced to return the children for whom they were responsible to the already financially strained main colonies.⁵ It was decided to try and discover what had happened to those children who had been returned, but in the end it was the AFSC rather than the FSC which agreed to help repatriate these children.⁶

The emergence of the International Commission on Child Spanish Refugees, a Quaker-initiated project, at the beginning of 1938 provided strong political and financial reinforcement for the relief workers. A charitable body made up of prestigious international names and under the leadership of Judge Hansson of Switzerland, its sole purpose was to persuade governments to donate either money or surplus food to the impartial relief of Spanish children. As more refugees found themselves absorbed by the Nationalist advance, this impartiality became easier to demonstrate. Edith Pye, T. Edmund Harvey and Hilda Clark, all British Friends, were serving on this Commission,⁷ and in April a telegram from Judge Hansson instructed the Barcelona Unit to go ahead and feed 5,000 children from existing stores. Needs and prices for more stock was to be wired through to the International Commission in Geneva.⁸

Initially the International Commission's appeal was directed to thirteen governments. In January 1938, Edith Pye, the FSC representative on the Commission, reported that the British Government had promised £25,000 on condition that the target sum of £147,000 could be raised first from other governments (such tied giving was to characterise the British government's approach).⁹ Meanwhile, Clarence Pickett of the AFSC was in negotiation with the American government for surplus wheat for the International Commission, whilst the International Commission was able to report in February that Denmark and Norway had promised 20,000 crowns, as had Norway, and an equivalent sum had

⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 16 February 1938.

⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 10 March 1938; AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 22 April 1938.

⁷AFSC: General Meeting. 27 May 1938.

⁸Dorothy Thompson to Friends House, 22 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 7).

⁹FSC: Minutes of Spain Committee, 12 January 1938.

been promised by New Zealand. Ireland, Australia, Finland, Belgium and Switzerland had all expressed an interest.¹⁰ Despite rapid fund-raising, however, physical manifestations of International Commission Relief were slow to develop. By the middle of March £37,000 had been promised from eight governments and the International Commission was trying to get the British government to withdraw their conditions.¹¹ Edith Pye felt that if the money did indeed materialise, it should be possible to feed 60,000 children in the whole of Spain for at least one hundred days, necessitating more workers on both sides. International Commission estimates in March suggested that at least 250,000 children were suffering from under-nourishment.¹²

In Barcelona, FSC canteens were feeding 300 city dwellers and 6,000 refugee children. Alfred Jacob was clear in his sense of the escalation of need: "The former problem was under-nourishment: now it is one of keeping the children alive."¹³ In response the AFSC donated another \$3,000; however, the AFSC saw signs that its capacity to raise funds might be coming to an end. John Reich reported: "It is difficult to raise money in America for Spain, as it is complicated with the appeal for relief in China, which touches the USA more closely."¹⁴ Isolationism was also a powerful factor: the American Red Cross had withdrawn from attempts to raise funds directly from the public, having met resistance to their fund-raising attempts for both China and Spain. They preferred instead to designate the AFSC as their representatives in Spain, and engaged in negotiations on their behalf with the American government for surplus wheat.¹⁵

Through March 1938 the Nationalists advanced eastwards, and on 16 March Barcelona was bombed for the first time. The relief workers faced disruption of

¹⁰AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, Executive, 11 February 1938; FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 16 February 1938, "Confidential Meeting on the International Commission".

¹¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 19 March 1938.

¹²FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 9 March 1938.

¹³FSC: Minutes of the Committee on Spain, 10 March 1938.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵AFSC: Committee on Spain, Executive, 11 February 1938. See also, Foster Rhea Dulles, *The American Red Cross: A History*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1950, pp. 342-345.

relief supplies and a new exodus of refugees into the Southeastern provinces of Alicante, Murcia and Almería, where Esther Farquhar, Emily Parker, Francesca Wilson and the Mennonite representative Levi Hartzler were maintaining two hospitals, two feeding stations for babies and thirteen workshops for refugee boys and girls.¹⁶ Although relief in Nationalist Spain was proceeding smoothly under the AFSC representatives Earl Smith and David Blickenstaff, there were serious discussions in progress as to whether FSC workers would be allowed to continue relief under a Nationalist government. With the advice of Mr. Pollock at the Foreign Office the FSC decided to send a representative to talk to Nationalist officials in Burgos.¹⁷ Alarmed by the deteriorating political conditions and uncertain over the future of Spanish relief, the Board of Directors of the AFSC sent a cable authorising AFSC relief workers to leave Spain as and when they felt necessary. The FSC, with similar worries, decided to issue certification to all their Spanish employees in the hope that this would offer some protection in the case of political recriminations.¹⁸

At the end of April the International Commission was able to announce that with the help of twelve governments it was able to release \$22,000. Under pressure, the British government had withdrawn its £25,000 conditional offer and had allocated £10,000 to be used as soon as £10,000 from other sources was made available, a sum which was raised rapidly.¹⁹ The International Commission was not a relief agency as such, so the money was largely distributed through the channels of existing relief organisations, including the SCIU, the Red Cross and inevitably the Quakers; Friends on both sides of the Atlantic had endorsed the principle of "unity in the work as impartial relief in both Loyalist and Nationalist Spain", which assisted the neutral image of the Commission.²⁰ Gilbert MacMaster, the AFSC

¹⁶AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 22 April 1938.

¹⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 28 April 1938.

¹⁸AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 16 April 1938. FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 5 April 1938.

¹⁹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 28 April 1938.

²⁰AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 27 May 1938; Minutes, Committee on Spain, 22 April 1938.

representative in the Paris Center, was asked to represent the FSC in so far as contact with the Nationalists officials was concerned.²¹ With permission to spend £4,200, Friends drew on current stocks to begin the immediate feeding of 2,000 children in Nationalist Spain and 5,000 children in Republican Spain. The rules of cooperation had yet to be worked out, but the International Commission's role appears to have been largely supervisory.²²

5.1 New Workers, New Personalities: the leadership of Clyde Roberts

With the anticipated arrival of International Commission finance it was possible for the AFSC to contemplate expansion. Charles Ewald, a former YMCA worker, was to be sent to the Nationalist zone, and major expansion was planned for Republican South-East Spain: the new workers were Martha Rupel, a member of the Brethren and a trained nurse; Florence Conard, a Young Friend, a Spanish speaker and a graduate of Oberlin and Wellesley, and the daughter of Philip Conard, YMCA representative in Uruguay; and Alfred and Ruth Cope, for three years in charge of the AFSC regional offices in Chicago and Directors of the Mid-West Institute of International Relations (but for all that approximately the same age as the Jacobs).²³ Alfred Cope's chief duties were book keeping, stock-taking and learning Spanish. His report that many of the records contained "missing links in the chain" may help to explain why a worker not directly engaged in relief was sent out, something that was not normal practice.²⁴ Esther Farquhar's poor handling of the accounts, which by her own testimony were rarely straight ("I am not a good administrator—I haven't the capacity to handle details and keep reports")²⁵ and Levi Hartzler's similar lack of competence in this area, almost certainly contributed

²¹AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 22 April, 1938.

²²FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 29 April 1938 and 2 June 1938.

²³AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 17 June 1938; John Reich to Emily Parker, 20 June 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

²⁴Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

²⁵Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 26 May 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

to Cope's selection.²⁶ Martha Rupel, it was hoped, would act as a visiting nurse, training assistants in the process.²⁷ In August the FSC also despatched a Dr. Audrey Russell to Barcelona as a medical advisor, who would serve as a representative of the International Commission. Plans to send Kenneth Douglas, a Friend of long standing, to Nationalist Spain in response to AFSC requests for a British worker were frustrated by the inability to secure visas for Nationalist-controlled territory.²⁸

Clyde Roberts took over as the head of the Murcia unit in August 1938 and drastic reorganisation took place, both of the work and of the modes of reporting. From now on, all members of the unit were able to write freely to Philadelphia, but all director's reports had to be countersigned by another member of the unit, presumably to ensure openness and consensus. All letters were to be written in duplicate and copies filed for future reference and made accessible to all members of the unit upon request to the field director.²⁹ Reports became much more detailed and standardised in style. This greater organisation may have resulted simply from Roberts' own background in business, but with the end of the war approaching, a concern for discretion may also have been a major issue—anything relating to relief work had to be checked and countersigned by Roberts. In terms of individual involvement, whilst the unit obviously continued to work together on many projects, Roberts decided that "Each staff member should expect to have some part of the work that can be considered as their very own for which they shall receive credit or blame" following the model of practice adopted in Barcelona after the departure of the SCIU.³⁰ This created the freedom which the Mennonite workers had been pushing for, and ostensibly provided recognition for the more junior workers. However, there is some evidence in the correspondence that Roberts'

²⁶Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 6 May 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

²⁷Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

²⁸FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 15 August 1938; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 October 1938.

²⁹"Tentative Plan for Coordination of Work of AFSC Spanish Relief", Clyde E. Roberts, 25 August 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

³⁰Ibid.

approach rebounded. Murcia appears to be the only unit to have held formal meetings and to have attempted to maintain a Quakerly method—at one such meeting (18 March 1939) an epistle from Meeting for Sufferings was read. This was probably because they were the only unit with a high proportion of Quakers, but it also appears to have been an innovation of Clyde Roberts. Although on the surface Roberts' approach would seem to provide valuable room for the distribution of praise and credit, in practice his ethos appears less positive. In his semi-annual report, for example, he wrote of the organisation:

...we need humbly to confess our inadequacy and correct as far as possible our mistakes. We need to consult each other more but cannot stop too much to talk when people around us are suffering as they are; neither can we afford to be arbitrary nor act upon snap judgement. We need positive and prompt action in the face of these emergencies, yet we must take some time for deliberation and reflection. We need modestly to confess that our work is relatively small as compared to the need: its importance depends greatly upon the spirit that we bring to it.³¹

Whilst the sense of the comments appears sensible, the style suggests that no-one could escape criticism. Furthermore, the tone was reminiscent of a revival meeting with an emphasis on confession, an approach alien to the Friends from unprogrammed meetings who made up the core of the Murcia unit. Reinforcing this interpretation is an indication of a possible generation clash: "I felt that the younger members of the staff were apt to be over confident in their judgements and sometimes warned them accordingly."³² Despite Robert's opinion that differences of opinion stemmed from the diverse backgrounds of the staff, Murcia was the most homogenous of the units—only Martha Rupel was not a Friend.³³ Rather, what seems to have been lacking was the joyful inspiration which both Alfred Jacob

³¹Semi-Annual Report of C.E. Roberts, 18 January 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

³²Personal Report of Clyde E. Roberts' AFSC Service in Spain. Committee on Spain 1940, Reports (Box 19).

³³Ibid.

and Esther Farquhar exuded. Ruth Cope displayed this approach far better than Clyde Roberts, revelling in both the faults and the virtues of the staff, "both for the pure pleasure it gives, and because it has a rather beneficial effect on the whole."³⁴ Neither the Copes nor Florence Conard appear to have been very comfortable working with Clyde Roberts and when Howard Kershner took over the directorate of the whole mission he despatched Roberts as representative to Almería, where a mature worker was required who could be trusted to work independently from the main units. To give Kershner credit (as he will be coming in for severe criticism later), he handled this with tact and diplomacy, requesting the Murcia unit to choose a person from their number to work independently in Almería. When Clyde Roberts was, inevitably, selected, he replaced him in Murcia with Emmet Gulley, in whom he had at this time a great deal of confidence.³⁵ This proved rather more satisfactory to the unit which had no further organisational difficulties in the remaining year of its service. Clearly, the choice of suitable leadership was crucial.

5.2 Relief Work

By August 1938, the Murcia unit had a large number of projects underway: three hospitals, two in Murcia and one in Alicante (the Almería one had closed); milk canteens for babies in Lorca and Almería; lunches in Murcia for refugees; the warehouse for food and clothing; breakfasts for school children and old people; food for transient refugees; and a dining room in Almería for local children. Smaller projects included the good will suitcases still coming from American children's organisations, the workshop in Murcia and the schools and evening classes.³⁶ Florence Conard, as one of the fluent Spanish speakers, went to Almería to supervise the establishment of the first International Commission Canteen there. It was to start with a capacity of 400. Another canteen was already functioning in

³⁴Ruth Cope, Minutes of the American Friends Service Committee, Murcia, March 25, 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Minutes, Murcia (Box 13).

³⁵As Howard Kershner later attempted to cast doubt on Gulley's probity this is an important point of which to be aware. Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 16 January 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

³⁶"Projects by Classification", 25 August 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

Crevellente (Alicante province), with a capacity of 500 children. However, the increasing supplies meant that the cars were more inadequate than ever and the need for trucks more urgent.³⁷ One consequence of this was a decision to limit orders to staples: any variety in purchasing would reduce the economy of bulk buying.³⁸ Jacob wrote from Barcelona, where the situation was worse: "The hopelessness of the search for food affects everybody. Nothing is available in the shops, not even the omelette powders, soup cubes, and sugar beets there used to be".³⁹ This affected the local population and the refugees equally, heralding a profound shift in the Friends' feeding policies which would, very soon, cease to use status as any indication of need. Clyde Roberts wrote,

We are finding it more and more difficult to confine our help to the children. Old people make a pitiful appeal and come to us daily. Nursing mothers have had some attention from the beginning of our work and it appears now that work for pregnant mothers is just as important. For example our work with babies reveals that their troubles began with prenatal undernourishment...To discriminate between town's people and refugees is almost inhuman and raises local difficulties so that we have begun with the smallest children and raised the age of admittance until the quota was filled... We are forced to say that if a child is more than five years old we can give no help which is also inhuman.⁴⁰

Most refugees were receiving only one, rationed, meal a day, consisting of chickpeas or greens, and one pound of bread a week, with daily porridge for the children. Prior to the intervention of the International Commission the Barcelona unit struggled to meet the goal of a cooked breakfast for every child who needed

³⁷Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 3 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

³⁸Ibid.

³⁹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 26 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Barcelona (Jacob) (Box 7).

⁴⁰Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

one. Vic and Granollers were both served by Friends' canteens, each providing breakfast for between 500 and 800 children. The Swiss, as their contribution, supplied stewed fruit for the breakfasts, when it could be obtained. In Manresa, 150 children were fed in a canteen run by a local committee and supplied by the Friends. Although regular visits were made to monitor progress and the honesty of distribution, the principle of depending primarily on local labour remained typical and assisted the Friends both in shaping the culture of their relief, and in accommodating some of the agendas of the local population. Thus in Puigreig,

We saw a little man arguing with some of the children and asked what it was about. It was the schoolmaster rating them because they wouldn't come to school in the rain, but turned up promptly for the afternoon cocoa. We arranged with him that only those children who attended school were to have the food...⁴¹

Even for the relief workers, concerned to maintain enough energy to do their work, available supplies were very tight. Dorothy Thompson, of the FSC, writing to John Reich from Barcelona, reported that there was no meat, except for canned beef, no butter, cheese, eggs, bacon, tea or coffee except in very small quantities, and very little bread. Beans formed the staple diet, supplemented with dried cod from Denmark. Thomson described a typical day's fare for the workers.

Breakfast—porridge and Cadbury cocoa and milk powder. They send out 16 cwt. per month to us and... you are now sending raisin blocks about five cwts. each in addition. Grand friends. This meal is about 7.30 or 8 a.m. Lunch is at 2 p.m. and consists of a plate of soup, a plate of beans and a plate of lettuce and sometimes corned meat or something that looks like a fried potato but is not. On Sunday for a treat we had dried cod and potato. Supper at 9 or 9.30—they dine late in Spain—is a similar meal. Dessert oranges or nuts. But the former are very poor.⁴²

⁴¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 26 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Barcelona (Jacob) (Box 7).

⁴²Dorothy Thompson to John Reich, 25 April 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence—Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

News came through in April that the International Commission was to go ahead. Dorothy Thompson wrote to John Reich listing the extent of the British Friends' commitments. The figures, listed in Appendix D, are interesting in that it is perhaps the first time that we have a clear picture of the British Friends' relief responsibilities. By 1938, although the FSC was the centre of the Quaker distribution network in Barcelona, the unit was acting as a clearing house and management structure for relief: much of the money and resources actually came from AFSC, the International Commission and other, smaller, agencies.

The colonies had been perhaps the most challenging of the Friends' commitments and, inevitably, the most difficult to keep up, as they relied on individual sponsorship. They also fed and cared for only a small number of children which, by 1938, despite the British Friends' belief that colonies offered more than physical relief—an issue which will be discussed in Chapter Seven—was becoming a dilemma. The strain on resources kept supplies to the colonies tightly controlled and restricted in the main to those materials which they could not possibly supply for themselves, such as milk and bread.⁴³

5.3 The Impact of the International Commission

From early 1938, the Friends began to draw up plans to distribute what they hoped would be a substantial supply of wheat from the countries contributing to the International Commission. Alfred Jacob, principal coordinator until the appointment of Howard Kershner, submitted a proposal to the AFSC which planned distribution of bread to refugee canteens, semi-colonies, refugee children, infants, toddlers and to schools. The last recipient was particularly important as the Friends maintained the use of food as an incentive for school attendance throughout the war.⁴⁴ A rough estimate suggested that a six-months distribution to these recipients would total around 22,000 tons of wheat—coincidentally the

⁴³Dorothy Thompson to John Reich, 25 April 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence—Barcelona (Jacobs), (Box 7).

⁴⁴*Memorandum concerning distribution in Republican Spain of 22,000 tons of wheat during six months.* Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

amount of wheat envisaged to be available to Republican Spain at the outset.⁴⁵ The majority of the International Commission wheat was distributed through the Friends in Barcelona, Murcia and Alicante, and by the Swiss Red Cross in Madrid. In the Nationalist zone, the wheat was supervised by the Friends, but was in practice controlled by the Falangist organisation Auxilio Social: sensing victory by the end of 1938 they became increasingly jealous of their territory. There was some debate as to how impartial distribution of the International Commission's wheat would have to be, but Dan West suggested that there would be no serious objections to most of the wheat going to the Loyalist side. The Nationalists did not need it and were increasingly looking to the future and the population which they hoped to take over.⁴⁶ The wheat and flour itself was to be warehoused in as wide a number of areas as possible in order to reduce pilferage and to increase security. In theory, both governments agreed to take care of this matter.⁴⁷ In common with Friends' policy as it had emerged in Spain, very little of this wheat was to be administered directly; Friends simply did not regard it as efficient to send out expensive American and British workers and felt that there were spiritual advantages to working with and through the people they were there to help.⁴⁸ The International Commission adopted this preference for already established organisations and, because of the scale of the relief involved, frequently offered help directly to the municipal authorities. The Friends' relief workers were increasingly employed in a supervisory capacity. Importantly, Jacob was able to

45	1. Refugee canteens	25,000 children	230.850 kg.
	2. Semicolonies	3,335	30.000
	3. Refugee children	3,000	27.000
	4. Infants	25,000	56.000
	5. Toddlers	12,000	86.000
	6. Schools	144,000	1296.000
	7. Gifts	93.000	279.000
	Total	306,052 children	20,000.103 kg.

Memorandum concerning distribution in Republican Spain of 22,000 tons of wheat during six months. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

⁴⁶Dan West to John Reich, 22 June 1938, Committee on Spain 1938, Correspondence, Individuals: Dan West (Box 7).

⁴⁷*Memorandum concerning distribution in Republican Spain of 22,000 tons of wheat during six months.* Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

⁴⁸Ibid.

report that the system of control over the foodstuffs seemed watertight and, perhaps more importantly, "an atmosphere of affectionate service for children prevails."⁴⁹ Jacob estimated the monthly consumption in the first seven International Commission dining rooms at 54 tons of dried vegetables ("beans, chickpeas, rice, lentils, split peas, macaronis, etc."), 27 tons of meat and fish, in addition to 100g of bread per child and 50-75g of chocolate or jam. However, this was also dependent on American supplies reaching the Food Supply department. Consequently, the Jacobs were anxious that any surplus foodstuffs that could be obtained from the USA should be secured for Spain.⁵⁰

In 20 June 1938, Edith Pye was able to report that over 11,000 children were being fed by the International Commission in fifty-four canteens with the expectation that this number would be increased. The Swiss Committee was supporting a further ten canteens with over fl. 1,500; however, where there were no canteens Edith Pye reported terrible conditions. After the maximum of 20,000 children were taken into the canteens there would still be an estimated 20,000 children in need. The estimated cost for this operation worked out at £100 per 1,000 children per month, or two shillings per child per month.⁵¹ Although resources were being stretched to accommodate the maximum demand, by July reports indicated that starvation in Catalonia and the South was such that the International Commission could not manage alone.⁵² It was still hoped that the League of Nations would step in to provide administrative and financial help, but in the event, they did not send an investigating commissioner until October 1938.⁵³ The concern was such that for the first time the FSC Spain Committee met throughout the summer months.

⁴⁹Alfred Jacob to John Reich, 11 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 6 July 1938.

⁵²Kanty Cooper reporting from Barcelona, FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 15 July 1938.

⁵³FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 15 July 1938; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 October 1938.

In August the International Commission were feeding 1,595 children daily and the AFSC in Murcia were issuing 6,100 regular rations (it is not clear whether this is the number of children being fed, but I would suggest not). Another 3,763 rations of unprepared food were being distributed to families and groups. By the end of September it was anticipated that the International Commission would be supplying 5,000 children daily in the region around Alicante and Almería. The quality of the food remained an issue and Dr. Audrey Russell requested that "if possible at least 5 p/c of middlings (containing the germ and parts of bran) should be sent separately with the flour for addition at this end where advisable." This strongly suggests that the International Commission were sending milled white flour.⁵⁴ A request for fat was also made as it was believed that "the best nutritive value is got out of starch when some sort of fat is added."⁵⁵ In October Alfred Jacob anticipated that eventually the dining rooms would total nineteen, with feeding capacity for 69,870 children, fed in two shifts.⁵⁶

Although International Commission work was intended as an increase in the work already being done, the realities of the situation were such that at least 600 children already fed by the Murcia Unit would now be supported by the International Commission.⁵⁷ In part this was because the International Commission food could be used only for refugee children.⁵⁸ Considering the equally abysmal condition of non-refugee children it made sense for the Friends to use the International Commission food for their refugees and reserve their own stocks for others.⁵⁹ In January 1938 the AFSC had offered \$1,000 per month for child feeding

⁵⁴Alfred Jacob to John Reich, 3 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁵⁸Dorothy Thompson to Friends House, 22 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 7).

⁵⁹Alfred Jacob to John Reich, 3 December 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

in Barcelona and this was diverted to non-refugee children.⁶⁰ It did, however, require the segregation of refugee children into separate dining rooms for the purposes of bookkeeping.⁶¹

By the end of September the Murcia unit had expanded the International Commission canteens to outlying villages and taken on another thousand children.⁶² The distribution of International Commission milk and wheat was complex. In Catalonia, the International Commission distribution was to be expedited by Alfred Jacob; in the provinces between Valencia and Madrid the FSC and the Swiss Committee were to take charge, and in Murcia, Alicante and Almería the AFSC workers took responsibility. In Jaén, Granada and Ciudad Real, the Mennonites were identified as the agents for distribution—the first time they had been singled out as distinct from the AFSC unit to which they were attached.⁶³ In Republican Spain, the Spanish Red Cross lacked the weight to be anything but auxiliary.⁶⁴ However, a series of letters throughout October 1938 suggests that initially there was some confusion surrounding the position of Red Cross flour in this arrangement. John Reich, in discussion with the field workers, had assumed that the International Commission would receive flour first in order to meet its commitments and that the rest would then be divided between the agents listed. Clarence Pickett, however, made an alternative arrangement that all the flour under the aegis of the International Commission would be for them to distribute. These crossed wires seem to have come about because of a misunderstanding of the relationship of the International Commission to collaborating organisations, which

⁶⁰Alfred Jacob to John Reich, 18 January 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacob) (Box 7); Dorothy Thompson to Friends House, 22 April 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 7).

⁶¹Alfred Cope to Mr. Lilliehöök of the International Commission in Geneva, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7)

⁶²Florence Conard to John Reich, 27 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁶³Clyde Roberts to Dorothy Thompson, 15 October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁶⁴Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 18 October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

varied from region to region. In the south-east, the International Commission was represented by M. Ogliati, who was a nominee of the Swiss Committee. His assistants were charged with shipping International Commission goods to the Murcia Unit and inspecting the canteens which the unit set up on their behalf.⁶⁵ In November, John Reich was still saying that the units on the ground had the final say in the distribution of the flour, and that 55% of the International Commission funds were to go to M. Ogliati as head of the regional International Commission and of the Swiss Committee, and 45% would be at the disposal of the Friends.⁶⁶ The arrival of the flour initially paralysed activity whilst responsibility was established. During this time the Murcia unit endeavoured to find out which areas were most in need, whilst aware that this might prove presumptuous.⁶⁷ Clyde Roberts was concerned that the Murcia unit's actions not be perceived as a bid for AFSC supremacy in the field. "Friends may well take a subordinate place, satisfied with having shown the way and with having had a good part in launching the Commission itself. Only make it international and keep it so."⁶⁸ However, Roberts added a rider, "The Quaker special work should go on, if it can be financed, because we have so many fine projects that the International Commission cannot take over unless they change their rules. Hospitals, baby clinics, colonies, workshops, schools and clothing distribution."⁶⁹ Prior to the actual arrival of the International Commission wheat, this had meant that supplying Commission canteens had meant an expansion of Friends' work at their expense. In a review of the situation in Murcia, requested by John Reich, Clyde Roberts wrote in November:

As we anticipated, the number fed by the Friends has not increased

⁶⁵Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 27 October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁶⁶John F. Reich to Levi Hartzler, 10 November 1938; Alfred Cope to Mr. Lilliehöök of the International Commission in Geneva, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁶⁷Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 27 October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁶⁸Ibid.

⁶⁹Ibid.

and may decrease but meanwhile the new feeding by the International Commission is increasing daily. The *total for Friends is about 6,765 persons*, mostly children. That doesn't include adults who work for us, nor their families. The total for the *International Commission will reach 9,000 daily*... When the flour comes in we will soon be giving bread rations to several thousand more. The International Commission feeding is just beginning to relieve the Quaker load as you expected it to do.⁷⁰

The arrival of International Commission flour allowed for a bread distribution to a large number of schools in both Barcelona and Murcia. The significance of the expanded bread distribution to schools was emphasised by Ruth Cope: "One school, a half block beyond the city limits (a school of the junior high status) which was of course ineligible for the 4,000 breakfasts which the Mennonites started here, dropped in attendance, I understand, from 70 to 10 pupils, for the mothers transferred their children to schools giving breakfasts."⁷¹ It was this need to feed non-refugee children that made it so essential for the Friends' units to have control over the Red Cross flour.⁷² Alfred Cope wrote that the clinics weighing children had noted that only one child out of a batch of thirty-two was "normal". Most were found to be over 25% under the expected figure for their height, and many over 50% under weight.⁷³ The infant mortality figures which had decreased steadily under the Republic had begun to rise rapidly in 1938.⁷⁴

The available clothing had now been distributed. Most of it had gone to the different *refugios* in and around Murcia and Barcelona. A total of 1,475 people in

⁷⁰Roberts' italics. Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷¹Ruth Cope to John Reich, 26 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷²Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷³Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 22 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷⁴Alfred Cope to John Reich, 20 December 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

the *refugios* and 327 people outside them had received clothing but there was a clear need for more clothing before the cold weather set in.⁷⁵

5.4 The End of Republican Spain

With the continued advance of the Nationalist armies, the Friends became concerned that canteens could not be maintained. Ways to keep the work as flexible as possible began to be explored, and plans to send milk canteens on lorries to the French borders were begun. Dermot O'Donovan, an Irishman who had been working for the Barcelona unit, was asked to go as a permanent worker to Marseilles to purchase for Catalonia and Southern Spain on behalf of the International Commission and maintain a continuity of supplies, which had been made difficult by the refusal of many shipping companies to carry goods for Spain. Only those British ships carrying nothing but relief supplies could be convoyed by the Navy. Barbara Wood, the Friends' shipping officer in Valencia, was particularly affected by troop movements. In April the Nationalists had reached Vinaroz, a small town on the east coast, successfully cutting off Valencia and Madrid from Barcelona, and preventing the transportation of goods or people from one area to another.⁷⁶

In August John Reich had written to Clarence Pickett about the possibility of securing surplus foodstuffs; having seen an article in the *New York Times* that Secretary Wallace was trying to dump 100 million bushels of wheat in foreign markets. In early September the United States Government and the American Red Cross agreed to cooperate in providing Spain with large quantities of surplus flour, in addition to that supplied by the International Commission.⁷⁷ Up to 250,000 barrels of flour were secured, to be delivered free of charge by the American Mercantile Marine Service to neutral ports. The flour had to be distributed impartially to refugees on both sides, and the Red Cross had to find the funds to

⁷⁵Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 15 August 1938.

⁷⁷John Reich to Murcia Unit, 7 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

pay for milling and transporting the flour to the Atlantic seaboard—funds which in practice had to come from the Friends—but the Maritime Commission would transport it free of charge into Europe, where the Spanish governments would furnish all additional transportation into Spain, including the loan of at least twenty trucks for this purpose. The milling costs for the first 100,000 barrels were to be borne by the Red Cross, estimated at around \$70,000 to \$100,000. The AFSC were to administer the food relief, and were responsible for the costs of transport from neutral ports to Spain, as there was no American Red Cross presence in Spain.⁷⁸ Ironically, the news of the Red Cross flour meant that the wheat appeal of the Church of the Brethren, which had solicited gifts in kind from Dunkerdt farmers, was somewhat redundant, and rather embarrassedly John Reich asked that the wheat collected be sold to provide funds for Spain and for transporting the agricultural department flour.⁷⁹ The provision of such large quantities of American flour modified the impact which the International Commission, with its restriction of aid to refugees only, might have had. This offer of flour enabled a 25% increase in the number who could be fed at the International Commission canteens, reaching a total of 50,000 children. The British government also agreed to donate another £5,000 when the total from other sources reached £20,000 and again at £30,000.⁸⁰ More flour was on its way to Southern Spain by October, where it was hoped to feed another 200,000 children in an area which included Madrid.⁸¹ There was some concern that the flour would not be accepted by Franco, as unless and until an eventual Nationalist take-over he would receive only a quarter or a fifth of the total amount. For propaganda reasons it might have made sense for him to declare that there was no need of the flour, and thus to place doubt on the

⁷⁸John Reich to Clarence Pickett, 25 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Spain (Box 8).

⁷⁹John Reich to Clarence Pickett, 25 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Spain (Box 8).

⁸⁰FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 21 September 1938.

⁸¹AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 18 November 1938.

neutrality of the project, but in the event it was accepted.⁸²

With the news that so much more food was coming in, John Reich approved funds to purchase trucks, with the understanding that the International Commission would continue to furnish food supplies for current activities. However, the trucks were not to be ordered immediately as Reich held some hope that trucks might be forthcoming from the Spanish government. In this, Reich showed more optimism than judgement.⁸³ A letter from Levi Hartzler on 13 September was similarly sceptical, pointing out both that the unit thought the trucks were already on their way, and that promises from the Spanish government had been interpreted as "something similar to what we already have and will not entail control of the trucks by the organization."⁸⁴ In a war trucks were liable to be reclaimed for military purposes. The nature of the Commission's work, in a large number of canteens spread over a large number of scattered villages, made AFSC-controlled transport an essential.⁸⁵ In November, however, John Reich was still awaiting confirmation from the Spanish government that the ten trucks promised were on their way.⁸⁶

The expansion which the American flour made possible allowed the FSC to send out more staff. Lucy Palser (a Somerset Quaker) was sent out as housekeeper-warden of the Barcelona Unit, and Richard Rees as a driver,⁸⁷ whilst Joyce Richards went out to work in what were known as day- or semi-colonies, day centres where refugee children were fed and educated before returning to their parents in the

⁸²John Reich to Clarence Pickett, 13 September, 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Spain (Box 8).

⁸³John Reich to Murcia Unit, 7 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁸⁴Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 13 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶John F. Reich to Clyde Roberts, 10 November 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁸⁷Richard Rees appears to have had no formal connection to the Friends other than a desire to help. As heir to a baronetcy he may have been Church of England. In 1940 he left the service of the International Commission and joined the army.

main refugee centres at night. An emerging problem was that the units were increasingly operating under the guidance of more than one authority, their own "home office" and the International Commission. This may have been more of an issue for the AFSC units who were used to much closer supervision.⁸⁸ None of this was helped by the erratic nature of overseas mail: letters between Spain and America might take anything between fourteen days and six weeks (a combination of censorship and the disruption of shipping), which persuaded the AFSC to use telegrams to confirm all mailed communications.⁸⁹

As money became shorter but responsibilities more plentiful with the arrival of Red Cross and International Commission Relief, Alfred Cope moved to tighten up the purchasing policy of the Murcia Unit. First, after initial expenses in America had been deducted, funds for relief would be transferred to the FSC in London who would then order supplies and deduct the cost, only ordering when the Unit was in credit. Instead of sending in orders, waiting for prices and then selecting goods, requests were listed in order of priority and the list filled as money became available. This both speeded up the system and prevented the overspending that had been endemic in 1937.⁹⁰ As a third measure all orders and all exchange of currency were to be suspended until November, when large deliveries were expected; this was to facilitate the accumulation of credit. Concerned about the need to maintain supplies, Alfred Cope wrote to Dorothy Thompson with three months' orders simultaneously to ensure at least one month's reserve supplies, but in addition, it was decided in September not to expand any of the projects in order that expansion might be possible when winter arrived.⁹¹ As a final point, it was suggested that the practice of encouraging workers to take vacations outside Spain

⁸⁸Levi Hartzler to Clarence Pickett, 13 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁸⁹Alfred Cope to his family, (no exact date), c. October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁹⁰Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 23 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹¹Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 9 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

cease. Vacations in Spain would assist the stockpiling of funds.⁹² It might be imagined that with the growing exigencies faced by the Murcia Friends, the more peripheral, non-food related work would have been laid down,⁹³ however, it was felt that the workshops and schools fulfilled a vital social role, both educating and helping to lift morale. The supplies used mostly came from interested groups willing to sponsor individual projects and the cost was very low in terms of food and clothing.⁹⁴

In September, the reports to be sent back from Barcelona indicated that there was now little difference between the condition of the civilian population and the refugees. In Madrid, which was rather more peaceful than it had been, the authorities were now providing relief irrespective of status.⁹⁵ 5,000 children in Madrid were now receiving milk from the Spanish Red Cross, with the FSC responsible for 1,000 of this number. 500 children felt to be particularly at risk were receiving Bovril and cod-liver oil. Shortages of vitamin B and D were particularly evident and nutrition-related illnesses, including tuberculosis, were on the increase. In Valencia, which was well supplied with fruit, vegetables and rice, milk was also very scarce with municipal authorities only able to supply children under two years old. Alicante, in contrast, was suffering destitution. Between Alicante and Valencia no village had bread, and the rice crop in particular had been affected by a lack of manpower and manure. The disruption of supply lines was making it difficult to rectify such disparities. In his report in late October Alfred Jacob said that he hoped, with the assistance of the American flour, to be able to distribute 3,000 tons of flour every three months through the schools. This had the desired

⁹²Clyde E. Roberts to Dorothy Thompson, 15 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁹³The shortage of resources is attested to by Emily Parker's decision to open up the children's bean bags to make stew. When they had been made, the workers had thoughtfully labelled the contents with just such an eventuality in mind. The material from which they were made went to patch the older boys' trousers. Emily Parker to the Kullys, 21 November 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Individuals, Parker, Emily (Box 9).

