

The Meeting for Business

Being orderly come together, you are not to spend time with needless, unnecessary and fruitless discourses; but to proceed in the wisdom of God not in the way of the world, as a worldly assembly of men, by hot contests, by seeking to outspoke and overreach one another in discourse as if it were a controversy between party and party of men, of two sides violently striving for dominion, not deciding affairs by the greater vote. But in the wisdom, love and fellowship of God, in gravity, patience, meekness, in unity and concord, submitting one to another in lowliness of heart, and in the holy Spirit of truth and righteousness, all things are to be carried on; by hearing and determining every matter coming before you, in love, coolness, gentleness and dear unity.

—Edward Burroughs, 1662

the main cities, including Boston, New York, Philadelphia, and Charleston. But they could not hold the country where hit-and-run tactics were used by generals Francis Marion, "The Swamp Fox," and "Light Horse" Harry Lee.

Another "might have been" soon occurred, dependent on the first one. The English Parliament began the abolition of slavery in the West Indies in 1833 and accomplished it in five years. Had the American Colonies remained a part of the Empire, this pressure for abolition would have applied to them also.

The cotton gin had been invented in 1793, but it was still not widely used. People were not yet so dependent on cotton as they were to become later. In 1833, there was in the South considerable abolition sentiment. Of the more than eight million white persons in the South in 1860, only 383,637 were slaveholders. Of these, only 2,292 were large planters (holding one hundred or more slaves). Accordingly, if Dickinson and his party had prevailed against the Declaration of Independence, a second long, bloody war, the United States Civil War, might have been prevented.

Had all of the American Colonies remained part of the British Empire, it seems to me also possible that the two World Wars would not have occurred, since that aggregation would have been so powerful that Germany would not have gone to war with it. At the beginning of each of the two World Wars, it appears now that the German leaders were not expecting the United States to take part.

Accordingly, I think that we can speculate that if the peace party in the Continental Congress had prevailed, four long wars would not have occurred. I know that it is hazardous to guess, but guesses, if they express the possible as well as the probable, may at least help us to guide our procedure in the future.

A Quaker Portrait: Rachel Davis DuBois

by Elizabeth Cattell

PEOPLE like Rachel Davis DuBois, who even in the pre-revolutionary twenties and thirties began working for peace and unity in diversity, easily bridge the generation gap.

The first peace caravan in this country was organized by Rachel and two other women of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. As a representative of the Philadelphia Young Friends Movement, she attended the Conference of All Friends in London in 1920. Two years later, aboard a ship to Europe, when the Women's International League sent her to a conference in The Hague, she studied the Versailles Treaty with Jane Addams. She picketed in Washington with Industrial Workers of the World for the release of political prisoners. When a man asked her, "Would you have me meet a bayonet with only a toothpick in my mouth?" she rethought and reaffirmed her pacifism. All this was prolog.

Rachel was born on a farm in southern New Jersey, one of six children. She remembers that one day, when she and her mother were bunching asparagus, her mother told her that when she was born, her superstitious nurse said: "I'll carry her up to the attic before I take her downstairs. That will make her high-minded." Her grandfather used to tell her: "I know of no truth that is not the parent of duty."

From her elders she learned not to lament or feel helpless when she had a problem but to seek a practical solution. When she went to Bucknell University as a girl from the sticks, no sorority rushed her. The shy girl's main contribution at meals was: "Please pass the beans." She would ask herself, "What's wrong with me?" Over the summer, she decided to try a new role; she memorized some funny stories. It worked; the next term she was elected president of three student organizations.

Rachel Davis did not really want to become a teacher. She wanted to go on the stage, except, she says, when she looked in the mirror. She began teaching history in the high school in Glassboro, New Jersey, but from the beginning she wanted to have a firsthand grasp of history and play some part in it and not just talk about it. So she stopped teaching for a while. Traveling in Germany in 1922, Rachel observed that Germany was still occupied four years after the end of the war, and that of the many children being fed by British and American Friends Service Committees, about forty percent appeared tubercular: Wars do not end with the signing of peace treaties.

