

The April business meeting of the Blue River Quarterly Meeting was held April 10, 1965, at the Urbana Friends meeting. It began at 2:30 after a period of silent worship. In the absence of Kathryn Mills, Clerk of Quarterly Meeting, her daughter Jean Mills Nelson acted as clerk. Delegates and attenders present were:

Clear Creek: Lucretia Franklin
Anna Mary Wilson
Carol Nelson ~~Gottler~~ ^{Walgren}
Helen Jean Mills Nelson

Peoria: Ruth and Daniel Smythe
Donna Smith

St. Louis: Justin and Mary LousFrost, Kirsten and Kari

Urbana: Virginia and Gene Gilmore Rachel Weller
Merlin and Jo Tabor Mariellen Gilpin
Bill and Kate Shoemaker Michael Ball
Willy du Bus James Ayars
Dorothy Weeks Marion Freeman
Natalie Davis Shirley Johnson
Wilbur Luce

Guests included Doris Peters from Rockford, Illinois Preparatory Meeting from Beloit, Wisconsin, and Pat Kelly and Georgia Valon, University of Illinois students.

The minutes of the October Quarterly Meeting were read and approved. There was no treasurer's report, since the treasurer did not come.

State of the meeting reports, which were to be primarily concerned with the relationship between the children and the adults of the meeting and their spiritual growth, were read by the delegates from the meetings.

Donna Smith read the state of the Society report of the Peoria Meeting. Donna Smith reported that it is the practice of the Peoria meeting to have the children spend the first fifteen minutes in silent worship, before going to their Firstday School classes. All enter into the silence, albeit with varying degrees of composure and reverence. In Firstday School there has been some discussion with the children about prayer. The report mentioned that there has been a heartening increase in the number of attenders at meetings for worship, and that a service group had been started by Friends at Bradley University. But the students felt embarrassed that the newspaper publicity referred to them as Friends when none of them happened to be Friends, so they had asked not to be sponsored further by the Peoria Meeting. The service committee continues, and Friends are generally in accord with their various activities.

Questions following the report elicited the information that there were two classes in Firstday School, a group including ages three through eight, and another including ages nine through thirteen. The meeting has sent a telegram to Johnson about Vietnam, and has sponsored two public talks on Vietnam, which were relatively well attended. Further, Reed Smith has talked to several Congressmen in Washington about Vietnam, although without encouraging results. The Quarterly Meeting joyously received the news of the Peoria Meeting's growth from a regular attendance of six to ~~that~~ of twenty-five to forty people at present.

Rachel Weller read the state of the meeting report from the Urbana meeting. A copy of that report is appended to this record of quarterly meeting. She emphasized that the meeting's approach to religious education is in a process of evolution at present. All ages have been integrated, with the result that the children are better acquainted with one another; older children share skills and ideas with the younger ones; adults' interest in teaching Firstday school has been renewed. As younger children frequently get in the older children's way and in other ways try one another's patience, the meeting feels that their current crafts program provides better opportunities for fostering spiritual growth than formal teaching would.

Questions from listeners revealed that Firstday School membership has jumped from three or four at the beginning of the school year to an average attendance ^{of} about twenty. It was suggested that the Urbana Meeting publish the results of their experiment as Friends present felt their experiment had much potential. It was pointed out that all the meetings felt the children did not know each other or the adults in the meeting, and that the Urbana meeting's attempt had resulted in members and children getting to know one another better.

Lucretia Franklin reported verbally for Clear Creek Monthly Meeting. She pointed out that Clear Creek is in a country neighborhood, and that there are very few children in meeting now, as a result of a natural shift in the age groups in a relatively stable population. They have four children, all nursery age, and three older children of widely varying ages. There is a very active adult class and a small but active and interested class of young married people, ~~some~~ of whom are ~~not~~ Quaker, but ~~they~~ do come and support the meeting. They have been encouraged to join Friends. She spoke of the meeting's sorrow over the recent loss of Joseph Hawks; Anna Mary Wilson and Jean Mills Nelson also expressed their sense of loss, and suggested that a few minutes of silence be devoted to his memory. A period of silent meditation followed.