⁹⁴Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 21 September 1938.

effect of increasing school attendance by 30%.⁹⁶ In addition, the Ministry of Economy in Catalonia had created a number of children's dining rooms in each of which children over four years old would be fed. The government supplied all the food except the bread which would be supplied by the FSC. It was hoped that a total of 20,000 children could be fed this way, with each child receiving a ration of 200 grams made up of skimmed milk, sugar, cocoa, biscuits and cod-liver oil. In order to spread relief as widely as possible, only breakfast would be provided.⁹⁷ With children under two having milk ration cards, the only group left unattended were the two to four year olds. Audrey Russell and Kanty Cooper decided, with the support of the Committee, to begin a pre-school scheme for these children and provide a much needed ration of bread in the morning, as a supplement to the mid-day meal supplied by the Catalan authorities. Audrey Russell estimated that there were 36,000 children between the ages of two and five years in Catalonia and only one child in ten of these was currently receiving relief. Even when all the flour arrived it was thought that only one-third could be fed. "A short time ago it was a question of feeding the children; now it is actually a question of keeping them alive".⁹⁸

In Nationalist Spain, Charles Ewald reported that Auxilio Social was feeding 150,000 people in its canteens, whilst the Government made grants to the families of soldiers at the rate of five pesetas per adult per day, and two pesetas for each child over three years old. In the International Commission canteens, under the auspices of the Spanish Red Cross, between 700 and 1,000 children were being fed at Huesca, Apiez, Allepuz and Málaga, in part with wheat from the American Red Cross. No shortage of milk was reported, with some areas holding a surplus.⁹⁹

Although by late November the Barcelona Unit was distributing the Red Cross flour, the difficulties of getting into Southern Spain meant that the Murcia

⁹⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 10 November 1938, "Audrey Russell's Report".

⁹⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 October 1938.

⁹⁸FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 10 November 1938, "Audrey Russell's Report".

⁹⁹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 10 November 1938.

Unit was yet to see its first 860 tons.¹⁰⁰ Allan Hole in Paris reported that getting goods into Murcia was increasingly difficult.¹⁰¹ However, at the end of November the three months' supply of milk for the canteens did arrive, enabling the Friends to relax their caution over the feeding programmes, and in December the first supply of Red Cross flour was delivered to Murcia.¹⁰² This was not achieved without some danger. Clyde Roberts reported that the port was bombed several times whilst the flour was being unloaded.¹⁰³

Despite this, it took time for the flour and milk to clear customs and then to be delivered to the outlying regions. In early December, Levi Hartzler, returning from time in the US, found little progress in Jaén or Ciudad Real. In neither had canteens been established, and there were serious problems finding warehousing and office space. Four canteens were in preparation and would be ready to go when the supplies arrived and it was planned to provide breakfasts for between 1,500 and 2,000 children. The urgency of the need for supplies had increased: in the regions under Mennonite care, the municipal authorities had already run out of milk.¹⁰⁴

The American flour, when it arrived, turned out to be wholemeal, ostensibly the better choice. However, the Spanish bakers, unused to wholewheat flour and without yeast available, had some difficulty in getting the bread to rise. The unit's preference was for either white flour or for wheat, but the latter was unlikely from the American source as one condition of this sale of surplus foodstuffs to the Red

¹⁰⁰John Reich to Murcia Unit, 25 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰¹John F. Reich to Alan Hole, 25 October 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Paris Center-Philadelphia (Box 8).

¹⁰²Ruth Cope to John Reich, 26 November 1938; Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 7 or 8 December (not fully dated), 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰³Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 7 or 8 December (not fully dated), 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰⁴Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 9 December (not fully dated), 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

Cross had been that it was milled in the USA.¹⁰⁵ One positive change was that the International Commission eventually moved to provide wheat to be milled in Spain, advantageous in a number of ways in that it put work into the economy, and the leftover bran could be used elsewhere, particularly for cattle-feed to help maintain what little there was left of local milk production.¹⁰⁶

In December the arrival of the Red Cross American flour allowed for a general change of policy which removed the Friends' necessity to focus 75% of relief on refugees and allowed them to select on the basis of need only, although it was felt that giving the refugee children priority was still advisable.¹⁰⁷ By this time over 50% of children in some regions were suffering from trachoma. Drugs were in short supply and Alfred Cope requested that a list furnished by volunteer doctors be filled if possible. Also badly needed was another truck. Although it was hoped that the truck, which was to be shared between the workers in Murcia, Jaén, Ciudad Real and Almería, would have a capacity of 3½-5 tons, Alfred Cope requested that its chief feature be its toughness, "otherwise it might just as well be delivered off the dock to an internment in the Mediterranean before it gets here".¹⁰⁸ The necessity for this purchase was increased by the failure of the promised government trucks ever to materialise. As anticipated by the Unit, they were always too much in demand for government purposes. The only civilian goods which were now being cleared through the ports were those marked for relief organisations.¹⁰⁹ None of the ten trucks promised by the Catalonian government had ever materialised and without at least three 3-ton Bedford trucks the American wheat could not be distributed. In the end, the three trucks were purchased by the National Joint Committee, R. A. Pilkington and the Misses Pilkington (of the

¹⁰⁵Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 7 or 8 December (not fully dated), 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰⁶Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 11 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰⁷Alfred Cope to John Reich, 20 December 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹⁰⁸Ibid.

¹⁰⁹FSC; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 21 September 1938.

Pilkington glassware company) respectively, and were sent to Spain at the end of December.¹¹⁰

By late December the delivery and distribution of flour was going much more smoothly. Clyde Roberts wrote, "We solved the problem of flour transport happily by using more than half rail shipments. In that way we achieved a more prompt delivery and avoided the trouble of managing a fleet of trucks, in itself a difficult problem".¹¹¹ This enabled 53,900 children to be fed with the Red Cross bread and another 9,810 with International Commission rations. The total of 63,710 children was somewhat more than the rations strictly allowed for, but as Ruth Cope pointed out it was difficult for the Friends to prevent the municipal authorities from spreading the rations as far as they would go.¹¹²

Although the need for large-scale food relief was escalating, some small projects did continue, including the summer colonies, designed to give refugee children a vacation from their difficulties.¹¹³ But the colonies, which the Friends had always supported in principle, were running into trouble by late 1938. The Barcelona unit had always supported them directly, but the Murcia unit had left them as the responsibility of the local municipality. By December, however, the municipalities' food-stocks were depleted, and although they had money there was little to buy. The Murcia unit decided to provide bread for all the colonies, and Cadbury's cocoa, donated by that company, for those thirty colonies with the largest proportion of the youngest children.¹¹⁴ Other responsibilities, such as the provision of food parcels (sponsored by friends and relatives), were becoming

¹¹⁰FSC: Minutes of the Spain (Executive) Committee, 10 November 1938; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 24 November 1938 and 20 December 1938.

¹¹¹Clyde Roberts to John Reich, 28 December 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹¹²Ruth Cope to John Reich, 29 December 1938, Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

¹¹³Esther Richards (*responsabile* of colony in Barrio Peral, Cartagena) to Ruth Cope, 12 November 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Spain, Letters Exchanged in... (Box 8)

¹¹⁴"Colonies de Provincia de Alicante", Emily Parker, 17 December 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

onerous, and although Friends continued to honour their commitments they were increasingly reluctant to take on new ones, and found the established recipients often ungrateful and critical of the help that could be offered.¹¹⁵ The only justification that Barbara Wood could offer for the parcels policy was that it was a means of collecting considerable funds, as the parcels were usually paid for in dollars or pounds: "it is only fair that those who have friends abroad able to help them should be 'taxed' in favour of those who have not."¹¹⁶

In December 1938, the League of Nations Commission studying Spain urged that a director be appointed to coordinate the work of all agencies sending food into Spain. In discussion with the AFSC, the FSC and the League of Nations Commission suggested that the AFSC appoint a food administrator for their own supplies, with the intention that other agencies come under this administration, as the AFSC was responsible for very large amounts of the food relief.¹¹⁷ With the idea that such a director would serve for an initial seven months, the AFSC offered the position to a New York businessman and his wife, Howard and Gertrude Kershner, who in November had actually offered their services for China, an area which traditionally attracted members of the evangelical wing.¹¹⁸ The Kershners sailed for Spain in January 1939, accompanied by Emmet Gulley, a Professor at Pacific College, Oregon, and a former Quaker missionary in Mexico. In addition, Kershner was provided with an assistant: Samuel Ybergoyan, the Uruguayan Consul in Lyons who spoke English, French and Spanish.¹¹⁹ The appointment of Howard Kershner to a position which would eventually oversee all Friends' relief was to have considerable consequences for the relations between relief workers, the public and the Spanish Governments. Kershner's posting was conditional upon the

¹¹⁵John Reich to Barbara Wood, 4 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Valencia, (Box 8).

¹¹⁶Barbara Wood to John Reich, 12 September 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Valencia, (Box 8).

¹¹⁷AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, December 1938

¹¹⁸AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 2 November 1938.

¹¹⁹John Reich to Alfred Jacob, 30 December 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacob) (Box 7).

securing of wheat through the Red Cross, but it was hoped to obtain up to 500,000 bushels a month. In addition, \$1,000,000 needed to be raised in administration costs, of which the AFSC agreed to raise \$25,000 in the USA.¹²⁰ If this programme could be carried through, it was hoped that 1.5 million refugees might be fed.¹²¹ At the same time, the President of the United States increased American involvement by forming his own Presidential relief committee under George MacDonald, with the aim of raising \$1.5 million for Spanish relief.¹²² With this level of finance potentially available, Edith Pye was able to report to the FSC that the International Commission had undertaken to feed 31,000 children in Catalonia through January and February 1939.¹²³

¹²⁰AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 2 December 1938.

¹²¹AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 3 December 1938.

¹²²AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 20 December 1938.

¹²³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 6 December 1938.

Chapter Six:

The Aftermath

The speed at which events moved in early 1939 shattered established plans. It became ever more important to maintain a flexibility of approach and to delegate as much power to the field workers as possible. Although the greatest need continued in Loyalist Spain the shifting political situation convinced the International Commission that Howard Kershner's first visit should be to the Nationalist authorities in Burgos.¹ In the event, the rapid fall of the Republic ensured that Kershner never visited the Republican Government and had little contact with the Republican authorities on which to base his view of the situation.

In January 1939 the Friends, through the International Commission, estimated that at least 10,000,000 were starving.² The American shipments of 14,300 bushels of flour and 72,000 bushels of wheat barely touched the periphery of the problem. In 1938 the International Commission had received £85,000 from the Scandinavian governments and £20,000 from Britain with the understanding that other money would be forthcoming, and this was used to buy wheat and milk from those willing to sell, mainly the USA.³ Early in the New Year Audrey Russell cabled the National Joint Committee to inform them that milk supplies in Madrid and Barcelona were reaching exhaustion. Although regular supplies were due within two weeks, twenty-eight tons of skimmed milk were needed urgently. A letter of 5 January from Barcelona indicated that over 140,000 children were now being fed in what was essentially a unified relief effort supplied by the International Commission. The British National Joint Committee could not promise more than £350, so the FSC agreed responsibility for a further £800 worth of purchases. With funds running so short, Edith Pye issued new press releases hoping to receive at

¹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 11 January 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

²Notes on Spanish Relief Work, 18 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

³Ibid.

least £4,500 in special donations.⁴

On 15 January the Nationalist forces entered Tarragona on the east coast. In the previous three weeks they had advanced at a rate of eight to ten kilometres per day. In Barcelona, the relief staff decided that they should divide into two groups, with Alfred Jacob, Lucy Palser, Kanty Cooper, Muriel McDiarmid and Robert Wheeler staying in Barcelona whilst the others went to Gerona to continue work with refugees there. A concentration of refugees on the northern border with France had led to the necessity for new supply centres on the crossing, and on the Barcelona road to serve refugees coming in from the South and West. As the nationalist armies advanced, the refugee crisis began to spill over into France. Norma Jacob reported that the refugee authorities in Perpignan estimated that there were already 17,000 refugee children in the Vic district alone.⁵ To make matters worse, several International Commission canteens were closed due to the advance of the Nationalists, and the flexibility of the Barcelona team was constrained by the mobilisation of all Spanish personnel, notably the Spanish truck drivers. Many of the colonies had to be evacuated, some into France, others into Barcelona. The scarcity of transport encouraged the International Commission to decide that £1,500 might be spent on the purchase of additional trucks rather than relying on the collapsing relief infrastructure. On 30 January, Edith Pye cabled to say that the FSC workers had been bombed out of Gerona. All were safe, and the workers had organised emergency canteens to provide hot milk and bread to refugees on the way to the frontier. Conditions on the road were dreadful, often choked with refugees and impassable for miles.⁶

With the fall of Barcelona on 26 January 1939, new issues of organisation and neutrality arose and there was growing concern over the safety of cargoes and personnel. In late January Kershner attempted to ensure the safety of both in discussion with the Nationalist authorities, but had to be satisfied with only verbal

⁴FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 January 1938.

⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 25 January 1939.

⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 1 February 1939.

assurances.⁷ Senor Cardenas, the Nationalist representative in the USA, admitted for the first time to Clarence Pickett that the Nationalists had a refugee problem and asked whether it would be possible to increase the shipments of flour to Nationalist Spain in view of the capture of parts of Catalonia which were in great need.⁸ It was anticipated by the AFSC that if the entire area controlled by the Republicans fell to the Nationalists, approximately six million people in Madrid and the surrounding areas would further drain the food supplies. Nationalist officials concurred with these estimates and requested as much help as could be supplied.⁹ With the assistance of the USA's President's Commission and the American Red Cross, 14,300 barrels of flour and another 72,000 bushels of wheat were shipped to Spain in January and February; it was envisaged that relief would be needed at least until the year's crop could be harvested.¹⁰

The fall of Barcelona in January 1939 kept the FSC unit out of touch for some time. When Alfred Jacob did contact the FSC and AFSC it was to request permission to continue relief work under Auxilio Social. The Auxilio Social would take over the administration of all those colonies which had not been evacuated to France, but requested that the FSC continue financial support. All private canteens were to close and children would be fed through Auxilio Social dining rooms. Audrey Russell was to continue with her mobile dispensaries with financial backing from the National Joint Committee.¹¹ Other matters failed to go as smoothly. Many of the children from the Friends' colonies who were evacuated to France became mixed in with other groups, and even when colonies were reconvened it was not clear that the same children were being supported. Many of the food stores along the Spanish frontier were appropriated or looted, whilst regional storehouses in Catalonia came under the control of Auxilio Social. 120 tons

⁷Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 23 January 1939; Howard Kershner to General Franco, 13 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

⁸AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 3 January 1939.

⁹AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 24 February 1939.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 9 February 1939.

of food were completely lost on the railway during the Nationalist advance into Catalonia, and another eight tons of food carried on a French lorry was also lost; there was some evidence, even admission, that stores were being confiscated by advancing troops. Of the FSC vehicles, two cars and two lorries were taken to France; the others were either abandoned after breaking down, were stolen, or were confiscated by the Nationalists. The whereabouts of those workers who had been sent to Gerona—Robert Wheeler, Muriel McDiarmid, Lucy Palser and Kanty Cooper—was unknown.¹² When Alfred Jacob was able to give a clear report, it was to say that Barcelona workers had been obliged to start afresh with new stores and a new house.¹³

When the flight for the border began in March 1939, and the French began to allow Spanish refugees to pass, Norma Jacob, Kanty Cooper and Lucy Palser of the Barcelona unit drove to the border, where they set up a mobile canteen; with them was Domingo Ricart, who needed to leave Spain for his own safety.¹⁴ The Quaker workers, acting on behalf of the International Commission, were able during the worst period of the flight to give out some 200,000 hot rations on both sides of the frontier, "some from mobile canteens established on lorries brought out from Barcelona, others in feeding stations set up by the Spanish [Republican] authorities, and others in the camps to which women and children were taken after entering France."¹⁵ Although the greater part of Friends' work was to remain within Spain until the end of the year, they responded rapidly to the needs in France and on the French border. The Comité Nacional de Ayuda¹⁶ had opened canteens at the main exit points on the Spanish side of the frontier and was trying to provide hot drinks for children and the sick. The International Commission had

¹²FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 1 and 15 February 1939.

¹³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 February 1939.

¹⁴Bulletin no. 34, 10 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. & Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

¹⁵Bulletin no. 32, 7 March 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Culleting (Box 10).

¹⁶This apparently bi-lingual title is as cited in FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 20 February 1939.

already moved into Perpignan and both the AFSC and the FSC agreed to continue their financial support.¹⁷ Lorries distributing milk gave out approximately 96,000 rations after reaching the French side of the border, whilst eleven lorry loads of food were distributed on the Spanish side by Audrey Russell and volunteers Richard Rees and William Brebner. Many children were camped with their *responsables* on the Spanish side of the border until they were vaccinated and then sent by train to the interior.¹⁸ By March, Edith Pye estimated that half a million refugees had entered France, with approximately 130,000 women and children distributed around four French departments.¹⁹

In March, John Reich, visiting Spain, drew a picture of increasing hardship, "amounting to actual starvation". The combined efforts of the AFSC, the FSC and the International Commission were contriving to feed approximately half a million children per day, but this fell far short of meeting the immediate need. At the same time, need in southern France was growing: an estimated 400,000 refugees were destitute and homeless. In an attempt to begin meeting this emergency, \$300,000 was set aside by the International Commission.²⁰ However, raising funds was becoming ever harder; many Spanish aid groups saw their function as supporting Republican Spain. With the demise of the Republic they began to wind up their efforts. The Spanish Child Welfare Fund had already begun to disband, and whilst some organisations had funds in hand—the Committee for Impartial Civilian Relief held \$40,000 of which \$23,000 was owed to the Red Cross—the lack of success which was reported by the USA President's Committee appears not untypical. The Spanish Child Welfare Association reported in April that continued fund-raising among the American people would be difficult unless Franco could be seen to show clemency to those who had supported the Republican government. In Britain, where most of the aid groups had been fiercely partisan, the problems of raising

¹⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 9 February 1939.

¹⁸FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 15 February 1939 20th February 1939.

¹⁹FSC: Minutes of Friends Service Council, 30 March 1939.

²⁰AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 18, 19 and 20 March 1939.

money were equally, if not more, difficult.²¹

6.1 Working with the Nationalist Government

In January, the AFSC informed the Nationalists that they would be willing to continue child feeding only if the present organisations, operated by the Quaker units, could continue. In particular, the AFSC refused to authorise the turning over of supplies to Auxilio Social.²² In conversation with Nationalist officials in Burgos, Howard Kershner had received full assurance that relief supplies would be admitted duty free and subject solely to AFSC control and administration. As a condition of supply, the Nationalists agreed that ships bearing relief supplies only to the remaining Republican ports would be free from attack, and under these assurances arrangements were made by both governments to furnish ships to transport the wheat from New York to Spain. Despite unfavourable reports from David Blickenstaff in the Paris Center on political conditions in Nationalist Spain, Howard Kershner's recommendations were accepted and relief supplies proceeded. However, it was not clear how long work would continue. David Blickenstaff felt strongly that Auxilio Social might want more control over the relief work that either the Friends or the International Commission might care for, and Nationalist actions in Barcelona confirmed this concern.²³

From March 1939, the Friends' relationship with Auxilio Social began to formalise, in part through the good offices of the International Commission and Howard Kershner. David Blickenstaff was provided with an office to supervise the allocation and distribution of all food and clothing sent by the Commission and the organisations collaborating with it. Despite previous assurances, although the Quaker units would be allowed to inspect freely, with guaranteed use of cars, they would not be permitted to run their own relief facilities.²⁴ In return, recipients and the newspapers would be informed of the origin of gifts, and the International

²¹AFSC; Minutes, Committee on Spain, 24 February 1939, 20 March 1939, and 28 April 1939.

²²AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 27 January 1939.

²³Ibid.; FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 15 February 1939.

²⁴FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 March 1939.

Commission would be reimbursed for transportation and handling charges on previous shipments into Nationalist Spain.

The major condition of this relief package was that no grain should be exported during the period in which the International Commission was supplying grain to Spain, but at the end of January rumours had begun to circulate that the Nationalists were exchanging wheat for German munitions.²⁵ The Friends felt strongly that such action, in addition to making fund-raising difficult, was fundamentally unethical. "If this practice continues, we will be ridiculous for sending in wheat for relief purposes."²⁶ This stance was taken even though the flour sent was not that provided by the International Commission.²⁷

With the capture of Barcelona the main issue was to what degree the Nationalist authorities would permit the continuation of the Friends' relief work. Initial signs were good. The American Red Cross stated that it would not continue to send shipments of flour unless it had assurance from the Nationalist Government that the British workers would be able to administer supplies in Catalonia as they had previously: the Red Cross were able to report that "We received a telephone call this morning from the Nationalist official in Washington stating that the Nationalist Government had accepted our offer."²⁸ The FSC, with no contact with their field workers through most of January, however, had received no confirmation of this, and had instead contrary reports from Edith Pye and Howard Kershner.²⁹ The Nationalists quickly requested that food be sent under the

²⁵Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 25 January 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

²⁶Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 3 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

²⁷Howard Kershner to Lillian Traugott, 10 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

²⁸Lucille H. Stephens (secretary to John Reich) to Dorothy Thompson, 2 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

²⁹Dorothy Thompson to Lucille Stephens, 15 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

auspices of Auxilio Social, which did not quite accord with the notion of the Catalonian unit continuing business as usual.³⁰ Under the new agreement, Alfred Jacob hoped to return to Barcelona as an International Commission Inspector, in which position the FSC was willing to support him financially. Despite the increasingly inauspicious circumstances, it was still hoped that he would be able to take up his original concern and establish a Quaker Centre in Spain. However, despite an agreement made with the International Commission, all cars and lorries were being commandeered by the Auxilio Social, hampering the mobility of the relief workers.³¹ The only cars still wholly under the control of the FSC were now in France, and relief workers were beginning to request transfers to the French camps. By the end of March 1939, nine FSC workers had been transferred in addition to Audrey Russell, who, although paid for by the FSC, was an International Commission representative.³² Barbara Wood decided to return at Easter 1939, in part for family reasons, and it was decided to send Emmet Gulley to Valencia in her place.³³

The rapid Nationalist advance of February had led to a number of the International Commission and FSC canteens being abandoned in Catalonia, but where possible, remaining canteens sought to expand, receiving refugee children from other areas. At the beginning of January 93,000 children in Barcelona were receiving bread from American flour through the Friends and the International Commission. In Catalonia as a whole the figure stood at over 142,000.³⁴ In early 1939, Charles J. Ewald was able to report a milk surplus in Nationalist Spain,³⁵ but as a tenuous "normality" resumed, food prices began to spiral above the level at

³⁰Ibid.

³¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 March 1939.

³²FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 and 23 March 1939.

³³Dorothy Thompson to Lillian Traugott, 21 March 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

³⁴Bulletin no. 31, 7 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

³⁵Report on the Relief Situation in Nationalist Spain, Charles Ewald. Committee on Spain, Reports, General 1939 (Box 13).

which most might afford them.³⁶ A shortage of raw materials had led to widespread unemployment: all Republican money had been cancelled and workers in some industries were dismissed. For those in employment, pre-war wages had been enforced, but there were no price controls and inequalities in recompense compounded the difficulties.³⁷ Alfred Cope reported from Murcia:

Landlords who had been paid rent in Republican money, got, after Franco took over, an enforced payment of an equivalent amount from those who had occupied their property during the war. During the war we rented a house from a man who was in a Republican prison and paid the rent to his agent. When Franco came in, or rather his group, we had to pay the landlord again in Nationalist money. These regulations of course applied only to the owners of property. The farm laborers and the like got paid with the then worthless Republican money on the first payday after the change, and of course received no restitution for their savings lost.³⁸

This rapid enforcement of "normality" was vital to the Nationalists' external and internal propaganda war, and a formal public assertion of their ability to feed and clothe the country. However, the scarcity of food combined with the end of the strict rationing imposed by the Republican government forced the Auxilio Social, in these early days, to accept material assistance wherever it could be secured. Auxilio Social was feeding 120,000 destitute people a day in Catalonia and the surrounding towns, and this reinforced dependence on FSC milk and International Commission wheat.³⁹ Anticipating a period of civil disorder, the Friends' unit in Barcelona had attempted to alleviate shortages by ensuring that all colonies, hospitals and canteens had at least two months' reserves and could cope with being cut off from their line of supply. Petrol had been stored in a number of different

³⁶Confidential Memorandum on Religious and Political Conditions in Spain by Alfred H. Cope, Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

³⁷FSC; Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 May 1939.

³⁸Confidential Memorandum on Religious and Political Conditions in Spain by Alfred H. Cope, Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

³⁹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 May 1939.

locations and drivers were instructed to strip their vehicles of spark plugs and wheels to preclude confiscation. All workers carried copies of the "agreement" obtained by Howard Kershner in order to forestall any over-enthusiasm on the part of local Nationalist sympathisers. Where possible, the details of the agreement were allowed to leak shortly before the take over.⁴⁰

However, not all relief workers found Auxilio Social to be cooperative. In Murcia the military confiscated relief supplies. In April Emmet Gulley wired Paris that his storehouses had been locked by the military authorities and Auxilio Social had demanded that he turn over all trucks and food. Although Sr. Bedoya instructed employees at local level to cooperate with the International Commission, the situation was not immediately resolved.⁴¹ Attempts to retrieve the four or five boat-loads of food seized by General Aranda's troops were not successful, despite the intervention of the American consul and threats from Howard Kershner that the International wheat supply would be discontinued if the supplies were not either returned or paid for. Eleanor Imbelli's work in Cuenca "evaporated" and in Valencia the police raided the office and attempted to arrest Emmet Gulley, an event prevented by the intervention of David Blickenstaff, whose long sojourn in Nationalist Spain gave him some authority and protection. The two workers, concerned to protect Spanish colleagues, burned the records to prevent them being confiscated by a higher authority. For the Friends, these events offered a very particular challenge to their work, threatening to undermine the visibility of their witness to neutrality and reconciliation. Ruth Cope wrote sadly:

Unfortunately the first Nationalist officers to come into the territory did not have the least idea who we were and assumed directly that we were reds. It was hard to bear this at first, as we might well have been sent to Nationalist Spain in the first place. It was even sharper, because Alfred and I had helped in the raising of

⁴⁰Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

⁴¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, p. 270, "Report of Conference on Spain, 26 May 1939." Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 4 April 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

so much money in Chicago and so many people had told us that the reason they gave to our work and not to other relief projects was because ours was *neutral*. But it is not a virtue to be merely neutral any more, it seems.⁴²

Goods were going missing on the railway and conditions were deteriorating. With the uncertainty of the food supply it was impossible for the Quaker and Mennonite units to maintain an adequate feeding programme. The American milk, sugar and cocoa that was coming in had become essential supplies rather than a supplement to the bread rations.⁴³ The hardest part was the need to withdraw what little adult feeding had been done:

Saying *no* to ill adults because there is not enough for children even is the hardest thing... You have to hold some rules like iron or you will be hindered past endurance (or efficiency), but it is hard to keep turning down people, especially acquaintances.⁴⁴

Some of the problems were due simply to internal turmoil amongst the Nationalists. In Murcia the Friends experienced four new Nationalist governors in as many days: each one was contacted and new documents signed to temporarily protect lives, property and the relief work, but each time the Friends were forced to deal with strident demands for food in return for promised assistance which "vanished the way of all good things."⁴⁵ As the Friends in Murcia gained experience they learned to be wary with the gifts they made:

We often made experimental acts of cooperation, making a gift of food or clothing on a small scale and seeing how it was given out. It soon became clear that the confusion and unreliability were very complete. One agency or office would be friendly; others were

⁴²Ruth Cope to Family. 7 May 1939. Committee on Spain, 1939, Individuals: Cope, Alfred and Ruth (Box 13).

⁴³Levi Hartzler to John F. Reich, 20 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, General (Box 12).

⁴⁴Ruth Cope to John F. Reich, 25 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, General (Box 12).

⁴⁵Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

hostile and confiscatory in attitude.⁴⁶

Far from bringing supplies with them, many sections of Auxilio Social appeared desirous to depend on the supplies of the voluntary relief agencies, if not through the extorted gifts, then through confiscation and enforced sales.⁴⁷ Sometimes the pressure brought to bear on the Friends was overtly political. The final governor to be appointed to Murcia was presented with a list of projects and staff and a draft of the agreement made with Auxilio Social in Burgos.

Against charges hurled against us of communism, partiality, incompetence, laxness of morality, political bias of employees and of generally being unfit to exist in liberated Spain, David [Blickenstaff] aided us in making emphatic denials...⁴⁸

Demands for written charges softened the attack, as did the offer to turn over the central canteen of over 1,000 children to Miss Pedreno, the local Auxilio Social delegate. In return the Friends asked that regular reports be made; this was granted as a right, but not fulfilled. The sacrifice of the central canteen proved a mistake: the staff were immediately discharged and replaced by inexperienced but politically reliable individuals. The weight records were discarded and reports of poor food and petty theft began to leak out. An ex-employee reported later that some of the supplies were being sold by officials. When the Friends were informed that the canteens' reserves were exhausted they declined to supply more food, refusing to jeopardise their reputation for impartially distributed relief merely in order to preserve a nebulous political neutrality.

Miss Pedreno also demanded that the children's hospital be closed and its staff and structure be turned over for her use as a children's home. Despite the fact that many of the children were very sick they were forced to evacuate, some to home and a small number to a smaller and less suitable location. The staff declined to remain at the institution and those who did not go with the children dispersed. Three weeks later the hospital was reported as operating as a children's home, but

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

contained no children, and Alfred Cope felt that reports suggesting that the aim had been to secure the building and its supplies were probably accurate.⁴⁹ Emmet Gulley cabled on 2 May to say that all the hospitals had been closed.⁵⁰ The hospital in Murcia under Sylvia Pitt was ordered to close down by an Auxilio Social delegate anxious to use the building as a children's orphanage; the sick children were turned over to the local hospital.⁵¹ On their return to London the nurses, Sylvia Pitt and Rachel Marshall, wrote of the work in Murcia:

The canteens were restaffed with Fascist girls, but continued to use our food. The 26 colonies of refugee children were disbanded... We were informed that our hospital and equipment were needed for orphaned children. Therefore, the sick children were removed to the Provincial Hospital to be nursed by nuns... We had the good fortune of meeting some of these friends again in Madrid. One mother told us how it had taken six days and nights to get there, travelling in cattle trucks... Her baby had died on the second day; her home was destroyed. It was very difficult to obtain food or work.⁵²

The Alicante hospital, which opened on 1 September 1937, closed on 5 May 1939. Most children returned to their parents or to the colonies for evacuated children. Those without parents or whose families had left Spain were admitted to colonies run by Auxilio Social.⁵³ All the refugees were immediately ordered back to their various cities, and for twenty days there was no bread in Murcia at all.⁵⁴ Despite this, many Nationalists who had experienced the Friends' work during the war were willing to assist, if only secretly, and this allowed the truck drivers to continue

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Dorothy Thompson to John F. Reich, 2 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

⁵¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 May 1939.

⁵²Bulletin no. 35, 4 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

⁵³Ibid.

⁵⁴Dorothy Thompson to John F. Reich, 9 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

circulating. Between \$8,400-\$10,000 worth of food was distributed. The policy of placing large reserves of food in local villages had also been successful and allowed villages to make local decisions about reopening canteens.⁵⁵

A growing concern was that the authorities had made no provision for refugees returning home. The Friends decided to make some arrangements and upon the presentation of identification papers, refugees were given condensed milk for small children and fish and potatoes for older members.⁵⁶ Supplies not suitable for distribution (usually the results of gifts in kind) were sold for approximately \$5000 and small gifts, as well as the right to buy some of the remaining stock, were given to those Spanish workers who felt they could accept.⁵⁷ In May, after a visit by Howard Kershner, Ruth and Alfred Cope, Mary Elmes and Jean Cottle crossed the border into France, taking with them all the complete office records of the work, leaving only copies of financial files in Murcia.⁵⁸ By the time they left their only permitted role in the relief work was "inspection" of a kind which precluded criticism. Alfred Cope left Valencia with "the feeling that you will be treated politely and that you will be disregarded."⁵⁹ In Valencia Emmet Gulley, only recently appointed to replace Barbara Wood, wrote to John Reich that almost all the work would have to end or change out of all recognition:

The new totalitarian state cannot permit foreign organizations to function. We have an arrangement with their national organization "Auxilio Social" so that we may cooperate with them. They do the actual feeding and our work will now consist in turning our food over to them, inspecting the work and especially in carrying to them the message of goodwill and love of the peoples of the many

⁵⁵Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Ibid.

⁵⁸Alfred Cope to John F. Reich, 12 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, General (Box 12).

⁵⁹Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

countries cooperating in this work.⁶⁰

Under this new system, the Friends would be restricted to the role of "ambassadors of goodwill and friendship", a role which they were inclined to refuse but continued to fulfil in order, they hoped, to provide some protection to their Spanish colleagues and to inspire impartiality in the relief distribution. This marked the last attempt of the Quakers to promote a message of conciliation.⁶¹ Only when this aspect of the work was blocked did the Friends finally abandon Spain. In the interim, Emmet Gulley was to stay, as Quaker representative for the whole of Spain, accompanied by Willi Begert, a representative of the Swiss Red Cross and Clyde Roberts in Almería. In Almería the situation was somewhat different in that Roberts' staff were non-Quakers and "somewhat rightist" and although the work was taken over by Auxilio Social, a number of their new agents were individuals who had been working with the Friends throughout the war, and it was thought that the conditions might actually improve with the change-over. Alfred and Norma Jacob agreed to remain under similar conditions in Barcelona, motivated by their continuing concern for Spain.

In June it was decided to continue work in Spain over the autumn and winter, but the Mennonites' building-projects proved impossible. In July the FSC agreed to cooperate with the AFSC in establishing an office in Madrid for the purpose of assisting repatriation.⁶² Florence Conard was asked to return to Madrid in September in order to assist in this work and monitor relief distribution. Lester Hershey was to undertake similar work in Valencia. Alfred and Norma Jacob proposed taking their children to Tossa where a hotel was available which they might turn into a Quaker centre and rest home.⁶³ David Blickenstaff and Paul Bowman were to remain in Bilbao. For himself Emmet Gulley saw the greatest part

⁶⁰Emmet Gulley to John F. Reich, 26 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Valencia (Box 12).

⁶¹Ibid.