On her return, she traveled in the South. She visited a

school started by a Quaker, which had a white faculty and a black student body. She met George Washington Carver and was shocked at her own ignorance about American Negroes. Also, now teaching in Woodbury, New Jersey, she questioned why there were only a score of Negro students in a school of fifteen hundred boys and girls. An essay by W. E. B. DuBois affected her deeply: "You will never overcome the problem of war until you overcome the problem of race."

Rachel Davis then decided that since racial discrimination and war are cut from the same cloth and racial discrimination is nearer home, it was on this problem that she must concentrate her efforts to seek a practical solution. In that, though, funny stories would not help.

She joined the Peace and Service (later Peace and Social Order) Committee of the Friends General Conference. She started a newsletter, in which she reprinted items from Negro newspapers and magazines. (The newsletter was taken over later by the National Council of Churches, which kept it going for thirty years.) She helped start the first Race Relations Committee in American Friends Service Committee and arranged conferences, dialogs, and seminars for blacks and whites. That, remember, was long ago.

Teaching social studies in Woodbury High School, she arranged for prominent people to speak in the school assembly.

After a talk by William Pickens, of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the first black speaker to speak there, she ran into trouble. The day Lindbergh flew the Atlantic, she shared the headlines: "Young Teacher Defies American Legion." The Woodbury Board of Education, at the insistence of the American Legion, sent three men to Rachel's home to ask her to "resign in secret because the community does not agree with your ideas." She refused. She had tenure and could not be fired without proof that she was unfit to teach.

Two teachers in Pennsylvania, where there was no tenure, had been dismissed for their ideas on peace and on race, and a mass meeting was held in Philadelphia. It was suggested that there be a similar meeting to note Rachel's refusal to "resign in secret." The idea appealed to her ego, but she felt uneasy. As have generations of Friends in doubt and trouble, she went to Twelfth Street Meetinghouse. She sat in silence, praying, several hours. The message to her was: Forget publicity; carry on your work.

Impressed by the intercultural assembly programs that Rachel had now introduced in Englewood, New Jersey, Washington, D. C., and other places, the American Jewish Committee extended the programs into fifteen high schools in New York. Work Projects Administration supplied help to Rachel and her coworkers to collect material on ethnic groups for use in the programs. The United States Office



Rachel Davis DuBois

of Education asked her to do the research for a nationwide radio series on the cultural contributions of various groups to American life. The series won a national award.

Rachel received her doctorate from New York University. Her thesis was published under the title, "Build Together, Americans." Without children, she and her husband, Nathan DuBois, were divorced, and Rachel taught intercultural education in New York University and other institutions for twelve years. (Because of the way Quakers use first names, I had known Rachel a decade before I knew there could be "Mrs." or "Dr." before her name.)

While teaching a class, mainly of teachers, in New York University, Rachel formulated her group conversation technique for bringing individuals of different racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds together on a deeply personal level. The method was arrived at experimentally and experientially. In one course, a teacher made the point, "If we are good teachers, we can overcome prejudice in students. How can it be done with the adults who plant the prejudice in the children?"

An intercultural group met in Rachel's apartment one autumn day. They spoke about fall festivals in their various religions and found basic similarities. At the end of the evening someone said: "We have found a new way of coming together." An older man said: "You did it tonight, but I doubt if you can do it again."

Another problem. Rachel decided she would discover what had been done and how. The group met with others during the year. They shared memories of festivals. They discovered similarities.

This group process, a blend of structure and spontaneity,

became what is known as group conversation, a method that has been used all around the world. So Rachel discovered intuitively "group dynamics." She also realized intuitively the importance of having minority groups develop positive self-images as a step toward unity.

