

MAKING IT TO THE PLATFORM :
THE INVOLVEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE
PEACE MOVEMENT IN TASMANIA FROM
THE CRIMEAN WAR TO THE END OF THE
VIETNAM WAR

by

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This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any tertiary institution and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

The thesis examines comments made by Marilyn Lake in relation to the involvement of women in the referenda campaigns of World War 1. In particular what role women played in the anti-conscription campaign, noting if this involvement increased over the period of the second referendum. From this point did the involvement of women in the peace movement increase over the century and were women able to make it to the platform of the peace debate. An investigation was made into the terms used to describe different types of peace followers, and the distinction between pacifist and pacificist was made, the different levels of involvement in the peace movement were examined, as were the reasons why women become involved in the pursuit of peace, and why women form their own peace groups. The peace movement in Tasmania began in the 1830s with the Quakers, gradually gaining strength with the formation of the Peace Society in 1907. The first World War was a set back for the fledgling movement but with union help it mounted a strong challenge to the conscription referenda. The birth of the women's peace movement occurred at this time and continued to gain strength until the thirties when it took the lead in the movement, successfully gaining signatures for the Declaration against Disarmament. With the rise in fascist aggression occurring in Europe, Tasmanians began to lose confidence in the League of Nations Union as an effective peace body. World War II was another blow to the peace movement after which came concern about nuclear warfare particularly during the 'cold war'. The Vietnam War saw the rebirth of the peace movement, coinciding with the youth movement of the sixties, the resultant mass movement for peace was unlike any demonstration against government policy seen before.

Women had been involved in the rise of the peace movement since Quaker times. Their own group, W.I.L.P.F. is the oldest surviving peace group in Tasmania. Though a pacifist group pursuing an educative role they have supported the protests of the peace movement when appropriate. With the women of this peace group and the Quakers rests the future of the peace movement in Tasmania.

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Abbreviations used in footnotes :

A.O.T. Archives Office of Tasmania

T.C. Tasmaniana Collection - State Library of Tasmania

Introduction

This thesis arose from comments made by Marilyn Lake in her work on World War 1. In it she said "Women seemed to be slightly more involved in the second conscription campaign than the first" and "Women anti-conscriptionists (with the exception of the occasional visitor) did not make it to the platform in Tasmania".¹ These comments aroused an interest to find out if this was the case and if so had the situation changed as the century progressed. Had the position of women in the peace movement changed by the anti-conscription campaign of the Vietnam War years? The result of this research is a study of the women involved in the peace movement in Tasmania with particular interest in the anti-war and anti-conscription campaigns of the first World War and the Vietnam War and of the quest for world peace and disarmament and anti-fascism campaigns of the thirties. Why these three periods were chosen is easy to explain. These three periods are those in which the peace movement in Australia has achieved some success. Although not successful in Tasmania the 1916 and 1917 referenda campaigns against conscription failed to get the votes across Australia. The mass Moratorium Movement and the campaign of the Conscientious Objectors were responsible for the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam and in the early 1930s the massive public support for the World Disarmament Conference and its Petition signed by thousands of Australians marks the movements success at that time.

1. M.Lake, *Tasmania and the first World War. A Study of the effects of the first World War on Tasmanian Society and politics 1914-19* (Hobart, 1972), p.229.

It is necessary to look at the peace movement as a whole before studying parts of it. Who are peace workers, what do they believe, how are they organised, where do women fit into this structure, why do women become involved in these movements? Only in recent years has this become an area of research by historians and political scientists in Australia, no study seems to have been done on Tasmania but for scant mention in some of the general work or for a particular incident of interest in discussion of particular people or organisations.

The Vietnam War and the strong peace movement it produced led to studies of that conflict and its mass protest movement this in turn led to studies of peace groups throughout Australia's history. The last twenty years have seen many articles being produced covering events from the Maori Wars to the most recent peace protests sponsored by such groups as Greenpeace. Sifting through the mass of material in search of items of relevance has been a major task. Malcolm Saunders and Ralph Summy are responsible for a large percentage of this literature and their work in this area has spanned the last twenty two years. Both readily admit, in letters to the author, to have researched little in regard to Tasmania. They are still most useful in determining who are members of peace movements. In looking at peace movements it is necessary to look both at the groups making up the movement and the individuals of each group, what they believe and the action they are prepared to take on an issue. Saunders and Summy say that to belong to a peace movement an individual or group must participate regularly, thereby demonstrating a positive commitment to and sense of identification with the movement's broad objectives. The words 'participate' and 'regularly' imply that a person must do more than merely sign a single protest petition or attend the occasional peace rally.²

2. M. Saunders and R. Summy, *The Australian Peace Movement : A Short History* (Canberra, 1986), p.6.

Martin uses four levels of involvement to determine degree of participation. The highest level of involvement includes the "key activists and spokespeople", the next level includes those with a long period of active membership and participation, then there are those who become active in response to a particular issue and on the lowest level are the "passive supporters" who do not take part in organised actions.³ Those involved in the peace movement are of two types, pacifist or pacificist. "A pacifist is a person who is opposed to war and violence. Pacifists believe that we should not kill or harm other people. And if killing is wrong, war must be wrong - because war is basically a matter of killing".⁴ The Quakers follow this belief. "The Pacificist qualifies his opposition to war and under certain conditions will take up arms. When he does capitulate and go to war, he is apt to be quite zealous, elevating the war above the level of simple survival and into a crusade for mankind's spiritual salvation. Before this stage is reached the pacificist manifests a strong inclination for and claims moral superiority for the ways of co-operation and peace rather than those of conflict and violence."⁵ An example of pacificists would those who actively worked for world peace through support of the League of Nations but who strongly supported war as the only means to curtail the aggression of Hitler.

3. B. Martin, 'The social construction of Australian Peace Movement demands, *War/Masculinity* (Sydney, 1985), p.88.

4. T. Augarde, 'What is Pacifism?' *Peace is the Way : a guide to pacifist views and actions* (Cambridge, 1990), p.11.

5. R. Summy, 'Militancy and the Australian Peace Movement, 1960-67', *Politics* Vol.V(2) (November, 1970), pp.148-162.

Regardless of whether pacifist or pacificist the individual or peace group is taking a political, moral or religious position of dissent against some government policy, this dissent will fall into one or more abstract categories : rejection of war in general - true pacifism; a refusal to support a particular war - for instance, the Vietnam War; opposition to a particular aspect of war - for example, conscription, nuclear arms and finally those that promote values, attitudes, policies and social structures that will remove the need for any of the above - for example the Quaker Peace Committee and those supporting United Nations peace programs.⁶

This dissent is more than just disagreement with the foreign policy of a government. Taylor claims they are "contemptuous of those in authority", that the typical peace dissenter claims to know better, to promote higher causes and "asserts a superiority, moral or intellectual".⁷ Gilbert and Jordens further distinguish these dissenters by classifying them into four groups : The Christian pacifists; the anti-war liberals; the anti-war socialists and the anti-imperialists.⁸ Christian pacifism has a long tradition, being based in the scriptures, the Quakers, Seventh Day Adventists and Christadelphians are the best examples. This type of dissent is often used as a reason by conscientious objectors for non-compliance with conscription requirements. These groups have been most successful in being granted exemptions to service. Anti-war liberalism was established in the nineteenth century, it saw war as

6. Saunders and Summy, *op. cit.* p.6

7. A.J.P. Taylor, *The trouble makers : Dissent over foreign policy 1792 - 1939* (Melbourne, 1957), p.13.

8. A.D. Gilbert and A-M. Jordens, 'Traditions of dissent' *Australia : two centuries of war and peace* (Canberra, 1988), pp.338-459.

irrational being "destructive of the moral economical and social progress of mankind".⁹ These dissenters are actively committed to campaigning against war, concentrating on "rational argument and an arousal of public opinion to influence the thinking of individual politicians and political factions".¹⁰ These dissenters were most strong before World War I and were represented by the various branches of the London Peace Society established in Australia around 1905. Some of these ideals were present in the support for the United Nations in the 1950's and in the Teach-Ins, pamphleteering, lectures and petitions associated with the Vietnam War campaign. Anti-war socialists are not strictly pacifists. Their dissent is based upon communist and utopian socialist ideals. They argue that wars were "conducted by the ruling classes for their own economic benefit, and at the expense of workers coerced into armies by legal prescription or economic necessity".¹¹ Workers were encouraged to resist all forms of involvement in wars. These dissenters are most active in anti-conscription campaigns and in the 1940's and 1950's the communist groups dominated the peace movement. Dissenters following the anti-imperialist line are those who question the involvement of Australia in war because Great Britain has declared war. They question the need for an involvement in war unless Australia is in direct threat of military attack. Apart from the later years of World War II, Australia has "fought as a junior ally of a great power in generally distant wars".¹² The Irish dissenters of World War I and the moratorium movement of the Vietnam War are examples of this type of dissent.

9. *Ibid.*, p.347.

10. *Ibid.*, p.349.

11. *Ibid.*

12. *Ibid.*, p.358.

Two other terms which may be used in discussions of peace movements are peace activists and peace advocates. A peace activist refers generally to an individual engaged in some form of anti-war protest whereas a peace advocate is anyone who promotes ideas and activities directed toward removing the causes of war and creating the conditions of peace.¹³

Participation in peace movements has always been hard to measure. Groups are usually established by pacifists and operate with an informal membership using mailing lists to maintain contact. These groups are barely visible between events but when a crisis occurs pacifists join the movement in such large numbers that they dominate and are able to ignore the pacifists goals and beliefs.¹⁴ These campaigns cause local groups of varying and fluctuating size to appear and these may have affiliations with a range of other organisations. Are the members of these parent organisations now considered to be part of the peace movement? In some campaigns this may be the case. Supporters with no organisational links may sometimes join in demonstrations or wear a badge in support, do these count as peace activists? The size of demonstrations is often used as a measure of support for a particular campaign. But these figures can be rubbery depending upon who is doing the counting. The peace groups will report a much higher attendance than the police force. Public opinion polls may also give a distorted picture of support for a particular campaign. This will depend upon the wording of the question and on the size and type of the sample used by the poll.¹⁵

13. Saunders and Summy, *Ibid.*, p.9.

14. M. Saunders and R. Summy, 'Salient themes of the Australian Peace Movement an historical perspectives', *Social Alternatives*, Vol.3, No.1 (1982), p.30.

15. A. Carter, *Peace Movements : International protest and World politics since 1945*, (London, 1992), p.xiv.

When determining the participation of those involved in the Tasmanian peace movement the minute books and other documents of individuals and organisations and press reports have been used as evidence of membership and participation in events, where possible.