⁶²Dorothy Thompson to John F. Reich, 20 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

⁶³Dorothy Thompson, to John Reich, 13 September 1939; Emily Hughes to John Reich, 6 October 1939 Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

of their work to lie in reconciliation, "the healing of broken spirits and the calming of hatreds".⁶⁴

In Madrid, the entry of the Nationalists had caused major problems to the relief organisations. The two Swiss workers had their vehicles confiscated, and these were returned only after high level intervention. They were required to pass on their goods in an orderly way to Auxilio Social but felt that "they had more self-respect than to stay and watch what was going on."⁶⁵ As the Friends had not had a representative in Madrid since the split with the Save the Children International Union in 1937, this left Madrid without a neutral relief force until Florence Conard arrived. Isolated for much of the war, serious malnutrition was endemic—Auxilio Social found that it had to feed fully half of the city.⁶⁶ As supporters of the right began to find jobs some of the need lessened, but there remained more to do than Florence Conard felt any one organisation could cope with.⁶⁷ However, Florence Conard's role was limited to that of observation, and even this was hedged around by restrictions; work for the "healing of broken spirits" was implicitly excluded.

This week I interviewed the delegate of the district Congress.... He told me it was absolutely forbidden to give political propaganda in the Comedores (something which made me mentally raise my eyebrows but I was in no position to argue). I explained in as simple language as I could muster that as far as I could see explaining that people in other countries felt full of friendliness and affection for Spain and the Spanish people wasn't political propaganda. But he insisted that it was...⁶⁸

The Nationalist embrace of *social* autarchy (they were, after all, importing

⁶⁴Emmet Gulley to John F. Reich, 26 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Valencia (Box 12).

⁶⁵Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (Box 13).

⁶⁶Bulletin no. 33, 11 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

⁶⁷Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 10 May 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

⁶⁸Ibid.

munitions) inexorably excluded outside relief organisations. Over a short period of time, the facilities to explain to children where the food came from was gradually withdrawn from most of the feeding stations Florence Conard visited.⁶⁹ Despite the efforts of Auxilio Social, which Conard generally approved, the general conditions in Madrid were, if anything, rumoured to be deteriorating, in part because a free market in food had been reopened. This changed the context in which people ate and increasingly alienated some of the relief workers. In a last, hand-written addition to her letter Florence Conard wrote:

It is one thing to bring food into a country where everybody but a few grafters... eat the same thing—where the best hotels serve the same lentil soup the soldiers and “refugiados” eat—where a piece of cheese is as much of a luxury to the Head of a Refugee Committee as to the least of his brethren....

[But when]... I pay 10 pesetas for a meal of meat, fish, cheese, etc... in the Hotel, and M. can't find 1.90 for a tin of milk of her baby... When anyone with money can have *anything* to eat and drink, when the soldiers are fed more than they can eat and $\frac{3}{4}$ of the city goes hungry—hungrier than during the war... when the stores are full of food and lean, sunken-eyed children press their noses against the panes... well—what about it? I for one, lose my appetite.⁷⁰

Although it had never been openly discussed, the context of rationing and the attempt of the Republican authorities to ensure an equity of food supply had been an ideal ideological atmosphere for the Quakers. Its loss was a shock and alienated the units more rapidly than their formal exclusion by the authorities. Changing relief methods further underlined the shift in ideology. Auxilio Social moved away from the collectivity of the dining rooms providing aid to family units, often as food to take away, despite the evidence that many recipients had little access to

⁶⁹Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 24 May 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

⁷⁰Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 10 May 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

either cooking facilities or fuel.⁷¹ This was apparently an ideological decision intended to reinforce the family as the primary economic and social unit, or it may have been to avoid possible political trouble focussed in the dining rooms. Either way, it appeared to the Friends to be less efficient in terms of fuel and to reinforce the isolation experienced by many in distress. Certainly, both the dining rooms and the colonies fell out of favour with the Nationalist authorities.

One particular concern for Conard was that little provision seemed to be made for pregnant and nursing women.⁷² This concern was reinforced by the rumours, confirmed by observation in the canteen at Chamberi, that Auxilio Social was giving milk to adults who were not sick. Conard envisaged a severe winter shortage, even though Auxilio Social had begun to tighten up on the numbers who were being fed.⁷³ Howard Kershner sent assurances that there was enough milk until the local supply could take over, but Conard, used to the cautious measures in Murcia was reluctant to accept what she saw.⁷⁴ Conditions in the Auxilio Social canteens did not cheer her; she found them on the whole unsanitary as well as ugly, and the workers were unwilling to take advice. The children's home she visited did not receive compliments either. In one home she was informed that the children had arrived very dirty and poorly clothed from "red" colonies, but on observation a month later they appeared to be in the same condition.⁷⁵

Throughout the first six months of the Nationalist occupation of Barcelona, Alfred Jacob had continued to monitor International Commission relief distribution, but had no control over its destination.⁷⁶ After a brief holiday, he and Norma returned to Barcelona with their children, planning to open a Quaker

⁷¹Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 24 May 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 31 May 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

⁷⁴Florence Conard to Emmet Gulley, 9 June 1939. Committee in Spain 1939. Correspondence: Workers in Spain, from/to (Box 12).

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 June 1939.

Centre along the lines originally planned. It was hoped by the FSC that an AFSC presence might be maintained at the Centre, but Alfred Cope, on his return to the USA, cautioned that Howard Kershner had expressed a desire to withdraw entirely from relief supply in Spain by August 1939.⁷⁷ However, in the event, a poor harvest in August meant that the International Commission continued feeding through the summer months.⁷⁸

With the outbreak of the European war, the position of Friends workers in Europe was increasingly precarious, although it was hoped that American neutrality would provide some protection for AFSC workers at least.⁷⁹ Most of the American workers in Germany had left in late August to attend a conference in Zurich—which was eventually cancelled—and experienced difficulties gaining re-entry.⁸⁰ Faced with a general deterioration in the political climate, the AFSC workers were now leaving Spain: David Blickenstaff returned to the USA in September; Clyde Roberts, Paul Bowman, Florence Conard, Lester Hershey and Wilbert Nefziger followed soon after, and Emily Parker returned in October. Twelve relief workers stayed on or transferred to France as International Commission inspectors. Noted in the minutes is the deep spiritual significance each reported from the work in Spain.⁸¹ Clarence Pickett suggested that in the event that it was not possible for the AFSC to continue distribution of the current shipload of wheat, that it be turned over to the American Red Cross and from thence to the American Ambassador to Spain for administration by Auxilio Social.⁸² Already a

⁷⁷AFSC: Minutes, Foreign Service Section, 15 June 1939; FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, p. 268, "Possibilities of Future Work in Spain"; AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 1939.

⁷⁸AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 1 August 1939.

⁷⁹AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 6 September 1939.

⁸⁰AFSC: General Meeting, 29 September 1939. In mid-September Howard Elkington and his wife returned to Berlin, Homer and Edna Morris were in London waiting for visas for Germany and Sylvia Perry was on her way to join Harry Champeney in Amsterdam. The Amsterdam Center was increasingly concerned with providing help for refugees, as was the Paris Center, to which it was hoped another American and a British Friend could be sent. AFSC: Special Meeting of Foreign Service, Board of Directors, Refugee Section and others, 12 September 1939.

⁸¹AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 29 September 1939 and October 21 1939.

⁸²AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 25 April 1939.

savings account had been set up to provide for the liquidation of the Committee.⁸³ By June, the AFSC had decided that it would not spend any more money on independent projects in Spain, although it would continue to contribute to the relief and personnel expenses of the International Commission. Preferring to reserve its funds for resettlement projects in Mexico, the AFSC decided against making plans for reconstruction work, in part due to other, more pressing needs and in part because it was already becoming clear that such assistance would not be welcome and could not take place within the restrictions the Quakers would require.⁸⁴ As a national body with a propaganda war to win, Clyde Roberts felt that Auxilio Social “still cling too much to the theory that they can feed everybody while actually they cannot.” In his opinion they had devised no good system of determining who to feed and the result was that toddlers and infants, often the least demanding, were neglected in many of the areas he visited.⁸⁵ The emphasis of the feeding had changed, however: milk was no longer a commodity in huge demand. As bread became more widely available, nursing mothers needed less assistance and the demand seemed to be for vegetables and grain. The extra grain which was in transit was offered to the French government for use in the refugee camps.⁸⁶

Many of the relief workers resented the inefficiencies of the Nationalists and their continual hostility to assistance. It was no longer possible for the Quakers to act openly in a context where relief was appropriated. Under Nationalist rule, badly needed supplies were left on the dockside sometimes for many months before being allowed to clear customs.⁸⁷

⁸³AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 24 February 1939.

⁸⁴FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 8 June 1939; Minutes of the Spain Committee, p. 270, “Report of Conference on Spain, 26 May 1939”.

⁸⁵Report of Clyde E. Roberts, Almería, Spain, for months of June and July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

⁸⁶Howard Kershner to John Reich, 8 May 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

⁸⁷Howard Kershner to Lillian Traugott, 10 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

300 tons of flour which we are now sending to Barcelona will without doubt have to be turned over to the Auxilio Social [despite instructions to the contrary from Philadelphia]... neither the American Friends Service Committee nor the American people are given any credit in connection with the flour, but that it is used as a means of propaganda for the glory of the Franco Government.⁸⁸

Such action did not merely prevent a Quaker witness, it placed it at the service of an ideology which was anathema to many Friends. Whilst willing and eager to assist the people of Spain, they were not willing to become party to political propaganda. In addition, a report from Howard Kershner made clear that the Nationalists' agenda placed a low priority on civilian relief. It took two weeks of negotiation to extract promises that pilfered or appropriated goods would be returned, by which time most of the food had been consumed by the army.⁸⁹ The Auxilio Social, as an auxiliary wing, did not have the authority to delegate at regional level or to overrule the military. Kershner wrote:

I have seen food rotting at the dock at Valencia within half a mile of starving people and no available lorry to take it to them. At the same time I have seen hundreds of lorries hauling soldiers and thousands of able bodied men marching in parades and every responsible official and most of the people, going to innumerable bull-fights and fiestas.⁹⁰

However, with the embargoes lifted it was now possible for Spain to buy its own wheat at five cents a bushel, half the price which the Food Surplus Commodities Committee were offering. This combined with the waste that Kershner reported and the confiscations by the army disinclined either the Friends or the International Commission to continue large-scale relief in Spain, although in the event it

⁸⁸Ibid.

⁸⁹Report of the Mission of the Director to Spain, 13 April - 15 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

⁹⁰Howard Kershner, report: "Three Weeks in Spain", April 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

continued into 1940.⁹¹ Ironically, there were now shortages in the Nationalist zone as food was diverted to the liberated territories. Whilst luxury goods, such as canned meat, were now available, there was a persistent shortage of low-priced foods such as peas, beans, rice, sugar and milk.⁹² Although Auxilio Social was anxious for feeding to continue, it asked that some proportion of the money might be diverted for the purchase of medical equipment. Many of the workers continued to argue that food was more important, but Kershner expressed it as his opinion that some ten or twenty per cent of funds might be employed for such purposes as medical units that might leave lasting memories of the Quaker work. Eventually, this resulted in a number of mobile medical units, mounted on light trucks, which could serve the more inaccessible villages.⁹³

In July 1939 Alfred Jacob lamented the disappearance of the huge Friends and International Commission organisation, the scattering of the Spanish collaborators and the departure of two-thirds of the foreign volunteers, despite the continuing and evident need.

We are almost tempted to feel that all our work has gone for nothing.

And yet we know that this is not so. Many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of Spanish children certainly owe their lives to our relief services. Innumerable mothers are grateful for the timely help that made so much difference in the dreary life of the refugee.

Concluding, Jacob looked to the future and the possibility that missionary activity—"finding people to whom the ideas of Quakerism are congenial"—might have to be given up.⁹⁴ Future tasks would simply be to observe and try "to filter out truth from the ceaseless rumours, propaganda, criticisms, accusation and aspirations which surround us", in particular Jacob was interested in education, in

⁹¹Howard Kershner to John Reich, 6 May 1939. Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 8 June 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

⁹²Report of Clyde E. Roberts, Almería, Spain, for months of June and July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, General (Box 13).

⁹³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 21 September 1939.

⁹⁴Ibid.

social service, in religion, wages and prices, in nutrition, social reconstruction and every aspect of life: "We shall be eager to see what new developments General Franco can bring about in a positive way, and what relationship these may have to the permanent welfare of Spain."⁹⁵

By November preparations were well under way to deal with the constricting conditions of war-time. The officers of the AFSC and its Refugee Section had been authorised to take such action regarding foreign personnel and the relocation of available funds as might be required.⁹⁶ Although Spain was still being dealt with by a separate AFSC committee, the cessation of hostilities and the increasing concern with the refugee situation in France meant that the Spanish work was in the process of being absorbed within the more general crisis. The FSC had not issued another appeal for funds since October, and the only FSC representatives in Barcelona were the Jacobs and their children.⁹⁷ In December Eleanor Stabler Clark, speaking for the AFSC, outlined four areas of continued activity:

- (a) The administration of colonies for Spanish children in France; (b) Assistance to Spanish refugees in North Africa; (c) Aid to Spanish refugees in Mexico, under the direction of Daniel and Elizabeth Marsh Jensen; and (d) Relief work in Spain itself.⁹⁸

The latter was gradually coming to an end, but work in Mexico, France and North Africa was expanding, although it was not clear how much money would be available.⁹⁹ As a conclusion of the work in Spain it was intended to send six or eight more mobile medical units, a long-term reminder of Friends' work.¹⁰⁰

The last American workers to leave were Clyde Roberts and Aldis and Cora Easterling. Florence Conard returned to Madrid to marry an Englishman and

⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶AFSC: Minutes, Board of Directors, 4 October 1939.

⁹⁷FSC: Minutes of the Friends Service Council, 5 October 1939.

⁹⁸AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 2 December 1939.

⁹⁹AFSC: Minutes, Committee on Spain, 12 December 1939.

¹⁰⁰AFSC: Minutes, General Meeting, 2 December 1939.

although still in situ in early 1940 it is not recorded when she departed.¹⁰¹ The final entry for the AFSC Committee on Spain is May 14 1940. There was no formal announcement that the committee was to be wound up but concern for Spanish refugees had become part of a far larger picture and gradually it was absorbed into the work of the Refugee and the European Relief Committees, formed in June 1940. The Jacobs moved to Tossa in June hoping to run a small Quaker centre, but in the first week of July the FSC decided to lay down¹⁰² all of the European field committees, accepting that they could not function effectively under war-time conditions.¹⁰³ On 18 July 1940 the FSC received a cable informing them that the authorities had arrested Alfred Jacob. He had been asked to meet a train carrying refugees into Spain at the border. The train had not arrived and he was arrested by the local authorities on a charge of spying and sent to Madrid. On the good offices of Howard Kershner, Jacob was eventually released but charges of owning an illegal vehicle were left on his record and he was ordered to leave Spain immediately.¹⁰⁴ In her memoirs Norma Jacob wrote, "By the summer of 1940 I was fairly well convinced that if the dictator didn't yet know that there was a fundamental incompatibility between Quakerism and his theory of society, we were wasting our time."¹⁰⁵ The work in Spain was over.

¹⁰¹John F. Reich, to Dr. Alberto Guani, Foreign Minister, Montevideo, Uruguay, 31 January 1939. Committee on Spain, Personnel, Individuals: Ybargoyen, S. (Box 13).

¹⁰²"Lay down" is Quaker terminology for formally closing a project.

¹⁰³FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 July 1940.

¹⁰⁴Interview with Alfred Jacob, Pendle Hill, PA., USA, 13 January 1997; FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, addition to Minutes of July 11 1940.

¹⁰⁵Norma Jacob, "The Spanish Civil War", in Piers Anthony, *Bio of an Ogre*, Ace Books, New York, 1988, p. 240.

6.2 France

In 1940 with the end of most Quaker work in Spain the AFSC and the FSC turned their attention to the relief and resettlement of the Spanish refugees who had fled to North Africa and to France. This thesis concentrates on the Friends' activities in the Spanish Civil War, but without some consideration of its aftermath the story feels unfinished. As the Friends themselves pointed out to the many organisations who did pull out in 1940 and 1941, the end of the war did not mean the end of the story. The actions of the AFSC and the FSC in the last two years that they were able to operate on the continent was a further manifestation of their commitment to the message of peace, reconciliation and justice to which they witnessed. For the Friends, the Spanish refugees were more than a symbol of a lost cause.

In the first months of 1940 no new workers were sent to Spain and of the AFSC, only Howard Kershner was still a regular visitor. The eight remaining FSC workers had been transferred to France, where as late as July 1940 the British Friends were maintained under the aegis of the International Commission.¹⁰⁶ When the International Commission withdrew from France in July 1940, the work was again taken over by the American Friends Service Committee, who maintained workers there until the final fall of France in 1942.¹⁰⁷

Once in France the Spanish refugees found a poor welcome. The original refugee camps were strained to breaking point, and the huge numbers crossing the border in the spring and summer of 1939 could not be accommodated.¹⁰⁸ Whilst some effort was made to house the women and children in school buildings and hospitals, the men were herded onto beaches where barbed wire and latrines were erected. In one of the largest camps at Argelès the only shelter was a burrow in the

¹⁰⁶Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 21 July 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁰⁷FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 11 July 1940.

¹⁰⁸Edith Pye estimated the numbers of refugees in the region of 230,000. Dorothy Thompson to Lillian Traugott, 2 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

sand.¹⁰⁹ This camp, one of the worst, was closed by August and the men relocated, some to a camp at St. Cyprien where married quarters were available for those who had wives and children with them.¹¹⁰ The problems for the refugees in France were far greater than many had experienced in Spain. The refugees in France were isolated from local communities and hence from assistance. Furthermore, the people around them were not sharing to any degree in their privations and were often hostile.¹¹¹

The move into the French camps changed the nature of Friends' relief work. Until the outbreak of war, although food was in short supply most women and children were adequately cared for and feeding able-bodied men had never been within the remit of the Friends' committees or the International Commission. With eight workers, two cars and two small trucks it was hoped to distribute one and a third million francs worth of clothing and bedding to the women and children scattered in France. Another one and a half million francs was to be spent on the men's camps. Kanty Cooper, Barbara Wood and Lucy Palser, who had left Spain in March, were by this time working with the Commission d'Aide aux Enfants Espagnols Refugés en France, assisting the women and children who had been spread around a number of Departments.¹¹² The French authorities could offer nothing but basic rations and as very few Spanish men were allowed to take work outside the camps there was nothing to do. Individual letters to the Friends testified to the misery which many felt.¹¹³ The team reported that many women

¹⁰⁹Francesca Wilson, "Report on the Civilian Camp at Argelès", 28 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹¹⁰Friends Service Council Bulletin, no. 37, 4 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹¹¹Lucy Palser and David Luscombe, 27 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

¹¹²Dorothy Morris had come from Lyttleton, New Zealand and had gone to Spain from England with Sir George Young in February 1937. In November she went to Southern Spain to work for the AFSC in Murcia and in February 1939 moved to Perpignan with Dr. Audrey Russell after leaving Spain because of earlier International Brigade connections. Friends Service Council Bulletin, no. 36, 7, July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹¹³Translated letter to Ruth Cope, name of sender omitted. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, Copes (Box 12).

had nothing to do all day but lie on mattresses and it was hoped that cloth, needle and thread and educational materials could soon be provided.¹¹⁴ In this way, Friends' relief work shifted rapidly towards the provision of moral assistance. Francesca Wilson felt strongly that this type of assistance might make a huge difference to the rate of illness within the camps. As food was not initially in short supply, relief tended to be in the form of winter clothing, soap, books and other small articles such as stamps and razors.¹¹⁵ Barbara Wood and Kanty Cooper reported that the allowance of only two stamps a week was felt sorely by the refugees, many of whom were intellectual and for whom writing and receiving letters was a vital part of their connection to the world.¹¹⁶ Much of this relief was predicated upon what the Spanish camp leaders requested to support their own efforts at mobilising the educational and vocational expertise which existed among the camp inhabitants. The stress on education was important for more than just traditional Quaker concerns for self-help: there was a consciousness that those who were to settle in France would need language skills and some knowledge of the country. In many of the camps, the presence of a large number of very well educated people led to the emergence of small schools and study groups, often teaching French. In some cases the French authorities were able to provide teaching materials, but Mary Elmes hoped that it might be possible to provide some books for the very small circulating libraries.¹¹⁷

The conditions in the camps were improving by August 1939, from the point of view of both food and living quarters, but there was still massive overcrowding and little to do. Most had exhausted what little money they had when they

¹¹⁴Bulletin no. 34, 10 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

¹¹⁵FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 14 March 1940.

¹¹⁶Barbara Wood and Kanty Cooper, 11 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

¹¹⁷Report on the Cultural Work in the Refugee Camps in Southern France, 3 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

escaped.¹¹⁸ Shortages of shoes and clothing were worsening as many had little to begin with. Many were refugees many times over and recognised the Friends from Catalonia.¹¹⁹ By August 1939, the British Friends could report that 50,000 men in the French camps had volunteered to return to Spain, and almost 20,000 had been absorbed into the work force, but that out of a total of 230,000 this was only the tip of the iceberg.¹²⁰ Unfortunately, repatriation did not always offer an acceptable solution. Relief workers reported:

Refugees continually give as their reason for not returning to Spain, fear of unemployment and persecution, based on the news they receive from their relatives in Spain. They will be told, for instance, that if they return their grandfather will give them work with him—the grandfather being dead years before; or that so-and-so has gone to live with his uncle, the uncle having died before the war.¹²¹

The French work was inevitably disrupted by the outbreak of war with Germany. One matter that had to be resolved was the status of relief workers. All Americans were warned to leave Paris in August, but the American Friends decided to stay.¹²² The British Friends also remained, under the umbrella of the International Commission.¹²³

War brought currency restrictions and it was no longer possible for the AFSC to pass money to Spain through London; the AFSC account with Friends House was closed in November and all International Commission money was

¹¹⁸Friends Service Council Bulletin, no. 37, 4 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹¹⁹Ibid.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Barbara Wood and Kanty Cooper, 11 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

¹²²Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 16 August 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹²³Dorothy Thompson, to John Reich, 13 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

transferred to New York for safety in September 1939.¹²⁴ Despite this, the International Commission began to consider enlarging its scope to deal with refugee children of all countries engaged in the war.¹²⁵

In October 1939 there remained 182,000 Spanish refugees in France of whom 100,000 were women and children.¹²⁶ The AFSC offered to take care of the children if the International Commission would take on the medical care of the injured and mutilated men, care of the aged and migration and resettlement plans. This was suggested because the AFSC's constituency had traditionally been most easy to mobilise for child welfare.¹²⁷ However, whilst the International Commission agreed to some emendation of its remit it felt that it could not take on all of these responsibilities and, like the AFSC, felt itself committed to the care of children, now very much the minority of those in need.¹²⁸ Furthermore, the context of the mission was changing rapidly. Two million French people had been evacuated from the war zones and this was overshadowing the issues of Spanish relief. It was becoming imperative that some money be found to extend relief to French children, if only for moral purposes: "it would increase our influence and make it possible for us to exercise a greater degree of protection and to render more assistance to the Spanish people."¹²⁹ Because of the alteration of the nature of the work in late 1939,

¹²⁴John F. Reich to Emily Hughes, 22 November 1939; Emily Hughes to John Reich, 6 October 1939 Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10); Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 12 September 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹²⁵Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 8 September 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹²⁶John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 11 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹²⁷Ibid.

¹²⁸Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 28 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹²⁹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 14 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

the International Commission removed the word Spain from its masthead, leaving its title as the "International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees".¹³⁰

It was hoped initially that the war would create a large demand for labour and thus take many of the able-bodied Spanish men out of the camps, leaving the old and sick in the care of the Commission.¹³¹ However, the war hardened attitudes to the refugees: regarded at best as an unhelpful burden and at worst as a security risk they were shunted from place to place, and camps near the Spanish border were moved.¹³² No attempt was made to mobilise Spanish men into the French army until November 1939 when the usual five-year contract for the Foreign Legion was amended to "for the duration of the war", but this was voluntary, and there was no attempt at conscription.¹³³ It was felt by many that to assimilate the Spanish into the army would be a breach of neutrality, and French rightist circles in particular opposed any such propositions. Added to this was a growing wave of French nationalism which made circumstances uncomfortable.¹³⁴ Assimilating Spanish men into the work force was not easy in part because of local hostility in some areas, whilst in others employers took advantage their precarious position,

¹³⁰Michael Hansson to Clarence Pickett, 5 August 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹³¹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 5 September 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹³²Emily Hughes to John F. Rich, 11 December 1939; Emily Hughes to John Reich, 6 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10). NB: John Reich, an Englishman, Americanised his name to "Rich" in late 1939, possibly as a consequence of naturalisation or to avoid associations with Germany. Extracts from the Report on Work for the Month of September, Perpignan. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

¹³³Howard Kershner to John Reich, received 7 December, 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11). 20,000 Spaniards who served in the French army were captured by the Germans. See Andrew Cowan, "The Guerilla War Against Franco", *European History Quarterly*, vol. 20, 1990, pp. 227-253.

¹³⁴Report on the Cultural Work in the Refugee Camps in Southern France, 3 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Spanish Refugees in France (Box 11).

offering extremely low wages and long hours.¹³⁵

The French authorities were losing sympathy with their foreign guests, both because of their own situation and because French politics was swinging to the right. Under the stress of war many of the less able people were under pressure from the French authorities to return home.¹³⁶ Reports were coming in to the AFSC of the forcible repatriation of widows. Women's refugee status seems to have depended on the refugee status of their husband, father or son; otherwise, like orphans, they were claimed by Spain, and France cooperated in returning them, even if their own safety could not be assured.¹³⁷ In blatant contradiction of his usual faith in the Nationalists' goodwill, Kershner reported, "On more than one occasion refugees have reported to me that women so repatriated have been either executed or imprisoned within a week of their arrival in Spain."¹³⁸ One difficulty was what to do with already existing colonies of Spanish children in France. The AFSC was reluctant to simply return them without some guarantees, but the situation was rapidly turning into a permanent charge.¹³⁹

Working with other organisations could lead to difficulties. The International Commission had a long association with the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign in New York but began to feel that this organisation's own associations in France might jeopardise the relationship between the International Commission

¹³⁵Howard Kershner to John Reich, received 7 December, 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

¹³⁶Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 19 and 25 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹³⁷Howard Kershner to John Reich, received 7 December, 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

¹³⁸Ibid.

¹³⁹John F. Reich to Howard Kershner and Edith Pye, 17 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11). Children were being cared for in four kinds of colonies: the Swiss colony, a colony operated by a Catholic Committee, a number of colonies operated by the Basque Committee and the Friends' original Pax colony from Perpignan. Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 26 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

and the French government.¹⁴⁰ Other organisations also had commitments of their own and could not be relied on to follow through with their initial interest. In December Kershner was perturbed to hear that the Confederated Spanish Societies had withdrawn its support of its colonies, caring for 700 children, which had already been established.¹⁴¹ By December 1939 the funds of many organisations were exhausted and the International Commission found itself taking over the colonies of a number of smaller organisations, including those belonging to the Swedish Committee.¹⁴² Another problem was that in war-time conditions all imports were liable to military requisition, making it risky for the Commission to bring in blankets and clothing.¹⁴³ Although refugees were encouraged to become self-supporting, there was an "iron clad" rule that refugees might not travel from Department to Department, whether to look for work or that a colony might be moved to safety, or to reunite families.¹⁴⁴

Kershner felt that some of the problems they were experiencing were deliberate: "If the truth were known, I think the French Government is opposed to having the refugees made so comfortable in France that they will not want to return to Spain."¹⁴⁵ However, it would be unfair not to point out that the French bore the brunt of the refugee exodus. In June 1939 alone the French government had spent

¹⁴⁰Howard Kershner to Herman Reissig, 30 November 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁴¹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 1 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁴²Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 5 and 14 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁴³Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 25 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁴⁴Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 28 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁴⁵Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 25 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

approximately 1.5 million francs on the refugees and had obtained a further credit of 3 million francs for the same purpose.¹⁴⁶

Despite these difficulties, Friends' relief work became far more encompassing than it had been in Spain. As money came in from the Confederated Spanish Societies, an umbrella group of most of the old relief organisations, the International Commission and AFSC were able to abandon their policy of children first and women maybe and turn their attention to the majority of refugees, who were adult males. With \$10,000 contributed by the Confederated Societies, it was possible to think in terms of providing appliances, tools, housing and rehabilitation training for mutilated men.¹⁴⁷ Other work amongst men included finding clothing for those in the compulsory work gangs which France had established and assisting them in establishing or maintaining contact with their families.¹⁴⁸ Child feeding continued as usual, although increasingly the Friends were looking after more and more French evacuees in colonies and canteens; as many children were returned to Spain, it became hard to find Spanish children to fill dedicated places.¹⁴⁹ Consequently, the French government favoured the colonies as a way of accommodating French evacuee children. Conditions were not easy and money was in short supply, although the Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign (SRRC) and the Mennonites continued to support the work, but in this period of the war the Spanish children, at least, continued to enjoy the support of the French government and population.¹⁵⁰ Workers were able to mediate between French authorities and camp inmates and to assist with the establishment of schools, material provided by

¹⁴⁶According to Michael Hansson, letter to Clarence Pickett, 28 June 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁴⁷Eleanor Stabler Clarke to Board of Directors and Committee on Spain, 12 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, General (Box 14),

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 17 January 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14).

¹⁵⁰Isabel Needham to John Rich, 10 March 1940. Committee on Spain 1939, Individuals: Needham, Isabel (Box 13)

International Commission funds and milk was provided for children in the camps and maternity assistance where possible.¹⁵¹ A curious phenomenon which Howard Kershner observed, however, was the length of time colonies could survive after their sponsors announced that funds had dried up.¹⁵² The FSC workers continued to operate with the International Commission in the camps, distributing clothing and food to over 230 camps in 44 departments.

In December the International Commission formally expanded its work to include French evacuees, adding a sub-department to its body. The FSC agreed to this step and was happy to be associated with it; Howard Kershner was anxious to have AFSC involvement, in part because the International Commission was not sure that non-Quaker elements would wish to continue with the work during war-time.¹⁵³ However, although the AFSC had begun appealing for funds for general refugee services the bulk of this money went to help with the resettlement of refugees from Central Europe. It was unlikely that the AFSC could raise more than the \$200,000 to which the total refugee budget already amounted.¹⁵⁴ Whilst they would be happy to receive funds on behalf of the International Commission there was a general feeling that this would actively militate against the International Commission, as it would combine rather than distinguish the causes. Recognising the gradual disappearance of a distinct "Spanish problem", the Committee on Spain was subsumed into the Refugee Section of the AFSC in April 1940.¹⁵⁵

Financial support was dropping away rapidly, but some was actually

¹⁵¹Eleanor Stabler Clarke to Board of Directors and Committee on Spain, 12 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, General (Box 14),

¹⁵²Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 31 January 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14).

¹⁵³Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 16 and 19 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁵⁴John F. Rich to Howard Kershner, 21 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

¹⁵⁵Eleanor Stabler Clarke, Chairman Committee on Spain, 2 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, General (Box 14).

rejected. In January a dispute broke out when Howard Kershner unilaterally declined to pass on earmarked gifts from the SRRC to certain organisations in France.¹⁵⁶ This was a response to the French government's ban on the Communist Party in September 1939, and its consequent attempts to monitor and shut down any agencies it regarded as suspicious. Howard Kershner, attempting to guard the AFSC and the International Commission from taint, refused to deal with those organisations with Communist sympathies. For Kershner to alienate the SRRC was problematic, however, as by 1940 it was the only American organisation in the USA which continued to raise funds for the Spanish refugees—the Confederated Spanish Societies represented only Spanish speaking peoples and had little influence with the North American public.¹⁵⁷ When Howard Kershner returned to the USA in May 1940, John Rich cautioned him in advance to withhold interviews with the American press until he was debriefed. The American political climate was increasingly hostile to the French government and the relief work was under constant criticism for being partial to French interests.¹⁵⁸

In February Margaret Frawley of Boston was sent out to join the International Commission. A journalist and social worker she was sent partially to liaise with the Philadelphia office, and to send back detailed information of relief operations and sponsorship arrangements.¹⁵⁹ As the refugees had become an acute political problem there had arisen a culture clash between the organisations which contributed to the AFSC—who wished to see more direct political intervention on behalf of the refugees, and who had been alienated by Howard Kershner's acceptance of French conditions—and the AFSC itself. Margaret Frawley's role was to create and handle publicity, which the other workers had neither the time nor

¹⁵⁶Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 2 January 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁵⁷John Rich to Howard Kershner, 2 February 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁵⁸John Rich to Howard Kershner, 26 April 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁵⁹John F. Rich to Howard Kershner, 12 February 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14); John Rich to Dr. Herman Reissig, 8 March 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, General (Box 17).

the experience to manage.¹⁶⁰ Naturally, she was quickly sucked into the relief work. At the end of February a new government circular was issued declaring that all Spanish refugees unable to support themselves must return to Spain, an announcement which caused consternation amongst the refugees. In response Howard Kershner released a bulletin to all the Prefects instructing them that places would be found in colonies for children whose mothers found work.¹⁶¹ In May the French Government began to enquire into the statutes of all voluntary organisations and those not dissolved after the first judicial enquiry remained under caution. To be allowed to continue working in France a relief organisation had to be able to prove that it had no political connections, however indirect.¹⁶² The Confederated Spanish Society funds were sequestered by the French government, leaving many Spanish refugees without means of support.¹⁶³

By March 1940 the French concentration camps had been liquidated and the men had been moved into work gangs or had found work in agriculture or industry. However, although by May most male refugees had found employment, one of the problems in settling Spanish workers into employment in the increasingly welcoming industries was that unlike in agricultural work—in which many women were employed—in industry there was no actual provision of food to workers, and wages were paid fortnightly or monthly. Without government aid, and with the local prefectures having no money for this purpose, many of the refugees experienced greatest hardship just when they were becoming most established.¹⁶⁴ Furthermore, Kershner estimated that there was a residue of 19,000

¹⁶⁰John F. Rich to Margaret Frawley, 5 February 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Personnel (Box 19).

¹⁶¹Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 29 February 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14).

¹⁶²g. Boudosquie to Howard Kershner, 2 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14).

