

# A Friendly Letter

Issue Number Eighty-Two

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First Month, 1988

Dear Friend,

First, some red-faced cleanup work: Last month's issue, #81, was erroneously dated "Eleventh Month," rather than Twelfth Month; and this was a bungled attempt to correct an error in the previous issue, #80, which was also mistakenly listed as that of "Tenth Month," rather than Eleventh Month. Is that clear? In any event, for those who are keeping back issues, the **issue numbers** are in the **correct** sequence.

Now then, to business: It has not been my intention to make this letter a kind of "New York Review of [Quaker] Books." Yet all last year, books, and allied publications such as music cassettes, kept turning up as items of keen importance on the Friendly horizon. Thus, this year's nominees for Quakers of the Year, Dean Freiday and Barbara Mays, come from publishing circles.

Speaking of Quaker publishers, a special mention is in order here of another one, really the daddy of us all: Leonard Kenworthy, now at Kendal in Pennsylvania. He wrote, edited and published six titles in 1987, two of them on Quaker topics. No wonder he puts the term "retirement" in quotes when describing his state in life!

Inserted in this issue is a reprint of an article that appeared last month in *Peacework*, the regional peace newsletter of the American Friends Service Committee's New England region. It is by Ed Lazar, who was Peace Secretary there in the mid-1970s, describing his

recollections and views of the AFSC's response to the aftermath of the Indochina War, especially in Cambodia.

This is the first such piece I have seen in an AFSC publication, and it deserves wider circulation. I say that because in my view this episode represents major unfinished business, not just for AFSC, but for other American peace groups active then. I was very gratified to see this discussion begin in AFSC precincts, rather than coming at us from outside.

Such external discussion is likely to heat up later this year, when the book *Peace and Revolution: The Moral Crisis of American Pacifism* (described in AFL #79) appears. (Readers interested in this discussion should know that letters challenging Lazar's views are in the 1/88 *Peacework*, and more are likely to come. For copies, write *Peacework*, %AFSC, 2161 Mass. Ave., Cambridge MA 02140. Donations are welcomed.)

Here are two other hot Quaker news tips: First, the AFSC office staff in Philadelphia has begun organizing a labor union, part of AFSCME District Council #47. And second, there are strong rumors as we go to press that the Friends General Conference offices may be moving **out** of Friends Center, soon. Good Grief! **Watch those spaces!**

Yours in the Light,

*Chuck Fager*

Chuck Fager

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Last Seventh Month an important anniversary passed unnoticed: It was twenty years since the first copies of *Barclay's Apology In Modern English* came off the press.

This plainly-bound green paperback, a familiar sight on the book tables at yearly meetings and conferences, is a landmark of modern Quaker scholarship and theology. *Barclay's Apology In Modern English* is a book all Friends ought to read, not as some oppressive duty, but for the constant enrichment to be found in it. Similarly, recognition is long overdue for its editor, Friend Dean Freiday, and the remarkable labor of love and intellect that went into it.

It is difficult to pin down the basis of the *Apology's* continuing appeal. It is not enough to point out the great learning that went into it; nor does it suffice to highlight its polemical effectiveness in defending Quakerism's distinctive notions against their many early critics. Freiday probably comes nearest the mark in his own reflections, which emphasize Barclay's vision of Quakerism as not simply another Reformation sect, but a whole new form of universalistic religion, neither Catholic nor Protestant.

### ***Backing Into The Future***

Freiday calls this formative Quakerism "**Begin-Again Christianity.**" And Barclay's exposition of it repeatedly zeroed in on critical theological issues: The place and interpretation of the Bible; the nature of salvation; liberty and authority within the church; the role of the ministry; the equality of women; peace; and so forth. Freiday's conclusion, after years of study, is that "If Barclay can be...faulted on any major matter, even our most vocal theological opponents have yet to surface it." Barclay's cogent treatment of basic issues, issues which transcend momentary controversies, has kept his work relevant to Friends since 1676--and the *Apology* has played no small role in keeping Friends relevant to the world.