Women have been involved in peace organisations in large numbers since they first appeared. Why have women been concerned with war and peace? War has always spelt hardship for women, both personally and for their sons and husbands. They have always been powerless to prevent war but were always the victims. Berit Ås summed up the position when speaking at a World Conference on nuclear war in 1982, "Women are victims in all wars. Men plan them, they train for them and they conduct them ... The different roles of men and women in wars dispose the two sexes to different thinking, feeling and action with regard to warfare. A similar difference of interests exists between men and women with respect to the army. For women their children, most often sons, have made up the armies of history. As cannon fodder, women's work and life intentions are disrespected and destroyed. For men the army consists of comrades. Finally, through history the owners of territories have been men. Women have very seldom held land, property or slaves. More often than not they have been sold, captured, stolen or even given away."¹⁶ One only has to watch the television news of current conflicts in Bosnia and Mogadishu to see that women are still the powerless victims of their men's wars. The words of Judy Small's song are still very much a true expression of the fate of women and children in war as when they were written :

16. Berit Ås is quoted by N. Shelley, 'Women and the prevention of nuclear war', *Australia and Nuclear War* (Canberra, 1983), p.229.

"Lest they forget the countless children burned alive in napalm's fire;
Lest they forget the dead civilians lying tangled in the wire;
And the faces of the women raped and shattered to the core;
It's not only men in uniform who pay the price of war."¹⁷

For women left at home when their men have gone off to distant wars there has been hardships to bear. These women have been expected to not only fend for themselves when maintaining their households but they have had to fill the shoes of these men. Often working long hours for much less pay at the jobs previously done by men, now gone to war. As well she lived with a continual fear, fear for the loss of her loved ones.

"The time was to come when the strain was still heavier, when women were to hide themselves and sometimes faint at the approach of the clergyman of their faith lest he should bear them news of the death of a son or husband, when lamps burnt late in solitary rooms where sleepless women prayed and suffered. Such is women's part in war, how bitter and hopeless only a women knows."¹⁸

Women, once they had gained the vote had more power to voice their protest about war and to push for lasting peace. Over the century women in the peace movement have become increasingly radical and confrontational but have remained non-violent in their actions. Women have a stake in maintaining peace, they have recognised this and joined the peace movement in large numbers, they see a need for change to the present system for this to happen. Why have they become so involved in the peace movement? Obviously, to protect themselves from war, as they

17. J. Small quoted by S. Erika, 'Rape : Our window of vulnerability' *Social Alternatives*, Vol.4, No.3 (1984), p.19.

18. E. Scott, *Australia during the great war*, 3rd ed. (Sydney, 1938), p.31 quoted by C. Shute 'Heriones and heroes, sexual mythology in Australia 1914-1918' *Hecate*, Vol.1, No.1 (January 1975), p.13.

are the victims but Susan Ryan notes more reasons for this involvement, "Women, as the bearers and rearers of children have a stronger biological stake in the future; that women being outside the power structures and the decision-making have been the victims rather than the perpetrators of armed warfare, and that women being less socialised into the dominant male patterns of aggressive behaviour are more able to see an alternative mode of human relations. Women do not make war, but they are the victims of it. Women lose partners, parents, children through war. They lose their countries, they lose their lives. They are subjected to particularly horrendous consequences of armed invasion. Women are raped in war. Women lose everything and gain nothing. Even when there is no war women lose out by national and international commitments to gigantic arms budgets. So women have every reason to oppose war and to support disarmament... The ideological base of the women's movement in Australia and throughout the world has been a rejection of the male values of aggression and on advocacy of the values of co-operation, consensus, tolerance and trust."¹⁹

So women become involved because they are affected by wars, they are the nurturers of the children, the future cannon fodder, they are also the educators and could change the way future generations think. But why do men allow war to exist? Elizabeth Kirkby would have us believe that "history makes it all too apparent that men have never had the will to work for peace".²⁰ Some would go further than this and blame men for all the earth's woes. "Men have stuffed up the earth and it is up

19. S. Ryan, 'A role for women in the disarmament movement', *Social Alternatives*, Vol.3, No.1 (1982), pp.59-62.

20. E. Kirkby interviewed in J. Scutt (ed.) *Different lives* (Melbourne, 1987) p.89.

to women to clean up the mess after them. If women ruled the world, we wouldn't be in the mess we're in!!"²¹

Wishing to become involved in an organisation to solve the earth's woes women may join either a mixed group or a women's group. The role they play in these groups may be completely different. In a mixed group they will generally play a subordinate role, being assigned to fund-raising and catering whereas the men act as committee members and office bearers. "It is exceptional for them [women] to play a leading role, they are expected to make tea, sell buttons and look after social activities."²² The women's only groups offer a chance at leadership to women who seek it. These groups usually meet at more convenient times and deal with items of a more women specific nature, they do not have to compete with men and some women feel more comfortable in the presence of women. Of course, in women's only groups someone will still make the tea and sell the buttons. Women who are members of organisations are often members of more than one. In a 1959 survey of National Council of Women delegates it was found that on average "women belonged to or held office in four organisations some reported membership in as many as a dozen".²³ Some of these features of women's membership in organisations applies to the involvement of women in Tasmanian peace organisations. Many of the women studied

21. B. Thiele 'Women, nature and the peace movement', *Social Alternatives*, Vol.4, No.3 (1984) p.13.

22. S. Encel, N. Mackenzie, M. Tebbutt, *'Women and society : an Australian Study*, (Melbourne, 1974), pp.278-9.

23. *Ibid.*, p.282.

were involved in a number of groups at one time, some mixed some women only. The roles played in these groups was also interesting to note. Some women were dominant in both types of organisation others only dominant in the women's groups. Details of this appear with discussion of each person concerned and of the various organisations involved in Tasmania's peace movement.

The role of women in peace groups is also determined by the group itself. Some groups by the very nature of their beliefs determine the role of its members. The Society of Friends has always been unlike other religious organisations in that it "seems to have unselfconsciously accepted equality for members in both rights and duties, regardless of sex".²⁴ Women were quite able to undertake leadership roles in this organisation if they so chose and this will be shown later to be the case.

Many of the women's only organisations which have appeared have done so on the basis of their being non-political. "This reflected a 'separate sphere' ideology, which held that women's interests were separate from men's and that party politics did not, and could not, represent women properly."²⁵ A large number of groups have appeared this century of which women of many and varied political persuasion have been members. Because the object of the group has been clearly set out the ladies have been able to meet the task at hand without problems of different political ideology getting in the way. Tasmanian women have been more adept at this than some of their mainland counterparts. The local branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

24. P. Scales, *Pacifism in Australia 1912-1918* (Adelaide, 1971), ch.3, p.4.

25. J.C. Waters, *To help the mothers and save the babies* (Hobart, 1983), p.16.

did not suffer division to anywhere near the level as that experienced by Sydney branches in connection to the communist association of Jessie Street the then leader during the thirties. The local ladies managed to stay largely apolitical throughout the crisis losing only a few members.

The involvement of women in peace organisations pre-suffrage times was far greater than that considered normal political involvement. Since the time of the first peace groups women made up at least half of the body of meetings and rallies. Women were the doers in mixed groups, the minute secretaries, letter writers, tea makers. Sometimes holding the secretarial or treasurer's positions but were rarely the Presidents. The women's organisations were potentially the most radical element of the movement even if this was rendered of little significance because of their marginal position in public life. The 1916 and 1917 referenda did get some women actively involved under the leadership of a Victorian, Vida Goldstein, but this was largely a carry over from the suffragette era. Many more women were content to write letters to the paper or to pass out leaflets, these being much less confrontationalist approaches.

The women's groups post World War I became a mix of women with traditional or liberal outlooks; "traditional women looking to the preservation of their family; liberal women looking to the preservation of the world".²⁶ They presented themselves on the local front as the

26. C. Bacchi, 'Women and peace through the polls', *Politics*, Vol.21, No.2 (November 1986), p.65.

conveyors of information to keep the general public up to date on relevant issues and on the international level they worked with other women in an attempt to influence world affairs. They appeared to have had little effect on either front.

The Vietnam War provided a much more visible means of protest for women than previously possible. It occurred at a time of great social change. As a reflection of the social changes of the sixties, women actively involved themselves in marches and rallies on a scale never before attempted, but again they were rarely to be the leaders or spokespersons. This was particularly so in Tasmania, where many women participated but largely in support of men. The most striking fact about the women and women's groups involved in Tasmania's peace movement was that they stuck to their tasks. These groups continued to exist and work throughout the century whereas the men and their groups tended to appear in response to some crisis then to fade away when the crisis had passed. The women have worked away at their task whether it be a high profile crisis or the continuing issues which are difficult to solve and which seem not to go away. This dedication must surely be a mark of the strength of their involvement in the peace movement.

Chapter 1 : The Peace Movement in Tasmania

The Quakers were responsible for the first peace initiatives in Tasmania. Though Quakers had been in the colony as convicts and free settlers since the colony began it was not until the visit of James Backhouse and George Washington Walker in the 1830's that the Society of Friends became a viable organisation with regular meetings in Hobart.²⁷ The purpose of their visit was to investigate the treatment of the aborigines by the white settlers and to impress upon Governor Arthur the need to protect the aborigines from white attack. They were appalled by the war being waged against the aborigines.

The Society of Friends continued to meet and through its Peace Testimony written in 1661 it attempted to follow the belief that "The Spirit of Christ, which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of the world".²⁸ To prevent the interest from waning frequent visits from English Quakers reinforced this testimony and offered the chance for local peace groups to become established. This occurred in 1855 with the visit of Frederick Mackie to Van Diemen's Land to spread the message of peace. He was fortuitous as his visit coincided with the outbreak of the Crimean War giving a far more receptive audience that might otherwise have been the case.²⁹ But

27. W.N. Oats, *Backhouse and Walker : A Quaker view of the Australian colonies 1832-1838* (Hobart, 1981), pp.21-2.

28. Augarde, *op.cit.*, p.161.

29. M. Nicholls ed. *Traveller under concern : The Quaker journals of Frederick Mackie on his tour of the Australasian colonies 1852 - 1855* (Hobart, 1973), pp.252-7

any peace discussions at this time had to contend with the growing fear of Russian attack and the cries for more defence of the colony.

Although few in number the Quakers publicly proclaimed their peace message by use of the press, distribution of leaflets and by petition to state government calling on the settlement of international disputes through arbitration not war. Public meetings were held, usually when a visitor was in town, to bring the subject of peace to the attention of the general public. But their efforts went almost completely unnoticed.³⁰ The Society of Friends had a Peace Committee to pursue these avenues to increase public awareness of the need for peace.