¹⁶³Report from Edith Pye (FSC), 3 July 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁶⁴Margaret Frawley, Report, "Phases of Spanish Refugee Work in France", received 7 May 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Reports (Box 14).

children, 15,000 women, 2,564 mutilated men and an unknown number of thousand of old and unemployable men who required continued care. Many were trying to emigrate but experiencing problems with visas.¹⁶⁵ Yet despite worsening conditions in France, one hundred refugees a day were still coming over the Pyrenees in response to a Nationalist amnesty that consisted of internment and forced labour.¹⁶⁶

The German advance in May 1940 led to huge influxes of refugees, both Belgian and French. In this context finding money specifically for the Spanish was next to impossible: "philanthropy is a fickle woman, pouring out her pennies as the headlines show the shift of battle," Margaret Frawley wrote. In this climate, and in a situation where many Spanish were now settled into jobs, the best way to help the remaining refugees was to create a more general relief service, and to focus on need and not nationality.¹⁶⁷ However, as the crisis deepened more restrictions were placed on foreigners and the programme of job-placement for Spanish refugees was suspended.¹⁶⁸

By June refugee problems had escalated dramatically and the International Commission established sub-offices in Toulouse, Bordeaux and Perpignan in an attempt to deal with the emergency.¹⁶⁹ The Friends and the International Commission were assisting Belgians, French, Poles, Luxembourgeois, and Spanish. It was no longer possible to separate the work and in practice few workers would have wished to.¹⁷⁰ The French authorities tended to expect the International

¹⁶⁵Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, no date, "Problem of the Spanish Refugees which make the maintenance of a permanent office essential"; Howard Kershner to John Rich, 12 March 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to H. Kershner (Box 14).

¹⁶⁶Donald Darling, "Observations in the Situation of Spanish Refugees in France", April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission..., Reports (Box 14).

¹⁶⁷Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 22 May 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁶⁸Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 6 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁶⁹Report from Edith Pye (FSC), 3 July 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁷⁰*Ibid.*

Commission to place credit at their disposal and were taken aback when specific orders were requested; however, despite this the French government did maintain concern for the refugees. In May the French government engaged the International Commission to inoculate all refugees against typhoid.¹⁷¹ In many areas the only real organisation was that provided by the refugees themselves, a trend of which the Friends approved, but at which the French government looked askance.¹⁷²

As the war situation became more threatening the Friends in Paris instructed the Bordeaux office to secure accommodation for the Commission there, and plans were made to evacuate. Nineteen people were sent to Bordeaux on 8 June. On 10 June another seven workers left Paris, leaving Richard Rees, Tony Gilpin, Margaret Frawley, Toot van Ordt and David Luscombe to follow, with a car and another lorry. A few days later, on the Saturday, news of the fall of Paris came through. The Bordeaux office heard that a British vessel, probably the last, was leaving Bordeaux, and called in all the British workers from the Prefectures. They arrived on the Sunday night, and on the Sunday and Monday the work and all money was transferred to the American, Irish and other neutral workers. In the absence of Howard Kershner, Margaret Frawley of the AFSC took charge, assisted by Howard Sturges (American), Una Mortisheas (Irish) and Wilhelm Frey (Swiss), and Toot van Oordt (Dutch) from the Paris office went on to join Celine Rott (American) at Montauban where there were many Dutch refugees needing help. Mary Elmes (Irish) went back to Perpignan, and Helga Holbeck (Danish) returned to Toulouse where she remained in charge. Donald Darling and William Brebner, both British, decided to remain, although Brebner had returned to Britain by September.¹⁷³ In addition a number of French Catholics continued to work with the Friends.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷¹Report from Toulouse, 25 May 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁷²Dorothy Morris to Richard Rees, 1 June 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission (Box 14).

¹⁷³Report from Edith Pye (FSC), 3 July 1940; Edith M. Pye to John F. Rich, 14 September 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission... (Box 14).

¹⁷⁴*ibid.*

On 14 June, the Germans entered Paris. On 20 June Margaret Frawley, in the absence of Howard Kershner, closed the Paris office and sent the remaining workers on to Bordeaux. After the foreign staff left, all local French staff were paid off with two months' wages. All the foreign workers were asked to withdraw as much cash as possible from the bank and to carry the work on as long as possible.¹⁷⁵ The armistice was announced on 22 June and the relief workers cabled Philadelphia to inform them that all relief work had been handed over to workers from neutral countries.¹⁷⁶ For the rest of June the number of refugees on the roads escalated enormously. The money taken from the banks was given to the field offices with instructions to buy supplies immediately and to feed the hungry.¹⁷⁷ With the money following the refugees to Toulouse, Margaret Frawley chose to stay in Bordeaux and wait for the occupation: the Spaniards, as Republicans trapped in occupied territory, were understandably fearful.¹⁷⁸ Furthermore, the British government refused to take out any refugees not listed as working with them and the American government was adamant that American ships should not enter French waters for refugees of any nationality.¹⁷⁹

On 28 June Margaret Frawley wrote to say that the Germans had begun to

¹⁷⁵Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 20 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁷⁶"...as definite policy, work of commission transferred to neutral workers, under Frawley, assisted by Sturges until Kershners arrival Bordeaux. All British workers landed England twentieth June except Darling and Brebner who decided to remain and one other. Hope Kershner arriving soon, anxious about group." Cable from Richard Rees and Edith Pye to John Rich, 22 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940. Coms & Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence from/to (Box 17).

¹⁷⁷Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 25 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁷⁸Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 25 and 26 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁷⁹Clarence E. Pickett to Constancia de la Mora, 24 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico (Box 19). Rudi Nobel, a young Spanish student whom the Friends had endeavoured to support at various times had found himself in a labour battalion assisting the British, but formally listed as a French soldier. When the British were evacuated they were not permitted to take anybody listed in this manner. Nobel's escape was assisted by Belgians but when he finally did get permission to leave for England he found himself on a boat to North Africa. Report of Rudi Nobel on North Africa, 6 October 1941. Foreign Service 1941, France, Relief, North Africa (General Files 1941, Foreign Service, France-Germany).

move into Bordeaux and that she understood they intended to take over all services.¹⁸⁰ When the Germans did enter Bordeaux, the Friends had fewer problems than they had anticipated. Returning from army head quarters where they had been granted permission to circulate, Frawley found two German soldiers waiting; recipients of Quaker feeding in 1919 they welcomed the Friends and helped to expedite matters: "That gratitude over two decades is something to treasure in these hard days."¹⁸¹

On 1 July the French government moved to Vichy. In Toulouse the International Commission was feeding 5,000 a day, and another thousand in Montauban as French refugees began to head south. Similar problems were reported from Marseilles.¹⁸² On 5 July, John Rich wrote to Luis B. Perez:

The withdrawal of practically all foreign relief agencies from French territory leaves our Quaker workers alone with the burden of supporting the many thousands of Spanish refugee children formerly maintained with help from abroad. One of the last acts of the Raynaud Government was to place 6,500 Spanish children in our care.¹⁸³

In addition, Howard Kershner reported a press release by General Franco forbidding further repatriation; 180,000 Spanish refugees were now trapped without the protection of a foreign government.¹⁸⁴

The principal tragedy was that as the work ballooned many societies withdrew or had their funds frozen.¹⁸⁵ The establishment of the Vichy government

¹⁸⁰Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 28 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁸¹Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 4 July 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁸²Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 15 July 1940; Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 15 July 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, from M. Frawley (Box 17).

¹⁸³John F. Rich to Luis B. Perez, 5 July 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: General (Box 14).

¹⁸⁴Ibid.

¹⁸⁵Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 11 July 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

did not prevent a blockade of all French ports, and the AFSC and the International Commission began to make presentations to the British Government for the safe passage of relief supplies.¹⁸⁶ The escalation of the war also reinforced the American policy of keeping American ships out of war zones, thus preventing any American ship from being hired to take the Spanish refugees to Mexico. Ironically, the President's committee continued to offer \$50 million for relief work if the AFSC could solve the blockade problems.¹⁸⁷ Vichy also posed problems for the fundraisers. In July the Foster Parents Plan (FPP), an organisation which had sponsored colonies, received letters from almost all the sponsors saying that if the money was to be used in France they would not continue to contribute: "it was their opinion that the Spanish children should go back to Spain rather than remain in France under Fascism." As the committee shared this feeling the sponsorship scheme was effectively at an end, although all current stocks were to be turned over to the International Commission.¹⁸⁸ Instead, the FPP took over the support of the Basque and Spanish children living in England, giving up on those in France, much to the annoyance of the AFSC who were shocked that the FPP could simply abandon responsibility for the children. The AFSC had long made a practice of substituting general funds where sponsorship fizzled out and did not really understand why the FPP did not do the same. The termination of an AFSC or FSC project had never been accompanied by the complete and immediate withdrawal which the FPP decided upon. It was as if the children ceased to exist for the FPP once the political cause they represented disappeared.¹⁸⁹

Sadly, having done a superb job in relocating the International Commission during the invasion, Margaret Frawley wrote that she had to leave in September in order to meet unavoidable personal commitments. There were now fifteen

¹⁸⁶John F. Rich to Margaret Frawley, 26 July 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, from M. Frawley (Box 17).

¹⁸⁷Ibid.

¹⁸⁸Edna Blue, Executive Chairman, to John F. Rich, 19 January 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: Foster Parents' Plan for War Children Inc. (Box 14).

¹⁸⁹Meeting of Executive Board Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, 15 April 1941. Coms. & Orgs.: 1941, Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign (Box 19).

Americans in France, soon to be joined by another two, and these would be the last new workers until the situation stabilised. The relief programme, although increasingly difficult to maintain, was still spending around Frs. 2,000,000 per month. Despite blockades and rigid restrictions on the transfer of funds to unoccupied France the AFSC had managed to buy more than 3,000 cases of Swiss milk and had transferred \$50,000.¹⁹⁰ However, as far as the Spanish were concerned the writing was on the wall. In a letter home Margaret Frawley wrote, "for all practical purposes the unoccupied and occupied areas are pretty much the same".¹⁹¹

As many children as could be sent home to relatives were now going, leaving many of the colonies with only a handful of Spanish children amidst large numbers of French and Belgians.¹⁹² Although the authorities were being cooperative the official services promised fail to materialise, many organisations simply folded up and left, and starvation began to set in amongst the refugees.¹⁹³

The AFSC found it increasingly difficult to separate their work into national groupings as the camps and refugee settlements were fairly mixed, and the Spanish refugees were no longer distinguished in all the records. This worried some organisations. SRRC expressed concern that the money they raised would be put into general relief in France, and felt that as the Spanish were solely dependent upon the International Commission they should have priority over the money SRRC raised. In reply John Rich explained that as the only money the AFSC was now receiving for the Spanish came from the SRRC they were in fact being subsidized by the general funds for relief in Europe.¹⁹⁴ Theoretically, under an

¹⁹⁰John F. Rich to Edith Pye, 28 August 1940. Committee on Spain 1940. Coms & Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence from/to (unknown Box)

¹⁹¹Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, undated, August 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁹²Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 12 September 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁹³Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, undated, August 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

¹⁹⁴Herman Reissig to John Rich, 9 November 1940; John F. Rich to Herman Reissig, 25 November 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign,

accord between Mexico and Vichy, all Spanish refugees were to be considered under the protection of the Mexican Embassy in Marseilles, and funds from the Spanish groups in Mexico were to go through the embassy, but this had little practical application as most of the left-wing groups in Mexico were unwilling to send money into Vichy France.¹⁹⁵

In total the Friends had complete care of over 1,000 children in Quaker houses scattered over France. An ever larger number were French, but Spanish, German, Czechoslovak and Polish children also made up the numbers. Supplementary feeding of another 30,000 children took place in 400 schools in Marseilles, Toulouse, Montauban, Auch, Carcassonne, Perpignan, Narbonne, Montpellier, Nîmes and Lyons. Local French committees were also active, proving soup for many of the canteens, to which the Friends added rice, milk and chocolate. Milk was also being provided for 10,000 French babies and in the concentration camps of Argelès and Gurs,¹⁹⁶ 2,000 children (the majority of who were Spanish) were given milk; maternity and infant clinics were maintained at Elne and Marseilles.¹⁹⁷ The Friends' work went back to where they had started, meeting refugees off trains and providing hot drinks and small comforts to the women and children. It was hoped that if funds could be raised the International Commission could continue to support around 900 remaining mutilated Spanish men, but the women and children would be prioritised.¹⁹⁸ An additional difficulty, which Frawley was anxious to avoid discussing with the Press when she returned, was

General (Box 17).

¹⁹⁵Daniel and Elizabeth Jensen to John Rich, 1 October 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

¹⁹⁶The term concentration camp is troublesome. It is not clear what the conditions were like, or the exact status of the inhabitants, but John Wood, an American worker, talks of thousands of refugees of many nations kept behind barbed wire on meagre rations, a reflection in part of the lack of food to be bought even on civilian ration cards. Report on Conditions in Unoccupied France and Current Relief Operations of the American Friends Service Committee, John Wood Jr., 24 February 1996. Foreign Service 1941, France—Relief (Box 26).

¹⁹⁷Report on Conditions in Unoccupied France and Current Relief Operations of the American Friends Service Committee, John Wood Jr., 24 February 1996. Foreign Service 1941, France—Relief (Box 26).

¹⁹⁸Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 12 September 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

whether food was by-passing the blockade and being diverted into occupied territory. She suspected that it was, but it was hard to monitor or to know what to do about it.¹⁹⁹

On 7 April, John Rich wrote to Cordell Hull, Secretary of State, to thank him for his assurance that the British government would reconsider passage through the blockade for food and clothing for adult prisoners in the French internment camps, but in the event, and with the American Red Cross declining to support the attempt to provide relief in the internment camps, the British government refused the request from the AFSC and the Jewish American Joint Distribution Committee.²⁰⁰ Despite this it was still intended to continue the feeding programme in the camps in unoccupied France until September 1941, after which supplies and funds would probably run out.²⁰¹ The Quakers were now one of a very few groups to be allowed into the camps.²⁰² In 1942, when Germany occupied Southern France most of the AFSC workers left. It is not very clear how many overseas Quaker workers remained in France (perhaps two or three): there are no records of names in the published sources and the AFSC archives have yet to be searched for this information, but these workers, with the assistance of the small number of Quakers in Marseilles and Paris, continued to provide small-scale relief in the camps in the South of France, to French prisoners in SS-controlled prisons and to give some limited aid to deportation trains. Some work was also done amongst those in hiding in Toulouse.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹Margaret Frawley to John F. Rich, 8 October 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence, France, Margaret Frawley, to Philadelphia (Box 17).

²⁰⁰John F. Rich to Cordell Hull, 7 April 1941; Department of State to John F. Rich, 1 April 1941. France, Relief, Internment Corps, 1940 (Box 25).

²⁰¹Report on camp situation in unoccupied France, 21 July 1941; Department of State to John F. Rich, 1 April 1941. France, Relief, Internment Corps, 1940 (Box 25).

²⁰²France, Relief, Internment Corps, 1940 (Box 25).

²⁰³Stanley Johnson, *Quaker Work For Prisoners of War in South West France, 1945-1948*, William Sessions Ltd., York, 1990, pp. 3-4.

6.3 North Africa

In an attempt to escape Spain around 5,000 people, men, women and children, took ship for French North Africa in April 1939.²⁰⁴ Once there, the majority were refused permission to leave the ships, although 1,700 were allowed to disembark and were placed in a clearing camp in Oran.²⁰⁵ Of the remaining 3,200 none were allowed to disembark from the thirteen ships on which they had arrived whilst the French government attempted to get the British to take some responsibility for the refugees. Although the Friends could do little to provide long term help, as an arm of the International Commission their representatives were able to fumigate, clothe and feed the refugees in Oran and eventually to secure their disembarkation.²⁰⁶

The economic situation of the refugees was worse than in France as no relief dining-rooms were established and the French authorities refused to grant work permits. Only very small industrial projects were permitted and some refugees were permitted to peddle, but otherwise there was little to live on.²⁰⁷ Many refugees were placed in "Foreign Labour Companies" scattered across the French territories. The Labour Companies were run like prisons, work was on such tasks as rail road construction in the summer heat, and failure to accomplish set tasks led to beatings. In addition, refugees were given no assurance that they would not be extradited to Spain.²⁰⁸

The fall of France led to a huge influx of refugees into Morocco. Once there, the internees were classified as *Travailleurs Civils Etrangers* (Foreign Civilian Workers). Although guarded by military personnel and treated as one step up

²⁰⁴In April there were 8,000 refugees stranded in Oran and 3,500 in Bizerta (North Africa). Notes on the conference between John Reich and the Confederation of Spanish Societies. 11 April 1939, Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²⁰⁵Robert Wheeler, "Preliminary Report on Refugees in North Africa", April 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

²⁰⁶Howard Kershner, "Report of Mission of the Director to Spain", April 13 to May 5 1939), Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

²⁰⁷Committee on Spain 1940, Refugees, Spanish Refugees in France and North Africa (Box 19).

²⁰⁸*Ibid.*

from slave labour (they were paid around 50 centimes a day), the designation wiped out all formal obligations of the military authorities. Prisoners of War cannot be forced to work, but the TCE could.²⁰⁹ The demobilisation of large numbers of French soldiers in French Morocco added to the problems, increasing overcrowding, exacerbating food shortages and contributing to the spread of typhus and malaria.²¹⁰ The refugees were organised into camps 80 km from Casablanca although the AFSC managed to keep 126 invalids and small children outside by granting each 5,000 francs. Those who had their own means were interned as soon as their money ran out, and as under Vichy work was forbidden this occurred rapidly.

As the Vichy government became established things worsened for the refugees. A report from Don Ramon Gonzalez Sicilia, who had served as Republican Spanish Consul in Casablanca, indicated that the contacts which had existed between the refugees and the French authorities had broken down. Despite public agreements between the Mexican government and that of Vichy, the refugees had no documentation other than the Foreigners' Identification Card issued by the French police in Morocco. When a refugee asked for authorisation to leave for Mexico, the Mexican Legation in France answered that permits would be issued in lots when a boat was assured, thus preventing people from arranging their own passage where possible. In June 1941, an attempt to evacuate as many as possible on the American ships the *Winnipeg* and the *Wyoming* failed when the *Winnipeg* was stopped and held by the British, and the passengers of the *Wyoming* were forcibly removed by the French authorities and returned to concentration camps.²¹¹

²⁰⁹Report of Rudi Nobel on North Africa, 6 October 1941. Foreign Service 1941, France, Relief, North Africa (Box 26).

²¹⁰Statement of Health Conditions in French Morocco, Dr. William Hills Sheldon, Assistant Professor, Cornell University, 4 November 1941. Foreign Service 1941, France, Relief, North Africa (Box 26.).

²¹¹Refugee Services, 1941; French North Africa, Refugee Program Reports (Box 27).

6.4 Resettlement in Mexico

Throughout 1939 and 1940 the AFSC had endeavoured to raise money for emigration but succeeded mainly in finding sponsors for specific individuals. In part, this was due to their reluctance to get involved with this side of the work, but also because their style of fund raising tended to lean towards small numbers of people giving large amounts to specific objects.²¹² In addition, however, the AFSC had to deal with the effects of the USA's 1924 immigration act which effectively prohibited such sponsorship from supporting emigration to the USA. Only individuals could sponsor and the immigrant had to prove a connection between themselves and the interested party. The law had ostensibly been intended to prevent labour contractors from bringing large parties of people over, but it had always been obvious that it would prevent mass migration of any kind.²¹³ In effect, this forced the AFSC to look to other countries to take in large number of refugees. The only country to do so was Mexico. With the outbreak of war, and the invasion of France in 1940 migration plans became imperative.

The Mexican Government's response to the flight of refugees from Spain exceeded the normal bounds of generosity. Early in the war Mexico had offered sanctuary to prestigious Spanish intellectuals, the elite of academic society.²¹⁴ Although Mexico had, since 1910, been a haven for political exiles, Mexican law was strict on the admission of immigrants and even stricter with regard to qualifications for citizenship. For the Spanish, the Mexican Government made an exception—seeing in the cause of the Republic a reflection of Mexico's own revolutionary struggles—and the Spanish refugees were offered the right to unlimited immigration and almost automatic citizenship.²¹⁵ Discussions in March and April 1939 with the Mexican government had established an initial total

²¹²Eleanor Stabler Clarke to Board of Directors and Committee on Spain, 12 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, General (Box 14),

²¹³John Rich to Herman Reissig, 19 March 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, General (Box 17).

²¹⁴Patricia W. Fagen, *Exiles and Citizens: Spanish Republicans in Mexico*, University of Texas Press, Austin and London, 1973, pp. 29-30.

²¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 31.

of 50,000 people and a number of general principles.²¹⁶ Only refugees who wanted to live in Mexico could be sent—there were to be no forcible transportations—and if a man were to be selected his entire family would be sent. Priority would be given to those whose lives would be in danger if they returned to Franco's Spain (in effect this meant everybody) and selections would be according to skill, ability and health. No political favouritism was to influence selection and the only restriction on the immigrants was that they were precluded from participation in Mexican politics—a sop handed out to the Mexican Right.²¹⁷

In April, Dr. Puche, Professor of Medicine and Rector of the University of Valencia and previously chief of the war sanitary services of the Republic, was sent to Mexico to open headquarters with a small staff, to establish the necessary connections with the Spanish authorities and to begin the work of looking at the possibilities of assimilation for the refugees.²¹⁸ Because of the hostility of the USA to the prospect of Spanish refugees, there was a certain amount of anxiety on the part of the government that the Mexican plan be successful.²¹⁹

A critical question was just what work the already overstretched AFSC would undertake in Mexico. There was pressure from other organisations for the Friends to either sponsor a Spanish colony in Mexico or to provide a welcome committee to assist the assimilation of refugees into the wider population, but they were reluctant to become involved in direct aid to a highly politicised group of adult and fit males, even though their selection criteria had already begun to break down in their work in the French camps. In addition, much of their work in Mexico had as much to do with settling German-Jewish refugees as it did with the

²¹⁶Conversation between American Friends Service Committee and Confederation of Spanish Societies, Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²¹⁷Ibid.

²¹⁸Ibid.; Fagen op. cit., p. 48.

²¹⁹The Committee for Impartial Civilian Relief in Spain, the President's committee, offered to support the effort through the Friends, but it is not clear exactly what this support amounted to. Mary Carter Jones to Clarence Pickett, 7 April 1939, Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

Spanish.²²⁰

The Mexican government agreed to provide an agency to support the refugees; to locate, survey and divide suitable land; give title to the land to those who settled; provide machinery to drill wells; provide government agencies such as post offices, telegraph services, railroads and police protection; and to provide a large amount of equipment for free. The agencies would supply windmills for tapping water, food and clothing, tools, seeds and technical aid. In reality, the government simply did not have the resources, and the war in Europe increasingly drained the fund-raising powers of the voluntary agencies.²²¹ Properly sceptical of such generous offers, the Friends sent out Sir Richard Rees to investigate.

In June 1939 Sir Richard Rees, who had worked for the AFSC/International Commission until 1940, was sent to Mexico to investigate conditions. Around 2,400 refugees had already arrived, with around 800 in Mexico City. One consistent problem was that the emphasis on getting out those in greatest danger meant that a large proportion were intellectuals, many very distinguished, but most with little money. Whilst welcoming the refugees, the Mexican government had hoped for agricultural workers and mechanics. What they got was, "anything from a civil servant up or down to a poet".²²²

The local Spanish Committee had engaged itself to organise reception arrangements and refugees were being distributed from Veracruz to the surrounding villages as rapidly as possible. All were supported by the local committee with some assistance granted by amenable state governors, despite some hostility from the Right.²²³ With the uncertain state of Mexican politics, there was a strong chance of the refugees becoming a political football. Rees reported that the Italians, Germans and Falange Española all had representatives in Mexico,

²²⁰"Report of John F. Rich Representing the American Friends Service Committee in Mexico City, February 11-12, 1940 on Behalf of Spanish and German Refugee Interests". Jewish Refugee Settlement in Mexico 1940 (Box 16).

²²¹Frank Tannenbaum to John Rich, 30 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²²²Report from Sir Richard Rees, 19 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²²³Ibid.

who appeared to be financing anti-government newspapers and politicians, and it was felt that they would encourage the Rightist press to attack the refugees in the run up to the Presidential election. For Mexicans, the Spanish Civil War appeared a struggle between the proponents of tradition and modernity. In the heated political atmosphere the war and the refugees easily became a referent for the domestic debate.²²⁴ As Cardenas was constitutionally excluded from running for another term, it was not necessarily in anyone's interest to support the refugees, particularly as the left drew its support from the Indians and peasants, few of whom read the newspapers anyway and whose land rights might be in jeopardy in the cause of resettlement.

In a secondary report from Pachuca, the capital of the State of Hidalgo, Rees was able to report that ninety-nine families had settled down to attempt market gardening. Fourteen refugees had been found clerical posts with the State Governor, two textile workers had gone into a local factory, and builders and carpenters had found work locally, some on the new Civil Hospital.²²⁵ In Toluca seventy families (about one hundred individuals, which suggests many incomplete families) were placed but here things were less happy, with wariness and mutual suspicion poisoning relationships between the Spanish and the local peasants who resented this influx of new Spanish blood.²²⁶ In his final report in July 1939 Rees gave it as his opinion that Mexico could support unlimited migration if sufficient funds were available for settlement and irrigation. However, the success of such a project would depend on the immigrants not competing in Mexican labour markets: instead they "should develop new territories and new industries", a rather optimistic and naïve approach to the issues.²²⁷ It later emerged that the cost of settling each farmer had proven much higher than estimated, since in order to

²²⁴Carolyn P. Boyd, "Latin American Perspectives on the Spanish Civil War", *Latin American Research Review*, vol. 20, no. 1. pp. 202-208.

²²⁵*Ibid.*

²²⁶Report from Sir Richard Rees, 19 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²²⁷Report from Sir Richard Rees, 30 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

assure a decent standard of living for what were, essentially, urbanites, some industrialisation had been necessary if they were not to abandon the colonies for already overcrowded cities.²²⁸ In the event, it seems clear that wherever the refugees were settled, they tended to regather and relocate in urban ethnic enclaves.²²⁹

On his return to Philadelphia Rees expressed a number of qualms. Despite the much vaunted neutrality of the agencies involved, Rees felt that the selection of refugees made by SERE (the Servicio de Emigración de Republicanos Españoles) and Ambassador Bassols (Mexican Ambassador to Paris) leaned towards Negrin's followers and was at least passively supportive of communism, which he feared would arouse the antagonism of the Mexican Right. The consolation he offered was that "almost without exception, the Spanish refugees coming to Mexico are most anxious to settle down to a normal, peaceful life and forget politics, no matter how interested or active they were in Spain."²³⁰ Despite accusations that Negrin wielded undue influence over the migration programme, it was felt that Negrin genuinely wished for the services of the Friends in order to prevent the opposition using the refugees as political ammunition.²³¹ However, all of this was complicated by disagreements within the Republican ranks.²³²

Initially, the AFSC's involvement with Mexico had been in resettlement projects for German Jews. For this purpose it was thought to send Daniel and Elizabeth Jensen to reside in Mexico City for a year.²³³ However, Daniel Jensen's explorations of Mexico City did not suggest an obvious task for the Jensens to

²²⁸Jose Puche to John Rich, 27 December 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²²⁹Fagen, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-55.

²³⁰Report from Sir Richard Rees, 3 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²³¹*Ibid.*

²³²Demetrio Delgado de Torres to Clarence E. Pickett, 22 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²³³Clarence E. Pickett to Daniel Jensen, cable, 13 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12).

perform in this direction, and he turned instead to the problems facing the Spanish refugees.²³⁴ There was little money available for direct relief, and with Republican money tied up in Mexico it was difficult to appeal for funds, but assistance with resettlement and education—a programme of moral and spiritual, rather than physical help—was feasible.²³⁵ On the basis of the Jensens' expense account of around \$2,500 for a year, some small assistance might be provided for specific projects but Daniel Jensen felt strongly that the growing European concerns of the AFSC took precedence in both urgency and levels of need.²³⁶ One major need was for assistance in reuniting divided families, and there are a number of letters in the files requesting assistance with this activity. Success was mixed and whilst contact with relatives in Spain could often be established, reuniting people was almost impossible.²³⁷ The work done by the local committee consisted of some direct relief, up to a maximum for any one family of \$10 per day. but mainly the checking and establishing of qualifications and the settling of "employables" into paid work; although as many were professionals this was not easy. Many of the skilled workmen were employed in a cooperative factory turning out tools, and elsewhere Spanish men were settled in agricultural cooperatives, an aspect of the work dear to the heart of the Jensens, who ran a cattle ranch. Ironically, the war conditions assisted with the resettlement projects as it limited the numbers of Spaniards who could leave Europe. The receiving station at Perote had been intended to receive up to 2,000 refugees but found itself with rarely more than 300 at a time.²³⁸

²³⁴See file: Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12).

²³⁵Daniel Jensen to John F. Rich, 22 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12).

²³⁶John F. Rich to Daniel Jensen, 27 October 1939 and to Elizabeth Marsh Jensen, 7 November 1939; the Jensens to John F. Rich, 12 December 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12). Daniel Jensen to John F. Rich, 13 November 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12).

²³⁷Daniel Jensen to John F. Rich, 23 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12). Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²³⁸"Report by Daniel Jensen", 17 October 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Mexico (Jensens) from/to (Box 12).

In November, Clarence Pickett had written to Dr. Frank Tannenbaum that with the deterioration in world conditions, it would be best if the majority of the 150-200,000 refugees in France went back to Spain. Only about 20-50,000 prominent people needed to be got to Mexico, thus, in his opinion reducing the problem to something more manageable.²³⁹ Unfortunately, unless Mexico could furnish the ships, it looked unlikely that even this number could be removed. John Rich mourned the problem with Dr. Aydelotte of Swarthmore:

No one seems to have any money for migration. Transportation is difficult to secure and Latin American countries are loath to make any commitments regarding acceptance of Spanish refugees.²⁴⁰

This transportation, however, was dependent upon raising at least an extra \$50,000. Unless the British Government and a variety of voluntary agencies contributed this was unlikely, and on the whole, although the British government agreed to pay half the costs of transportation, the Santo Domingo project succeeded only in sending sponsored individuals.²⁴¹ Mass migration to Santo Domingo was not really feasible, and the conditions there were such—with limited government funds, and an economy dependent on agricultural labour, of which the refugees had little experience—that many migrants used it as a stepping stone to somewhere else.²⁴² The problem for Friends in considering this type of relief work was that it was potentially endless.²⁴³

²³⁹Clarence E. Pickett to Dr. Frank Tannenbaum, 20 November and 20 December 1939. Committee on Spain, 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²⁴⁰John Rich to Dr. Frank Aydelotte, 22 December 1939. Committee on Spain, 1939, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico, General (Box 13).

²⁴¹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 1 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

²⁴²Howard Kershner to John F. Rich, 2 January 1940. Committee on Spain, 1940, Coms. & Orgs.: International Commission.(Box 14); Joseph A. Rose, Dominican Republic Settlement Association, Inc. to Clarence E. Pickett, 17 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940. Coms. & Orgs.: Dominican Republic Settlement Association; Refugee Services 1940, France, Refugee Programmes, 1940 (Box 15); Margaret D. Finlay, Board for Christian Work in Santo Domingo, 11 June 1940. Committee on Spain 1940. Coms. & Orgs.: Dominican Republic Settlement Association.

²⁴³Extracts from Howard Kershner's letters. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard

By 1940 the prospects of relocating large numbers of Spanish refugees were poor. The Mexican government was willing to take almost any number but only on condition that they be financially underwritten, and there was no money in sight as long as the basic needs of the the refugees in France were to be met. From July, similar demands were made of refugees landing in Santo Domingo.²⁴⁴ The Jensens' mission had always been planned as an advisory rather than relief service and despite constant appeals from them, there was little hope of any money.²⁴⁵ In May 1940 Spaniards were forbidden, at twenty-four hours notice, to leave Spain.²⁴⁶ In July, the Vichy government began to clamp down on Spanish refugees and make it increasingly difficult for them to leave. By October, the collapse of France had affected a number of fund raising bodies, including SERE, the Spanish organisation which had sponsored most of the resettlement in Mexico.²⁴⁷ With no money on either side, and a lack of cooperation on one, emigration was looking ever less feasible. The Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign, still active, reported that the Vichy government were refusing to allow refugees to leave even when boats were available, in violation of their agreement with Mexico.²⁴⁸ The Jensens' work resembled far more that of a traditional Quaker centre than it did a relief station. Much of what they did was to provide open house, to write letters for people and intervene with the authorities, provide textbooks where possible and to provide

Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

²⁴⁴Daniel Jensen to John F. Rich, 2 March and 7 July 1940, John F. Rich to Daniel and Elizabeth Jensen, 8 April 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²⁴⁵Ibid.

²⁴⁶Daniel Jensen to John F. Rich, 30 May and 6 September 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²⁴⁷John F. Rich to Dr. Walter B. Canon, Harvard Medical School, 2 October 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Refugees, Spanish Resettlement in Mexico (Box 19).

²⁴⁸Herman Reissig, SRRC, to John F. Rich, 26 March 1941. France, Relief, Internment Corps, 1940 (Box 25). This was done to try and break the blockade. The Vichy government agreed to allow refugees out on boats which arrived carrying cargo. The British government would only allow medical supplies past the blockade, and would not allow ships to leave carrying mail. John Rich to Herman Reissig, SRRC, 24 April 1941; Herman Reissig to John F. Rich, 26 April 1941. France, Relief, Internment Corps, 1940 (Box 25). Jack Nicholls, Ministry of Economic Warfare to John F. Rich, 8 May 1941. Coms. & Orgs.: 1941, Spanish Refugee Relief Campaign (Box 19).

hospitality to those passing through.²⁴⁹ Many Spanish colonists had settled down and were supporting themselves, schools were running although short of funds, and a certain amount of self-assistance was organised.²⁵⁰ There was some clothing distribution but as many of the Spanish had by now scattered in various settlements, this was a difficult job, and as the refugees became more settled, and began to accept Mexican citizenship, they became increasingly hard to mobilise in support of their counterparts still in France.²⁵¹

After the war there was a growth in Spanish Republican cultural politics as the refugees looked briefly to the victorious allied powers to overthrow the Nationalist regime, but the failure of this hope led the majority of the refugees to look to Mexico for their future.²⁵² In March 1947, Franco announced that Republicans might return to Spain unless they were guilty of political crimes. This naturally had little effect, but in the 1950s the rapprochement between Mexico and Spain was achieved in part by the extension of a more cordial welcome to those who wished to return.

²⁴⁹Memorandum, 25 September 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²⁵⁰Daniel and Elizabeth Jensen to John Rich, 3 December 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²⁵¹Daniel and Elizabeth Jensen to John Rich, 19 November 1940. Committee on Spain 1940, Correspondence Mexico, Jensens, January-June (Box 17).

²⁵²Cowan *op. cit.*, pp. 228-229.

Chapter Seven:

Ethics and Ideology

The Friends' insistence on the distinctive nature of their relief work, and its intimate connection with their witness to peace and social justice, is not fully substantiated by the simple fact of their work. They were not, after all, the only relief organisation engaged in Spain. In their letters, however, the relief workers maintained that critical to their work was the mode in which they conducted it. In this chapter I shall examine the decisions the Friends made at different levels of the organisation and attempt to describe the ideologies they brought with them and those ideologies which developed on the ground. It is not possible to separate ideological considerations from financial concerns and this chapter will consider how the relief workers' interpretation of financial ethics led to a number of very distinctive attitudes, extending into both their public and private domains, and the degree to which their beliefs shaped the ways in which they worked with others. This chapter will conclude with an exploration of Howard Kershner's impact on the relief workers in Spain, and the extent to which he reoriented the public witness and reinterpreted the field workers' values in the light both of changed conditions and his own character.