Dean Freiday is a retired writer and editor from New Jersey, part of Manasquan Meeting. He backed into the project of reclaiming Barclay for today's readers more than thirty years ago, after several seasons on the Epistle Committee of the newly-reunited New York Yearly Meeting. That committee's work, Freiday recalls, involved many deep and fruitful discussions of Quaker beliefs. But they also left him, as a rela-

tively new Friend, seeking a systematic exposition of formative Quaker theology and doctrine. He dived into the works of Fox; while rich and deep, they are anything but systematic. Thus he turned, as have many before him, to Robert Barclay's *Apology*, the masterwork of the theologically-trained Scots Quaker, first published in Latin in 1676.

Like anything else, however, the *Apology*, despite its great virtues, also has its downside. There was its length, and above all, its style. As Freiday mildly puts it, "the King James English and almost interminable sentence structure were a handicap at many points." There were also many obscure references to theological works of the day and the Fathers of the Church.

Freiday decided that a threefold effort was needed to make the *Apology* widely useful again to Friends: the references must be annotated, the stilted text respectfully updated, or "**transphrased**" as he puts it, and some redundant material deleted. "In all, I spent four or five years doing the research necessary for transphrasing or annotating," he reports. In the process he tracked through old tomes in English, Latin, French and German. This work was so painstaking that, besides filling in the historical background, Freiday also found and corrected "the only known typographical error in the original *Apology*", a misspelling repeated in every edition for more than 200 years. (You can look it up on page 153, footnote 30.)

### ***Giving All For Truth, Still***

His "transphrasing" work was equally careful, aimed at "something between translation...and what is generally meant by paraphrase." Here's a sample, from the Introduction: Original: "Forasmuch as that, which above all things I propose to myself, is to declare and defend the truth, for the service whereof I have given up and devoted myself, and all that is mine; therefore there is nothing which for its sake, by the help and assistance of God, I may not attempt." Now here is Freiday's version: "In confidence that with God's help there is nothing that I cannot do, I have undertaken to declare and defend the truth, to whose service I have devoted myself and all that is mine." So what's the difference?

Once the editorial work was done, there remained the job of getting it published. Grants covered about a third of the first



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# The Peace Movement and Cambodia

Ed Lazar, author of this article, was Peace Education Secretary of the New England Regional Office of the American Friends Service Committee from 1970-77. Currently he is Associate Director of Humanitas International Human Rights Committee, which works for human rights, disarmament, and nonviolence. (Humanitas, PO Box 818, Menlo Park, CA 94026)

In June, Amnesty International released a report called "Kampuchea, Political Imprisonment and Torture." It documents that there are thousands of political prisoners in Cambodia today and that torture continues to occur in the prisons. Reading the Amnesty document and a 1985 Lawyers Committee for Human Rights report on continuing human rights abuses in Cambodia made me review in my own mind one of the most tragic periods in human history, the fate of the Cambodian people in the last twenty years, and, closer to home, one of the most remiss and/or compromised periods for the American peace movement including the American Friends Service Committee.

There are few comparisons with the total barbarity of the Khmer Rouge rule of Cambodia from 1975 to 1978. There were mass executions and the beating to death of anyone remotely considered an enemy. Virtually anyone who was educated, had any profession, was engaged in business, was a student or teacher, asked the wrong question, or simply irritated a Khmer cadre ended up in the "killing fields," those monuments to inhumanity. In addition to the relentless slaughter of innocent men, women and children, the forced transfer of entire populations including the sick, the elderly, the very young, along with forced labor in severe conditions led to exhaustion, starvation, disease, and death for additional hundreds of thousands. In total, the accepted estimate of deaths from Khmer Rouge policy is 2 million people out of a then estimated population of 7.5 million. Under a Khmer Rouge-type regime in the US, nearly every reader of *Peacework*, along with most other independent thinkers, would have been beaten to death so that a new society could be built.

So many times there have been examinations of how the world ignored the extermination of European Jews at the time of Hitler. There has been very little examination of how the Cambodian tragedy was overlooked or the role of the American peace movement during the period. The fact is that there was a shocking lack of response to the situation--one of the major social failings in recent history, and a largely unexamined failure. Part of the purpose of this article is to stimulate such an examination because we must learn a lesson from the Cambodia experience, a lesson which hopefully will affect our current response not only to continued violence within Cambodia but to other conflicts in

the world.