After group conversation had been used for four years in school communities in tension areas, the report of which was published as *Neighbors in Action*, the Department of State asked Rachel to train group leaders in Germany to help solve the problems of integrating twelve million persons who entered Germany from countries that had been taken over by the Soviet Union.

Soon after Rachel returned from Germany, she was called before the Un-American Activities Committee. When Senator Joseph McCarthy asked her whether, if she could attain the goals of Communism by nonviolence, would she be for Communism, she said: "Senator, I wish you would tell me exactly what are the goals of Communism." Everyone laughed. After he had elucidated for a while, she said, "Senator, I am not following you." Everyone laughed again. The hearing ended with an apology to Rachel from the Senator.

From group conversation there developed the Quaker dialog. Friends General Conference sent her to some four hundred Quaker groups, including Meetings in five Southern cities, where she helped programs in race relations. After her work in Atlanta Friends Meeting, Martin Luther King, Jr., asked her and her colleague, Mew-Soong Li, to join the staff of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in order to develop a dialog department to reconcile Negro and white Americans. Some six hundred whites and blacks in twelve cities were trained in the use of group conversation. For many of them, the discovery of each other's humanness was a revelation and a relief. A book arising out of this experience, *Reducing Social Tension and Conflict*, by Rachel Davis DuBois and Mew-Soong Li, recently was published by Association Press. Rachel felt Martin Luther King's belief in "unmerited voluntary suffering based on love" carried her own work to a deeper religious level.

Rachel now is consultant director of the New York Friends Center Workshop, which carries on the training of leaders in group conversation and Quaker dialog. Friends World Committee in 1969 sent her to eight European countries to use her Quaker dialog in Friends Meetings.

Rachel feels her sense of fulfillment (plus, naturally, the inescapable sense of failure, with or without amusing stories) is based on the deep enrichment of her life by her many intimate contacts with people from many cultural backgrounds in this country and abroad.

She feels, too, that today these mutually enriching experiences are easily available to all of us if we allow ourselves to be guided by the old Quaker saying, "It's the not-me in thee which makes thee precious to me."

Business, and the Tainted Web We Weave

by Donald G. Baker

THERE ARE TWO ways of doing business.

One is to build a better mousetrap with honesty and integrity and hope the world will beat a path to your door.

The second is to pretend to build a better mousetrap (which may in fact be worse) and then sell it.

The second method, of course, is dishonest; it is selling goods under false pretenses. Well, maybe not very false. Merely print on the label "Made with one-hundred percent whole wheat," and let the naive buyer presume that this means "made entirely of whole wheat," when actually it contains about one-third of one-hundred percent whole wheat and two-thirds filler.

This second procedure has become standard practice in American business. Put bluntly, this program is: "Don't worry about quality—even plan obsolescence if you wish, but lie about your product so that nearly everyone will think you are devoted to quality. Keep talking about the huge sums you are spending on research to improve your product, but spend the real money on advertising, packaging, and sales."

This approach is bad enough in cars and cereals, but within the post-Roosevelt era it has spread into the church and educational institutions, public and private, and here such falsehood is deadly. It is destructive of the very values these institutions exist to promote.

Sports, for all their commercialism, are still honest in one respect: You get credit for a goal only when the ball is moved so as to *actually* score according to an exact definition of scoring. No one has had the audacity to suggest that a team should be given a couple of extra points because its members were of the right party or because they tried or were related to some important politician or were of the right color or hair length. You get no credit until the ball reaches a certain point, even though many think they can win a ball game with their mouths.

Sports are a side issue, but what of the main projects of social action? Westmoreland repeats for four years "We are winning." Johnson takes up the refrain. Nixon says, "I'm seeking peace." General Electric advertises its devotion to service or progress. Lockheed and General Dynamics are interested only in defending our freedoms. Colleges are interested only in the search for truth. Churches are interested only in spreading the teachings of Jesus. The big lie technique of Hitler and Goebbels has been adopted generally by the leading personalities and institutions of the countries that fought the Second World War.

By what steps today does one build a new meetinghouse,