The Maori Wars provided the impetus for the next outbreak of peace sentiment. When Lieutenant Colonel George Dean Pitt arrived in Hobart in September of 1863 to recruit for the New Zealand militia there was press complaint regarding the drain on the colony of men. But his mission was successful, by mid December he had recruited 147 Tasmanians into the 3rd Waikato Regiment.³¹ The Quakers alone protested the validity of the war itself but had little influence on these young men keen for adventure. There was scattered opposition to Pitt's visit but it was on the ground that able-bodied men and their families were being poached from the colony where they were badly needed to develop the land. Together these complaints must have had some effect as the recruiting campaign was halted by the government.³²

30. P. Brock, *The Quaker Peace Testimony 1660-1914* (York, 1990), p.276.

31. L.L. Barton, *Australians in the Waikato War 1863-1864* (Sydney, 1979) passim.

32. M. Saunders, 'Peace dissent in the Australian Colonies : 1788-1900', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol.74, No.3 (December 1988), p.185

The Quakers were again aroused to action in the late 1860's with the passing of the Defence Act which called for more military installations and increased military training in the colony. This produced a "noticeable awakening of alertness to the need for continual public witness against the growth of militarism". They saw the military preparedness produced by the Defence Act as a "denial of Christ's message of peace and non-violence - and a great economic drain on the colony's meagre financial resources".³³ Meeting with little success the Quakers were forced to retire from the public arena again having failed to arouse much public interest for their cause.

Twenty years passed before the next chance for public peace protest. The Sudan conflict coincided with the visit of Joseph Neave a London Quaker. Two forces of dissent were evident and combined to form the first branch of the London Peace Society in Hobart in 1885. The anti-imperial dissenters protesting about involvement in far away conflict combined with the Quaker pacifists. Neave undertook a tour of major cities and in his addresses apologised for his speeches being at a time when the War was a political topic of contention. His lecture was "an explanation of why pacifism was an inherent part of the Quaker faith". War, Neave claimed was entirely opposed to the example and teachings of the saviour; if Christians were imbued with the spirit of Jesus Christ, they could never take up arms against their fellow man 'even to protect themselves from aggression and wrong'.³⁴ His objective of stirring

33. W.N. Oats, *A question of survival : Quakers in Australia in the nineteenth century* (St. Lucia, 1985), p.320.

34. M. Saunders, *Peace Dissent*, p.191.

Quakers to greater efforts in promoting the principles of peace met with some success with the Society of Friends in Tasmania producing a pamphlet, "Is War reconcilable with the teaching and example of Christ?" and distributing it to other Australian branches for public circulation.

The visit of William Jones, an English Quaker, to Australia in 1888 gave the peace movement a much needed boost. He was recent secretary of the London Peace Society and spoke of the importance of the Quaker Peace Testimony and for the need for arbitration in the settling of international disputes. The Friends organised public meetings in each capital city. "In Hobart the Town Hall was made available for a public meeting without charge. It was held in the presence of the governor, Sir Robert Hamilton, and Lady Hamilton. William and Katherine Jones dined at Government House and lunched with the Premier, P.O. Fysh. Jones wrote enthusiastically about his reception in Tasmania and attributed the warmth of that reception and the interest of his audiences to the high regard in which Friends were held in Tasmania. At all his meetings Jones urged those present to remain afterwards and sign what was known as the Wisbech Christian Peace Declaration, which aimed at mobilising Christian support for the Peace Movement."³⁵ Jones was successful in spreading his message to more than just the Quakers. He was able to get the Women's Christian Temperance Union to establish a department for Peace and Arbitration within their organisation, it remains to this day. Jones' visit led to the creation of a Peace Association in Hobart. Whether this was the same group formed when Neave visited or another group and whether the two groups existed at the same time is unknown, it seems unlikely as each would have had similar membership.

35. Oats, *A question of survival*, p.321.

With the outbreak of the Boer War the Quakers took a strong stand protesting the participation of Australian soldiers. They were supported this time by "a small number of anti-militarists and a sprinkling of non-sectarian religious pacifists".³⁶ They made little impact upon the general public their protests being dismissed as just those of a strange religious faith. The Friends took action to counteract the war fever by use of a more public avenue than had previously been used : the school. "The school took no part in collecting contributions to the Patriotic Fund and when a public holiday was declared to celebrate the relief of Mafeking, the School refused to recognise it and continued normal work. Two teachers, members of the Society of Friends, when they found that the school flag had been flown to mark the relief of Ladysmith, promptly hauled it down."³⁷ Such incidents received unfavourable publicity and enrolments were probably jeopardised further when military authorities were refused permission to run cadet corps on the grounds. J.F. Mather, Chairman of the School Board, "saw the Peace Testimony as more than a negative opposition to war. He believed that the school had a responsibility to promote the principles of justice and brotherhood which would ultimately prevail and take away the occasion of war."³⁸ Mather was also involved away from the school in preparing a leaflet setting out the Quaker view of war for distribution to teachers and community leaders. He was also involved in a campaign of letter writing to the press protesting "compulsory militarism in school which undermined the democratic spirit".³⁹

36. Brock, *op.cit.*

37. Oats, *A Question of Survival*, p.315.

38. *Ibid.*

39. *Ibid.*, p.320.

Tasmania did not seem to be so involved against the Boer War as the mainland states. The two groups formed there to protest the War, the Peace, Humanity and Arbitration Society in Melbourne and the Anti-War League in Sydney, did not seem to have had any influence here. The women's groups did involve themselves with this War.

Mrs. Jessie Rooke in her Presidential address to the 1899 Annual Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union devoted a large part to discussion of peace. As superintendent of the Peace and Arbitration Department she reported that "a letter had been sent to every union urging the members to disseminate peace principles as widely as possible, and to endeavour to induce young men to discuss the subject in their debating societies. Over 500 pamphlets and leaflets have been distributed throughout the colony".⁴⁰ By the next convention the war had started and Mrs. Rooke spoke of the need for peace especially in relation to the current Boer War. Mrs. Lodge the new superintendent of Peace and Arbitration, expressed concern at the inactivity of the department because of "the warlike tendency of the public mind".⁴¹ Mrs. Lodge reported another difficult year in 1901 because the community was more concerned about the men who had gone to South Africa than in peace.⁴² With an end to the war in sight the 1902 report is concerned with the need to hold public meetings to "advocate the adjustment of disputes by arbitration".⁴³ The 1903 reports expressed joy at the end of the war, and

40. Women's Christian Temperance Union of Tasmania Annual Convention Report 1899, p.16, A.O.T.:NS/337.

41. *Ibid.*, 1900, p.9.

42. *Ibid.*, 1901, p.10.

43. *Ibid.*, 1902, p.22.

a disinclination by people to discuss the subject, but "the Superintendent feels that now is the time to study the matter with an unprejudiced mind".⁴⁴ By 1904 concern had shifted to the conscription clauses of the Defence Bill and the need to draw this to the attention of Tasmanian women.⁴⁵ Rose Scott publicly linked the women's suffrage movement with opposition to the Boer War. In 1898 she had lectured the National Council of Women of N.S.W. on Arbitration versus War using Joseph Neave as one of her sources. As a result of her lecture the National Council of Women, Australia passed a resolution deploring the 'war spirits of the age' and protesting against the encouragement of that spirit in Australia.⁴⁶ The newly formed Tasmanian branch was bound to support this resolution and develop policies to support it. Its interest in this area of peace promotion was still evident in 1907 when it became involved with the visit of Dr. Charles Strong, founder of the Melbourne Peace Society, to Hobart.

This visit came about because Mrs. Strong, as Victorian delegate to the Tasmanian National Council of Women Congress in March 1907, asked if her husband should give his 'Peace' lecture to the Congress.⁴⁷ This arrangement was later changed when it was "announced that Dr. Strong was not able to remain for the Congress but would address a

44. *Ibid.*, 1903, p.10.

45. *Ibid.*, 1904, p.7.

46. A-M Jordens, 'Against the tide :the growth and decline of a liberal anti-war movement in Australia, 1905-1918', *Historical Studies* Vol.22, No.88 (April 1987), p.377.

47. National Council of Women, Tasmania, *Minutes Executive Meeting*, 28.1.07, A.O.T.:NS/325.

meeting with the view of forming a branch of the London Peace Society on Friday March 1st.⁴⁸ The meeting was duly held, being presided over by Mrs. Emily Dobson, on behalf of the National Council of Women. Dr. Strong spoke of the "evils of war, the growing belief that war is a mistake for economic and other reasons" and the growth of the Peace Movement over the last twenty years. "Even if war could not be abolished, it was our duty to minimise it as far as possible. We could do our part by helping to form public opinion." To this end he called for the formation of a group in Tasmania. It was moved by Mr. A.J. Taylor that a group be so formed and named the Tasmanian Peace Society, Hobart Centre and a provisional committee was appointed to oversee the formation of the Society.⁴⁹ The peace group was to be affiliated with the London Peace Society as one of its Australasian branches. The Melbourne Peace Society was "not so much the leader of these branches as their main link with the parent body in London".⁵⁰

The provisional committee determined that the objects of the society would be : The adoption of arbitration in all international disputes instead of war; by the simultaneous reduction of armaments, to relieve the peoples of the world of the increasing burden of taxation; removal of international misunderstandings and the cultivation of international brotherhood and goodwill; and co-operation with kindred societies in

48. *Ibid.*, 25.2.07.

49. *The Mercury*, 2.3.07, p.7.

50. M. Saunders 'The origins and early years of the Melbourne Peace Society 1899-1914', *Royal Australian Historical Society Journal* Vol.79, Nos. 1 and 2 (1993), p.109.

Australasia, Great Britain and other countries throughout the world.⁵¹ The office bearers of the society were solid, respected members of society, including clergymen (Bishop Mercer), Quakers (Mather and Walker), and the wives of politicians and members of the press (Mrs. Dobson and Mrs. Lodge).⁵² With members of such calibre the Society should have had much political clout. But its influence seems to have been of limited extent, it seemed to act as another outlet for the Christian pacifists already in Hobart. It was able to voice its opinions to a wider range of groups, particularly womens, when it was granted delegates to the National Council of Women in 1908.⁵³ By mid-1907 its meetings became concerned with the issue of compulsory military training, Mrs. O'Shea Petersen had become a committee member⁵⁴ and thereafter its meetings were no longer reported in the press, although it existed for some time longer, at least until 1913.⁵⁵

The event which aroused most participation in the peace movement prior to World War I was the introduction of compulsory military service with the passing of the Defence Act of 1910 which made training

51. Melbourne Peace Centre, *Annual Report*, 1907, p.11.

52. *Ibid.*, pp.4-5.