Anna Mary Wilson added that she felt the meeting was doing as well as could be expected; there was no lack of interest, even though attendance was small. At least two members have written their senators and representatives about Viet Nam and were pleased that they had received replies. The Meeting had traditionally had an Easter service given by the children. This year the children were not able to do it yet, so the adults were planning a program to present to the children. They had been challenged by the need to rethink what they wished to say on Easter morning, and the children were looking forward to watching their elders perform.

Since the St. Louis delegates had not yet arrived, the meeting agreed to break for tea, and then hear the St. Louis report on the state of their meeting before beginning the afternoon discussion about the spiritual growth of the children and adults of the meeting. It was proposed before break for tea that a letter be sent to President Johnson, expressing approval of his recent speech about Vietnam. Donna Smith and James Ayars were asked to write the letter and have the recording clerk read it to the Meeting for approval after the tea.

After the tea the Frosts of St. Louis and Shirley and Vern Bechill of the Kalamazoo Meeting of Green Pastures Quarterly were introduced.

The following draft for the letter to President Johnson was then read and approved:

"We desire to reexpress to you, Mr. President, our appreciation of your declared willingness to negotiate in Vietnam without pre-conditions. We urge that negotiations be carried on with the North Vietnamese, the Viet Cong, or any other representative groups.

"We further desire to express our appreciation of your proposal to support the Mekong Delta economic development program through the United Nations.

"We will support you in any efforts to reduce the military operations in North and South Vietnam.

"We recognize how heavy a burden you carry and assure you that our prayers are with you."

James Ayars commented that they had hoped to express the sense of the meeting in a positive form. It was suggested that the Recording Clerk name the cities represented in the Quarterly Meeting in a footnote, so as to give the President some idea of the range of people represented by the letter.

Meeting was reminded that Clear Creek is to be host meeting for the next Quarterly meeting. It will convene August 18th at 4:00, just before the Yearly Meeting. At that time, delegates will be chosen for the Yearly Meeting.

Attention was called to the question which had been raised at the October, 1964 meeting about the need for having a treasurer for the Quarterly Meeting. It was recalled that the doubt had been expressed by the treasurer, who felt that since the money was paid to yearly meeting by the monthly meetings, there was not much sense in channeling it through Quarterly meeting. No one present felt moved to discuss it, so it was suggested that a committee consider the proposal and report at the October meeting. (It was pointed out that it would be impossible to discuss it before Yearly meeting in August.) It was emphasized that the question was not being tabled, but only postponed for later consideration.

Mary LousFrost then gave the state of Society report for St. Louis; she mentioned that the lack of attendance at business meeting, due largely to the distance that many had to come, had made it difficult for business meetings to do any business.

It was suggested during the discussion of her report that the few who do come should express the sense of the meeting and go ahead and do things. It was pointed out that non-attenders should feel an obligation to help carry out the sense of the meeting. Doris Peters suggested that Beloit monthly meeting meets for business quarterly instead of monthly, and that it is understood that the meeting does not come to an end until the business is over. They handle immediate problems on Sunday morning. St. Louis delegates said that the meeting had tried inviting persons coming from a distance to eat dinner with a family in the immediate area before business meeting, to make it more convenient for them to come. But it had been objected that people should come for the business and not for the food. They had also tried meeting for business right after meeting for worship, but it was even harder to keep people then. Quarterly Meeting agreed that members need to feel the importance of business meeting in the life of the meeting in order to keep the meeting alive.

Ruth Smythe then asked the Recording Clerk to read an article in the Urbana News-Gazette of April 10, and suggested that the meeting send Joseph W. Letson a note supporting him in his picketing of the Lincoln, Illinois Post Office on October 27, 1962 to protest the Cuban blockade. This action had resulted in his dismissal from Lincoln Junior College, for which the college is currently being censured by the American Association of University Professors. It was felt that correspondence with the college would be of little help to Letson. Urbana meeting recalled that Letson had attended meeting for worship at the time of his action and that he had felt that he would be dismissed for his action and that agitation on his behalf would be of little help. It was enquired what had happened to Letson: no one knew. No text for a note to Letson was suggested, and the business meeting was closed with a silence.

Helen Nelson Acting Clerk.

Mariellen Gilpin

Mariellen Gilpin
Acting Recording Clerk