7.1 The Special Qualities of Quaker Relief

It has already been established that the Friends decided to focus their relief on children. This decision was not dissimilar from that of other organisations and although their motives may have been slightly different, with an emphasis on the neutrality of the recipients rather than a decision to aid the Spanish Republic, they did not stand out in this fashion from other agencies involved in Spain. The SCIU, in fact, used similar arguments. However, the Friends held a distinctive witness which shaped their ideology.

Although the most public side of the Friends' testimony in the Spanish Civil War was the maintenance of neutrality and the succouring of the victims of war, a practice shared with both the SCIU and the Red Cross, they themselves felt that such a witness would be in itself inadequate. Crucial to the twentieth-century

Friends' witness—both British and American—was a belief in social justice. Unless the witness to peace was linked to some attempt to preserve and sponsor social justice it had the potential to become a belief in the duty of the Christian to suffer tyranny.

The AFSC and the FSC were themselves products of the acceptance of a social gospel which put deeds before words: at the turn of the century they had firmly rejected theological understandings which saw worldly activity as a distraction from the "eternal truths" of Christianity.¹ Liberal Quaker theology emphasised social justice as a crucial element in the making of peace. This itself was perhaps the crux of the matter: in their work in Europe and in Ireland during the nineteenth century, the Friends had moved from a belief in the keeping of peace through neutrality and non-compliance in the acts of war, to a growing belief that it was their duty to make the conditions for peace. How they chose to dispense relief was a part of an ideological stance on peacemaking.

In December 1936 the FSC Spain Committee responded to a request from an English woman who wished to evacuate her children, explaining that they had declined to take part in any international evacuation from Spain.² During the war, the Friends in both organisations consistently refused to assist the evacuation of children from Spain, making an exception only for children who were taken to camps and colonies on either side of the French-Spanish border. The Friends declined to become involved in any of the other schemes for helping Spanish children, such as the Basque refugee project or the attempts by the National Joint Committee, from late 1937, to arrange for the repatriation of children.³

¹H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, Edinburgh House Press, London, 1938, p. 48; Rufus Jones, *The Quaker Peace Position*, Peace Association of Friends in America, Richmond, Indiana, 1915.

²Dorothy Thompson, Assistant Secretary, Spain Committee to Alfred Jacob, 2 December 1938. London letters—copies, 1938 (General Files 1938, Foreign Service).

³This second possibility, involvement in repatriation, emerged in late 1937. Earl Smith and Dan West, Mennonite AFSC representatives to Nationalist Spain, stopped off in London to hold talks with the National Joint Committee about the possibilities. The conclusions, however, were less than positive. The committee felt that few parents would be found to admit to not wanting their children to return and it would place these parents at risk of persecution if some were returned and not others. The Mennonites' proposal, that neutral territory should be established from which the children might be collected, was dismissed as impracticable. Dan West and Earl

The first matter—the support of Basque children in Britain—was vehemently opposed by Alfred Jacob because of the excessive cost—which he found to be inefficient and unethical—of the potential trauma to the children taken away from their own culture, and of the problem of maintaining public interest in, and financial support, of the children after the initial enthusiasm had worn off.

Jacob argued that it was cheaper to bring food to the children than the children to the food and argued that it was psychologically healthier for the children to remain in Spain. In some instances, Jacob felt called upon to question the motives of those who wished to take children abroad. One such individual was a Mrs. Adeney who desired to adopt a Spanish child for the experience of bringing such a child up with her family; Alfred Jacob asked if she would not rather donate such a child's passage-money to feeding a far greater number of children in Spain. He felt strongly that the plans which emerged in 1937 to transport considerable numbers of Spanish and Basque children to countries offering refuge went against the principle that no child should receive "special" treatment and that the money spent on train-fares for this relatively small number of children deprived others of badly needed food and medical aid.⁴ In contrast, the SCIU took no such stance: Dr. Pictet arranged with Senor Alcalà to send some 500 children to Switzerland and increasing hardship in Barcelona meant that by late January the Catalan Refugee Committee was prepared to acquiesce as long as certain conditions were met.⁵ Friends' qualms over the wisdom of bringing the children to England were later justified to some degree. A number of the older boys had to be returned to Spain when their behaviour made them unwelcome in the towns and camps offering support.⁶ When money did run out and once the war ended it became difficult for

Smith, to John Reich and Patrick Malin, 15 September 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain, Workers (from and to).

⁴Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 16 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁵In public the FSC Spain Committee supported all efforts made in whatever direction. Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 24 January 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁶FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 22 July 1937.

sponsors to justify the children's presence.⁷

The drive to sponsor children's colonies by both the Barcelona and the Murcia units, which began in earnest in April 1937, coupled worries over growing food shortages with a concern for children's moral and spiritual well-being. Although the Friends generally opposed evacuation overseas, evacuation within Spain was something they believed to be potentially beneficial to large numbers of children, and which offered efficiency gains in terms of feeding substantial numbers of children in a central location. Having seen a number of mentally damaged children at her feeding centre in Murcia, Esther Farquhar visited a number of colonies in June 1937: "the stories of the individual children and of their experiences are hard to believe since they now seem such happy normal children... We wish that more of the children could be living in these colonies."⁸ For many children, as I have discussed in Chapter Three, the colonies were a means of rehabilitation, and the creation of holiday camps and part-time colonies was one means by which Francesca Wilson attempted to fulfil this aim. But children's colonies were by no means a new idea; they had become popular in both America and Britain in the nineteenth century as a means of housing orphaned and homeless children and taking children out of the city slums into the countryside—in Britain, Dr. Barnardo's Homes were perhaps the best known of the children's colonies or villages. In Spain, a number of children's societies and relief organisations quickly took up the idea as a way of getting children out of the cities where the privations were likely to be greatest, and also as a means of housing refugees. In November 1936, Alfred Jacob visited a number of these colonies, both to assess what needs they had, and in order to consider whether this was an appropriate method of providing relief. Conditions in these colonies varied widely although this did not appear to relate automatically to who ran the colonies. Thus, the first colony Jacob visited, run by Ayuda Infantil de Retaguardia, was one of the better homes, the children being housed two to a room and one to each bed. Those

⁷The older boys followed news of the war closely and tended to be highly politicised. They did not easily fit the popular image of "innocents". Legaretta, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 20 June 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

children from better-off families had brought clothing with them; others, some from the streets, had brought nothing and there was a general shortage of clothing. The Ayuda Infantil was made up of anti-fascist students, although Jacob reported that its publicity did not stress this point, and children were helped irrespective of their parents' political allegiance. However, the second home, run by the same organisation, contained many slum children and conditions were poor. Children were in dormitories of ten or twelve, potentially hastening the spread of infection. The children greeted their visitors with the raised arm and clenched fist, and a picture of Lenin hung in the chapel. This home was much more political, but the absence of politics in the first colony suggests that politics was brought by the children and their *responsables* rather than the sponsoring organisation.

Most of the colonies were settled in large houses abandoned by their owners at the start of the war. Ayuda Infantil settled children in colonies of between thirty and ninety children, under the care of their teachers and other voluntary help. The intention was that through the comradeship of school classes, educational and cultural values could be preserved better in this fashion than by billeting refugee children with individual families. In 1936, the Ayuda Infantil was taking care of 465 children, with the help of subscriptions and donations. Government support was restricted to the supply of rice, beans, sugar and cooking oil, but this was clearly more government support than the children would have received in their own homes.⁹ A report from the International Red Aid home in Castellón, suggested that a shortage of supervisory personnel made it difficult for children to be monitored in individual homes.¹⁰ The Friends, although not always comfortable with the overt politicisation of these homes, believed that their support for a wide range of groups would avert accusations of bias. More important than the colour of their politics, was the fact that these organisations were feeding children. Their difficulties in Nationalist Spain would centre on whether children were actually being fed.

The first of the Quaker children's colonies was in Puigcerdá on the French border. The settlement at Puigcerdá was to develop into more of a village as a

⁹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 19 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

¹⁰Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, "International Red Aid: Castellon; visit to War Orphans Home at Benicasim", 21 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

number of organisations sponsored different houses. The Quaker representatives there were Norma Jacob, who settled there with her two children, Theresa and Piers, and Esme Odgers, a representative of the Australian Spanish Relief Committee, who chose to work under Quaker aegis. Internal evacuation, to colonies and camps, proved to be a suitable subject for publicity photographs and were Alfred Jacob's solution to the difficulty in which the FSC found itself when it refused to sponsor evacuation, something for which it was relatively easy to raise funds. In the *FSC Bulletin* in late December 1937, members of the Birmingham Meetings and other donors were encouraged to send postcards and manufactured products from the city of Birmingham to the children of the Birmingham colony at Caldas Maravella, a small health resort south of Gerona. In such ways the connection between donor and recipient, always an important consideration for Friends, could be strengthened.¹¹ The Belgian, Swedish and Swiss colonies which Alfred Jacob had observed seemed an appropriate means of feeding and caring for large numbers of children. Despite the fact that he still believed, in principle, that Friends' money should supply food alone, he also believed that the speed with which these colonies became established, and therefore capable of distributing the food, could be increased if installation costs could be met from abroad. The main emphasis was on getting the children out of Madrid and Barcelona as soon as possible. With plenty of large houses available, Jacob felt there was scope for expansion of the colony system beyond refugee children, and suggested that foreign organisations could agree to provide the funds to provision the homes,¹² whilst individuals could themselves sponsor individual children.¹³

The decision to support the children's colonies took the Friends for the first time beyond simply the provision of milk. To keep the colonies going required the supply of a wide range of food stuffs including chickpeas, noodles, rice, sugar, fish (usually salted cod), tinned meat and lentils, and the shortage of food in the area

¹¹*FSC Spain Bulletin*, no. 16, 22/12/37.

¹²Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 9 April and 4 May 4 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹³Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, undated but sometime before 4 May (date of next letter) and stamped received 10 May 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

meant that it was urgent that food be sent in quickly from abroad.¹⁴ Some food could be grown locally, but the absence of most of the male workforce meant that there was nobody to do the heavy digging.¹⁵ By July 1937, however, the Friends had offers of financial support from Friends in Paris, Birmingham, Denmark and Norway.¹⁶ The Paris and Birmingham colonies were to be in Rubí, a short distance from Barcelona, and under the supervision of Asistencia Infantil. Both were to be ready for occupation in mid-July, housing a total of ninety-five children¹⁷ However, although it continued to support the Manresa colony for which it was already responsible, the Danish committee pulled out of the scheme when the news arrived that 500 Basque children were to be received in Denmark, this despite Elise Thomsen advising the committee of the views of Alfred Jacob and herself on this subject.¹⁸

Once the colonies were materially established, the difficulty was to convince parents to send their children. Domingo Ricart and Elise Thomsen began a series of visits to Murcia and to Madrid (where conditions were particularly bad) in order to persuade the authorities and parents of the advisability of sending children away. In general, whilst parents appeared to support the concept, many were reluctant to be parted from their children despite the conditions in which they were

¹⁴Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 10/11 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁵With this in mind, Alfred Jacob requested the service of voluntary diggers, a group of students under the supervision of Jack Hoyland, a British Quaker. Getting visas for such a workforce, however, required some negotiation with the Foreign Office who, presumably, feared the young men involved would use it as a way to join the International Brigade. In the event, the diggers were allowed in, but rather than digging individual plots for each house, in Jacob's absence they were sidelined into other, larger work, including digging drainage ditches, clearing bricks in preparation for a stable, cleaning houses in preparation for the children, and preparing some of the land for planting crops. Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, addendum dated 13 July to letter of 7 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3; Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 11 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁶Alfred Jacob to Henry von Ettei, Paris, 2 July 1937; Elise Thomsen to FT, 2 July 1937; Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 17 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁷Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 7 July 1937, Elise Thomsen to Fred Tritton, 30 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

¹⁸Elise Thomsen to FT, 30 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

living.¹⁹

The establishment and maintenance of the colonies did not go as smoothly as might have been wished. By mid-August 1937, it had become clear that getting food through to Spain on a regular basis was not going to be easy. The three colonies at Rubí had been running for three weeks and had still not received supplies. One solution was to order supplies through the SCIU at Geneva, but this required the sort of cooperation which the unit and the SCIU were no longer sharing.²⁰ In September, the colonies were still waiting for the supplies to arrive from Geneva.²¹

The decision over what food was supplied was, as far as possible, left to the Spanish colony administrators who informed Alfred Jacob what food was required. This ensured that, within the restrictions imposed by rationing and shortages, as far as possible the children received a familiar diet.²² There was a constant need for rice, sugar, wheat flour, oatmeal, tinned meat, dried fish and beans, the list confirming the Spanish control over the children's diet.²³ Where possible, the food was to come in the largest packs available—herring, for example, in barrels rather than tins—in order to minimise the cost of transporting packaging.²⁴ Jacob would inform the colonies what was cheapest or most readily available and from this list they would work out what they wanted in what quantities. The matter of daily diet was left to the warden or the cook of each colony.²⁵ The main problem with the colonies was in keeping them stocked. Supplies were slow to arrive, and by October 1937 Alfred Jacob was becoming increasingly unhappy at the failure to support them. On average, the food orders were taking between two and three

¹⁹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, addendum dated 13 July to letter of 7 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²⁰Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, undated, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²¹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 11 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²²The Basque children sent to Britain were faced with unfamiliar food which led to a number of difficulties. Legaretta, *op. cit.*, p. 109.

²³Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²⁴Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 27 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²⁵Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 11 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

months to come through. The lack of food at Figueras and at the Birmingham colony prompted him to send the remainder of the cocoa and milk intended for Barcelona Station canteen which was to be closed down. The Birmingham colony had been established in July, but had not yet received any food from the FSC, making do on what could be obtained locally, which was very little.²⁶ Coordinating the supply of the colonies required that the Friends knew the itemised cost of all supplies. One method adopted to stretch relief supplies was to supply only that which could not be got in Spain, using some of the supplies to exchange with other organisations for goods that could be procured locally.²⁷ However, in addition to food, the Friends tried to provide other materials for the colonies. The lack of coal was a constant worry, particularly as winter drew in, and despite their concerns that the coal might be appropriated to military use, the FSC agreed to provide some forty tons of coal to be divided between Hogar Luis Vives (two tons) and the colonies, and some to be sold to small agencies for whom it would be uneconomic to import small quantities.²⁸

The moral health of the children was of great concern to Friends and efforts were made to create a healthy moral atmosphere, and to this end attempts were made to send out materials for lessons and for games. For the girls, Jacob was anxious to provide knitting wool and cloth so that they might be both occupied and help to make up the shortage of blankets and clothing which many of the colonies experienced.²⁹ Dr. Morages, encouraged to take charge of the colonies at Rubí, began to run an experimental education system:

The day is planned so that the children receive schooling from 9:30 to 12 and 3:30 to 6. At 12 there is a talk on some subject of interest and at 6 a walk. The schooling is given in such a way as to arouse the children's curiosity so that they themselves are eager to learn. Bits of Greek history for example are learned on the play-ground, the

²⁶Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937, FSC/1/3.

²⁷Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 25 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²⁸Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 12 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

²⁹Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

children themselves forming bands and acting the part of one or other nation...³⁰

The children also ran their own council, were given a small amount of pocket money and once a week were taken to the cinema, the gift of the cinema manager and the workers. The children's well-being was monitored on index cards, and Dr. Morages was able to report that those children who were at first restless and inclined to run away, had settled down. Those showing most signs of distress appeared to have recovered their spirits.³¹ At Bosque in the Woods, in Murcia, Esther Farquhar observed "the happiest and most natural bunch of youngsters that I have seen for a long time," and she wrote approvingly of the practical arrangements for the colony with its emphasis on practical and moral training.

The whole place was very simple, and the children do the work.

There are some of the mothers there too who do the cooking and heavier work, but the girls do the ironing, the sewing and the cleaning and were proud to tell us all about it.³²

Concerned not to create a culture of dependency, and to provide children with practical skills, the Friends also believed such involvement helped to encourage children to have pride in their own colonies. However, at most of the colonies—the exception was Rubí—the emphasis seems to have been on girls' contribution to household management. Less attention appears to have been given to training boys in household or other skills. This may have been related to the age of the inhabitants. Whilst many teenage girls were evacuated, teenage boys were often mobilised into either the army or the factories.

Two types of purchase were made for Spain, of food and of manufactured materials. In each case a different buying policy was adopted. In the case of food, the primary problem in Republican Spain was the lack of milk, meat and bread. Fresh vegetables, fruit and oil remained in reasonable supply well into the war, misleading the casual inspector as to the severity of the hardship. In some cases the

³⁰Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 11 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

³¹Ibid.

³²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

difficulties were due to lack of transport for foodstuffs, and later blocked transport links, rather than actual absence of food. With the support and recommendation of the authorities, therefore, Friends in Barcelona and Murcia used their foreign currency to supply those foods which could only be bought outside Spain, but which the devaluation of the peseta precluded the authorities from procuring.³³ Thus, in the first year or so of the relief effort, fruit and vegetables were bought only sparingly, and the Friends always concentrated their resources on milk and grain.³⁴ In Nationalist Spain, the emphasis remained on clothing until the end of 1938 and the unifying of the relief operation.

Although food was in scarce supply in Republican Spain, industrial materials were not, so wherever possible Alfred Jacob and Esther Farquhar preferred that manufactured materials be bought in Spain for as long as they remained available, using the pesetas acquired from the sale of milk supplies to institutions and small relief parcels to civilians. Where possible, equipment was bought from Spanish factories, and later, when materials became scarce, it became the practice to use the condensed milk tins as cups. Material for Francesca Wilson's workshops was also, where possible, bought in Spain.³⁵ In this way foreign currency could be reserved for essentials no longer available in Spain, such as milk, whilst pesetas could be fed back into the local economy without creating widespread financial disruption.³⁶ The exception to this was medical equipment: with most medical resources directed to the front, it was necessary to import medical equipment for civilian use.³⁷

³³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

³⁴Esther Farquhar to Barbara Wood, undated, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Workers in Spain [internal] (Box 3).

³⁵Francesca Wilson, *In the Margins of Chaos: Recollections of Relief Work in and Between Two Wars*, John Murray, London, 1944, p. 175.

³⁶Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 4 May 1937, Committee on Spain, Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3). The soap purchased by the FSC for example, was purchased from Spanish factories until supplies could not longer be secured. Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 15 June 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

³⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

The concern to employ money as frugally as possible extended into other areas: Alfred Jacob preferred to send mail overland to save money, and whilst Esther Farquhar and the other Americans chose to use airmail, they tried, when possible, to avoid employing the telegrams which the AFSC in Philadelphia liked for the sake of speed. Even the letters which were sent home both to keep the committees informed and for the purposes of publicity were affected by this concern for economy. Esther Farquhar's earliest letters frequently ran to between seven and ten pages. By September 1937, however, they were usually around three, both to cut down on mailing costs from Spain to the USA, and also to restrict the cost of copy typing and internal postage as Esther's letters were to be sent on to others.³⁸ Alfred Jacob used the thinnest of onion skin, presumably to keep down the weight of his often lengthy screeds.³⁹

Travel, too was an area on which to economise. Relief workers were conscientious and travelled third class on trains.⁴⁰ The AFSC, concerned to maintain as high a standard of professional ethics as possible, even issued its field workers in Spain with expense forms on which they were required to detail all their expenditure in a standard format. Regular reports of shipments and receipts were also required.⁴¹ Although Alfred Jacob did not fill in forms he did maintain a constant flow of information on expenses.

Apart from relief itself, one of the largest single costs was the purchase of labour, and Alfred Jacob rapidly became predisposed to the use of Spanish personnel. Some overseas workers were clearly welcome, specifically medical personnel such as the Scottish doctor, Richard Ellis, or the medical student Martin Hereford, but others annoyed him, in particular the "observer".⁴² Horace

³⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 15 September 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence from, Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

³⁹See Spain files at Friends House, London.

⁴⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, May 4, 1937, Committee on Spain, Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴¹Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 8 October and 7 December 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar.

⁴²Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 10 October 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

Alexander's visit in December 1936 was welcomed enthusiastically: "a man of immense human kindness and wisdom",⁴³ and the needs of fund-raising necessitated regular visits by Friends (and others) to the Barcelona Unit, in order that they might report back as eye-witnesses, but to Alfred Jacob, concerned to maximise the child feeding, this did seem an unconscionable waste of money. Unless foreign workers had specific skills or spoke Spanish, Alfred Jacob was generally hostile to the concept:

...everybody wants to send somebody to Spain, and you see those dozens of somebodies loafing about the cafés. The thing to send to Spain is food... Workers in England is quite a different matter, and much more difficult for the person who becomes one—no travel, no glory, no holiday, no fame, just work.⁴⁴

As he wrote in a letter to Judith Corcoran of the BYPA, there was something rather presumptuous about the assumption that foreign expertise was needed, implying that Spaniards lacked expertise and/or commitment to their own needs. In November 1936 Jacob wrote to Edith Pye stressing the availability of Spanish personnel: "I do not yet see any prospect of need for further English helpers here, because any milk centres established should become autonomous Spanish ones under our supervision."⁴⁵ Jacob saw the Barcelona unit as working with rather than for the Spanish people, providing the resources for them to help themselves. When, in April 1937, Jacob reported a need for more personnel, despite the possible expense, he added that to his knowledge the only people fulfilling his requirements of speaking perfect Spanish and caring deeply for Spain, were his wife, Norma, and his colleague from the YMCA, Domingo Ricart: as he had requested that a paid post might be found for Ricart for some time, this resolved itself satisfactorily and Domingo Ricart was retained at £1 per week.⁴⁶

Taking in Spanish workers inevitably meant accepting the loss of complete

⁴³Alfred Jacob to Mrs. Small, 12 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴⁴Alfred Jacob to FSC, 8 December 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴⁵Alfred Jacob to Edith Pye, 26 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁴⁶Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, April 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

political neutrality, but Jacob felt that neither Ricart's membership of the Socialist party, another worker's anarchism, nor another worker's status as the son of a marquis was of any great concern. In Jacob's opinion, "to do without party people would be to do without voluntary workers entirely."⁴⁷ The real issue was whether those workers were willing to lend themselves to Quaker notions of impartial relief and Quaker insistence that they cooperate with those of conflicting allegiances.

In contrast to the policy operated in Barcelona, the Murcia unit operated with an assumption that foreign expertise was required, if only in selected professions. In July 1937, Esther Farquhar wrote requesting American volunteers with specific skills, particularly a visiting nurse, "...oh how Spain does need to learn something about public hygiene, as well as personal."⁴⁸ The tone of her letter implied that the need was for foreign expertise rather than qualified locals.

I have already mentioned the need for a doctor. The methods of the Spanish doctors differ from those of England, according to one of the English nurses, and I would suppose that were true as compared to those of American doctors also. I only know I often wish for an American doctor with all of his facilities to do something for these babies.⁴⁹

Esther Farquhar apparently did not distinguish easily between American scientific expertise and American money and equipment. The reluctance to use expensive foreign workers came not from the Murcia unit but from the Philadelphia office; although a number of American nurses offered their services in 1937, Louisa Jacob and John Reich were hesitant to accept as the cost of sending them abroad was excessive, added to the risk that they might not fit in with the British nurses already employed.⁵⁰ A particular concern with overseas workers was that they should be able to speak Spanish and to stay for a sufficient amount of time as to ensure the

⁴⁷ Alfred Jacob to FSC, 31 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁴⁸ Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 7 December 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar.

continuity of their work. One doctor, a member of the New York Yearly Meeting, was rejected on both these grounds: her proposed two-month stay was not sufficient to generate any proficiency in the language.⁵¹ Dan West's inability to speak any form of Spanish severely hampered his role in Nationalist Spain. On one occasion, in order to explain to the charge nurse at the hospital in Bilbao that he wished to take an inventory of the clothing received, he was forced to rely on the inadequate translation of a patient who had some English.⁵² However, as has already been discussed, the AFSC faced major difficulties merely keeping the Burgos unit staffed.

In Barcelona the influx of American funds from the AFSC from 1937 onwards, and later from the International Commission, allowed the unit to consider paying for additional assistance. However, rather than spend more money on foreign volunteers, the distribution and mixing of milk was undertaken by local women, three to a station, and each paid 50-60 pesetas monthly. These women would be chosen by Asistencia Social, the Republican agency, and would spend some time working in Barcelona in order that they might "get to know the spirit of our work",⁵³ something which the unit regarded as crucial. In addition to the feeding, these workers would be expected to assist the refugees with other difficulties and to monitor needs as they developed and had a secondary effect of empowering and training sections of the local population. As the unit continued to expand, taking on a number of Spanish workers, there was also a growing need for office space independent of the YMCA. These Spanish workers were responsible for the day to day process of running the relief effort. Señor Palà, a bank manager, assisted with the accounts; Rosa Poy "does everything from buying medicines asked for by the children's colonies to arbitrating between English and Spanish workers at Puigcerdá"; Reuben Ferré looked after the station canteen and did odd jobs, and a number of others helped in the garages and drove the trucks. This still

⁵¹Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 2 July 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence, to Esther Farquhar.

⁵²Dan West to John Reich, 27 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence, Nationalist Spain (from and to).

⁵³Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 21 December 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

left Alfred Jacob with the need for another office worker, and he eventually took on a young woman called Mercedes (no surname is ever provided), the sister of another worker—both later turned out to be supporters of the Nationalist cause, which was helpful once the Nationalists took Barcelona.”⁵⁴ In contrast the Murcia unit, which used the money from the International Commission in part to increase the size of their unit, had by November 1938 grown substantially to include fifteen American workers.⁵⁵ These differences in practice may be explained in a number of ways. The larger amount of money which the AFSC had at its disposal allowed the Murcia and Burgos units to import more US workers—although this was limited by State Department restrictions—but it would also have allowed them to expand relief using Spanish personnel. The Murcia and Burgos units’ decision to operate primarily with American workers was a choice for expertise, but it was also an alignment with the professional and secular world of the 1930s, a culture in which professionals did things for people, rather than with them, in both business and social work, although it must be recognised that this preference could not always be supplied with adequately trained individuals. In the actuality, the AFSC took what people it could get.

Contrasting the different practices it would be easy to suggest that Alfred Jacob and the FSC, with their ideologies of empowerment and facilitation, were ahead of their time even allowing for the economic stringencies which shaped their practice.⁵⁶ In fact, the policies of the FSC were in accord with the standard practice of missionaries in the 1930s: the emergent concern amongst missionary societies

⁵⁴Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 7 August 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁵⁵Working in Murcia were: Clyde E. Roberts, Emily Parker, Alfred H. Cope, Martha Rupel, Florence E. Conard, Levi Hartzler, Clarence Fretz, Lester Hershey, Mary Elmes, Irene Callon, Sylvia Pitt, Francesca Wilson, Dorothy Morris and Dorothy Litten. The last two were nurses. John Reich to Murcia Unit, 25 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁵⁶See Alex Bryan, *Healing the Wounds*, Quaker Home Service, London, 1986; Joan Hewitt, *Lending a Hand in Holland, 1945-46*, William Sessions, York, 1990; Stanley Johnson, *Quaker Work For Prisoners of War in South West France, 1945-1948*, William Sessions, York, 1990; Eryl Hall Williams, *A Page of History in Relief: London, Antwerp, Belsen, Brunswick, Quaker Relief 1944-1946*, William Sessions, York, 1993; Roger C. Wilson, *Authority, Leadership and Concern*, Swarthmore Lecture Pamphlet, Friends Home Service Committee, London, 1970.

was to encourage indigenous peoples to create and minister to their own church.⁵⁷ The AFSC units thus appear in tension between two models of practice, that of modern business and social work with its emphasis on expertise and that of the missionary who hopes to generate enthusiasm and talent in the field. This tension, exacerbated by the AFSC's need to avoid accusations of missionary intent, may have been resolved in part by the type of person they did despatch. Of the AFSC representatives in Spain, Sylvester Jones, Esther Farquhar, Clyde Roberts, Earl Smith, Florence Conard, Emily Parker, Alfred Cope and Emmet Gulley all had both missionary and either social work or business backgrounds. All of these workers show a tendency to switch rapidly between calling for expertise and placing emphasis on training and empowerment.

Concern for ethical relief practices extended into the running of the household and the unit's social relations with others. Quite early on, Alfred Jacob reported that there was a need to reciprocate Spanish generosity with small gifts of milk or sugar to people who hosted him or who worked as volunteers. However, he felt strongly that it would not be right to provide these small gifts out of the relief stores, and requested instead that the unit be supplied with a box of provisions specifically to distribute amongst the voluntary workers as thank offerings.⁵⁸ This desire to keep gifts separate from relief is a small but simple illustration of the way in which the difficulties of residence in Barcelona became ethical issues.

When in July 1937 the Barcelona Unit moved into its own house new issues emerged, some major others minor but significant. The house provided accommodation for the foreign workers (and the Ricarts), a space for large food stores, and also a garage for the trucks of the National Joint Committee which had become crucial to the distribution of Friends' relief. It was hoped that this would cut down on the cost of living expenses, but food for the growing household was both a practical and an ethical problem.⁵⁹ The house had a population which

⁵⁷Gordon Hewitt, *The Problem of Success: A History of the Church Missionary Society, 1919-1942*, vol. 1, SCM Press, London, 1971, p. 422.

⁵⁸Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 3 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁵⁹Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, addendum dated 13 July to letter of 7 July 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

fluctuated around fourteen, with a constant stream of visitors supplementing the permanent household. Initially they had only four ration cards and whilst this eventually climbed to ten, it left a shortfall which it was felt the FSC should fill. From late August, the FSC undertook to send out separate rations for the workers.⁶⁰ For day-to-day maintenance all those living in the house needed to pay their way. As Sra. Ricart had become de facto house keeper, and Domingo Ricart was receiving no payment for his services from either the FSC or SCIU, it was decided that all but the Ricarts would pay ten pesetas a day, which the Ricarts would then manage to cover the expenses of the household. When the NJC took up office space in the house, it was decided that the most equitable arrangement would be for the NJC to pay a proportion of the costs in London.⁶¹

The supply of the household could produce unexpected ethical dilemmas. Although there is no testimony against it, most Quakers do not smoke, and Alfred Jacob in particular did not approve.⁶² However, cigarettes were one of the principal forms of currency: when a supply of 5,000 cigarettes were donated, Norma Jacob expressed a hope that they might be able to keep some as they were a valuable medium of exchange and tobacco could also be employed to secure good will.⁶³ Overcoming his dislike of the substance, and his usual determination to act at all times within the law, Jacob had tobacco smuggled over the border. In order to maintain some contact with his Spanish workers in what was an expanding organisation, he made it his own responsibility to hand out a small weekly tobacco allowance to truck drivers and other volunteers with whom he had little day-to-day contact.⁶⁴ Clyde Roberts, who became head of the Murcia unit in 1938 made a similar decision, and despite disapproving of the substance, distributed coffee as

⁶⁰Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 27 August 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁶¹Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937.

⁶²This usually stems from a combination of two testimonies, the rejection of stimulants and the rejection of luxury and waste.

⁶³Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 25 September 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3; In the event, 3,000 were sent to Puigcerdá for use in local exchange by the colonies. Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 15 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁶⁴Interview with Farah Mendlesohn, 15 January 1994.

a gift to workers and local officers of the council, recognising its value both in improving morale and, in the circumstances, as a stimulant. As Roberts put it, "it is good economy to take care of ...[the assistants]... properly."⁶⁵

One of the difficult issues for Friends, as food supplies shortened and greater restrictions were imposed upon imports and the use of foreign currency, was how far to abide by laws which interfered with the provision of relief. The testimony to Truth clearly required that Friends operate within the letter of the law, but Friends' tradition of refusing to abide by those laws they felt contravened the law of God is well known.⁶⁶ Smuggling, however, fell short of the latter in being rather less than above board. Norma Jacob, in the appendix she contributed to her son's autobiography wrote:

...It amuses me now to recall that this highly respectable Quaker drove into Spain with the spare tyre on his car stuffed with foreign money. This was our first encounter with Catch-22 which always operates in wartime. Money was contraband and might not be carried across frontiers, yet it was impossible to do anything without it. This was just the beginning of our subsequent career as lawbreakers."⁶⁷

Alfred Jacob, in an interview for the AFSC, recalled smuggling in eggs for a sick man who had been told by his doctor that he must have an egg a day. The very fact that, as Quakers, they were waved across by the customs inspectors, only made it worse in that they were trading on the Society's good name.

And yet, from a higher moral standard, of course it was right, but just according to the letter of the law, it was wrong. We were really trying to do the best we could.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Clyde E. Roberts to John F. Reich, 18 October 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁶⁶The refusal to pay tithes has been replaced by some self-employed Friends by a decision to deduct that proportion of tax which would be spent on defence.

⁶⁷Norma Jacob, "The Spanish Civil War" in Piers Anthony, *Bio of an Ogre*, Ace Books, New York, 1988, p. 230.

⁶⁸Karin Lee interview, "Alfred Jacob...", op. cit., p. 16.

This willingness to do one's best, and to compromise one belief in order to support another, demonstrated the flexibility which the Jacobs brought to their work. It is unusual for Friends in that it placed a heavier emphasis on ends rather than means than perhaps meets the conventions; however, it is more understandable within the British tradition of relief work in which individuals were very much responsible for their own choices and actions, than that of the AFSC which attempted to maintain corporate consistency in action as well as words.

By October the condition of the Spanish workers was deteriorating and Alfred Jacob asked permission to begin providing food for the Spanish workers in the house: "We cannot work side by side with people who we suspect have starving families while we are well fed".⁶⁹ In response the FSC began to send £10 to contribute to groceries for the house and another £5 that relief parcels might be made up to be dispensed from the house.⁷⁰ The visible deterioration in the physical health of the citizens of Barcelona also began to alter the Unit's approach to their own food. The shortage of food in Barcelona meant that it was no longer a case of the Committee supplementing the household food; instead, at least 80% of the household's requirements would have to be sent in from abroad if the unit were to eat through the winter. What this meant was that the food parcel, ordered much earlier in the year, would have to be stripped of its luxuries, such as breakfast cereal, both because the money could buy a far greater amount of basic foods locally, and also because the unit increasingly felt that the purchase of luxuries could not be justified. Norma Jacob wrote:

The Committee's money must either be used on us or on hungry children, and so long as we have enough to go ahead on simple standards, I want the children to get everything else. For me £1 is 20 kilos of milk which is 160 litres of liquid milk which 360 children drink.⁷¹

After much debate the Committee finally agreed, but suggested that transient

⁶⁹Alfred Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 5 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁷⁰Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 12 October 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

⁷¹Norma Jacob to Dorothy Thompson, 3 November 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/3.

observers and other guests be charged a fixed sum per meal to compensate the FSC, money which could be put to relief purposes. At the same time it was agreed that Lucy Palser, a nutritionist, would be sent to Barcelona to assist Sra. Ricart and ensure that the relief workers did not allow themselves to become malnourished.⁷² Although the same issue did not excite such debate in Murcia, in part because the rules were established in Philadelphia and not debated on the ground, the same concerns applied. Ruth Cope, sent out as a secretary and housekeeper, wrote in November 1938,

Enclosed are, at long last the expense reports. My chief source of thanksgiving [*sic*]. Our personal expenses aside from the office are practically nil, as there is literally nothing to buy...