53. National Council of Women, *op.cit.*, 16.3.08.

54. *The Mercury*, 28.6.07, p.5.

55. During Mrs. Petersen's federal campaign of 1913 she revealed that she was a member of the Peace Society, see V. Pearce 'A few viragoes on a stump' The womanhood suffrage campaign in Tasmania, 1880-1920', *Tasmanian Historical Research Association. Papers and Proceedings* Vol.32, No.4, (December 1985), p.159.

compulsory for all able bodied males between the ages of 12 and 26.⁵⁶ Exemption from service was possible for members of a recognised peace church : claimants to this had to prove they were 'forbidden by the doctrines of their religion to bear arms'. If the applicant was successful he would be assigned 'so far as is possible' - to non-combatant duties such as ambulance training or clerking or work in the commissariat. Probably the government had Quakers chiefly in mind when making this exception to the universality of the service required.⁵⁷

Those involved in campaigns against the compulsory military service were concerned with the compulsion and/or the military training, this opposition brought together groups of a very different nature in the quest to protest this service. The Peace Society was concerned with this issue and had been since 1907 but it was not able "to undertake a militant campaign against the drafting of the country's youth for defence".⁵⁸ Those making up this campaign included : left wing socialists and trade unionists including the I.W.W. (Industrial Workers of the World) who opposed compulsion as undemocratic and the preparation for war as against their socialist/communist creed; pacifists and anti-war groups from the Protestant Churches and the Society of Friends. Brock refers to these people as anti-conscriptionists⁵⁹ but Tanner says there is a confusion of terms. "Compulsory Military training or 'compulsion', such as operated in Australia before the first World War, differed from 'conscription' in several respects. The compulsory trainee retained civilian status and continued to work during this period of military obligation.

56. Brock, *op.cit.*, p.277.

57. *Ibid.*, p.278.

58. *Ibid.*

59. *Ibid.*, p.279.

Drill was carried on during weekends, in the evening, and at camps held for a specified number of days each year. The conscript, however, becomes part of the standing army and is a full-time soldier during his two, three or five year term with the forces. Fundamentally, compulsion was a scheme for training civilians in the techniques of warfare so that they might defend the homeland, conscription is a method of reinforcing the standing army by obliging young men to forsake civilian life for a period of continuous service with the forces," [sometimes overseas].⁶⁰

By this definition not all those who oppose compulsory military training will oppose conscription particularly if during war-time. The use of the term anti-compulsionists will be used to distinguish the two. Brock says that the bulk of the [anti-compulsionists] were either secular left wingers or non-Quaker Protestants.⁶¹ The Women's Christian Temperance Union were also anti-compulsionists because they saw the Act was a "serious infringement of civil and religious liberty, a menace to home influence, and a cruel, needless and unwarrantable burden upon the manhood and boyhood of our land".⁶² They were also concerned about the harm it might do to boys' morals as well as the morality of war itself and "their not unreasonable fears that their sons being released, even if briefly, from the guidance of their parents and exposed to bad influences in the course of their training".⁶³

60. T.W. Tanner, *Compulsory citizen soldiers* (Sydney, 1980), p.xx.

61. Brock, *op.cit.*

62. Tanner, *op.cit.*, p.212.

63. Brock, *op.cit.*

Three Quakers, John Hills, Thomas Hubbard and John Fletcher formed the Australian Freedom League in Adelaide in 1912. In May Fletcher visited Tasmania and formed another branch. As Hobart had a long history of Quaker pacifism he was assured of a warm welcome. Support was forthcoming from the Anglican Bishop of Tasmania, the Right Reverend John Mercer and also from a prominent Baptist Minister and author, Reverend F.W. Boreham. The object of the A.F.L. was the repeal of the compulsory clauses of the Defence Act. It was not opposed to a voluntary defence force.⁶⁴

The major form of dissent from the Defence Act's compulsory clauses was for parents to refuse to allow their boys to muster. Non-compliance was a form of passive resistance to the Act. This form of protest did not go unnoticed. "During the first three years of training, from July 1, 1911 to June 30, 1914, 27,749 prosecutions were instituted under the Defence Act in all Australia", Tasmanian figures being unavailable. "Most of these resulted in fines, but 5,732 brought continuous detention in a fortress or other military place."⁶⁵ Because of these penalties the anti-compulsionists claimed the Act was "making criminals out of boys by hauling them into court and sentencing them to confinement for obeying their parents, or their conscience".⁶⁶ Protest regarding the compulsory training of the nations youth was still very loud when Australia joined Great Britain in war against Germany. But a nation at war requires its citizens to support its efforts in every way. Many of those previously protesting the Defence Act now became active in

64. Tanner, *op.cit.*, pp.198-9.

65. Tanner, *op.cit.*, p.207.

66. *Ibid.*, p.209.

support of the war effort. Others, the Peace Society, the A.F.L.. went into recess feeling their protest to be inappropriate in the present climate. They did not want to be seen as hampering the war effort. But many of the leaders of these groups would re-appear to become leaders of the anti-conscription campaigns of 1916 and 1917.

Ann-Mari Jordens offers these thoughts on the cause of the breakdown of the peace movement at the beginning of the war. "The personal and social tensions created by the war soon destroyed the internal cohesiveness of these bodies. Some members were able consistently to maintain their pre-war anti-war activism, others wholeheartedly supported Britain's policies and were thus rendered politically impotent for the duration of the war. They devoted themselves to self-education or raising money for war related charities. Those whose pacifist principles were stronger than their pro-imperial socialisation, or whose cultural formation included Irish or European influences were able to take an active role in the amalgamation of the small and diverse elements of the anti-war movement".⁶⁷ This amalgamation produced the Australian Peace Alliance in 1915. It had a "dual purpose" to provide as strong a voice as possible to call for a stop to the War, and to give some degree of protection to various dissenting groups opposed to the war - on the principle of "safety in numbers".⁶⁸ The Quakers provided much in the way of inspiration, leadership, membership and facilities to this group. The A.P.A. was an active organisation distributing literature and holding public meetings throughout the war years. The national body held Easter Conferences in 1916, 1917, 1918 and 1921. These conferences were attended by delegates from each state who represented not only the state

67. A.M. Jordens, 'Anti-War organisations in a society at war, 1914-18', *Journal of Australian Studies* No.26 (May 1990), p.79.

68. Scales, *Pacifism in Australia*, P.2.

A.P.A. but also trade unions, trades hall councils, political Labor Leagues, women's groups, socialist parties, religious denominations, anti-conscription bodies and peace societies.⁶⁹ These conferences gave the small local groups, contact with larger groups, some inspiration and once the conscription campaigns were underway a source of shared information and interstate speakers. Resolutions passed at the first conference included an attack on conscription, and a declaration that free speech, free press and free assembly should be inalienable rights in war as in peace, the second conference added the demand for universal adult suffrage, an end to political prosecutions under the War Precautions Act, an end to all limitations on civil liberties and an immediate repeal of the compulsory clauses of the Defence Act. The 1918 conference was considered the most radical, its resolutions encompassed those of the previous conferences and included support for Conscientious Objectors around the world, a call for an "unarmed Australia" and rejection of President Wilson's proposal for a League of Nations.⁷⁰ Having achieved most of its objectives, the end of war and failure of conscription referenda the A.P.A. lost much of its impetus. The 1921 conference was its swansong and it faded away thereafter.

The other group most active in Hobart was the Society of Friends. Although only small in numbers they exerted much influence in the community and were well-respected for the strength of their beliefs. Their 1916 Annual Conference was reported in the press, "stressing their protest against conscription as being not only part of the military system but as a distinct trampling of inalienable rights of freedom of

69. *Ibid.*, p.27.

70. *Ibid.*, pp.29-32.

conscience."⁷¹ J. Francis Mather as the Hobart leader wrote letters to the press further outlining the society's position with regard to conscription and war, in response to unfair comment from the editor.⁷² He was concerned that the Quakers would be seen not to be opposing war on a spiritual basis but for materialist, political or socialist reasons.⁷³ Mather had problems at the school as well. He did not allow militarism to pervade the school but he could not condemn those who undertook military service in defence of ideals sincerely held. Much discussion arose over the form of honor roll for the fallen ex-students. The list of names included servicemen, nurses, ambulancemen, stretcher bearers altogether without rank. Below the list of names was the simple inscription "They followed where their sense of duty led".⁷⁴ This seems to sum up the Quaker approach to the war, some needed to take action others needed to help victims others to defend their beliefs.

Two women's groups also appeared in Tasmania during the war. The Sisterhood of International Peace was formed in 1915 and continued after the war changing its name in 1920 to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. It continued through the thirties but declined during World War II but reappeared in 1963 continuing today as one of the few peace groups active in Tasmania. The Women's Peace Army established by Vida Goldstein in Melbourne in 1914 had a following in Hobart at least by 1917 when she visited to campaign against conscription. These groups will be discussed more in Chapter 2.

71. *The Daily Post*, 3.10.16.

72. *The Mercury*, 4.11.16.

73. W.N. Oats, *The rose and the Waratah* (Hobart, 1979), p.205.

74. *Ibid*, p.211.

The other group which appeared during the conscription campaigns was the Anti-Conscription League. It was set up by Robert Cosgrove, "had strong trade union associations, held large demonstrations that sometimes became violent, and attracted insinuations of disloyalty from conservative sections of the press and the public".⁷⁵ This group was only active during the period of the referenda campaigns in October 1916 and December 1917. There was a group established in Launceston for the same purpose, it called itself the Workmen's Anti-Conscription League they pledged to educate their fellow citizens to exercise an intelligent 'NO' vote.⁷⁶ This group was led by James Mooney, Secretary of the A.W.U., he was supported by James MacDonald M.H.A. The Hobart group was led by Matt O'Brien of the Hobart Trades and Labour Council. Others valuable to the 'NO' campaign were Senators O'Keefe, Guy, Long and Ready and M.H.A.'s Dicker, Watkins, Shoobridge and Sheridan.⁷⁷

This brings us to the campaign for the 1916 Referendum. Those arguing for the 'NO' case had some advantages. The 'NO' case had a statistically better chance of winning, about 5 to 1. "People nearly always prefer to vote for the known even if they are not altogether pleased with it, than for the unknown, with all its terrors."⁷⁸ The issue of states rights versus individual rights was a concern. "Conscription opponents stressed the primacy of individual rights and denied the states' right to compel men to go to war."⁷⁹ The vote of women was considered to be crucial and so

75. Gilbert and Jordens, *Traditions of dissent*, p.353.

76. *The Mercury*, 29.10.16.