I start with some personal experiences at AFSC during those years, and by necessity I'm going to be very selective. From 1975-1977, following the conclusion of the Vietnam War, there was an overwhelming lack of peace movement response to press and refugee-survivor reports of Khmer Rouge slaughter within Cambodia. These reports either were dismissed as refugee exaggerations or labeled outright lies fostered by the CIA. I recall news of a French priest's report about the killings. I brought them up with a co-worker, then working fulltime on Indochina work, and she dismissed the report with a wave of the hand as just so much CIA-inspired disinformation. Why did this occur?

The long Vietnam War had just ended and many in the peace movement, including myself,



## CAMBODIAN TRAGEDY...

were weary from that struggle. More important was the fact that US government representatives for years had been predicting a bloodbath if the US left Southeast Asia, and had used that scenario as one of the reasons for continuing American destruction of the area. In reactive response, peace movement people for the most part had dismissed the bloodbath scenario as well as the falling domino concept. When reports started coming in about what could be described as a bloodbath, they were dismissed as yet one more example of government and media duplicity.

Further, some peace activists to whom we had looked to for reliable information, such as Gareth Porter of the Indochina Resource Center, were not only questioning the reports but actively countering them. And Noam Chomsky, one of our most respected analysts, seriously questioned the "propaganda campaign" and the "systematic distortion or suppression of the highly relevant historical context." (I take this to mean that some commentators weren't acknowledging the prior US aggression against Cambodia--but does knowing the important prior history in any way justify the horrors that followed?)

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Yet to me personally, there was a ring of truth to the reports or at least possible truth. No matter, I essentially did nothing about it. The best that can be said is I was open to the fact that a tragedy was occurring, yet that did not help one Cambodian. In my own case I had already been deeply scarred by attacks from peace movement co-workers because I stated that NLF military victory was not a success for peace and I had publicly expressed my concern over the imprisonment and re-education of Buddhists and other third force people in Vietnam. I was the only AFSC signatory to one statement of concern for our fellow peacemakers in Vietnam. And after I wrote an internal letter of concern over political prisoners in post-war Vietnam and the exclusion of Thich Nhat Hanh from Vietnam, I drew silence from the entire AFSC organization (the one exception was a single note from a Midwest area office). The AFSC position then and now appears to be 'we don't want to rock the boat in Vietnam, we have a positive relationship, we want to help re-build the country and, in effect, talking about political repression doesn't fit into our plans.'

With that kind of response over Vietnam I just didn't have the strength to deal with the silence which was accorded reports from Cambodia. I resigned from the AFSC at that point for personal reasons, but the one political reason I didn't state at the time was that I couldn't stand the thought of staying at AFSC to fight my own colleagues; that just wasn't my reason for being in the peace movement.

Even if the entire peace movement had protested the extraordinarily brutal events in Cambodia, the results might not have changed, as the Khmer Rouge at that time were not respecting any international norms. But that does not erase the fact that we should have led the protest.

And what of China, which was the chief patron of the Khmer Rouge--how could they have allowed what happened to happen? Vietnam, which invaded Cambodia in 1978 and continues to occupy the country, did so not because of Khmer Rouge internal policies but because the Khmer Rouge was being hostile to Vietnam at their common border. It was only after Vietnam, in a sense sanctioned, and then actively promoted recognition of the Khmer Rouge killings, that many American peace activists fell in line and finally publicly acknowledged the tragedy for what it was. This change of face of some US peace activists was reminiscent of the 180 degree change from non-support of an "imperialist" war to full support of a "people's" war when Stalin's Soviet-Nazi pact was betrayed by Hitler.

There are at least two major reasons for raising this question ten years after the event. First, although Cambodia is seldom in the news these days, the Cambodian tragedy continues. The most unbelievable and unacceptable part of the current tragedy is that Pol Pot, Ieng Sary, and others of the Khmer Rouge leadership responsible for the Cambodian genocide are now part

of the Democratic Kampuchea Coalition government, although Pol Pot has withdrawn somewhat into the background for cosmetic reasons. The Vietnamese occupation of Cambodia continues, and many of the Cambodian officials sanctioned by the Vietnamese are former Khmer Rouge cadre. The civil war in Cambodia pits a puppet government controlled and supported by their traditional enemy, Vietnam, against the coalition composed of the Khmer Rouge (KPNLF), Prince Sihanouk supporters (FUNCINPEC), and a group led by Son Sann, a former prime minister. The Cambodian people are still the victims, caught in the middle of a foreign occupation and civil war between groups which both include mass murderers responsible for killing members of their families.