I have just discovered that while 16 units of food from the warehouse was considered by all concerned as a rock bottom figure, our household expenses in terms of warehouse units are *roughly* 22. This cheers me as it indicates that we are not living too extravagantly from the local point of view.⁷³

In actuality, weekly maintenance varied as each person took the chance to purchase large quantities of local produce whenever possible, such as tomatoes or raisins, but the principle remained the same: as little as possible was to be spent on food for the workers whilst still maintaining them in good health.⁷⁴

7.2 Working With the Local People

The Quaker relief work in Spain did not and could not take place in a vacuum. Although the Friends had remarkably little to do with the war itself and there is rarely any mention of its progress or its politics in correspondence except references to the changing flow of refugees, the Friends did work actively with Spanish volunteers, with the Spanish authorities and with other organisations on

⁷²Dorothy Thompson, Assistant Secretary, Spain Committee to Alfred Jacob, 11 November 1938. London letters—copies, 1938 (General Files 1938, Foreign Service).

⁷³Ruth Cope to John Reich, 24 November 1938 Committee on Spain: Correspondence, Murcia, General, October-December (Box 7).

⁷⁴*Ibid.*

both sides of the political divide. As was made painfully clear to the SCIU, the Friends regarded the manner of cooperation as an ethical issue in its own right.

Wolf Mendl suggests that one factor which influenced the outlook of Friends and shaped their dealings with others was the dominant part in World affairs played first by Great Britain and then by the United States.⁷⁵ In 1936 the British Friends retained a strong sense of responsibility for the world but were coming early to the realisation that imperialism had its drawbacks and was not truly compatible with their Testimony. In contrast, the American Friends were a vibrant part of a growing American internationalism, which unconsciously or consciously had begun to see its mission as bringing American values to a turbulent Old World; they were part of the newly emerging cultural imperialism which was to characterise the American presence in the world throughout the twentieth century. Although both agencies worked for what they would have considered to be non-imperialist ends, their differences influenced the way the units cooperated with their Spanish associates.

If the Barcelona unit's experience of working with the SCIU had been unsatisfactory, cooperation with the Spanish in Barcelona more than compensated. The rapid expansion of activity in all spheres brought with it a shortage of personnel to mix and serve drinks in Barcelona and its surrounding districts and to act as nurses in Murcia and Valencia. Mobilising a local workforce, however, required tact and a facility with the language which was not always available. As already discussed, local factors also played a part in dictating who was available and willing to help with the relief work. In politically mobilised Barcelona, securing workers was not particularly difficult. In Murcia, where politics felt less urgent and the population was more suspicious of outsiders, there were few people with either the motivation or the education to form an obvious corps of volunteers and the unit, out of both choice and necessity, relied more heavily on American workers and on Spanish professionals.

By January 1939, the Friends' unit in Barcelona had up to sixty Spanish workers, some volunteers, and other paid workers (such as the truck drivers). Most

⁷⁵Wolf Mendl, *Prophets and Reconcilers: Reflections on the Quaker Peace Testimony*, Swarthmore Lecture 1974, Friends Home Service Committee, London, 1974, p. 44.

of these we know very little about. Fear of incriminating individuals meant that once the Nationalists were clearly winning, the Friends disposed of most of their records. Only those actually named in the correspondence can be discussed. What is clear is that most of the volunteer workers in Barcelona had strong beliefs of their own, from Domingo Ricart, a pacifist Spanish Protestant, to Alfred Jacob's secretary, a rather reticent woman who turned out to be a Nationalist.⁷⁶ In response to a query from the FSC as to the suitability of these people, whether they accepted the peace testimony or were in any way maintaining a witness for peace Alfred Jacob answered:

I never discuss politics with them and it does not interest me in the slightest what they choose to think so long as they can carry out the particular piece of work they are willing to do for us. In the case of the foreign helpers [non-Spanish] I try to make it clear to them that they should not do anything which would classify them with a particular political group.⁷⁷

In a 1997 interview he confirmed that he had little awareness of, or concern for, the political allegiances of either the workers employed or the authorities with whom he cooperated. His principal concern was whether or not they were efficient and committed.⁷⁸ Earlier concerns that Quaker relief work should be undertaken only by the like-minded disintegrated under the pressures of the moment. In addition, Alfred Jacob appears to have grasped what the Spain Committee at home had not: that these workers, whatever their private opinions, were publicly involved in relief that was provided as part of a witness to peace. As such, they and the work they performed within that context were automatically expressions of that witness.

Despite Jacob's great spiritual concern for Spain, he stopped short of establishing a silent Meeting for Worship within the unit. This was not for lack of encouragement: in addition to Sylvester Jones' desire to see a distinctive Quaker witness, Russell Ecroyd, the originator of the mission, pressed for the spiritual

⁷⁶This may have been the Mercedes mentioned above, but it is interesting that whenever this individual's political allegiance is mentioned her name is not specified.

⁷⁷Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 3 March 1937, FSC/R/SP/1/2.

⁷⁸Alfred Jacob, 13 January 1997, Pendle Hill Quaker Study Center, PA.

message of the Friends to be declared through the presence in Spain of a silent Meeting.⁷⁹ Alfred Jacob did initially attempt to begin the day with a silent Meeting, but he made the mistake of inviting his secretary to join the worship and realised from her reaction that this was inappropriate—the Meeting quickly fell into abeyance. As he was to realise at the end of the war, many of the Spanish workers were Catholics, and of the foreign workers, only Elise Thomsen, Lucy Palser and the Jacobs were Quakers.⁸⁰ This particular type of outreach would not be possible for the Friends, although the Mennonite workers in Murcia were much more successful with their Spanish Protestant associates.

Prior to August 1938, the regular Spanish help in both units was essentially unpaid, in part to discourage those whose motives were purely pecuniary. However, as already discussed, all units moved rapidly to provide relief to their collaborators. In Murcia a system of recompense was worked out in early October, based on family need and circumstances, rather than the amount of service rendered. After the completion of a form and with a personal interview, each family was given a ticket for a stated peseta's worth of food at the legal price. Once a week they were then permitted to take that amount from the food stocks, choosing for themselves what to take. Alfred Cope reported that the system was well received although the value of the food given was low.⁸¹ Only a very few of more than fifty full-time Spanish workers in Murcia were paid in cash. Those who worked in the International Commission Canteens were reimbursed to the extent of a child's ration per day, with some local municipal authorities adding payment on top of that. In the closing days of the relief work gifts of codfish and coffee were given to the helpers who it was feared would suffer particularly after the change in regime.⁸² Sometimes, offers of work were themselves relief. One young woman whose youngest child was a recipient of the Gota de Leche station was offered a

⁷⁹Ester Perez de King to May Jones, 8 November 1936, Committee on Spain: Individuals-Jones, May and Sylvester (Box 1).

⁸⁰Karin Lee interview, "Alfred Jacob...", *op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

⁸¹Report of the Spanish Child Feeding Mission from August 1938-15 May 1939 as seen by Alfred H. Cope. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Murcia (box 13).

⁸²*Ibid.*

caretaking post. The woman concerned had four children of her own and the care of an orphaned niece. Her husband was in prison and, in search of work, she approached Esther Farquhar who offered her cleaning work in the office and warehouse.

... but it didn't take me long to realize that she herself needed some more nourishing food in order to be able to do all that she was undertaking. Their diet has been poorly cooked potatoes, with occasionally some rice, and practically nothing else for a long time...We have since been giving her milk, beans, bacon, prunes and chocolate at regular intervals, for certainly she needs food worse [sic] than money, which buys so little food in Murcia.⁸³

In addition to food this woman was provided with clothing, and two of her children continued to dwell in the colony at Espuna. It was very clear to both the AFSC and the FSC workers that they could not morally refuse food to those who worked feeding others, whilst they themselves were well fed.

Alfred Jacob's attitude to the Spanish was very relaxed. Although critical of Catholicism he felt that the Spanish were eager to modernise, and at least part of his motive for his own presence in Spain was a desire to be involved in a truly experimental society. Entering into the work with so much zeal, he tended to be over-critical of outsiders such as Dr. Pictet who disapproved of Spanish innovation and enthusiasm. However, crucial to the relationship of the Murcia unit with the Spanish was a rather different assessment of the "Spanish character". The Friends in Murcia were not precisely critical: Quaker doctrine prefers to look for that of God—in this case the good and useful—in everyone, and there are numerous references to the enthusiasm and welcome they received, and to the abundant offers of help made. Particular compliments were paid to the efficiency with which the local authorities organised the distribution of refugees. Nevertheless, the American workers clearly regarded many of those whom they assisted as disorganised and backward. However, they saw this as something to be remedied, rather than to be condemned. Most of the relief workers believed that the place of

⁸³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 15 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

external assistance was to promote development from within.

Disorganisation was a charge frequently levelled at the refugees whom the Friends assisted and one which seems somewhat unfair. Many, if not most, of the refugee hostels were overcrowded and few refugees had the resources to allow of any serious level of organisation. The refuges in which the Friends worked appear to have left much to the individual, despite the inefficiencies which this promoted. Dorothy Thompson saw families cooking small rations individually, using small bits of wood scavenged for fuel. In Granollers much of the cooking was done on the roof, with water brought up from a single tap downstairs. Only the children's meal was cooked communally, and this by individuals "trained" by the Friends.⁸⁴ When children's canteens were begun in these places the relief workers always reported back on the chaos which accompanied the first week, but it is noticeable with what speed the anarchy settled down, usually when refugee women were recruited to assist in the organisation and feeding within the canteens. However, although the workers were taking part in a supposedly egalitarian exercise, their unconscious prejudices, both with regards to the children's nationality and to their class, sometimes surfaced. Friends placed responsibility for much of the chaos they witnessed on the type of people who were found in the refuges. Dorothy Thompson wrote of the refugee centre at Granollers:

[It] is one of the most pathetic things in bulk I have ever seen.... In Granollers—as far as I could visualise, the people are of a much poorer class and therefore more hopeless. They were less desirous of making any effort to be clean, and, to give them their due, their quarters were much worse... but when the people make no effort it is almost impossible and the place becomes littered with every kind of rubbish.⁸⁵

Falling into similar assumptions, on his visits to some of the poorer of the Ayuda Infantil homes, Alfred Jacob wrote that the place was too cold, "but perhaps no

⁸⁴Dorothy Thompson to John Reich, 25 April 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence—Barcelona (Jacobs), (Box 7).

⁸⁵Dorothy Thompson to John Reich, 25 April 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence—Barcelona (Jacobs), (Box 7).

more than the homes the children came from."⁸⁶ Warm water was a necessity, for moral as well as physical reasons: "they will not have warm baths this winter—which is a pity, just when they are in the care of people who could teach them to like cleanliness."⁸⁷

The charge of backwardness which was often levelled at the Spanish is more complicated. On the whole, in the hospitals which the American Friends ran in Almería, Alicante and Murcia, the efficiency and practice of the Spanish doctors was admired by the Americans, as was these doctors' interest in new treatments and their desire for reforms. When tension arose between the English nurses and the Spanish doctors over treatment methods, it was the nurses who were relocated—at no time did the unit actually import American doctors (although the British doctor, Audrey Russell, joined the International Commission in 1939). The offer of an American pediatrician had been made by the AFSC, but as the woman in question did not speak Spanish it was felt that her use would be limited.⁸⁸ When nursing staff were needed it was, by 1938, either provided from America—Esther Farquhar was also convinced that American and British nurses did not mix—or supplied by Spanish refugee women who volunteered to train as nurses to fill the role previously associated with nuns. Of the refugee assistants, the *practicantes*, the general consensus was that they were "child-like": they could not be left unsupervised but were warm-hearted and liked, and were liked by, the children.⁸⁹ They are always referred to as girls and no age is ever mentioned, so it is not clear if these women were simply too young, or whether ignorance was being mislabelled as stupidity, but their lack of education exacerbated the Americans' general impression that this was a backward nation.

This lack of education at all age levels was of particular concern. Esther Farquhar was keen to get schools going in the refugee camps, usually appointing

⁸⁶ Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 19 November 1936, FSC/SP/R/1/1.

⁸⁷ Alfred Jacob to Edith Pye, 28 November 1936, FSC/R/SP/1/1.

⁸⁸ Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁸⁹ "Impressions of the Children's Hospital at Murcia", Dorothy Litten, 22 November 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

teachers from within the camps, pointing again to that tendency to rely on local human resources which the Friends prized. Other concerns, however, were backwardness in educational techniques, play abilities, in child hygiene and nutrition. The Friends were determined that America had something to teach the Spanish in all of these areas although they were keen to work with the local culture. Emily Parker came to Spain as a play worker to teach Spanish children something of American play habits, whilst Martha Rupel, a nurse and member of the Church of the Brethren, was brought in to act as a visiting nurse taking lessons in hygiene and child development into the refuges and canteens.⁹⁰

Friends in both Barcelona and Murcia preferred to work within existing structures. There were efficiency gains to be made by employing already active systems and individuals, and a greater moral value for the Friends in working with people rather than for them. In addition, working within existing systems increased the chance that some influence would remain after the Friends departed.

In Valencia and Murcia, whilst cooperation with the mayors and the local municipal authorities was relatively smooth, problems included the rivalry and lack of cooperation between the local authorities' committees dealing with refugees and, as hardship widened, those committees dealing with the hardship suffered by local inhabitants.⁹¹ In order for relief work to proceed in the "scientific" manner which both Esther Farquhar and her Spanish physician, Don Amalio, wished, some form of remuneration would have to be offered, preferably from the coffers of the Health Authorities. Contact with the authorities, however, could bring forth offers of voluntary assistance from those individuals not mobilised for the war effort. Although Barcelona appears to have had a system of mobilisation for relief work, Murcia did not. A member of the Asistencia Social, Sr. Aguilera, indicated that his wife and her niece would both be willing helpers: Esther Farquhar felt that educated women would help to bridge the gap between herself, the Murcian

⁹⁰Clyde E. Roberts to John F. Reich, 27 August 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia (General, January-September).

⁹¹Levi Hartzler to Orrie Miller, Chairman of the Mennonite Relief Committee, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence-Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to) (Box 7).

doctors and the refugee women.⁹² Where the issue was milk canteens for children, the Friends had often to rely on the efforts of local volunteers, but it was a continuing concern to Esther Farquhar to find locals "who are not grand of the refugees."⁹³ When she did, individuals such as Dr. Montalbán and the Mayor of Murcia proved invaluable in their co-operation. Others were willing to take on the lowly task of mixing milk. In a lovely example of cultural differences one young man, José, expressed concern that Esther should be mixing the milk,

...for he said women shouldn't do work like that, and he was sure that he could do it without my help. I told him that women had been preparing milk for babies for a good many generations and in all countries, and that I rather enjoyed it, but he still insists that I should let him do it.⁹⁴

Whilst Esther felt that they would probably get a female helper in to assist with cleaning the bottles as the work got heavier, she was prepared to cater to José's male pride to the extent of leaving him the responsibility for the operation. Interestingly, in this same letter, Esther Farquhar mentions José's queries about the nature of Quakerism, one of the few occasions when a Friend indicated that a Spaniard had expressed an interest. From the letter, it seems clear that Esther Farquhar did little to encourage this interest, anxious, as was Alfred Jacob, not to be labelled a "rice Christian".⁹⁵

Good relations with the local authorities could ease supply problems. Because the unit in Burgos undertook limited distributions this was not a major issue, but shortages of flour in the Murcia unit in May 1938 were alleviated by a loan of five tons of flour from the local government, to be returned when supplies

⁹²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁹³Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 1 July 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁹⁴Ibid.

⁹⁵Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 21 July 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

were adequate, which in the event, was not until September 1938.⁹⁶ The need to maintain good relations with local authorities was illustrated when deliveries went astray. In December 1938, fifty tons of condensed milk were unloaded at Cartagena instead of Valencia. Apparently unclaimed, the milk was requisitioned by the authorities and assigned to Madrid. Only because Emily Parker travelled through Cartagena and was informed of the presence of boxes with the Quaker star upon them was it possible to track the milk and, following the cooperation of the Civil Governor, to recover it.⁹⁷ A continuing concern in Barcelona was the need to pay import duties: although the government was willing to pay them on the FSC's behalf, this still slowed the process down and frequently led to bureaucratic confusion.⁹⁸ However, the difficulty with relying on the local authorities was that it brought the Friends into contact with local politics. In the summer of 1937, the dissolution of the local refugee committee in Murcia, due to political in-fighting, left a power vacuum; the Asistencia Social could not take over until all the accounts were settled. In the meantime the local committee continued to act until Sr. Delgado, secretary of the Asistencia Social, took over in mid-August 1937 and became Esther Farquhar's principal liaison.⁹⁹ When a local Asistencia Social was reconstituted there was no place in it for Sr. Montalbán, Esther Farquhar's principal aide, whose insistent efforts on behalf of the Friends appears to have made him unpopular. Despite his offer of voluntary assistance—paid for by his trade union—it was made clear by Sr. Delgado that he would not be acceptable as a liaison between the Friends and the Committee. Instead, Esther Farquhar, Inez MacDonald and Francesca Wilson decided that he could be employed to assist with the Red Cross's request that the Friends extend their feeding stations to Almería. Montalbán's assistance proved invaluable: like Domingo Ricart in Barcelona, his

⁹⁶Clyde E. Roberts to John Reich, 27 August 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, General, January-September (Box 7).

⁹⁷Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 6 December 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 7).

⁹⁸Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 23 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

⁹⁹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 10 and 13 August 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

local connections helped the unit to find premises, in this case a warehouse with office space, and provided the understanding of the local culture which assisted the success of the warehouse. In addition, he proved able at those administrative tasks which Esther Farquhar appears to have found irksome. Apparently, retaining an individual out of favour with the local committee did not damage the Friends' relationship with the authorities.¹⁰⁰

Depending on the local authorities for assistance could be helpful, in that it secured credentials, but issues of prioritisation and accreditation often arose. The demands on the municipalities were large and often FSC/AFSC business was of relatively low importance. Projects such as the Dining Rooms for children, whilst desired by the authorities, were often slow to receive attention: planned in August, the Murcia canteens were yet to materialise at the beginning of September.¹⁰¹ If anything, Esther Farquhar's concerns to do things "properly" may have proved slower and less effective than Alfred Jacob's more amateur approach. This interpretation is perhaps supported by her decision to by-pass the authorities in order to establish a Gota de Leche station in Almería. Her original intention had been to encourage the Ministerio de Sanidad to establish and run the station, whilst the AFSC merely provided the milk. Lack of action in this area encouraged Esther Farquhar to ignore governmental disapproval and simply go ahead with the plans, finally establishing the station in the house of a local supporter of Sir George Young, José Gonzalez, as the hospital was both overcrowded and currently occupying a building previously employed as a Reformatory, a use to which the local Judge was anxious to reassign it.¹⁰² This did not always resolve the issue of demarcation. When Levi Hartzler came out to Murcia in late 1937 he reported that the local government was anxious that all relief work be in their hands, to the extent of taking over any new projects. Hartzler, like Esther Farquhar, was reluctant simply to hand over relief supplies until they could be absolutely sure

¹⁰⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 25 August and 7 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

¹⁰¹Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 7 September 1937, Committee on Spain: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

¹⁰²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 30 November 1937, Committee on Spain, Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

where they were going, and this was best achieved by maintaining control of the relief stations.¹⁰³ However, when it came to setting firm guidelines the Republican authorities seemed reasonably willing to accept the units' decisions. Ruth Cope argued that the triage rules of the International Commission and the Friends were often appreciated by local authorities, as it freed them from making difficult and unpopular decisions, and the Barcelona Unit was clearly willing to accept some direction from the authorities on the matter of the location of canteens and support for colonies.¹⁰⁴

In addition to cooperating with the local authorities the Friends in Republican Spain established a number of successful relationships with other voluntary agencies. In Barcelona, the FSC were successful in establishing mutually beneficial arrangements with the expatriate-organised General Relief Fund and with the TUC-sponsored National Joint Committee which provided much of the transport for the unit and for which the unit provided grazing facilities and an administrative base in Barcelona. In fact, this was so successful that it is alluded to only in passing. There was little need for Alfred Jacob to discuss on paper what was clearly a smooth arrangement.

In Murcia, the unit's principal partner was Sir George Young, an expatriate and philanthropist who ran a number of hospitals. Overall this co-operation was successful, but it was not without difficulties due to the clash of ideologies and ethos which a close arrangement engendered. Co-operation with Sir George Young's hospitals in Almería, Murcia and Alicante had been on an informal level from mid-1936 through most of 1937. This informal arrangement had its difficulties however: the Friends, although supplying food and medical equipment to the hospitals, had little control over their management. Although Sir George Young willingly provided nurses for Francesca Wilson's first feeding station in Murcia, by July 1937 he was ready to recall them in order to staff another children's hospital.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³Levi Hartzler to John L. Horst (Scottdale, Pa.: Mennonite), 27 December 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence - Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to) (Box 7).

¹⁰⁴Ruth Cope to Family, received 28 November 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938. Individuals: Alfred and Ruth Cope (Box 9).

¹⁰⁵Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 1 July and 7 September 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

In response the AFSC offered to take over responsibility for the hospitals and Esther Farquhar began to visit them in the company of Sir George Young. In September 1937 the Friends in Murcia were invited to take over the running of three children's hospitals in Murcia, Alicante and Almería. However, the AFSC could afford this commitment only if the Mennonites and Brethren continued each to guarantee \$2,000 a month, and even then the AFSC could guarantee funds only for three months, an arrangement which Sir George viewed with some alarm.¹⁰⁶ Consequently he determined to maintain what Levi Hartzler termed a "fatherly feeling" for the establishments, which constantly threatened to flower into interference should the AFSC not live up to his expectations.¹⁰⁷

Relationships between workers after this take-over were not always easy. Already present in Murcia were the British nurses attached to Sir George Young's unit. However, there were a number of problems with these women, both in terms of their personal commitments and how they related to their Spanish co-workers. Francesca Wilson and Esther Farquhar may both have been put off from the thought of too many overseas volunteers in part because of the problems these women involuntarily caused. A major issue was simply that when overseas workers became ill, they almost always went home. As typhoid was becoming a problem in 1937, and as overwork left nurses exhausted, the withdrawal of overseas workers left gaps only some of which could be filled by Spanish auxiliaries.¹⁰⁸ Other problems were about conflicts in practice. During her last visit to Murcia 1938 Francesca Wilson was informed by one nurse of the Spanish practice of injecting children, which the doctors preferred as it ensured that the correct dose was received. The nurses were horrified by the fear that this engendered, and preferred to administer medicines orally.¹⁰⁹ Only the rigid hierarchy maintained between these two branches of the medical profession

¹⁰⁶Louisa Jacob to Esther Farquhar, 8 October 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence to Esther Farquhar.

¹⁰⁷Levi Hartzler to John Reich, 15 November 1937, Committee on Spain 1937: Correspondence - Murcia (Levi Hartzler, from and to) (Box 7).

¹⁰⁸Francesca Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

¹⁰⁹*Ibid.*

appears to have ensured that the nurses continued to support the Spanish doctors' practices. Although there were problems with the English nurses, when asked if she wished for American replacements or additions, Esther Farquhar replied that she felt to add a third national culture into the already strained situation would be too much.

My concern at the moment is the personnel of the American staff and the philosophy of relationship with the Spanish people, especially with those that have offered us their time and services. The Spaniard is... as different from the traditional Puritan American as any of the European peoples. Without a rather deep understanding of this difference and of Spanish and character, foreigners in Spain are very apt to be so impressed by what they see as weaknesses and deplorable characteristics that they lose faith in them altogether. And so I should say that the *first prerequisite for a good worker is an understanding and appreciation of the Spanish race.* ...¹¹⁰

For example, the reaction of Margaret Hope, one of the senior nurses, was one of hostility, both to the Friends directly, and with regard to Friends' relations with the Spanish staff, which were more informal than the English and Scottish nurses preferred. The AFSC expected high levels of accountability and there was also some suggestion that the Almería staff could not supply the records which the American staff expected as a matter of course.¹¹¹ In the end, the Almería hospital had to be disbanded and the nursing staff either sent home or to other stations.¹¹²

Dorothy Thompson sent me a copy of Margaret Hope's report... It bears out what the Spaniards felt to be true—that the English nurses were jealous of the Americans. They were never interested in the Gota de Leche [milk station] and were always afraid that they were

¹¹⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 26 May 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

¹¹¹Esther Farquhar to Dorothy Thompson, 21 February 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, London-Spain (Box 7).

¹¹²Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 23 February 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

going to have to work under the American flag... the English, especially non-Friends, are very very conscious of their nationality, and feel superior to all the rest of the benighted world. But there I have made a general statement which doesn't apply to most of the English people I know... Francesca Wilson is a grand person and very cosmopolitan and so is Barbara Wood.¹¹³

In particular, it seems that the nurses did not understand the Quaker notion of collaboration and remained uncomfortable with the egalitarian and non-hierarchical atmosphere the Quakers preferred. There is no evidence that the nurses saw themselves as part of a wider mission or as anything other than employees, unlike the Spanish doctors who were happy to connect their work to the wider child-feeding project.

It must be emphasised that the Friends did not see this as a problem entirely external to their unit. Esther Farquhar had a number of difficulties with Levi Hartzler, who was unwilling to accept the principles on which the Friends worked with the Spanish.

I saw no point in imposing upon them any made-in-America system and have not believed that in so doing I was being false to my responsibility to the Committee nor to those who sacrificed to make it possible...He [Levi] resents the Spaniards making any criticisms or suggestions, or seeming to take any authority upon himself.¹¹⁴

Levi's attitude caused problems in Esther Farquhar's absence. A Spanish Protestant had offered his services and been accepted. With the permission of the unit he distributed goods from his own home. When he seemed to be taking a great deal of goods, Levi dismissed the woman who had helped him and placed an older woman with him as a spy. When this came out, Esther Farquhar was left to soothe ruffled feelings. The Spaniard in question had been told that unless he did things in the way the unit laid down they could do without him as there were plenty of other people who would be glad to take his place. Eventually the problem was

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 26 May 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence, Murcia, Esther Farquhar (Box 8).

sorted out, but not without apologies all around, and some members of the unit resented the Spanish helpers' evident pleasure in Esther's return.¹¹⁵ Her final comment was that, "Levi thinks he understands more than he does and so gets things balled up occasionally, but he continually studies the language".¹¹⁶ Even where the chain of command was relatively clear and the two organisations formally tied, differences of culture could cause difficulties.

The cultural stresses within the hospitals finally led to a reorganisation in November 1937. The hospital in Murcia had to be moved anyway as the relationship with the reformatory in which it was housed had reached its limits. A bout of illness amongst the English nurses created a poor atmosphere for making such decisions. Margaret Hope wanted to close the hospital and establish a convalescent home in the Villa Maria approximately five kilometres away, with a clinic in the Gota de Leche building. The nurses would then be sent to Murcia where they were badly needed. None of the nurses, however, were willing either to transfer to Murcia or to move to the convalescent home. In the end ten beds were provided at the Villa Maria, with what Esther Farquhar referred to as a *practicante*, a Spanish nurse employed to take charge of the children. The nurse was one of the few secular Spanish nurses available, secured from a UGT syndicate. The English nurses, however, remained unhappy. Relations within the hospital appeared to have deteriorated, cultural expectations and prejudices having got in the way of close co-operation. Esther Farquhar explained:

...the doctor...expressed a feeling which has been manifest in other hospitals also. He said he never felt at home in the English Hospitals. They served him tea and said "thank you — thank you — thank you", but he never felt that his orders were being obeyed... The difficulty has been that the English nurses feel themselves far above the Spanish doctors in their knowledge of hygiene at least, and are very much opposed to the use of so many injections, and you can easily understand that this attitude on their part has made it very

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

difficult for the Spanish doctors who are giving their time and services to out hospitals.¹¹⁷

The situation had become so bad in the Murcia hospital that the doctor, Don Amalio, had threatened to resign. The nurses were eventually returned home and a new administrator, Dorothy Morris, with experience of Spanish doctors at the front was engaged, releasing Margaret Hope to take over the workshops in Murcia from Francesca Wilson who needed to return to England for the start of the school term. Local *practicantes* were hired in place of nurses and Dorothy Litten, a nurse who arrived in September 1938, was able to report that she had nine girls learning to be nurses, some refugees and some local girls.¹¹⁸ Those on the domestic staff were all refugees.

Most of the girls are not really enthusiastic about nursing, but like to be here because of the safety and the good food—nevertheless we hope that some of the elementary health instruction that we give them will make them more sensible wives and mothers later on. They are good natured girls and kind to the children but very irresponsible and needing endless supervision.¹¹⁹

What was clearly required both in the hospitals and other areas of relief work was an attitude that there was more than one right way of doing things and a belief in the essential unity of the mission.¹²⁰ Hiring local, untrained girls smoothed the path to co-operation: they learned the American and the Spanish methods which kept the peace and, from the American point of view, were being trained in modern methods and in addition helped to reinforce the spiritual connection between giver and receiver which the Friends were anxious to emphasise. The loss of the English nurses allowed for a shift in operational procedure in a direction more in accord

¹¹⁷Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 30 November 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

¹¹⁸"Impressions of the Children's Hospital at Murcia", Dorothy Litten, 22 November 1938. Committee on Spain: Reports, Murcia (Box 9).

¹¹⁹*Ibid.*

¹²⁰Esther Farquhar to John Reich, 30 November 1937, Committee on Spain, 1937: Correspondence from Esther Farquhar (Box 3).

with Quaker ideologies of self-help and empowerment. Furthermore, the incident provided clear evidence that over a period of time Esther Farquhar had learned to value the experience and judgement of her Spanish medical staff.

7.3 Howard Kershner and the Difficult Adjustment

The Friends' Mission in Republican Spain until 1939 had been marked by their willingness to adapt to the needs of their Republican colleagues and their operation as collaborators rather than directors. Consequently, it was further distinguished by the extent to which the Friends in Murcia and Barcelona succeeded in integrating their priorities and ideology into the prevailing mood. The failure of this approach from 1939 was a direct consequence of the Nationalist victory, but the speed with which it took place and the lack of corporate resistance to Nationalist demands can be traced to the actions and beliefs of Howard Kershner, appointed director of the AFSC and International Commission relief effort in Spain at the end of 1938. Kershner's very different witness and the relief workers' response illuminates very effectively some of the underlying beliefs which most of the relief workers shared at the same time as illustrating the degree to which circumstances might shape the manifestation of the Quaker witness.

Throughout 1939 the relief work was unified under the directorate of Howard Kershner and the International Commission. In Spain, the International Commission was to all intents and purposes Howard Kershner, and his personality guided the mission, shaped its relationship with the Auxilio Social and in the end alienated many of the workers. One way to interpret the rapid departure of the relief workers from Spain, and the failure of the principle relief workers to transfer to France in 1939, is as a reaction to their dislike of the arrangements, compromises and attitudes which Kershner imposed in this year.

Kershner's principal work was intended to be in Republican, or Government Spain. John Reich wrote to Alfred Jacob, "...while no definite plans have been laid, it is reasonable that he will have headquarters in Barcelona to be in touch with the Government there." It was hoped that Kershner's appointment would provide both unity and professional management skills for an increasingly large operation.

However, Kershner acted upon his own initiative when he chose visit insurgent Spain first, a habit which was to lead to a troubled relationship with both his colleagues and the AFSC, although in the event, with the Nationalist victory imminent by February 1939, it was hoped that Howard Kershner's contacts with Nationalist Spanish officials would assist the AFSC's and FSC's adjustment.¹²¹

We hope Howard Kershner will be a great help to everyone trying to do this tremendous task of feeding Spain's millions. He is an outstanding business man and a good executive who should be able to co-ordinate private and governmental efforts. Give him all the help you can. He comes to the job entirely unacquainted with Spain, but with a sound business judgement and with a deep devotion to the spiritual implications of our work.¹²²

However, in appointing someone who knew nothing of Spain to oversee the relief mission, the AFSC were ignoring all previous requirements for relief workers, and in particular ignoring Alfred Jacob's criterion that his workers should feel attached to the people with whom they were working.

Kershner's position vis-à-vis the AFSC was complicated. He was initially employed by the AFSC to take over as director of their relief work in Spain but, at the last moment, he was asked also to direct the International Commission relief work. He was therefore both employee and colleague of the AFSC. However, the AFSC was only one of a number of organisations whose work was supplemented by International Commission rations and the relationship between the two was complex.

Howard Kershner was to maintain his own accounting system and banking facilities for expenditures in connection with the administration of relief supplies furnished by the American Red Cross, but AFSC workers in Southern and Nationalist Spain were to be accounted for through the AFSC offices in

¹²¹John F. Reich to Murcia Center, 6 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, General (Box 12).

¹²²John Reich to Alfred Jacob, 30 December 1938, Committee on Spain 1938: Correspondence-Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

Philadelphia.¹²³ Indications emerged early on that Kershner's own perception of his role differed from that of the AFSC, and that his own personality drove many of the decisions that the International Commission made in the field. In February 1939 he proposed that all accounting be centralised through him and that he should have control of his workers' salaries. Charles Ewald who regarded Kershner as "something of a reactionary in Economics" did not approve of either Kershner's appointment or his actions.

...he seems quite lacking in appreciation of the spirit that must pervade this service. When he argues that to have the loyalty of the people who are doing this relief work in Spain, he should control their salaries, I am frankly shocked. I refused a salary of \$1500 a year offered me by one of the leading merchant banking corporations in South America years ago because my life was not for sale. I was doing the thing I was doing because I wanted to do it and because I had a certain attitude towards my fellow men, and so it is with people in Spain. They are not there for salaries, and money does not determine their loyalties... Howard Kershner impressed me as opinionated, with rather bookish ideas of efficiency and almost hard boiled. To my surprise Hallingworth Hood, without knowing anything about what was in my mind, spoke of him as something of a mystery man and "opinionated".¹²⁴

Kershner's plans were rejected by both the AFSC and the FSC, but it was already clear that Howard Kershner entered Spain with very different notions of Quaker work to those of the closely knit and essentially egalitarian relief units, and a very different understanding of who he was working for.¹²⁵ Ewald's assessment of his character was to be substantiated by subsequent events.

The relationship between the AFSC and the International Commission was

¹²³John Reich to Bernard Lawson, 3 January 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹²⁴Charles J. Ewald to John F. Reich, 8 December 1938. Committee on Spain 1938: Personnel, Individuals, Charles Ewald (Box 8).