77. R. Hodgman, *Tasmania and the conscription issue 1916-1917* (Hobart, 1962), p.23.

78. L.C. Jauncey, *The story of conscription in Australia* (London, 1935), p.191.

79. G. Withers, *Conscription necessity and justice* (Sydney, 1972), p.6.

the campaigns of both sides were directed at the female vote. More details of this in Chapter 2.

The press took sides in the campaign, "*The Mercury*" being in favour of conscription and "*The Daily Post*" supporting the 'NO' case. Both papers were restricted in what they could print by the strict censorship in force during the war. Several letters were not permitted and readers were advised on the procedures which needed to be taken to ensure publication.⁸⁰ Anti-Conscription rallies and public meetings were held most Sundays in Hobart and in small towns around the state. Meetings of 2,000 people were common in both Hobart and Launceston. Nineteen meetings were reported across the state prior to the 1916 pole.⁸¹ The meetings being addressed by state Labor politicians, unionists or visiting politicians such as Frank Anstey M.H.R. from Victoria, who dominated the campaign. The 'YES' campaign was similarly organised into a Referendum Council and they too held rallies and public meetings. These were attended by the Premier and members of government, representatives of the War Council and supported by the Prime Minister.⁸² Hughes sent telegrams to be read at public meetings, these being directed towards women for it was felt they held the key to the success of the vote.⁸³

The Anti-Conscription rallies which had the largest attendances were those sponsored by the trade unions, these were often rowdy with

80. *The Daily Post*, 13.9.16.

81. *The Daily Post* reported these meetings from 29.9.16 to 10.10.16.

82. *The Mercury*, 29.10.16.

83. *The Mercury*, 20.10.16.

much interjection coming quite often from returned soldiers. Much of the debate at these meetings was concerned with the need or otherwise for more men at the front at the expense of men needed for work in Australia and whether coloured labour would be imported to fill the gap.⁸⁴ These arguments were bound to find favour with the trade union men. As the date for the poll drew near the police officers were reminded in their gazette of the need "to observe strict impartiality and neutrality on political matters and on questions exciting partisanship".⁸⁵ There was a fear that the rowdiness recently experienced at some rallies would flow over to the polling stations and cause trouble for voters. But these fears were unfounded and polling day was calm and peaceful.⁸⁶ The outcome of the poll was success for 'NO' Australia-wide but a failure by eight thousand votes in Tasmania.⁸⁷

No sooner had the Anti-Conscription Leagues disbanded and life returned to normal than rumour of a new referendum were to be heard. Calls were made to reform the League to get plans for the new campaign under way.⁸⁸ When the Prime Minister finally announced on November 6th the date of the poll, the Anti-Conscriptionists complained bitterly that they had been put at a disadvantage by the wording of the question and by the day and other details of the poll. The polls were to close only three days after the announcement of the referendum, disfranchising many voters particularly those in the country where polls would close before news of the referendum reached the area. The poll was to be taken on a

84. *The Mercury*, 27.10.16.

85. *Police Gazette, Tasmania*, October 20, 1916, A.O.T.:POL 349.

86. *The Mercury*, 30.10.16.

87. *Ibid.*

88. *The Daily Post*, 1.7.17.

Thursday, many workers would have trouble getting to booths to vote. The question did not include the word conscription seen by many as a deception by the government to get the 'YES' they sought. Children of parents born in alien countries were also to be prevented from voting.⁸⁹ These arguments seemed to add to the strength of the 'NO' case this time.

The campaign was again directed by Robert Cosgrove for the Anti-Conscription Executive. The arguments were much the same as before : "conscription was morally wrong : it was not right to force another man to give his life; compulsion was wanted for civil reasons rather than military, to suppress the workers and enforce repressive economic conditions; the government could not be trusted with such enormous power".⁹⁰ To these arguments were added the concern about the food shortages being experienced in England and by the troops, and the need to use the space available on limited shipping for food rather than for troops.⁹¹

Some new faces appeared to campaign for the 'NO' side this referendum. Vida Goldstein from Victoria spoke at several lively meetings, Anstey again toured the West and North West Coasts as well as the two cities. Reverend A.B. Prowse, Presbyterian Minister from Zeehan and Queenstown became the only Tasmanian clergyman to sign a widely publicised manifesto "Conscription and Christianity".⁹² The Society of Friends took a more visible stand on this referendum. They published a minute which drew some comment from the press where they had been held with respect. Part of this minute read "Each man must

89. *The Daily Post*, 13, 22 and 28.11.1917.

90. Lake, *Tasmania and the first World War*, p.220.

91. *The Daily Post*, 19.11.17.

92. Hodgman, *op.cit.*, p.37.

follow the light as, in his own conscience, it leads him, whether to the trenches or to the conscientious objectors prison. We cannot take part in war or in any of the preparations which lead up to it. What we ourselves cannot do, we cannot vote to compel others to do."⁹³

Three factors were to help the 'NO' vote in this referendum : the Catholic vote, the attitude of the returned soldiers and the validity of Hughes' figures, on the number of troops required. Attacks by *The Mercury* on Dr. Mannix's campaign in Victoria to sway Catholics to vote 'NO' seemed to do more harm than good, many Catholics had sympathy with Mannix. Returned soldiers and letters from the front seemed to deny the need for reinforcements and a claim was made that the increased troop numbers were to form a seventh division.⁹⁴ The campaign was more violent than the previous one. Rallies were more rowdy than before, interjection more frequent and scuffles more common. The 'NO' headquarters was the subject of vandalism with hoardings torn down and volleys of rotten eggs being thrown at the door.⁹⁵ Once again appeals were made to the woman voter largely by those from the 'YES' side, the Prime Minister and Broinowski of *The Mercury* using the press for this purpose and a public meeting for women was held.⁹⁶ The conscriptionists appeared convinced that the anti-conscription movement was little more than an Irish Catholic conspiracy.⁹⁷ This stirred up the

93. *The Daily Post*, 10.12.17.

94. Hodgman, *op.cit.*, p.39.

95. *The Mercury*, 28.11.17.

96. *Ibid.*, 12, 18 and 20.12.17.

97. Lake, *op.cit.*, p.224.

deep resentment for Irish Catholics held in the community and led to a fiery and bitter campaign. As the campaign continued a distrust grew of Hughes and his increasing use of dictatorial powers - especially censorship. There was concern that he would seek more and more powers and remove more individual rights if he succeeded with this referendum. This may have swayed some voters. The result this time was not so clear cut. The 'YES' majority in the state fell to only 379 but nearly ten thousand had failed to vote.. "It seems clear that while the anti-conscriptionists remained steadfast in their opposition and attracted some converts, thousands of people who had previously voted 'YES' stayed away from the polls. It is also possible that when Hughes disfranchised large numbers of voters, he disfranchise some of his own supporters."⁹⁸ Australia wide the 'YES' campaign failed again to gain the required votes the majority for 'NO' increased by one hundred thousand votes, this was a severe blow to the Prime Minister. The battle to prevent conscription being won the peace movement again turned its attention to anti-war activities, a quest for world peace and disarmament.

The conscription issue did not die with the loss of the referendum in 1917. The compulsory military training of boys and young men was still in force. The Peace Alliance, Hobart Branch; Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; the Society of Friends and the Australian Freedom League all continued to campaign against such training. These groups all produced and distributed pamphlets between 1919 and 1939; all directed at parents in the hope they would protest to the government.⁹⁹

98. *Ibid.*, p.232.

99. Copies of these pamphlets are at the Launceston Local History Room in a "*Conscription*" folder.

With the Establishment of the League of Nations in 1919 those Peace Groups whose main aim had been the promotion of arbitration and disarmament no longer had a purpose and tended to fade from view, they were replaced by League of Nations Unions in all states. The L.N.U. in Tasmania was a group with influential members including Edward Dwyer-Gray. The membership reached five hundred in 1929. Activities included those of educating the young at schools, through Junior League of Nations, of the merits of world peace and disarmament.

The women's groups provided a significant source of membership, most sought representation at the L.N.U. A Launceston branch was established in 1929.¹⁰⁰ Once this branch was established a state organisation was formed with a new constitution. The first state conference was held on 1st March 1930, the first Federal Conference was held 30th June 1930. The methods used by the L.N.U. to spread its message to the public were through public meetings and debates on particular aspects of disarmament, press reports of these and other meetings and of conferences and by the use of radio; 7ZL provided twenty minutes once a month for the use of the L.N.U. for discussion and speakers on topics of their own choosing.¹⁰¹

A highlight of the work of the L.N.U. was a successful conference held in March 1934 to which all Tasmanian churches and societies were invited to send delegates to discuss the whole question of furthering the cause of disarmament. Fifty three societies sent delegates. It passed a resolution which sought "to create a public opinion strong enough to

100. League of Nations Union, *Minutes*. 16.8.29:A.O.T:NS/1139.

101. *Ibid*, 9.3.31.

overthrow all evil forces that delay disarmament and frustrate efforts towards peace".¹⁰² This conference received wide press coverage and copies of the resolutions were sent to the Prime Minister, all State Premiers and all branches of the L.N.U. in Australia, London and Geneva.

By 1935 there was growing concern about the role of the League of Nations as a peace broker this led the executive to pass a resolution expressing its concern on the matter. It read : "That this Tasmanian section of the Australian League of Nations protests against the reported terms for the settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, and is of opinion that if the League, instead of guarding the peace, is transformed into a bureau for awarding territories and premiums to aggressor nations, it would mean the complete destruction of the League and a termination of all reliance upon collective security."¹⁰³ This resolution was widely reported.

Following the Brussels Peace Congress in 1936 the L.N.U. decided that in Tasmania an attempt should be made to form a co-ordinating committee, representative of all bodies working for peace, to organise a peace campaign to follow the initiatives of the Brussels Conference but that each group retain its individuality and work towards its own ideals.¹⁰⁴ This committee became the local branch of the International Peace Campaign. The concern with this group was that it had strong communist links which were not favoured by the conservative elements of the L.N.U. The executive had been shrewd by suggesting such a move to

102. L.N.U., *Annual Report*, 4.12.34.

103. L.N.U., *Executive Minutes*, 16.12.35.

104. *Ibid*, 10.2.37.

keep the autonomy of all groups involved. Each of these groups sent delegates to the All-Australian Peace Conference which was held in September 1937. The exception being the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, this group had withdrawn from the IPC because of its disagreement with use of arms as a threat to aggressor nations. Australian W.I.L.P.F. wished the entire world to be disarmed and would not countenance the use of military sanctions in the name of collective security.¹⁰⁵

As the world situation began to progressively deteriorate the L.N.U. began to be affected by a community disillusionment with the League of Nations, it began to lose members and those remaining became more pessimistic of the future. The standing of the L.N.U. in the community declined and was rarely reported in the press. By 1938 the Annual Conference passed a boycott of Japanese goods because of its aggression in China. In 1939 with the approach of war perilously close the group concerned itself with the issue of supply of arms to Germany by British firms. A letter was sent to the Prime Minister with a resolution to this effect and requesting it to be forwarded to the British Prime Minister.¹⁰⁶ This group continued to exist in a minor way throughout the war - seeking peace, as soon as possible, and taking up the issue of care of war refugees. Although membership declined, fifty seven people still attended the 1944 annual meeting.¹⁰⁷ The members of the L.N.U. were not pacifists, they had accepted that in the case of fascism and in particular, Hitler, that war was necessary to curtail aggression.