Because of big-power politics, it is the Khmer Rouge coalition that has a seat in the UN. So we now have the spectacle of Khmer Rouge "diplomats" exercising UN privileges, the same people who a few years ago smashed all basic human rights and every aspect of international protocol including sanctuary at foreign embassies. (This is as staggering as if Hitler were still alive and sending his chief lieutenants to the UN.) A number of peace leaders--including top AFSC officials--have protested this seating arrangement. My own thinking is that the seat should remain empty until a popularly-supported representative government is available for the Cambodian people.

In April 1987, 200 Cambodian survivors of the Khmer Rouge years who are now living in exile, including Dith Pran, Yang Sam, Sichantha Kassie Neou, Haing Ngor, and Arn Chorn issued a letter calling for application of the Genocide Convention against the Khmer Rouge. This effort is sponsored by the Cambodia Documentation Commission (251 West 87th St., #74, New York, NY 10024) and needs our support.

Secondly, it's important to recognize that while we in the peace movement are very good at criticizing the destructive action or inaction of others, we are reluctant to take responsibility when we have been wrong or inadequate. We need constructive self-criticism. We need to learn from our mistakes--even, or especially, huge mistakes. The obvious lesson here is that when our government says that an "enemy" nation, Communist or other, has committed criminal actions it does not mean that we automatically should take an opposing stance. There is a strange type of US peace movement imperialism sometimes at work which suggests that other countries are unable to come up with their own destructive policies, that all wrong-doing emanates from the United States. What we seem to miss is that there may be more than one wrong or more than one right in a given situation. We need to examine each situation for ourselves, and try to get at the truth, and then state what we discover, no matter whether it does or does not correspond with any governmental or institutional view.



printing, and the rest came out of Freiday's own pocket. The book appeared in the summer of 1967. To his surprise, the first printing was gone in two years; now in a third printing, it has sold over 5,000 copies. Still, Freiday remains several thousand dollars in the red on the project, a deficit he is unlikely ever to make up. But he says cheerfully that "I think it has been money well spent, and my major gift to the Society."

A major gift indeed. The years of research, the careful rewriting, all done in "spare time," and the resulting reclamation of a theological resource that can stand up to the best in the Christian tradition--it adds up to a gift to the Society that few others in his generation can match.

### ***Putting Color In Quaker Publishing***

Another Quaker publisher, Friends United Press in Richmond, Indiana, also ran several thousand dollars in the red in 1987, but here too it was a sign of money well spent. And the lion's share of credit for its striking achievements belongs to its gifted and dedicated Editor, Barbara Mays.

For awhile last year, in fact, it seemed as if every time something interesting happened among American Friends last year, Barbara Mays had a hand in it. There were, of course, the books, chiefly John Punshon's *Encounter with Silence*, and Douglas Gwyn's *Apocalypse of the Word*, both reviewed here (in issues #78 and #71, respectively). But there was also a volume on the background of the Richmond Declaration of Faith, just in time for the Friends United Meeting Triennial which considered and declined a proposal to reaffirm that document. Besides this, there was even a coloring book, *Color Me Quaker*.

I must admit to envying her this last, because producing a Quaker coloring book had long been one of my ambitions; but mine never got off the runway, while Barbara made hers happen. My kids liked it.

Nor were words and pictures all there was to FUPress last year. There was music too: *Go Cheerfully* a songbook and tape, (also reviewed here in #78). Again, this was Barbara's doing: She is part of an informal network of Quaker songwriters, and had been collecting Friendly songs for eight years.