¹²⁵Bernard Lawson to Howard Kershner, 16 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

always awkward. The FSC needed the funds of the International Commission enough to be willing to subsume its structure within that of the Commission. The AFSC, with a more formal relationship and greater financial independence was not and a number of significant decisions assisted in exacerbating the potential for tension. The International Commission decided to appoint Kershner as a vice-President without waiting for the AFSC response to the initial suggestion, which they in fact opposed.¹²⁶ Kershner replied in July that after some discussion there had been unanimous agreement from all but the Friends that he should be appointed. He wrote, "I do not hold this against you, as I understand your view point", but his concern was somewhat undermined by his revelation that he had been elected prior to the receipt of the AFSC's views upon the matter.¹²⁷ Kershner's tendency to centralise administration led to the Philadelphia office feeling uninformed and in August 1939 John Reich had to request that copies of all AFSC relief workers' reports that revealed the state of affairs in either France or Spain should be forwarded to both London and Philadelphia. This had previously been the normal practice for any field director.¹²⁸ Clearly Kershner did not view the AFSC as his primary responsibility, although it had been his first from which all else flowed.

Practical arrangements with the International Commission were often better. In March 1939 the AFSC decided to accept the proposal that all AFSC personnel be maintained by the International Commission and that AFSC money go to the purchase of American wheat, but problems still emerged over the amount of influence which the Friends were to wield in International Commission decision making. The British Friends in particular had been essential to the formation of the

¹²⁶The International Commission later made the decision to appoint the American George MacDonald to the same post despite AFSC protestations of his ineffectuality on the Presidential Commission supposedly raising funds for Spain. John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 23 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹²⁷Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 11 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹²⁸John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 16 August 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

International Commission, and the presence of the British Friend Edith Pye on the committee ensured Quaker input. But Kershner could be rather defensive, quite properly, about undue over-emphasis on Friends' influence; however the way in which he phrased it was troubling.

One point that I think has not been appreciated in Philadelphia is that the greater part of the resources of this Commission have come from Europe. We are responsible to twenty-four Governments of which America is only one. Is it right for us to allow our course to be unduly influenced out of consideration for conditions in America, when after all America is comparatively a small factor in the work of this Commission? Are we not rather in duty bound to look to the situation in Europe and be governed largely by what appears to be advantageous from this standpoint.¹²⁹

The uncomfortable implication, which was to echo in much of Kershner's work, was that his loyalty was to the governments and to international politics. As the governments were the major donors, this appeared superficially to accord with Quaker concern for financial responsibility towards donors, but traditionally, the Friends' primary responsibility had been to the *recipients* of relief. Although some earmarked gifts were distributed they were only ever solicited for the colonies and the practice was not one which either the AFSC or FSC encouraged. More usually, Friends operated on the assumption that those who gave money to Quaker agencies understood the factors which shaped Quaker relief practices. Howard Kershner had turned this around, allowing the donors the right to influence the direction of relief, and although ostensibly Quakerly this emphasis on the "European situation" effectively opened the door to a relief policy which would accommodate Nationalist political demands. If the donors did not object, why should the recipients?

The effectiveness of the International Commission can best be judged by its ability to mobilise cross-governmental support. The British, Swedish, Finnish,

¹²⁹Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 16 August 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

Belgian, Norwegian and Danish governments were the largest givers. In February 1939 the Swedish Government donated £75,000, whilst the British Government donated £20,000.¹³⁰ America preferred not to give aid directly and the International Commission had to be satisfied with purchasing cheap surplus wheat—an offer whose generosity varied with the discount that the Federal Surplus Commodities Corporation was willing to offer¹³¹—and the donations raised by the President's Committee.¹³² One gets the sense that both the AFSC and Howard Kershner were slightly ashamed by the parsimonious attitude of the US government.¹³³ The USA's President's Committee, by 23 March had raised only \$5,000 and donations were slow to come in.¹³⁴ In April John Reich reported that they came in at only \$200 per day. Income in Philadelphia was slightly less and largely earmarked and what was left was pooled to buy wheat and pay off the deficit owed to the Red Cross as a result of their underwriting the shipping costs. The Catholic Church had not proved as helpful as hoped; apart from \$5,000 from one Catholic committee there

¹³⁰Bulletin no. 31, 7 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

¹³¹John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 14 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11). The price offered increased from four cents a bushel to ten cents a bushel.

¹³²In January 1939 Lillian Traugott wrote to Dorothy Thompson in January 1939 informing her that a committee had been appointed at the request of President Roosevelt to raise funds to move the surplus wheat. This agency hoped to raise \$500,000 within a month and a half. It is worth noting that the American government was not willing to give even enough money to transport it, preferring to rely on Hooverite philosophies of encouraging private philanthropy. In contrast, the British government—once the war was at an end and it felt immune from accusations of partisanship—was willing to be flexible and announced that it was happy to see money donated for food diverted to resettlement plans. This generosity should not be misread. Large numbers of Spanish refugees would have proven even more embarrassing than the government's unwillingness to assist the relief effort. Edith Pye to John F. Reich, 28 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10); Howard Kershner to Passmore Elkington, 13 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹³³Howard Kershner to Passmore Elkington, 13 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹³⁴Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 23 March 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

had been no large-scale support. The remaining anti-Franco feeling in America ensured that many donations came in earmarked for the refugees in France.¹³⁵ Fundraising in America was hampered by the American Red Cross and the International Red Cross being reluctant to take overtly political money; in February 1939 they refused to accept funding from the Medical Bureau of North America because of its Communist taint. Howard Kershner felt that a more pragmatic approach was needed and said that it should be accepted for grinding wheat.¹³⁶ Consequently it was necessary to persuade the Spanish governments to contribute transportation costs for the wheat, not always an easy task.¹³⁷

Because of the difficulties in the field, one area of work that was not explored was peacemaking. Kershner had hoped to assist in peace negotiations but was warned off first by the State Department and later by the AFSC who felt that it would jeopardise both the work and the safety of the personnel.¹³⁸ J. Passmore Elkington of the Spain Committee (AFSC) wrote of the fear that the Nationalists would hear the AFSC as pleading for their Communist "partners". Furthermore, the AFSC had no way to enforce any agreement the Nationalists might ask them to broker with the remnants of the Loyalist and wished to have no association with unreliable promises. Despite this, however, Elkington assured Kershner that the peace witness remained at the heart of the mission, "...we cherish peace-making always...Besides, your alms bearing, it is a joy to know that the influence of your spirit reflecting constantly Divine Love, 'will condition', as moderns say, the

¹³⁵John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 6 and 12 April 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹³⁶Howard Kershner to Passmore Elkington, 13 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹³⁷Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 3 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹³⁸John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 25 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

temper of many an otherwise bitter spirit"¹³⁹ The difficulty was that Kershner's own understanding and expression of pacifism were extremely simplistic. In his autobiography he wrote:

I sometimes speculate about what might have happened if the Republican Government had not resisted Franco's attempt to take over... If Republican Spain had held fast to an attitude of non-violence, allowing Franco to assume the responsibility of governing, a change might have taken places without bloodshed and without the inevitability of inaugurating a Fascist government. It seems not unlikely that after a time the Franco government would have been overthrown by the will of the people peaceably expressed, and the Republican Government restored.¹⁴⁰

Although his comments were a version of the classic statement of acceptance and compliance which we see in both the 1660 Peace Testimony and in later Quaker actions such as the acceptance of the American Revolutionary Government, Kershner appeared oblivious to other parallel developments in Quaker thought—refusal of military service, refusal of oaths and of the payment of tithes—which did not equate peaceableness with compliance. Pacifist the Friends might be, but they had maintained a consistent reputation as an obstinate and uncompliant people.

Kershner's claim to the moral high ground and his expressions of goodwill were also tainted by anti-Republican prejudice and ignorance. His efforts to substantiate his neutrality only served to display his partisanship. In the same passage he wrote: "The insurgents did not observe constitutional procedure; they resorted to violence. It is also true that there was violence and bloodshed on the part of the Loyalists".¹⁴¹ The equating of the two, whilst firmly within a Quaker tradition that all violence is wrong, lacked any acknowledgement of the political

¹³⁹J. Passmore Elkington, Chairman of the Spain Committee, to Howard Kershner, 28 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁴⁰Howard E. Kershner, *Quaker Service in Modern War*, Prentice-Hall Inc., New York, pp. 102-3.

¹⁴¹*Ibid.*

history of the war and made no distinction between the legitimate and the illegitimate government—a distinction which Quakers in earlier wars, whilst maintaining their neutrality, had observed.

Kershner was also wary of offering direct help to political refugees: a decision taken with the advice of the AFSC, but again his public statements went beyond simple refusal and embraced the vocabulary of judgment and condemnation. Approached by a member of the Defence Council of Republican Spain at the end of March to assist with the evacuation of up to 10,000 intellectuals, he expressed his regret but was obliged to say that his government did not wish him to become involved in such matters. "He made no claims for the criminal or lawless element but spoke only of getting the high grade, honestly convinced Republicans out", but decided privately that he would be willing to make a personal plea in Burgos for the safety of the "high grade", a distinction that most workers would have decided was irrelevant and unnecessary in an atmosphere in which criminality was decided by a person's political allegiance.¹⁴²

Initially, as I have already indicated, Kershner felt that it was not in keeping with the wishes of the donors that goods should simply be turned over to Auxilio Social.¹⁴³ Although prior to 1939 some gifts had been made to government agencies it was not standard practice. However, in late February 1939 he came to an agreement with Señor Bedoya, chief of the Auxilio Social, that David Blickenstaff should have an office at the headquarters of Auxilio Social in Valladolid, and from

¹⁴²Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 27 March 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11). A particular problem was that the International Commission's money was earmarked and there were no funds to assist with migration. The International Commission (actually Dermot O'Donovan acting on Kershner's behalf while he was in Spain) refused to assist 120 Lincoln Brigaders trapped at Le Havre and in danger of imprisonment. O'Donovan felt that the Americans were far better off than other refugees, either military or civilian and that International Commission resources could be better applied: "The position of about 6,000 Central European ex-International Brigaders in the camps... is quite desperate. They cannot return to their own country. [And] Mexico will accept only Spaniards." Dermot O'Donovan to John Reich, 21 April 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁴³Howard Kershner to General Franco, 13 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

there take charge of allocation and distribution of all supplies sent in to Nationalist Spain. This had certain advantages, it brought with it customs waivers and protection for personnel, but it was also a tacit surrender to the principle that goods would be handed over to the Spanish agency and the tendency was for Auxilio Social to assume more authority than the Friends thought they had granted.¹⁴⁴ The rapid assumption of authority by Auxilio Social was received badly by the relief workers, in particular because Kershner's belief in centralised administration meant that they had been allowed no part in any negotiations. Consequently, only a few days after the above letter John Reich wrote to Kershner with the news that the entire Quaker unit in Barcelona—with the exception only of Alfred and Norma Jacob—would be leaving as they had been deprived of all authority and responsibility.¹⁴⁵

Although they were still listed as representatives of the International Commission the Jacobs had lost control of direct relief work: the Commission's gifts went straight to the Auxilio Social. The Jacobs received reports as to the location of deliveries, endeavoured to monitor these and also attempted to keep in touch with local needs and to pass on this information to the Commission. Their official work was increasingly limited in scope, consisting mainly in tracing missing members of families and providing small food parcels for particularly hard hit families. One or two study groups were being attempted although this was hedged around with restrictions, and it was possible for the Friends to loan cars and lorries to organisations and to young people in order that outings might be made.¹⁴⁶

Even when, as happens only too often, the problem is outside our power to solve, we do our best to give sympathy and encourage

¹⁴⁴Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 21 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁴⁵John F. Reich to Howard Kershner, 23 February 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁴⁶"News from Barcelona" by Alfred Jacob, 31 October 1939. 1939 Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10), and Report from Alfred Jacob, Barcelona, 6 September, 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Barcelona (Box 13).

people to keep on looking for ways out of their difficulties instead of giving way to despair. For what has been achieved in this way we have principally to thank our invaluable Spanish secretary, a staunch Catholic who has during these difficult months given us an object lesson in what Quakerism in practice should really mean.¹⁴⁷

In August Auxilio Social reported that they had delivered over 17,000 kg of milk to 32,224 children.¹⁴⁸ However, in the small number of sites that the Friends were able to visit, Alfred Jacob reported that a smaller number of children was being fed than the Barcelona Unit's experiences had led them to feel were in need.¹⁴⁹ In Igualada, the centre of the tanning industry, unemployment had wreaked havoc. Auxilio Social was feeding sixty-eight babies, 288 children aged 3-13 and 441 older people. In October, however, the representative received instructions to strike off the register all families where the income was as much as one peseta per head per day.¹⁵⁰ Similar situations existed in most towns, with conditions depending largely on what factories were operating. In April 1939 Auxilio Social claimed to be feeding 2½ million children and 1½ million adults.¹⁵¹ In July, Harvey Ernest Bennet (a Mennonite), Irene Callon, Alfred Cope (but not Ruth who was in France), Jean Cottle, Maria Ecroyd, Mary Elmes, Rachel Marshal, Emily Parker and Sylvia Pitt arrived in London. Emmet Gulley left Valencia at the same time for the USA on the way to take up a position in Cuba in a retraining centre for German refugees.

Clearly, the AFSC workers were not comfortable with Auxilio Social and this discomfort was passed on to the Philadelphia office. In April 1939 Clarence Pickett (Executive Secretary of the AFSC) made his feelings clear in a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt: "It is a purely political and partisan organization, with which it has been extremely difficult for us to work...our Organization found that the

¹⁴⁷Report from Alfred Jacob, Barcelona, 6 September, 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Reports, Barcelona (Box 13).

¹⁴⁸Ibid.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Howard Kershner, report: "Three Weeks in Spain", April 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

Loyalist Government had a more intelligent and more dedicated relief set-up than the Auxilio Social. The latter is pretty much politics at its worse."¹⁵² Lillian Traugott felt that the situation, based on the June reports of Alfred Cope, Emmet Gulley and Emily Parker, was such that Quaker feeding should draw to a close.¹⁵³ However, belying this point of view, Howard Kershner wrote:

The official attitude of the military and civil authorities is very cordial. Our twelve workers will carry credentials from Sr. Bedoya and will have permission to go about wherever our food is being used, observing, inspecting and recommending. The food will be distributed from our warehouses upon the joint recommendation of our representatives and the delegates of Auxilio Social.¹⁵⁴

Kershner's experience of civility and reasonableness from the Nationalist authorities was at some remove from that of his workers, and negated his own criticisms about the waste of manpower in endless parades and celebrations.¹⁵⁵ In particular, it is important to recognise that it was at variance with the pre-victory reports of both David Blickenstaff and Earl Smith.¹⁵⁶ However, as has already been indicated, the fundamentals of the situation extended beyond a simple belief on the part of Kershner that the Nationalists were doing a good job. The dissonance between the ideology and expectations of Howard Kershner and those of his relief workers finally blew up in June 1939, threatening to damage the public face of the Friends, putting their workers in danger and exposing the differences in values and experience between those Friends who had served in the Republican zone and Howard Kershner.

On 8 June Alfred Cope arrived back in New York. Upon landing he was met by John Reich's secretary and told that Clarence Pickett was willing for him to be

¹⁵²Clarence E. Pickett to Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, 20 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Auxilio Social (Box 10).

¹⁵³Lillian Traugott to John F. Reich, 14 and 20 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: John Reich from/to-in Spain (Box 12).

¹⁵⁴Howard Kershner to AFSC, undated, Committee on Spain, 1939, Personnel, General (Box 13).

¹⁵⁵Kershner, *Quaker Service...*, op. cit., pp. 97-98.

¹⁵⁶See Chapter Six, fn. 47 and 53.

interviewed. He was presented with a list of appointments including the *New York Times* and the *New York Tribune*. Based on these originals, *Time* also ran a story. In the latter Alfred Cope, based on what he had been told by Nationalist Officials and what he had seen himself, was quoted as estimating that there might still be around 70,000 Italian troops in Spain, and spoke of the Nationalist confiscations of food in Murcia and other districts.¹⁵⁷ On 9 June the *New York Times* printed an article based on this interview with the newly returned Alfred Cope. The AFSC had not merely given permission for this interview, they had encouraged it, but had monitored neither the interview nor the subsequent article.

General Franco today stands accused by Alfred Cope of the American Friends Service Committee, with having taken food and milk supplies intended for 100,000 half-starved Spanish babies and of having diverted them to other purposes because their mothers were not politically acceptable to the Spanish Dictator. Mr. Cope, who directed the non-political and impartial distribution of relief for the American Quaker organization, declared... that the Friends had lost 6 or 7 shiploads of food destined for destitute children, but which, he said, "so far as we can find out was eaten by Franco's army...." Despite the well-known aversion of the Quakers to mix in politics or to comment upon political situations, Mr. Cope said the Loyalists had been herded into concentration camps everywhere under unbelievable conditions, and that executions by General Franco were apparently going on continually.

The only point made which was definitely untrue was that Alfred Cope was never the director of the operation but served first under Clyde E. Roberts and later under Emmet Gulley.

The partiality which this article advertised might have passed quickly from public view had not Howard Kershner, without consultation with the AFSC, released a repudiation to the Paris Press and the *New York Times*. When Howard Kershner had entered Spain he had made the decision to visit the Nationalist side

¹⁵⁷Alfred Cope to Dorothy Thompson, 17 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, Copes (Box 12).

first, against the advice of the AFSC. In the event, there was no Republic by the time he had finished. One effect was that he only received one side of the story. First-hand reports of "Red" brutality and torture were counteracted only by rumours of Nationalist executions.¹⁵⁸ For example, Kershner wrote without comment:

When the Francoists "liberated" Valencia they emptied the gaols of 29,000 prisoners. I asked the official who told me this how many they placed in gaol, and he said with great gusto: "Fifty thousand!" I was told that of this 50,000 maybe one or two thousand might be shot and that the rest would be put to work."¹⁵⁹

He added no discussion which would indicate whether he realised that this would be forced labour, and, as he made clear in a later comment, was willing to regard the large number of arrests and executions as a "restoration of discipline and...the execution of what it [the new government] considers justice".¹⁶⁰

On 27 June Howard Kershner wrote to Clarence Pickett, simultaneously sending a copy to the *New York Times*, arguing that because only one lot of the 350 tons taken by the army was from America, the matter was one which chiefly concerned the Commission and the governments and institutions who contributed to its resources. In addition he offered reassurances from Auxilio Social that all the missing goods were accounted for and would be returned.¹⁶¹ However, in a later letter and in reply to Clarence Pickett's request for a copy of the agreement made with the Nationalists in March, Kershner admitted that no written confirmation of the agreement had ever been received. He had been advised by the British representative in Burgos that it would be undiplomatic to insist on a written agreement, but insisted that with the exception of the missing shipments all

¹⁵⁸Howard Kershner, report: "Three Weeks in Spain", April 1939, Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.; Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

¹⁵⁹Ibid.

¹⁶⁰Statement to the AFSC, 29 June 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁶¹Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 27 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12); Kershner, *Quaker Service... op. cit.*, pp. 95-97.

agreements had been kept.¹⁶² Neither Florence Conard, who was refused involvement in the canteens, the workers in Murcia, where three hospitals had been closed, nor the Jacobs, who lost all control over distribution, would have agreed with this statement.

Howard Kershner did make genuine efforts to secure the return of the food, writing directly to both General Franco and to General Antonio Aranda.¹⁶³ However, the matter was complicated by his inability to fix on the number of shipments which had gone missing. In his letter to General Franco it was seven shipments; in a statement to the American Friends Service Committee, it was five or six shipments.¹⁶⁴ His statement to the AFSC also contained comments which were almost designed to be inflammatory. Kershner insisted that of the thirty-one workers in Spain none had been forced to leave. "Those who left did so from personal inclination and because they felt their usefulness had come to an end." Apart from Dorothy Morris, who was advised to leave because of former service as a nurse with the International Brigade,¹⁶⁵ there is evidence from both Alfred Cope, Emmet Gulley and Florence Conard that they left because, whilst not physically compelled, they felt their presence to be unwelcome. Sylvia Pitt and Rachel Marshall were not actually thrown out but were forced out of their jobs and residence. In fact, they had to get Kershner's support to be able to leave.¹⁶⁶ Kershner wrote with astounding complacency:

It ordinarily requires two to three months to get permission to leave Spain, but in view of the splendid work which these people had

¹⁶²Ibid.

¹⁶³Howard Kershner to General Franco, 28 April 1939; Howard Kershner to General Antoni Aranda, 30 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12),

¹⁶⁴Statement to the AFSC, 29 June 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁶⁵Emily Hughes (Spain Committee) to Lillian Traugott, 24 April 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹⁶⁶Dorothy Thompson to John F. Reich, 9 May 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

done, permission was granted immediately.¹⁶⁷

Kershner's comments implied that these workers had abandoned their posts. In an attempt to discredit the evidence of Alfred Cope he asserted that far from hanging on as he had said, Cope had been anxious to leave despite the offer of work under Auxilio Social in Alicante. However, Cope's arrival in America in June rather than March suggests that he did not leave in great haste.¹⁶⁸ Kershner complained:

It is unfair for Alfred Cope to say our representative was forced to leave Albacete. It is true that he was told to get out or he would be put in gaol. This statement was made during the change by an uninformed official, but David Luscombe or any other of our workers could go back to Albacete armed with a salvo-conducto to go anywhere in Spain and a letter of credentials from the National Delegate of Auxilio Social, both of which our workers now carry.¹⁶⁹

Florence Conard, in her letters from Madrid, was explicit that her work was being hindered and increasingly constrained. As was discussed in Chapter Six, it was the personal connections between donors and recipients which Friends regarded as so important which most offended Auxilio Social. To Howard Kershner, however, preserving good relationships with officials in order to facilitate the distribution of relief, took priority over contact between the Friends and the recipients. This was a valid point of view which recognised the simple importance of material aid, but it marked an important departure from the Friends' previous insistence that their work *must* offer a spiritual dimension.

Florence Conard and Alfred Cope were also convinced that the relief work was increasingly partial. The accusation that Auxilio Social was discriminating against the children of "Reds" was one that Kershner vociferously denied, but Alfred Cope, Emmet Gulley and Emily Parker all gave personal testimony to

¹⁶⁷Howard Kershner, "Report of Mission of the Director to Spain, 13 April to 5 May 1939), Committee on Spain, 1939. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain (Box 11).

¹⁶⁸Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁶⁹*Ibid.*

discrimination in feeding, and had reiterated their worries in a number of letters.¹⁷⁰ Furthermore, evidence existed in Earl Smith's reports that the Auxilio Social had never accepted the principle of impartial relief.¹⁷¹

Perhaps most unfortunately, the statement which Kershner sent to the AFSC, he also released to the press. Furthermore, Kershner did not restrict himself to a simple repudiation of Cope's own statement. In his final paragraph Kershner explicitly exposed his own prejudices:

That many people have been imprisoned by the Nationalists is well known. Personally, I think the number is excessive and quite unjustifiable. Nevertheless, when one reckons with the violence and lawlessness of the opposition and the equal if not greater degree of murdering and robbing that was conducted by the opposition, the present situation is quite understandable. At least the present Government has restored discipline and is proceeding in an orderly manner to the execution of what it considers to be justice. One may differ from this conception of justice, but at least it is not mob violence or lawlessness, and there is much in the present regime to commend it to those who believe in public order and discipline.¹⁷²

Kershner's view of Spain was entirely constructed through Nationalist eyes and, although he made clear his opposition to totalitarianism, his own instincts and organisational practices were autocratic and centralist. It is thus unsurprising that he felt able to express warmth and sympathy to the representatives of centralisation and "order".

I consider a totalitarian government the greatest misfortune that could come to any people...[However] I have great sympathy for it on account of the difficulties which it faces and the highest admiration for the sincerity of many military, civil and Auxilio Social officials with whom I am personally acquainted. That they are

¹⁷⁰Clarence Pickett to Howard Kershner, 30 June 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁷¹"Earl Smith's report", June 1938. Committee on Spain, 1938: Reports, General (box 9).

¹⁷²Statement to the AFSC, 29 June 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

trying very hard to restore justice, good government and prosperity to Spain is beyond question.¹⁷³

Kershner was willing to ignore the fact that after three years in Republican Spain, the Barcelona unit had reported very little lawlessness or violence. Edith Pye had tried to edit this statement, prior to its submission, but to no avail.

I think it gives an equally wrong impression of the state of things in Spain. Perhaps not so much of the actual state of things, but it seems to me a reflection upon the state of things in the Spain we knew and loved and worked for under the Republic.¹⁷⁴

Some Friends were outraged. One AFSC worker whose signature, unfortunately, is illegible, wrote: "Little did we think that we would come to having a Friend posing as an apologist of the Franco regime".¹⁷⁵ There was concern that a Director could repudiate the word of his field workers who had spent a great deal more time in Spain. Kershner's commendation of the Nationalists' "justice" brought particular outrage.¹⁷⁶ Another Friend felt that it was not in the spirit of the testimony of the Society to indulge in a public discussion of the merits of one form of government over another, a stance which Kershner, for all his vehemence, claimed to support. In his own eyes, he was the public advocate for neutrality, whilst Cope was the advocate of partisanship.¹⁷⁷

Kershner was considerably hurt by the response which his letters received. His initial hope that the effect of the Cope statement would blow over in Spain was undermined as knowledge of its contents spread. As far as he was concerned Cope had the disadvantage of having seen the war only from one side; he refused to admit that he himself was at the same disadvantage. He also argued strongly that

¹⁷³Ibid.

¹⁷⁴Edith Pye to Clarence Pickett, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁷⁵Unknown correspondent to John F. Reich, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁷⁶Ibid.

¹⁷⁷David Berkingoff to Clarence Pickett, 1 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

Cope's estimates of the number of Italian soldiers in Spain were a wild guess and already out of date. However some of his arguments were disingenuous. Declaring that only one of the missing shipments was in fact Quaker food did not invalidate Quaker concern for the return of the other shipments. He agreed that Auxilio Social had refused milk to babies; he had witnessed it but claimed that it was due to lack of supplies. He did not answer the challenge that Auxilio Social had been giving milk to healthy adults.¹⁷⁸ In self defence he argued that the key to Quaker work in Spain was not to feed the hungry—a statement made often by other Friends—"any decent philanthropically minded person might have done that and did",

but to have stayed through the change and shown forth an attitude of patience, understanding and love when the Nationalists came, was the greatest opportunity for demonstrating the Quaker way of life that I have ever seen. I am very sorry to say that with a few exceptions, this opportunity was not realised and that most of our representatives did not rise to the occasion.¹⁷⁹

This rather unpleasant dig at Alfred Cope ignored the fact that Kershner himself had not served under two administrations and did not have to make a transition. Emily Parker, in one of her last letters, had been very clear about her willingness to serve under the new regime.¹⁸⁰ In his autobiography, a book not printed by any of the Quaker presses, Kershner wrote rather insultingly,

The experience of those who were unable to make the adjustment had been entirely in the Republican zone. They had not had the benefit of associating with any of the fine people on the Nationalist side. They seemed to feel that there was nothing to be said on behalf of the Nationalists or any of their works.¹⁸¹

Although the workers in the Republican zone had either begun with or had

¹⁷⁸Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁷⁹Ibid.

¹⁸⁰Emily Parker to Grace Rhoads, 24 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Individuals: Parker, Emily (Box 13).

¹⁸¹Kershner, *Quaker Service...*, op. cit., p. 109.

developed sympathies with Republican aims, particularly in the areas of child-welfare and literacy, this ignored the evidence that both the Barcelona and Murcia units had served successfully with Spanish workers who had turned out to have Nationalist sympathies. Furthermore, the units had had their offers of co-operation spurned and their projects forcibly closed. In addition, Kershner was not in Spain in May when Alfred Cope left and did not return arrive until 24 June.¹⁸² He was also absent from the field during the two other major crises, the fall of the Republic and the fall of France.

Despite Kershner's protestations, at the end of June the Board was convinced that the information provided by Emmet Gulley's report substantiated that of Alfred Cope and despite Kershner's assertions that neither could be considered impartial, both were probably accurate.¹⁸³ Because Cope himself had never claimed to be wholly impartial his account was more plausible. Writing to his family (a letter which passed through the AFSC) he stated:

Internally, Spain was never meant for Fascism, or Communism or Anarchism. Its development into a republic may be deferred, but not stopped by a Franco victory. Thus, while I admit my sympathies are with the people on the side I am working, it seems that the secondary results of our feeding on a large scale will not be for the bad and may diminish the total evil somewhat.¹⁸⁴

Writing to Henry Cadbury, one of the founders of the AFSC, Cope had also argued that, "Our realization of what basic Quaker concepts of religious freedom, and attendant democracy, should lead us to the right course to follow"¹⁸⁵ Although Florence Conard expressed herself disturbed at Cope's statements, her own letters

¹⁸²Ibid.

¹⁸³Clarence Pickett to Board of Directors, 30 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁸⁴Alfred Cope to Family. 12 January 1939. Committee on Spain, 1939, Individuals: Cope, Alfred and Ruth (Box 13).

¹⁸⁵Alfred Cope to Henry Cadbury, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: Murcia, Copes (Box 12).

to Emmet Gulley had supported much of what Cope had said.¹⁸⁶ Clarence Pickett believed that as it was Emmet Gulley who had had the boat-loads of food removed from his care and had seen other food stocks taken away and sold, he was probably correct in his facts.¹⁸⁷ Emmet Gulley, who had by July 1939 returned to the USA, generally supported Alfred Cope's statements although both men felt that there had been some distortion of Cope's original comments. Clarence Pickett was inclined to believe Alfred Cope but felt that it did not help relations with Spain.¹⁸⁸ An extra problem, however, was that John Reich was in Paris at the time of both releases, accompanying Howard Kershner on his duties. Although Reich had been extremely supportive to his field workers, this was his first visit to Spain and he was dependent upon Howard Kershner for chaperonage and guidance. Inevitably he viewed circumstances through Kershner's eyes and met only the people with whom Kershner dealt.¹⁸⁹ Reich, still on tour with Kershner, wrote in support of Kershner's stance, and indicated that substantial amounts of food had been returned.¹⁹⁰ In fact no acceptable restitution was made until November and this still fell short of the total food which had been taken, despite Kershner's rather dubious assertion that a settlement based on food prices within Spain for goods bought abroad (resulting in less food returned than taken) was fair.¹⁹¹ A particular problem was that Cope, Gulley and Parker felt that the feeding should draw to an end, as they were reluctant for the AFSC to become associated with partisan feeding; Kershner felt this would only convince the Nationalist that the Quakers

¹⁸⁶Howard Kershner to John Reich, 15 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁸⁷Clarence Pickett to Dan West, 29 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁸⁸Clarence Pickett to John F. Reich, 21 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: John Reich from/to-in Spain (Box 12).

¹⁸⁹Dorothy Thompson to Clarence Pickett, 17 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

¹⁹⁰John Reich to Clarence Pickett, cable, 6 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁹¹Kershner, *Quaker Service...*, op. cit., p. 97; Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 30 November 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

were indeed "Reds". He was probably right; however his mode of expression was again an apologia for the Nationalists' actions, condemning the Friends for using the Bishop's palace to house a children's dining room and a church as a food warehouse.¹⁹² Kershner was adamant that he was not pro-Franco, and that he had "remonstrated with them" over some of their policies, but his tone was always anti-Republican.¹⁹³ He made a rather revealing comment to John Reich in April 1939, which was in marked contrast to the experience of the AFSC and FSC workers in Barcelona and Murcia:

We are liked and greatly appreciated at the top but it is difficult in some instances to get this attitude filtered down to the local people that one must deal with. It can be done and is being done but only with infinite patience and persistence.¹⁹⁴

Kershner's sympathies were very much with the hierarchical structure the new regime embodied; his very choice of colleagues may have shaped his perception of events. Stanley Payne asserts that representatives of the Spanish fascist party, the Falange, were generally excluded from the upper echelons of government during the war and it was these upper echelons, predominantly military and often Carlist, with whom Kershner dealt most often. Members of the Falange instead "filled in the framework of local government"¹⁹⁵ at just the levels at which most of the relief workers were operating and as it was these levels which appear to have directed so much hostility to the overseas relief organisations. Relief workers in Murcia, Barcelona and in Burgos prior to the victory had relied greatly on local support. Its absence reinforces the impression that it was no longer possible to maintain an ideology of collaboration and co-operation.

Kershner felt it outrageous that the Board should accept Cope and Gulley's

¹⁹²Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 11 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁹³Ibid.

¹⁹⁴Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 22 April 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁹⁵Stanley Payne, *Falange: A History of Spanish Fascism*, Stanford University Press, Stanford CA, 1979, pp. 202.

word without reference to the report of the Secretary of the Spain Committee on a fact finding tour.¹⁹⁶ However, Kershner's hostility towards Gulley is problematic; until this incident he appears to have had the highest regard for Emmet Gulley whom he appointed to Valencia to replace Clyde Roberts. In March he had written: "We are particularly fortunate in having secured the services of Emmet Gulley. He has already won the affection and co-operation of the entire force in Central and Southern Spain....I cannot speak too highly of the quality of the service he is rendering."¹⁹⁷ His protestations that Gulley was unreliable, consequently ring rather hollow.

Kershner's relationship to the AFSC was a difficult one. He seems to have regarded their reaction to the controversy as a personal betrayal and ignored his own contribution to the situation. With regard to Kershner's independent press release, Pickett commented that he had not thought of contacting him when the news broke about the contents of Cope's (authorised) press release because: "I never before have known anyone abroad who was representing the Service Committee to give a release without consulting the office here".¹⁹⁸ Kershner's belief that he did have the right to speak independently for the International Commission caused problems in that he was inextricably identified with the AFSC and anything he said would be identified with them,¹⁹⁹ In September John F. Reich cautioned Walter Woodward of *The American Friend* not to publish Kershner's revised statement on Spain. "He is not correct in assuming that the International Commission is an independent organization. It must, at all times, be correlated to the Society of Friends if Friends are to maintain any responsibility in the Spanish

¹⁹⁶Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 11 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁹⁷Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 7 March 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, Jan-July (Box 11).

¹⁹⁸Clarence Pickett to Howard Kershner, 20 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

relief field."²⁰⁰ Walter Woodward subsequently forwarded letters from Kershner to himself in which Kershner complained that the most important part of his statement, that on what he thought to be the proper Quakerly attitude had been cut. Like many, including the AFSC, he sought an end to this matter, but felt that if Clarence Pickett thought it appropriate to continue the debate then he would.²⁰¹

In July 1939 it was decided that despite the problems, and taking into account promised restitution for the missing food, the International Commission would continue feeding beyond August.²⁰² A statement was made to this effect to the press, attempting, where possible, to smooth over any difficulties caused by the controversial nature of Cope's and Kershner's comments.²⁰³ However, it was not felt that the AFSC could continue to raise funds for Spain. The most they could do was to continue to support the remaining workers, including the Kershners, and to begin moral support of those refugees arriving in Mexico, important because the International Commission had decided that its remit did not run to Mexico.²⁰⁴

Despite the pledges of support which Kershner received from the AFSC he refused to let the matter drop, perhaps because they reiterated their faith in Cope's and Gulley's reports. Kershner complained that he had been personally betrayed, having given his pledge that all the workers were "fair and impartial, and the type of people who would not concern themselves with politics", something which he

²⁰⁰John F. Reich to Walter Woodward, 7 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

²⁰¹Walter Woodward to Clarence Pickett, 9 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

²⁰²Although the Nationalist authorities were clearly not overly concerned to preserve the inviolability of foreign agencies' food supplies from their own expropriations, they did not encourage pilfering and were willing to act against generalised looting. In 1942, José Perez de Cabo was executed for selling Auxilio Social flour on the black market. Payne op. cit., pp 215-216.