105. C.A. Rasmussen, *Defending the bad against the worse* (Melbourne, 1984), p.293.

106. L.N.U., *Executive Minutes*, 16.8.39.

107. L.N.U., *Minutes of Annual Meeting*, 24.4.44.

The Society of Friends was also active between the wars. Its members belonged individually to many of the peace groups; particularly W.I.L.P.F., A.P.A. and L.N.U. holding some of the leading positions. Issues concerning the Quakers included compulsory military training and help and assistance for war victims and refugees. "The Friends War Victims' Relief Committee of the first World War was inaugurated in 1920 and became the outstanding feature of the Australian Friends for the next few years."¹⁰⁸ Ruth Erskine of the Hobart meeting was responsible for the organisation of this work.

Another active group was W.I.L.P.F. Formed as the Sisterhood of International Peace it had changed its name in 1920 becoming the Australian Branch of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. Eleanor Moore of the Melbourne Branch remained leader of this group. She undertook a national tour in 1931, the purpose being to get as many signatures as possible from Australia for a world-wide Disarmament Declaration. This Declaration was to be presented at the 1932 Geneva Conference for reduction and limitation of armaments. The Declaration was circulated through forty countries in eighteen different languages and was signed by over eight million men and women; 118,000 of them were Australian.¹⁰⁹ In Tasmania W.I.L.P.F. was responsible for getting as many signatures as possible. But in effect all the peace groups worked together closely in support of this project. The Hobart Branch of the World Disarmament Movement invited Eleanor Moore to visit in August, her visit was co-ordinated by W.I.L.P.F. and she spoke to the people of Hobart on four occasions. The speakers at the Mayor's

108. C. Stevenson, *With unhurried pace* (Melbourne, 1973), p.33.

109. E. Moore, *The quest for peace* (Melbourne, 1948), p.89.

reception included : Mrs. T. Murdoch from W.I.L.P.F., Mrs. E.A. Waterworth from the Pan Pacific Union; Mr. E.E. Unwin from the World Disarmament Movement and Mr. W.F.D. Butler from the L.N.U.¹¹⁰ Miss Moore also spoke to luncheon meetings of the L.N.U. and Hobart Rotary and at an evening meeting at the Town Hall to celebrate the third anniversary of the signing of the Kellogg Peace Pact. This overcrowded meeting was organised by the World Disarmament Movement and it passed a resolution of support for the Geneva Disarmament Conference. Other speakers represented the government and opposition; the L.N.U.; Rotary; the Anglican Synod and the Society of Friends.¹¹¹ The entire visit of Miss Moore was well reported in the press and this helped enormously with the task of gathering signatures for the Disarmament Declaration. Having had great success in this area the World Disarmament Movement seemed to lose its way and had disappeared by 1934.

Several small groups still existed in Hobart, these included the Peace Society and the Pan-Pacific Women's Union. The Peace Society had weathered the storms of war and conscription and continued to educate in a small way on the merits of peace. Its numbers had been so low that it was forced to suspend operations in 1935. By 1937 it had regrouped and again took part in the peace movement particularly on the pacifist side. Having a predominate Quaker membership it did not accept the need for war to control fascism. It favoured the use of arbitration to prevent war. The Pan-Pacific Women's Union was formed in 1928 to study the Pacific peoples and commence a dialogue with them. It was concerned with maintaining peace in the area and later with atomic testing in the islands. Both groups had delegates on the executive of the L.N.U.

110. *The Mercury*, 25.8.31.

111. *Ibid.*, 28.8.31.

Out of Hobart the L.N.U. was the only peace organisation to exist and this was not continuous. The Launceston Branch had several periods of inactivity. E.M. Higgins attempted to stir some action into the northern scene but he had little success. He found very few people interested in politics and even fewer in foreign policy. His attempts to form a branch of the Peace Council were also unsuccessful.¹¹² This disinterest in foreign affairs may account for the absence of the Movement against War and Fascism (M.A.W.F.) from Tasmania. This group was the most active anti-war group in Australia in the thirties but it had no membership in Tasmania. It claimed to have affiliation nationally with groups in Tasmania as information of its activities was available but there was insufficient interest in its policies for the formation of a local branch. Affiliates with groups with branches in Tasmania included W.I.L.P.F., W.C.T.U. and Society of Friends. Some caution must be given as to the validity of claims of affiliation. Some delegates to M.A.W.F. meetings were not official representatives of their groups.¹¹³ "The W.I.L.P.F. stated it was affiliating because it wished to put an end to exploitation in society, and the exploitation that occurred on the battlefield was subsumed under this goal."¹¹⁴ Although not successful in Tasmania M.A.W.F. did succeed in getting a local branch of the International Peace Campaign (I.P.C.) established in Tasmania. The M.A.W.F. was the organiser and founder of I.P.C. in Australia.¹¹⁵

112. M. Roe, 'E.M. Higgins, A Marxist in Tasmania', *Labour History* No.32 (May 1977), pp.11-26.

113. D. Rose, 'The Movement Against War and Fascism, 1933-1939', *Labour History* No. 38 (May 1980), pp.78-79.

114. *Ibid.*, p.79.

115. *Ibid.*, p.84.

The I.P.C. formation in Hobart in 1937 was arranged by the L.N.U. and an interim committee of W.F.D. Butler and W.A. Woods (L.N.U., Mrs. E.A. Waterworth (Women's National Party League) and Mrs. C. Oliver-Smith (Mother's Clubs) was appointed.¹¹⁶ The group had a slow start but with favourable publicity it had grown considerably, with wide and influential support notably from the ranks of the Labor Government, by the time for nominations to the Melbourne Peace Congress drew near. The list sent to organisers for acceptance was "considered the best list, in fact it far outstripped all the others".¹¹⁷ This Congress was attended by 4,000 people. The inferences that the I.P.C. was a communist front had not affected membership, "Perhaps the leftist tinge was unimportant in Tasmania. Higgins surprised that his communist background was not considered worthy of comment, put it down to the 'political agnosticism' of the place."¹¹⁸ The I.P.C. in Tasmania had relied upon Woods to give it impetus but with his health declining and the Congress over the I.P.C. "shrunk to little more than the L.N.U. under another name and as the community was more interested in 'Defence than Peace' it would be disbanded."¹¹⁹ This occurred in April 1939 when war was becoming a very real prospect for the future.

Over the twelve months preceding the war most peace workers had to choose between their pacifism and their anti-fascism, those who chose anti fascism became reluctant advocates of war and began to focus their energies on protecting their democratic institutions against militarism and

116. *The Mercury*, 6.4.37.

117. Rasmussen, *op.cit.*, p.313.

118. *Ibid.*

119. *Ibid*, p.314.

trying to preserve a moral advantage against the aggressor nations. Some chose pacifism and the pacifist groups showed a strengthening under the threat of war.¹²⁰ For most the choice was not difficult as Katherine Susannah Pritchard wrote "Pacifism, pure and simple, offers no obstacle to fascist aggression."¹²¹ For a great many 'pacifists' of the between-the-war years the idea of peace without freedom or justice had become untenable. In the course of 1939 a choice had to be made and they chose the lesser of two evils. It was a choice almost everyone in Australia had to confront for there were few who were genuinely enthusiastic for war - the wounds of 1914-18 were deep and barely-healed.¹²²

The Quaker Peace Committee and W.I.L.P.F. were active during the war in a small way. They continued to urge the government to stop conscription into the forces. And following the struggles of the first World War, surprisingly, conscientious objectors or 'shirkers' were not criticised with the same degree of enthusiasm. Some C.O.s were released from active service because of religious beliefs.¹²³ More concern was generated for the terms of surrender and peace negotiations. Both the Quakers and W.I.L.P.F. were against the "unconditional surrender" being sought by the allies and campaigned strongly for changes to these peace negotiations. The nuclear solution was of great concern to them and they protested accordingly by letters and petitions to government.

120. Rasmussen, *op.cit.*, p.413.

121. *Ibid.*

122. *Ibid.*, p.419.

123. P. Wagg. *Tasmanian attitudes towards Japan during the Pacific War* (Hobart 1975), p.14.

During the war women, once again expected to undertake men's work and responsibilities, became aware that they did not enjoy the same rights as the men they replaced. In August 1942 the United Associations of Women (U.A.) called a meeting to plan an Australia-wide conference to consider the problems of women under war conditions and to prepare a charter of aims for women to work for in peace. The first Australian Women's Charter (A.W.C.) Conference was held in Sydney in November 1943. The Conference was enormously successful, all states were represented with delegates from 91 women's organisations of wide ranging political and social nature. Among other things "the Charter demanded women representative in the peace negotiations and on all government decision making bodies".¹²⁴ A second Charter Conference in 1946 was not as successful because the taint of communist influence had deterred the majority of conservative women's groups from participating.

This fear of communist influence affected many groups throughout the post-war years. Groups that had not feared to associate with the leftist groups prior to the war were extremely careful of their affiliations after the war. The L.N.U. and W.I.L.P.F. in Tasmania were particularly concerned and withdrew from the groups they had previously associated with. The Australian Peace Council (A.P.C.) Conferences of 1950, 1953, 1956, 1959 and 1964 had little Tasmanian representation for this reason. The only groups from Tasmania to be represented were the Launceston Peace Quest Form; a Methodist based pacifist group; and local

124. P. Ranald, 'Women's organisations and the issue of communism' in A. Curthoys and J. Merritt (ed.), *Better dead than red* (Sydney 1986), p.47.

representatives of the A.P.C. and the Australian Assembly of Peace; both pacifist groups.¹²⁵ Some groups became divided over the political leaning of affiliated groups W.I.L.P.F. nationally suffered greatly from this, but little is known of what happened in Tasmania. Lesley Murdoch left W.I.L.P.F. when this organisation came increasingly under Communist influence.¹²⁶ She was probably not alone in this and the post-war decline of W.I.L.P.F. could have been because of this. W.I.L.P.F. reformed in 1963. The Pan-Pacific Women's Union suffered the same fate. It reappeared in 1952 as the Pan-Pacific and South-East Asia Women's Association (Tasmania Branch). The aim of this group was "to foster and strengthen the bonds of peace among Pacific peoples by promoting a better understanding and friendship among the women of all Pacific countries."¹²⁷ Many prominent women could be found among its members, and as a branch of an international organisation, conferences were held on a regular basis with Tasmanian delegates attending. Another women's group to appear prior to the Vietnam War was the Union of Australian Women, Tasmanian Section. This group appeared in 1960 and was well known as a communist front for housewives. This group was responsible for the Save Our Sons group of the Vietnam years.