Friends United Press is part of Friends United Meeting, but Barbara Mays has not limited its vision to one segment of Friends. This fits her own situation: from solidly programmed Indiana Yearly Meeting stock, she is now a member of Richmond's mostly unprogrammed Clear Creek Meeting. Thus it is no surprise that, besides running FUPress, she has provided much of the drive behind Quakers Uniting In Publications, or QUIP, an association of Friendly-oriented publishers.

QUIP includes publishers from Oregon to England, and covers a spectrum of Quaker diversity almost as wide. Last year QUIP's first catalog appeared, listing a wide range of Quaker publications; while a fledgling effort, the QUIP catalog represented a substantial and concrete advance in Quaker ecumenical cooperation. And again, Barbara played a key role in making it a reality.

### ***Standing Out in the Friendly Crowd***

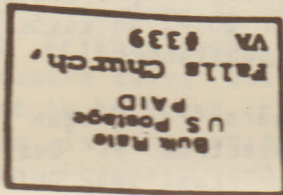
I mentioned above that FUPress ran a deficit of a few thousand dollars in 1987. But this was on total sales of well over \$100,000, which means that she has brought it to within a few percentage points of breaking even. For 1988, Barbara Mays has some exciting new FUPress titles in the works. Among them, I am particularly anxious to read three: One is *Friends Divided*, by David Holden, which is a sociological examination of the major Quaker separations; it even has a chapter on Central Yearly Meeting in Indiana, which is perhaps the most strictly isolationist body of Friends. The second is by Douglas Gwyn, *Unmasking the Idols: The Drama of Recognition*. It is said to pursue further some of the ideas and issues in his *Apocalypse of the Word*. The third volume is *New Church In The City*, by Marlene Pedigo, which describes the Chicago Fellowship of Friends, a mission of FUM in the Chicago ghetto.

Comparing FUPress's lists for the past two years to those of the other Quaker-related publishers in America, including this writer's, it is immediately apparent to me that none of the rest of us even comes close to matching it in substance, and weight. And this distinction is owed almost entirely to the ability and dedication of Barbara Mays. She is the pacesetter in Quaker publishing.



INSIDE: QUAKERS OF THE YEAR,  
AND THE AFSC AND CAMBODIA

From: Chuck Fager, A Friendly Letter  
P.O. Box 1361  
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### THIS MONTH IN QUAKER HISTORY

Before the American Revolution, Nantucket island was the world center of the whaling industry, and also a major Quaker community. After the war, the Nantucket whalers' trade was greatly reduced by punitive British tariffs on American whale oil, which kept it out of the London market, then the biggest. To break out of this embargo, William Rotch, the wealthiest and weightiest of island Friends, led a group of Nantucket whalers to France in the late 1780s, to start a whaling industry based there.

The Quakers settled in the port of Dunkirk and pleaded successfully for tolerance of their religious peculiari-

ties regarding oaths and military service, first from the royal government and then from the new revolutionary regime. They plied their whaling trade quietly and with some success.

By the end of 1792, however, their little Quaker colony was in grave danger, as France fell from revolutionary fervor into the civil war which eventually produced Napoleon. Hence, on First Month 19, 1793, with the noise of combat close by, William Rotch climbed sadly onto his ship with the last of the settlers and sailed out of Dunkirk, ending this Quaker presence in France.

### QUAKER CHUCKLES

#### A Testimony To Simplicity

Last summer at Yearly Meeting there was much discussion about reviving the practice of recording ministers. One new member sat raptly through this session, which resulted, as usual, in the appointment of a committee. Afterward, this newcomer spoke enthusiastically in favor of the idea. "I'd like to be a recorded minister myself," he affirmed. He was encouraged to take this leading to the committee for testing.

Later, the newcomer was asked what had become of his hopes of being recorded. "I'm afraid the committee wasn't too keen on the idea," he said dejectedly. "I'm not exactly sure why not." He

paused, and then concluded, "I guess they just didn't like my demo tape."

#### Another Testimony To Simplicity

One other notable item of business turned up in the report of our Outreach Committee, which noted: "We have been asked by several meetings about increasing their listings in local telephone directories to make Friends more visible. We have recommended putting the main listing under F for *Friends*, with cross references under Q for *Quakers* and R for *Religious Society*. However, we do not think, as one Friend suggested, that it is needful to have another entry under L for *Lighting Consultants*."