²⁰³Statement to the *New York Times*, 20 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco; Clarence Pickett to Howard Kershner, 20 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

²⁰⁴Clarence Pickett to Howard Kershner, 20 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

had no right to do as Friends do not operate on group pledges.²⁰⁵ In August Alfred Cope received a cautionary letter from John Reich which contained the following extract of a letter from Howard Kershner:

...More serious [than food shortages] from our point of view is that the fact that the Cope release has been translated and more or less circulated in Spain. One of Cope's former drivers received a letter from Alfred Cope a short while ago and was promptly put in gaol... the very fact of having received a communication from Cope was sufficient to incriminate this man. Cope should be warned immediately not to write to anyone in Spain.

...Burgos replied that in his judgement and in the judgement of the officials of Spain, Cope will always be regarded as a spy... I think our contacts have been friendly enough and solid enough so that we will have no difficulty in retaining them, but for a long time there will be a big question mark in the minds of nationalist Spanish authorities in regard to us and our workers.²⁰⁶

In August Alfred Cope, who had kept relatively silent on the matter, wrote a lengthy letter to Howard Kershner on the advice of an acquaintance who worked in international law. In this he stated that he considered his own account to be "more in accordance with the facts" and based on better evidence.²⁰⁷ He felt strongly that he had to make some statement so that his acquiescence did not pass into the record.

There are many who hope that you can effectively obtain *de facto* restoration of the remaining goods involved, regain control of the food outlets in Spain, and do something realistic to investigate and alleviate the difficulties some of our former workers suffer

²⁰⁵Howard Kershner to John Reich, 21 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

²⁰⁶Howard Kershner to John Reich, 22 August 1939; John Reich to Alfred Cope, 25 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

²⁰⁷Alfred Cope to Howard Kershner, 23 August 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

through jail or restrictions before glowing reports of progress are issued. The greatest hope is that in these matters the name of the AFSC as administrator may be kept in good order. This does not mean alone the winning of the good graces of Franco, other governments, or gaining international prizes much as these may be hoped for; I refer also to certain traditional values which may only be discovered by reading Quaker history rather carefully, and reexamining our spiritual condition.

I must reject as untimely recent statements to the effect that staying in Spain is good pacifism as true but aside from the issue. We should be good pacifists, but I also believe that one should not hide difficulties in administration by saying that what has been done had been effected for the sake of pacifism. It is possible to be good pacifists and good administrators.²⁰⁸

Understandably Howard Kershner did not take the accusation of venality lightly, nor the accusation that he did not understand Quaker pacifism, and in a letter he again attacked Cope's initial statement point by point, and took issue with this last point in particular.²⁰⁹ Kershner seems to have been determined to destroy Cope's credibility. In Chapter Twelve of his autobiography, "A Difficult Adjustment", he went to great lengths to present his view of events whilst avoiding all mention of Alfred Cope's name or the decision of the AFSC to accept Cope's version of events. The acceptance of this book as one of the established records of Quaker activity in Spain has done a great disservice to all the Friends who served in Republican Spain and should be read only with the understanding that it is deeply partial and unreliable. Whilst it is clear that Cope's original statement was ill-advised, in that it made life difficult for those still in Spain, there is no evidence that he was deliberately attempting to mislead.

By late July, only one-third of the total amount of missing foodstuffs had

²⁰⁸Ibid.

²⁰⁹Howard Kershner to Alfred Cope, 14 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

been returned.²¹⁰ In reply to Alfred Cope's continuing concern on this matter, Reich had written that Kershner continued to emphasise his confidence that full restitution would be made and that short of "camping on official doorsteps" nothing more could be done.²¹¹ Kershner's promises that all would be returned, when made earlier in the year, had been received with some incredulity by Lillian Traugott. In June the food had been promised for three months and in September restitution had still not been made.²¹² Although much of the food was eventually returned by the army, it was not, as had originally been intended, returned to the International Commission. Instead a compromise was reached whereby it was returned in Spanish rather than American estimates of value, and to the Auxilio Social who by August were the only public face of relief permitted.²¹³ The food was finally all returned to some satisfaction in October 1939 and as an acknowledgement, the remaining \$100,000 of foodstuffs which the International Commission had earmarked for Spain was sent in.²¹⁴ In October Howard Kershner reported the winding up of the work in Spain. It had been decided to spend the remaining \$100,000 allocated to Spain rather than transfer it to the refugee account. \$25,000 was to be used for powdered or condensed milk, and for an invalid food made of 70% flour and 15% each milk and sugar, and \$15,000 for medical equipment.²¹⁵ However, the bitterness which the controversy with Alfred Cope had left is testified to by Kershner's refusal to accept Emily Parker's offer to work in

²¹⁰Howard Kershner to John Reich, 21 July 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Controversy: Cope-Kershner, re-Franco (Box 12).

²¹¹John Reich to Alfred Cope, 5 September 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Coms. and Orgs.: Friends Service Council Correspondence, from/to (Box 10).

²¹²Lillian Traugott to John F. Reich, memo, 20 June 1939. Committee on Spain 1939. Correspondence: John Reich from/to-in Spain (Box 12).

²¹³Howard Kershner to John F. Reich, 11 August 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

²¹⁴Howard Kershner to Clarence Pickett, 19 October 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

²¹⁵Report of Conference of Workers, Howard Kershner, 16 October 1939. Committee on Spain, Reports, General (Box 13).

France.²¹⁶ Howard Kershner left the Society of Friends in the 1950s.

Howard Kershner's directorship of the Quaker mission in Spain left uncomfortable and unpleasant memories in the minds of the relief workers. Kershner changed both the direction of the relief—acquiescing rapidly to the Nationalist demands that all work should be channelled through their partisan agencies—and its ethos. The Friends' units on both sides of the war had seen their work as separate from the war and its outcome, although many, particularly the Jacobs and Emily Parker, clearly hoped for a Republican victory. Crucially, however, prior to 1939 they had expressed their work through the strong relationships they maintained with the people around them and with little reference to the authorities and governments under whom they ostensibly served. Howard Kershner brought with him a new ideology which permeates his letters; his autobiography illuminates a man concerned to work with and through governments and who saw himself responsible to official authorities rather than directly to the recipients of the relief he dispensed. Crucially, he seems to have seen Spain and the Nationalist authorities as the recipients of relief, rather than the people. This sense continues throughout his work in France, where again there is rarely any mention in his letters of the people on the receiving end of the mission. Howard Kershner worked for Spain and for the refugees as an abstract; for the Jacobs, the Copes, for Esther Farquhar, Emily Parker, and the others it was intensely personal.

²¹⁶John F. Rich to Howard Kershner, 7 December 1939. Committee on Spain. Coms. and Orgs.: Int'l Commission for Relief of Child Refugees in Spain—Correspondence, from/to Howard Kershner, August-December (Box 11).

Conclusion

The Friends' presence in Spain was motivated by very different impulses than those which operated in other organisations and this had consequences for Quaker practice: the Friends were not in Spain to support a political cause and consequently, they did not leave when the cause collapsed. Equally, despite their prioritisation of children's needs (the arguments for which were discussed in Chapters One and Two), they were not, unlike the Save the Children Union, in Spain specifically for the children. When adults became the majority of refugees in 1939, the Quakers did their best to redirect their provision. Rather the Friends were in Spain to demonstrate their belief in the positive powers of peaceful cooperation and to witness to the presence of the Divine Light in all people.

Perhaps the most crucial question to ask in this conclusion is to what extent the work in Spain was a successful witness to pacifism. It is clear from the early actions of Alfred Jacob and the letters of Sylvester Jones that when the work in Spain was first considered, it was this Testimony which was of primary importance; without the Peace Testimony there might be nothing to distinguish the Friends' work from the "merely" humanitarian.

The FSC and AFSC were adamant that they were neutral participants in the war. However, by demanding this status they argued forcefully that neutrality could and should be an active and not passive position. The Friends publicly declared the principle of international responsibility and asserted that neutrality did not have to mean waiting for natural events to take their course. For the Friends, starvation was as final a cause of death as warfare; to permit the former was to engage in war no matter what declarations of neutrality were made. In this the Friends made a substantial contribution to long-term developments in international politics. Although blockades still take place, it is unusual for blockades of foodstuffs to be deemed acceptable.

Publicly, the FSC and the AFSC maintained their corporate witness by serving on both sides of the lines. Although Friends had in the past made a point of assisting both the victors and the vanquished in the aftermath of war, this was the first time they had successfully served as an outside agency on both sides of an

ongoing war. However, until the fall of the Republic it is an uncomfortable fact that the AFSC rarely had Quaker workers based with the Burgos unit. Until the arrival of Howard Kershner, who may have been selected precisely for the right-wing orientation which so offended many of his field workers, the Burgos unit relied almost entirely on Brethren and Methodists. Without personnel files, which do not seem to exist, it is impossible to assert whether this was deliberate or coincidental, nor is it clear whether this issue is significant. Did the failure of the AFSC to establish a *Quaker* presence in Nationalist Spain indicate a left-wing bias on the part of the Committee? It seems unlikely: the AFSC was anxious to operate in Nationalist Spain but it relied heavily on securing willing workers. This in turn, however, leads one to question the individual neutrality of the Quaker workers in the Republic.

Although all relief workers volunteered knowing that they could be sent to either zone, it seems clear that many of the relief workers in the Republican zone, whilst somewhat suspicious of communist and socialist rhetoric, identified strongly with many of the social ideals of the Republic. In particular they welcomed the opportunity—which the Republic seemed to offer—to introduce mass education to Spain, and supported the general faith in an emerging order of social justice. It was inevitable, therefore, that the relief workers in Murcia and Barcelona, whilst not regarding themselves as Republican supporters, would direct their sympathies to that government, and be somewhat dismayed by the policies of the Nationalist regime. Their personal beliefs were subsequently often rather less than neutral, but it is important to recognise—before faulting these people for failing to live up to their own ideals—that they were prepared to attempt relief work under the Nationalists and that for the most part they consistently maintained an outward neutrality in their everyday actions. Their reasons for leaving varied but for Emily Parker and Alfred Cope, the actions of Howard Kershner were as significant as those of the new authorities. Their assignments to Republican Spain *may* have been a simple recognition by the AFSC of where these individuals would be most effective.

It is worth reiterating how apparently unaware most of the Friends were, prior to 1939, of the allegiances of their Spanish colleagues or of the political in-

fighting which surrounded them. The allegiances of the relief workers were very much to the Spanish people rather than to the authorities, and the Friends appear to have been mostly indifferent to the turmoil which was apparently taking place around them. This aspect of their behaviour and experience is significant in another way. The history of this war has typically been written by those with strong political allegiances or who were themselves involved in the political changes which were occurring. That the Friends in Barcelona *could* be oblivious to many of the local political disputes suggests that historians may need to re-examine in the future just how significant such events were to the average inhabitant of the city.

The importance of the Friends' witness to peace and to neutrality was displayed best by the decision to remain in Spain after the fall of the Republic when many other agencies began to withdraw. It is also in this area that we can see the importance of the corporate testimony over and above that of the witnesses of individuals. Although the majority of the relief workers who served during the Republic did leave within months of the Nationalist regime taking hold, the despatch of new workers to replace those who departed ensured the continuity of the corporate Quaker witness.

If neutrality was one of the hallmarks of the Quaker witness as publicly displayed to the outside world, amongst Quakers and the Quaker relief workers there was an additional concern to distinguish the work from the "merely" humanitarian. To modern ears, this sounds odd. What was it about humanitarian work which the Friends regarded as inadequate? The answer to this can be seen in a brief comparison of Quaker work in the Republic and the non-Quaker AFSC work in the Nationalist zone. The Burgos Unit was involved very much in distributing humanitarian war relief: a short term expression of sympathy to the "innocent" victims of war. One of their major concerns was that they did not become involved in alleviating more long-term poverty. Whilst Quaker relief in Murcia and Barcelona might have been selective, it was motivated not by humanitarian sympathy but by a pacifist witness which refused to acknowledge any distinction between the "innocence" of combatants and non-combatants, *or* between the Spanish recipients of relief and their "neutral" donors. A request from the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom in 1936 for example,

“asking that we appeal to the chief Spanish leaders to show especial mercy to women and children, hostages etc.,” drew forth the comment: “Considerable discussion reveals insufficient unity for us rightly to go forward in this matter.”¹ The difficulty lay with the implied legitimation of the killing of combatants and male civilians contained within the request. Thus the Quakers did not believe that some were less due sympathy than others and further, they were usually reluctant to acknowledge any fundamental distinctions between war-time or peace-time poverty or to accept that the poor might deserve their poverty. The incident with the Fifth Quarter (the vice district) in Barcelona (Chapter Two) was unusual. The only issue which mattered was that each individual had that of the Divine Light within him or her, and this entitled all to long-term social justice, not to pity or the transient sympathy expressed in humanitarian relief.

This insistence on social justice and the distinctiveness of Friends’ relief was further emphasised by the Quaker insistence that means mattered as much, if not more, than ends. This emphasis—despite the Jacobs’ occasional lapse into smuggling—distinguished the mission from 1936-39 from both the SCIU and the later policies of Howard Kershner. This privileging of means over ends also distinguished them, in the final analysis, from both the secular professionals whom the AFSC workers often seemed anxious to emulate, and the religious missionaries within whose paradigm the FSC unit appeared to operate. In contrast to professional social workers of the period, the Friends emphasised that their role was to facilitate and empower, to work with people not for them—an approach with spiritual benefits for both Spanish and foreign personnel. Furthermore, the Friends emphasised the importance of leaving communities able to sustain and expand upon the work initiated. Whilst the Friends admired professionalism and where possible sent out professionals they did not want to create a culture of dependency. In addition, whilst the American Friends often adopted the rhetoric of professionalism it needs to be recognised that this rhetoric was tempered by the difficulty of finding spiritually suitable and professionally trained personnel.

The belief in creating indigenous expertise was a growing trend amongst missionary societies of the period, anxious, like the Friends, to expand operations

¹FSC: Draft Minutes of the Peace Committee, #100, Thursday, 1 October, 1936, p. 104.

as cheaply as possible and increasingly aware that an indigenous organisation had a better chance of survival. However, for all that the Friends were anxious to put down roots, and despite the previous missionary experience of a number of the American workers, they fiercely rejected religious (although not always scientific) proselytising and were very cautious *what* message they left behind. Although keen to contribute to the future spiritual and intellectual development of Spain, the Quaker relief workers did not wish to be the source of cultural conflict. The Friends' belief that children should not be sent abroad was both a rejection of a very expensive means of relief, *and* a rejection of one aspect of the result, that of separating children from their families and culture. Although the Quakers never totally abandoned the hope that a Quaker mission might be possible after the war, they regarded as immoral the use of colonies or evacuation proposals to influence Spanish children. Quite prepared to teach hygiene and domestic skills in the colonies, the Quakers nevertheless comprehensively rejected the idea of interfering in the transmission of indigenous culture, placing emphasis on the use of Spanish *responsables* wherever possible. Because of the importance of this belief that the mode of operation mattered as much as material achievements, the Friends existed in an uneasy but productive tension between the modern science and professionalism they admired, the missionary ideologies which a number of the workers brought with them and the weight of Quaker principles.

In her desire to assert the modernity of Friends' ideology and practice in Ireland, Helen Hatton quickly loses sight of the role of the Inner Light in the relief practices of the Friends.² A similar issue exists in relation to the work in Spain. Because the Friends, AFSC workers in particular, were anxious to assert their modernity and their rejection of active proselytisation it is easy to lose sight of the important part which faith and their witness to peace played; most of the field workers talk little of their faith in their letters home. However, for modern, liberal Friends, the theological emphasis is on silent witnessing for Christ and public emphasis on good works: as was the case for many missionaries in other fields,

²Helen E. Hatton, *The Largest Amount of Good: Quaker Relief in Ireland 1654-1921*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Kingston and Montreal, 1993.

“the sacred and the secular were mutually sustaining”.³ Faith mattered enormously to these workers: it motivated their actions beyond any belief in humanitarianism and it helped to maintain the organisations in the field when others had retired from the cause or turned their attention to more immediately fashionable disasters. However, it is not clear all the relief workers continued to believe that their work was an adequate witness to peace in the face of war. Alfred Jacob rejected his qualms:

We are almost tempted to feel that all our work has gone for nothing ...[but]...we hope and believe that for some of our most valuable fellow-workers contact with the ideas of Quakerism has opened up new possibilities of service...we have learned how fine human nature can be even in the midst of cruelty and destruction, and how imperishable are the things for which men think it worth while to die.⁴

But Jacob clearly came to believe that whilst fighting might be wrong, not all causes were unworthy. However, in part perhaps because of their sympathies for the Republic and because the workers in the Republican zone experienced the hardships of blockade and bombardment to an extent not shared by their colleagues in Burgos or the later AFSC workers in Marseilles, a number of AFSC and FSC workers came to doubt their own commitment to pacifism and the adequacy of relief work as a witness. Emily Parker, as we saw in Chapter Three, came to reject what she felt to be the “stock answers” of pacifists and went home with more questions than she had answers.⁵ Norma Jacob, who went on to be a regular employee of the AFSC, recalled in later life:

I went into that war as a pacifist, and I’ve never been as good a

³Kristine Swenson, “Ministering to Bodies and Souls: British Medical Missions and Women Doctors in the 1880s and 1890s” in *Nineteenth Century Religion and the Fragmentation of Culture in Europe and America, Conference Papers: Stream B, Women’s Interventions in Religious Traditions*, Lancaster 1997, p. 13.

⁴FSC Bulletin no. 35, 4 July 1939, Committee on Spain 1939. Coms. and Orgs: Friends Service Council—Friends Service in Spain, Bulletin (Box 10).

⁵Emily Parker to Grace Rhoads, 24 February 1939. Committee on Spain 1939, Individuals: Parker, Emily (Box 13).

pacifist since because Barcelona was heavily bombed, usually on Sunday mornings... You'd go up on the roof and you'd watch the bombers coming in and the defending fighters going out to get them. It's not possible to wish, you know, that they would miss... I'm not as good a pacifist, since then, as I had been.⁶

In contrast, Dorothy Bonnell, who served in Marseilles in the early 1940s, could write, "In time of bitterness, hatred and energetic pursuit of cruelty, we try to demonstrate another way of life... we try to *show* that some men can still try to behave like Christians."⁷ Clearly, to be part of a war had a very different effect on the Friends' Peace Testimony than did clearing up in the aftermath. The doubt which some workers expressed, however, should not be seen as a sign of failure—Emily Parker and Norma Jacob, for example, both went on to do further relief work whilst Alfred Jacob, the most committed, perhaps, to Spain settled down to organic farming—instead, it should be seen as a process of struggle with a difficult and complex witness which has continually to be shaped to the circumstances in which it is practised. Quaker willingness to continually reinvent and adapt the Peace Testimony may be a factor in its longevity.

From 1936 to 1942 British and American Quaker relief workers were active in feeding and clothing over 150,000 children of Republican and Nationalist Spain. From their initial beginning as a Quaker mission centre in Barcelona the Friends developed their work along the east coast of Republican Spain and in the villages around Burgos: in order to remain active they had to recognise the often secularised or hostile context in which they worked and during this period came to sublimate their religious witness within an apparently wholly practical project. Yet within this context the Friends actively witnessed to the testimonies to peace and social justice which lie at the heart of Quaker belief: for the Friends in Spain, feeding the children was a sacred, not a secular activity.

⁶Karin Lee, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

⁷"Inter-Office Letter" forwarded to Europe Committee, by Dorothy Bonnell, AFSC worker in Marseilles, 22 May 1941. Letters from AFSC (Box 24).

**APPENDIX A:
Receipts and Expenditure**

1. *International Commission for the Assistance of Child Refugees*, London, 1940, p. 42.

**SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS
APRIL 1, 1940**

Gifts in kind	£ 251,447
Governmental grants in cash	182,657
Public subscriptions	19,649
Private subscriptions	30,606
Total	<u>£ 484,359</u>
Unexpended balance, fully allocated for continuing the most urgent of our services	£ 20,000
Amount required monthly to carry on the work	£ 9,000

For French relief work, contributions should be sent to

*The Committee of Mercy,
254 Fourth Avenue, New York City.*

or

*The American Friends Service Committee,
20 South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia.*

Contributions for Spanish relief work should be sent to

*The American Friends Service Committee,
20 South Twelfth Street, Philadelphia.*

GIFTS IN KIND

We record our grateful thanks to all those who have so kindly donated gifts in kind for the furtherance of the Spanish work, including bedding, clothing, educational materials, foodstuffs, household equipment, lorries and cars, medicines and vaccines, soap, etc., making a total value of £8,413 os. od.

The following list will give contributors some idea of the variety of such gifts:—

BARKER & DOBSON, LTD.	..	..	..	..	Barley sugar.
BIRMINGHAM FRIENDS' SPANISH CHILDREN'S RELIEF FUND	..	..	..	..	Clothing, Soap, Milk, etc.
BIRMINGHAM FRIENDS	..	..	..	..	Standard Nine Car.
BOURNVILLE WORKERS' ASSOCIATION	..	..	..	..	Tinned vegetables, etc.
ISAAC BRAITHWAITE & SONS	..	..	..	..	Soap.
BURROUGHS WELLCOME & CO.	..	..	..	..	Medicinal Supplies.
CADBURY-FRY, LTD.	..	..	..	..	Cocoa and Milk powder Chocolate.
CAMBRIDGE GROUP (per MISS E. WAT- CHORN)	..	..	..	..	Malt and Cod-liver oil, Calcium Tablets, Marmite, Vitamin capsules.
CLARKE NICKOLLS & COOMBS, LTD.	..	..	..	..	Various confectionery.
DR. D. J. COLLIER	..	..	..	..	Anti-diphtheritic serum.
DANISH FRIENDS	..	..	..	..	Milk, Codfish, Shipbread, Tinned meat, Soap, Cloth- ing, etc.
B. FINCKEN & CO., LTD.	..	..	..	..	Coffee, "Force".
FRIENDS' MEETINGS AND SCHOOLS	..	..	..	..	Condensed and Dried Milk, Soap, Educational material.
W. R. JACOB & CO., LTD.	..	..	..	..	Biscuits.
LEVER BROS., LTD.	..	..	..	..	Soap.
LISTER INSTITUTE	..	..	..	..	Vaccines, Serum, High potency bulbs.
SIR HAROLD MACKINTOSH	..	..	..	..	Toffee, Caramels.
NATIONAL JOINT COMMITTEE FOR SPANISH RELIEF	..	..	..	..	3 ton Bedford truck.
"NEWS CHRONICLE" AND "TIME AND TIDE"	..	..	..	..	Paper (reel ends).
NORWEGIAN FRIENDS	..	..	..	..	Clothing, Kipperred Herrings, Soap, Oil, etc.
THE MISSES PILKINGTON	..	..	..	..	3 ton Bedford truck.
R. H. PILKINGTON, Esq.	..	..	..	..	3 ton Bedford truck.
QUAKER OATS, LTD.	..	..	..	..	Quaker Oats.
SIR RICHARD REES, BART.	..	..	..	..	Ford car and Scales.
SHUTTLEWORTH & CO., LTD.	..	..	..	..	Chocolate.
SWEDISH FRIENDS	..	..	..	..	Clothing.
MISS OLGA TURNER	..	..	..	..	Liver Foods and Medical Supplies.
ROBERT WHEELER	..	..	..	..	3 ton Bedford truck, Half-ton van, Aluminium cooking utensils, Typewriter.

In addition, 6,000 tons of wheat was sent direct to Catalonia per the American Friends' Service Committee.

FRIENDS SERVICE COUNCIL

Summarized Income and Expenditure Account

	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
EXPENDITURE				
To PURCHASES OF FOOD, CLOTHING, ETC. (including supplies for Children's Colonies)	39,963	9	11	
„ FREIGHT, PACKING AND INSURANCE ON purchases and gifts in kind (the latter estimated by the Council at £8,413)	5,380	0	6	
„ REMITTANCES TO THE SAVE THE CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL UNION	3,834	8	3	
„ VARIOUS GRANTS FOR RELIEF PURPOSES	2,313	3	0	
„ PURCHASES OF MOTOR TRANSPORT	1,909	16	0	
„ TRAVELLING EXPENSES OF WORKERS	620	12	1	
„ COSTS OF MAINTAINING PERSONNEL AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES ABROAD:				
In Spain	3,145	3	1	
In France	2,194	13	6	
	5,339	18	7	
„ PURCHASES OF FOOD SUPPLIES, ETC., ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN FRIENDS' SERVICE COMMITTEE	22,133	13	1	
„ ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS IN ENGLAND:				
Salaries	1,688	1	0	
Office General	780	19	2	
Publicity and Deputations	336	7	0	
	2,805	7	2	
„ Balance in Hand	793	9	11	
	£87,314	0	8	

We have examined the above Summarized Income and Expenditure Account and find it correct.

London, 26th February, 1941.

SPAIN RELIEF

November 1st, 1936 to December 31st, 1940

	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
INCOME				
By CONTRIBUTIONS:				
General	42,317	13	4	
(Of this total £8,102 13s. 11d. was considered as being intended for the JOINT SPANISH RELIEF WORK of the Friends Service Council and the Save the Children International Union.)				
For the support of Children in Colonies	5,304	0	2	
	47,621	13	6	
„ REFUNDS FOR SUPPLIES PURCHASED AND DISTRIBUTED on behalf of:				
(a) The International Commission for Child Relief in Spain, and other organizations	13,826	14	8	
(b) The American Friends' Service Committee	22,133	13	1	
	37,960	7	9	
„ REFUNDS TOWARDS PURCHASES OF MOTOR TRANSPORT	989	13	0	
„ Various other Refunds	742	4	3	

Note.—This statement records the Income and Expenditure for the period shown of the funds raised and administered in London, France and Spain by the Friends Service Council on behalf of its Spain Relief Committee. It does not include gifts in kind provided by the American Friends Service Committee or funds raised locally in Spain.

ture Account with the books and vouchers relating thereto and find

ROBERT H. MARSH & CO.,
Chartered Accountants.

APPENDIX B:

Domingo Ricart and his Impact

Domingo Ricart is the only one of the Spanish assistants who attains a clear and delineated personality in the letters which the Friends sent home. Although he rarely spoke directly to the FSC, he maintained a continuous presence throughout the mission in Barcelona, from 1936 to 1940. His aid was particularly important as, although Jacob spoke Castilian, he did not speak Catalan, and Ricart took on the role of translator, mediator and, as Norma Jacob came to spend much of her time with the children's colonies at Puigcerdá, second-in-command.¹ Ricart left very little personal writing (his historical works, held in Haverford library, are extensive), but the weight of his presence is embedded in his relationship with Alfred Jacob.

Domingo Ricart was raised a Catholic, in common with most of his contemporaries. However, he had begun to question the church's teachings whilst still at school in Barcelona: "We read some text about Luther, about how depraved and terrible he was. But the same page had a quotation from Luther that made more sense than what the text told about him."² He went on to study in Paris and by 1936 was working in Barcelona and on the board of the YMCA. He was by this time a committed pacifist, but was not aligned with any one church. In a talk he gave in 1940 during a year spent at Woodbrooke, the Quaker centre in Birmingham, Ricart recalled that having "solved a long, deep and anguished" religious crisis by leaving the Catholic Church he had found the satisfaction of his most immediate spiritual needs in the Calvinist Swiss Reformed Church. In particular, he relished the "uncompromising recognition of the absolute and direct Sovereignty of God without human intermediaries".³ When Alfred Jacob arrived in Barcelona, Domingo Ricart welcomed him as the first pacifist he had met.

A few days after our first contact with Alfred Jacob, we took him to our home, and then began the most complete and deep friendship that I have ever made. Two and a half years of life and work in common, sharing anxieties and dangers, joys and difficulties, bind people together for ever.⁴

The spiritual connection between the two was strong and Domingo Ricart offered Alfred Jacob both office space at the YMCA and lodgings with him and his wife, Margarita de las Barreras. When the unit eventually moved to a house, Hogar Luis

¹FSC: Minutes of the Spain Committee, 22 December 1936.

²Nancy Dawson. "Domingo Ricart: A Life of Seeking and Serving", in *Friends Journal*, February 1988, p. 6.

³Domingo Ricart, "The Society of Friends and Spain", address given to Monthly Meeting, Birmingham, 9 November, 1940.

⁴Domingo Ricart, "The Society of Friends and Spain", op. cit., p. 1.

Vives, Domingo Ricart and his wife moved as part of the unit, he as the second administrator and Margarita as the housekeeper.⁵

However, unlike Alfred Jacob, Domingo Ricart did not view Quakerism as a spiritual form suitable to the Spanish soul and, despite discussion and study with Jacob, it was the work of Friends which initially made the greater impact. By 1940 Ricart saw the Society of Friends on a path which he would like to follow. During a year spent at Woodbrooke he became convinced that the Spanish mystical tradition, embodied by Juan de Valdés, was "amazingly coincident" with the thoughts and writings of George Fox.⁶

In common with Alfred Jacob, Ricart, although an intellectual, was a believer in practical Christianity and was most impressed by Quakers in action rather than with Quaker doctrine. His ideas for post-war missionary activity included experiments in practical Christianity and "The application of Christian principles of social justice".⁷ However, his notions of social justice were channelled by his opinion of the morality of the recipients. Thus it was Ricart who persuaded Alfred Jacob, early in the war to reject the authority's request for a canteen in one of the vice districts of Barcelona.⁸ The significance of this should not be exaggerated: moral and spiritual care was a major concern for Friends, as will be examined in chapter four, and neither Esther Farquhar nor Francesca Wilson were averse to selecting recipients on the grounds of moral worth, but this case was unusual in forming a reason for exclusion from care rather than inclusion.

APPENDIX C

The following notes from a Miss Girsberger, a missionary in Shanghai, were reported in an article in *The Evangelical Friend* in 1938.

We are still quite busy in the camps. Christian work is being done in eight camps, and we inspect seven of these, besides, for the Red Cross. The latter consists in checking up on the food, sanitation and everything that has to do with the welfare of the refugees....In some camps we have regular preaching services. Group meetings and children's meetings are held where it is possible; and in two camps we have Bible classes for the Christians and those who are specially interested in the Gospel...We have found a goodly number of Christians in the camps. Our deep desire is to bring them all to Christ...

"Missionary", Walter R. Williams, *The Evangelical Friend*, June 1938, p. 7.

⁵Nancy Dawson, *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.

⁶Domingo Ricart, "The Society of Friends and Spain", *op. cit.*, p. 2.

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸Alfred Jacob to Fred Tritton, 16 January 1937, FSC/R/SP?1/1.

APPENDIX D: FSC's Canteens and Colonies, 1938

<u>CANTEENS IN BARCELONA</u>	<u>CHILDREN</u>
Sans.....supported by F.S.C.	
Carmen..... F.S.C.	3 500
S. Andrés.....Norway	
Luis Companys refuge.....F.S.C	
 <u>CANTEENS IN CATALONIA</u>	
Sabadell.....supported by A.F.S.C	Puericultura 30
	Direct distribution 350
Tarrasa.....A.F.S.C.	Refugee Canteen 325
Manresa.....A.F.S.C.	Refugee Canteen 400
Vich.....A.F.S.C.	Refugee Canteen 800
Granollers.....A.F.S.C	Refugee Canteen 400
Igualda.....A.F.S.C.	Puericultura 225
	Direct Distribution 250
Gerona.....A.F.S.C.	300
Caldas Malvella.....F.S.C.	110

N.B. Puericultura means that the infants are fed in a welfare centre under the auspices of a doctor.

COLONIES

Rubi.....supported by Birmingham	50
St. Helens	25
Asistencia Infantil	95
Paris	20
Caldas de Malvella.....Birmingham	Asistencia Infantil 85
La Noguera (Manresa).....Denmark	Pro-infancia Obrera 85
Solrbotey.....F.S.C.	Ayuda Infantil 100

OTHER RELIEF WORK (Food and Milk for Refugees.)

Manresa, Igualada y Reus (Cantina Swiss 300)

N.B. In certain places there are transient refugees who receive food and milk so that the numbers vary from week to week.

CHILDRENS' COLONIES

[names of organisations supported]

Ayuda Infantil
Asistencia Infantil
Pro Infancia Obrera
Autónomas

<u>AID IN GOODS</u> Ayuntamiento Barcelona (Town Council Social service)	3.000 ⁹
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⁹Dorothy Thompson to John Reich, 25 April 1938, Committee on Spain, 1938: Correspondence—Barcelona (Jacobs) (Box 7).

APPENDIX E: Personnel

FSC Workers in Spain.¹⁰

William Bremner
Kanty Cooper*^f
Arthur Egerton
Signe Fredholm (Swedish)
Lydia Gee
Anthony Gilpin
Donald M. Groom
Dr. Martin Herford
Alfred B. Jacob*
Norma Jacob*
Bronwen Lloyd Williams
Angus McCowen
Muriel McDiarmid

Dermod O'Donovan (Irish)*^f
Lucy M. Palser*^f
Janet Perry
Richard Rees (volunteer)*^f
Domingo Ricart (Spanish)*
Joyce Richards
Dr. Audrey Russell*^f
Elise Thomsen (Danish)*
Dorothy Thompson
Robert Wheeler (volunteer)
Francesca Wilson*
J. Cuthbert Wigham
Barbara Wood.*

* served in Spain for more than a few months.

^f also served in France.

In addition to the above, the following workers were appointed by the Friends Service Council on behalf of the American Friends' Service Committee for their hospital work in South-Eastern Spain.

G. Irene Callon
Jean Lyall Cottle
Margaret de Culpeper
Marie E. J. Elmes
Ann Hathaway
Bessie Hobson
Margaret Hope

Marjorie Kent
Dorothy Litten
Rachel D. Marshall
Dorothy Morris^f
Norah Morris
Sylvia Pitt
Doris Shaw

^f also served in France.

AFSC Workers in Republican Spain:

Florence Conard
Alfred Cope

Ruth Cope
Esther Farquhar
Levi Hertzler (Mennonite Central Committee)
Eleanor Imbelli (originally of the Swiss Committee)

Sylvester Jones
D. Park Lantz (Mennonite
Central Committee)
Emily Parker
Clyde Roberts
Martha Rupel

¹⁰ *Quaker Service in Spain, 1936-1940*, Friends Service Council, London, 1940, p. 20.

AFSC Workers in Nationalist Spain:

David Blickenstaff
Paul Bowman
Howard Kershner^f
Emmet Gulley
Wilfred Jones
Earl Smith
Dan West

^f also served in France.

AFSC Workers in France included:

William Brebner
Donald R. Darling
Margaret Frawley
Helga Holbeck
Gertrude T. Kershner
David T. Luscombe
Patrick Murphy Malin

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