After nineteen years of relative quiet on the Tasmanian peace scene with involvement of very few but the most dedicated pacifists the actions of the Federal government in 1964 changed all this. Peace groups hereafter contained a much broader range of society from students to the very old and included pacifists and pacifists concerned both with

125. R. Summy. Letter to author, 24.8.93.

126. H. Murdoch. *Lesley Murdoch and her life in Hobart* (Hobart, n.d.), p.13.

127. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac*, (1960).

conscription and with the war itself in Vietnam. The face of the peace movement changed dramatically and it has kept a lot of these new elements to this day.

In 1964 the government introduced a National Service scheme which was different from previous conscription schemes. It included the adoption of a lottery system; drawing birthdates of draftees; two years full time Army service with the conscripts being conscripted into the Regular Army. In 1965 the Defence Act was amended to allow these conscripts to fight abroad without the restriction of a territorial limit.¹²⁸ The government claimed the conscripts were needed because "general regional insecurity required a larger force than that existing"¹²⁹ and was not due to the American involvement in Vietnam. Many were sceptical of the governments intentions and were justified in their thinking when troops were sent to Vietnam in 1965. First responses to these events were from the established peace groups with regard to protection from conscription for their members. The Quakers being the most active in this area in Tasmania, offering advice to conscientious objectors.

The students at the University of Tasmania were made aware of the situation in Vietnam through *Togatus* the student newspaper. In mid-year the paper devoted a double-page spread and the editorial to the war, it included opinions from four spokesmen representing the Labor Party, Liberal Party, Communist Party and a South Vietnamese student.¹³⁰ This

128. G.A. Withers 'Has conscription a future?' *The Australian Quarterly* Vol.44, No.1 (March, 1972), p.13.

129. *Ibid.*

130. *Togatus*, 15.6.65.

approach was fairly typical of that taken by the paper over the war period, attempting to present opinion from both sides of the political spectrum. The Students Representative Council continued this policy when it held Teach-Ins and debates on the war, making sure speakers represented both sides of the argument. Apart from those students who were members of Students for a Democratic Society (S.D.S.) very few were actively involved in the anti-conscription/anti-war movement in the early years of the Vietnam War. The S.D.S. members were largely concerned with resistance to the call-up and assisting those who did not wish to register for the ballot. By the time of the Moratoriums of 1970 many more students had become informed of the issues of conscription and the war, their numbers made up a large proportion of the marches and of its opponents. Surveys of students found : in 1966 that there was "a slight majority support of Australia in Vietnam, while for conscription ... a slight majority opposing it",¹³¹ in 1967 50% of students and 60% of staff were opposed to conscription and 75% of staff and 41% of students were opposed to Australia's role in Vietnam.¹³² These survey results suggest that the student groups were more concerned with the anti-conscription side of the peace movement and as a result concentrated their efforts on draft resistance activities. These included sit down protests against the National Service Act inside the Department of Labour and National Service; marches in protest of the provisions of the Crimes Act in regard to prosecution of draft resisters; distribution of leaflets and the Moratorium Marches themselves.¹³³

131. *Togatus*, 8.9.66.

132. *Ibid.*, 16.10.67.

133. B. Rish, *The Tasmania University Union 1899-1972* (Hobart, 1981), pp.61-63.

In the general community a myriad of groups appeared during the eight years of the Vietnam crisis. Membership of groups was not mutually exclusive and some groups changed names or dissolved to make way for a new group. Some groups were single issue organisations concerned with only one aspect of the conflict, for instance the Conscientious Objectors Advisory Group; while other groups were concerned with all aspects of the conflict and its solution, for instance W.I.L.P.F.; and other groups became involved through participation in the Moratorium, for instance the A.L.P. and trade unions.

W.I.L.P.F. which had only been reformed in 1963 was extremely active in all aspects of the movement. Members took part in vigils, rallies, marches and the Moratorium but also in a less visible way : they raised money through art exhibitions, cake stalls and so on to send to war victims in Vietnam; they wrote to the Prime Minister, the President of the United States, local politicians and the press seeking withdrawal of troops and the stopping of conscription; they organised petitions and gathered signatures in support of these causes; they produced and distributed pamphlets and car stickers to sell their messages to the public; they supported other peace groups in their actions and offered assistance with the organisation of the Moratorium and other activities of these groups.¹³⁴ Although only a small group, never numbering more than fifty members, these ladies were very active and tireless in their efforts for the peace movement. Their names appear on the membership and executive lists of many of the other groups, some ladies (Mrs. Jean Perkins and Mrs. Bronwen Meredith) were members of four or more groups, simultaneously.¹³⁵

134. For details of these activities see *The Minutes of W.I.L.P.F.*, 1965-1972, A.O.T.:NS\1363.

135. See Chapter 4 for more details.

One of the first anti-war groups to be set up in Hobart was the Vietnam Action Campaign which was in existence in time for Hiroshima Day remembrance in August 1965. This group sought the total and immediate withdrawal of troops from Vietnam. It changed its name many times. In 1966 it became the Vietnam Action Group (V.A.G.), by 1967 the group changed its name to the Vietnam Study Group. In 1970 the name changed again to Campaign for Peace in Vietnam, this name lasted only three months as the group disbanded to support the Moratorium Campaign. When the group reformed in March 1972 it was under a new name and new aims as the war was nearly over; troops had been withdrawn and by year end conscription had ceased. The group was now called Peace Action Campaign and it turned its attention to nuclear disarmament and other global issues for peace. The V.A.G. had branches in Launceston and Burnie and its inaugural meeting attracted twenty five members. By 1967 there was also a University group. Women occupied four of the committee places and its affiliates included the Society of Friends, W.I.L.P.F. and the Union of Australian Women. V.A.G. undertook much the same type of programme as W.I.L.P.F.; holding vigils and Teach-Ins; organising and distributing pamphlets by letterboxing and manning shopping centres; they offered financial support to Conscientious Objectors and organised speakers from the mainland (Jean McLean and Jim Cairns) to speak at public meetings and at the University.¹³⁶ Name changing was also a feature of this group, the Launceston Action Group later changed its name to become Conscience on Vietnam Committee. This group held several successful rallies in Launceston but support in the north was never large, a march of fifty supporters was considered successful.¹³⁷

136. For details of these activities see *V.A.G. Minutes* of 1967-70, A.O.T.:N.S. 683/5.

137. Interview with Jean Hearn, 2.9.93.

The Society of Friends as would be expected joined the campaign against both conscription and the war in Vietnam. In a press statement the 1968 Yearly Meeting wrote "we feel a sense of shame that we and our fellow Christians have so failed to stir the conscience of the Australian people that our young men are still being compelled by law to train to kill other human beings".¹³⁸ Many members joined the other peace groups being set up in Hobart in response to the war. These were individual responses and not as official delegates of the Society. One member Ronald Darvell, set up the Conscientious Objectors Advisory Committee (C.O.A.C.) in March 1966. He was supported by the Society in these endeavours. This Committee offered support and advice to young men seeking to refuse the 'call-up' on the grounds of their being a conscientious objector.

A more radical group than C.O.A.C.. was established in 1967. The Draft Resistance Union (D.R.U.) was set up by the Vietnam Action Campaign nationally. In Hobart it shared the same address as the Peace Action Campaign, so links can be presumed to have existed between these groups. The D.R.U. staged 'sit-ins', rallies and organised petitions to protest the draft. In later years activities included writing 'falsies'; filling in false registration papers; and also in burning draft cards.¹³⁹ Some of these actions resulted in the arrest of participants, often the more radical students who also joined groups away from the University.¹⁴⁰

By the summer of 1969 National organisations of protests were being formed. The first of these was against conscription and the students

138. *The Australian Friend* (February, 1968), p.3.

139. Notices of these activities are held in the *Tasmaniana Collection* : S.L.T.

140. Rish, *op.cit.*, p.61.

were the largest group of participants, they held public meetings and distributed leaflets. In Launceston the Conscience on Vietnam Committee organised the campaign. Following this the Moratorium Campaign was planned. It aimed to convert the anti-war movement into a public phenomenon by inspiring thousands to demonstrate support by marching in peaceful, non-violent rallies, around Australia on May 8th, 1970. The campaign sought the immediate withdrawal of Australian and foreign troops from Vietnam and the immediate repeal of the National Service Act. The organisers hoped that the mass participation of ordinary Australians would influence the government to change its policies.

In Tasmania the Moratorium was planned by the Tasmanian Vietnam Moratorium Campaign (T.V.M.C.). Its inaugural meeting was held on 8th March 1970 and was chaired by Dr. Michael Roe. The Committee formed from this meeting had Neil Batt as Chairman and Richard Meredith as Secretary and Jean Hearn was the Launceston contact.¹⁴¹ Although this group co-ordinated the Moratorium activities in Tasmania it was not the only group involved; four other groups appear prominently on materials distributed in connection with the Moratoriums : Tasmanian Moratorium Committee; Vietnam Moratorium Campaign; Moratorium Industrial Committee and Trade Union Moratorium Committee. These groups all used the same postal address.¹⁴²

The Moratorium Campaign in Tasmania consisted of four major rallies; two in 1970 and one in each of 1971 and 1972. The first of these

141. T.V.M.C. *Minutes of Inaugural Meeting*, 8th March 1970, Tasmaniana Collection

142. Pamphlets and notices of these groups are kept in *Tasmaniana Collection* : SLT.

was by far the most successful. Between 2 and 3 thousand people marched; 1200 of these were students - the highest proportion in Australia. They marched from the University into the city, around the city block, stopping at the Commonwealth Bank corner where speakers, Professor Roebuck, Senator O'Byrne and Father Corrigan, addressed the gathering, then they continued on to the City Hall.¹⁴³ This was the most peaceful of the Moratoriums.

By holding the Moratorium on the same day around Australia the maximum effectiveness of it, as a pressure group to change government policy, was clearly obvious. "It mobilised thousands of Australians who had never before exercised their political convictions outside the privacy of the polling booth, gave new legitimacy to street demonstrations and organised protest as a means of expressing political dissent."¹⁴⁴

Although the Moratorium Campaign was organised by the T.V.M.C. this group consisted of representatives of all the peace and anti-conscription groups, the Labor Party, Trade Unions, Church groups, Communist Party as well as students from both the University and schools. It is quite an amazing feat that such differing groups could work together to produce such a peaceful rally without any problems. Many groups made compromises to work with the groups involved, but the outcome was more important than the individual needs of the groups involved. The stress on non-violence was probably the link which held the groups together. But only the first Moratorium would be free of violence.

143. For differing reports of the march see *The Mercury*, 9.5.70 and *The Tribune*, 16.9.70.

144. Gilbert and Jordens, *Traditions of Dissent*, p.357.

Support for the Moratoriums by the established churches varied, most did not make official announcements but left the decision of whether to participate up to individuals. The Methodist Church reminded members of their appeal to the Australian government regarding Vietnam and the repeal of the National Service Act but would not go so far as to recommend participation in the Moratorium.¹⁴⁵ The Anglican Church had no official policy but Retired Bishop Cranswick offered a lead for others to follow; he was active on the executive of the T.V.M.C. The Roman Catholic Church was not in support of the Moratorium but when one of its Hobart priests, Father Corrigan was suspended for his active support of the movement he also offered a lead for other Catholics to follow, and many did.

The Trade Union Movement was also divided in its support of the Moratorium movement. The secretary of the Tasmanian Trades and Labour Council (T.T.L.C.), Brian Harradine, was very hostile to the Moratorium. He declared that it was official trade union policy not to become involved in political issues and urged all unions affiliated to the T.T.L.C. to 'reject attempts being made to ... pervert the trade union movement and embroil it in divisive issues'. He attacked Neil Batt, a Labor M.H.A. and a prominent Moratorium organiser, for his 'gross political interference in the affairs of the trade union movement' and debated the protest with him on television.¹⁴⁶ Despite Harradine's protests many unions did support the Moratorium in Tasmania, Saunders

145. See memo to this effect held in *Tasmaniana Collection* : SLT.

146. M.J. Saunders 'Trade Unions and Vietnam', *Labour History* No. 43 (November 1982), p.75.

lists 19 supportive unions.¹⁴⁷ The Waterside Workers were even prepared to be docked pay as the march and rally exceeded their lunch break, making them an hour late back to work.¹⁴⁸

The second and subsequent Moratoriums were more violent, fraught with problems amongst organisers, and with police confrontation and did not draw as much support from the public. The threat of violence was in response to police aggravation and to opposition groups causing confrontation. The police in Hobart were to blame because they insisted there be changes in the route of the rally - changes which would bring marchers into direct contact with pro-Vietnam groups, a situation in which it would be difficult to prevent conflict between the groups. The organisers of the T.V.M.C. split over whether to follow police instructions and thereby risk violence or to disobey police instructions and follow the previous safer route. The Friends felt that it was important that they participate in the preparations to ensure that the non-violent character of the demonstrations be maintained.¹⁴⁹ Neil Batt resigned as Chairman because he could not countenance the act of civil disobedience planned by the refusal to follow police directives. Supporters of the decision to disobey police instructions felt the need for a non-violent march and rally outweighed the need to follow police orders. The second Moratorium took place on 18th September 1970. Father Corrigan led 800 marchers from the University into the city, fearing the worst, marchers were advised not to provoke any violence. Apart from two arrests of pro-

147. *Ibid.*, pp.81-82.

148. *The Mercury*, 9.5.70.

149. *The Australian Friend* (August 1970), p.3.

Vietnam supporters the Moratorium caused no problems, Neil Batt joining the march in Collins Street.¹⁵⁰ Launceston held a march the next day, this was described as a 'stroll in the sun'.¹⁵¹

The third Moratorium had problems during the march itself, a break away group defied police instructions to march to Franklin Square, choosing instead to march around the city block. The problem was really with the police and the Transport Commissioner, who, the T.V.M.C. claimed, had given permission for the march to go around the city block but had later changed their minds. The Moratorium separated when 100 moderates followed Bishop Cranswick as he chose to follow the police directive to go straight to Franklin Square thus keeping with the policy of non-violence, the others chose a path of civil disobedience.¹⁵² This action led to a winding down of the T.V.M.C.'s activities and it was suspended in December 1971; its activities were taken over by the P.A.C. or the soon to be formed Association for International Co-operation and Disarmament (A.I.C.D.).¹⁵³ The P.A.C. organised the 1972 Moratorium in April, this was a low key affair attended by only 200 participants who held a rally in Franklin Square then marched to the Town Hall for a forum.¹⁵⁴ This group was not as moderate as the T.V.M.C. and as a result lost much of the support of the public, and as the War seemed to be drawing to a close the need for Moratoriums had passed.

150. *The Mercury*, 19.9.70.

151. *The Mercury*, 21.9.70.

152. *The Mercury*, 1.7.71.

153. For details see *Minutes of T.V.M.C.*, 1971, A.O.T.:NS\668.

154. *The Mercury*, 22.4.72.

With the end of the Moratorium campaign, the end of the Vietnam War and the finish of conscription, the peace movement broke down into the small groups which had existed prior to the crisis. Many of these small groups still exist today, these groups have largely concerned themselves with the issues of nuclear warfare and armaments and human rights issues in the world trouble spots while generally supporting the United Nations as world peace keeper. But the success of the Moratorium movement lies in the fact that it enlightened a whole generation to the power of mass protest as a means of influencing government. The 'demonstration' was to become a common and effective means of expressing opposition to government policies. The Moratorium supporters of the seventies may have been the "Save the Franklin" supporters of the eighties.¹⁵⁵ The organisers were certainly aware of the power of mass support and used it frequently to influence the public to join their movement.

Since the Vietnam days the peace groups have reverted to the small groups of letter writers who occasionally venture in to the public eye by holding Vigils of Remembrance on Hiroshima Day or for the extremists - colourful protests, Greenpeace style, against visiting nuclear powered and armed warships to then quietly retire until the next visit. But these groups are the core of the peace movement. For they will be there, to answer the call at the time of the next crisis, they will organise the general public, once aroused, to join them in the campaign, as they have done since early this century. This is the strength of the movement, it has a core of dedicated believers who can harness the public to join them in their

155. J. Hinton, *Ideology and representation* (Hobart, 1983), p.93. He found only a quarter of the respondents he surveyed claimed to have been influenced by the anti-Vietnam protests in their joining the environmental movement.

campaigns, the organisational machinery is on standby waiting to leap into action in a moments notice in response to a call for help. The biggest problem which besets the current peace groups in Tasmania is the increasing age of these stalwarts and the inability of the groups to attract new, young members. The radical groups do not seem to have the same problem as they are seen to be active once or twice a year, the pacifist groups whose activities are less public, have a greater problem of attracting new members. This problem must be overcome if the peace movement is to continue in Tasmania.

Chapter 2 : Women and the Peace Movement during World War I

Unlike their mainland counterparts, the women of Tasmania were not prominent in the conscription campaigns of 1916 and 1917. This is true of both sides of the debate. Many reasons can be advanced for this, the most likely being that few Tasmanian women had the confidence to be politically active in these times when the country called for loyalty and support. Those in favour of conscription were happy to support the men in their campaign, those opposed had not long enough had political freedom to use it now, in what would appear to be a disloyal way. Tasmania did not have a large enough population to have drawn a group of women together to oppose the referendum in large enough numbers to be noticed. Although largely unrecorded there were women who were opposed to the conscription referenda and to the war itself who worked hard to influence others to support them.

Some peace groups which had been active prior to the war and who had worked to end compulsory military training found themselves in difficult circumstances once war broke. Fearing to be disloyal and not wishing to hamper the government in its war efforts these groups went into recess for the duration of the war. The Australian Freedom League found itself in this position, it had had a strong women's auxiliary working before the war but recessed until after the war, it resumed its activities in 1919 and was still protesting compulsory military training well into the 1920s. The Hobart Peace Society also declined during the war, although in existence it was inactive and was largely a 'Friends' group of pacifists. Some of its former pacifist members (A.J. Taylor and Emily Dobson) had left to join the Conscription Committee, deciding that as war had been declared they felt obliged to support government policies fully.

More on Mrs. Dobson later. These people had put loyalty to country before personal beliefs. The true pacifists, the Quakers, could not follow these leads. They put their religious beliefs first, no matter how unpopular this may have made them to the rest of society. Mrs. Francis Mather continued to act as Secretary of the Hobart Peace Society for the duration of the war. Others were noted more out of the state than within for their work. Ruth Erskine "was a forceful opponent of conscription in Australia, so much so that her name appeared in history books as one of its leading antagonists".¹⁵⁶ She was also involved with the Friends War Victims Relief Committee as were many of the Quaker women.

The Women's organisations which prior to the war had been concerned with peace and with compulsory military training became surprisingly quiet on the subject once war began. The Women's Christian Temperance Union, probably to prevent division within the society, did not discuss the merits of war or of the referenda, instead concentrating on the welfare issues affecting women during the war and their concern at the referenda was to have bars closed for the day - this they did succeed in achieving.¹⁵⁷ The National Council of Women in spite of its having a department of Peace and International Relations could not now tolerate pacifist ideals preferring to offer loyalty to the troops abroad and to support the war effort.¹⁵⁸

156. M. and W. Oats (compiler), *Dictionary of Australian Quaker Biography* (Hobart, 1989) - More on Mrs. Erskine in Chapter 3.

157. *W.C.T.U. State Executive Minutes*, 1915-21.

158. Moore, *Quest for Peace*, p.39.

Two organisations based in Victoria did have a following in Tasmania during the war, The Women's Peace Army (W.P.A.) and The Sisterhood of International Peace (S.I.P.). S.I.P. in Hobart was the first branch established out of Melbourne in 1915. This peace group was set up by Charles Strong who believed that women working together could achieve a great deal more for world peace than women in mixed groups could achieve. Eleanor Moore was its leader and remained so until her death in 1949. The aims of the S.I.P. were : "to promote mutual knowledge of each other by women of different nations, goodwill and friendship; to study the causes, economic and moral, of war, and by every means in their power to bring the humanizing influence of women to bear on the abolition of war, and the substitution of international justice and arbitration for irrational methods of violence".¹⁵⁹

The Sisterhood worked entirely within the bounds of the traditional view of women's nature, stressing their role as educators of public morality. They avoided public criticism of the war in progress, spending their energy on preparation to ensure such conflict would never happen again, rather than impeding the activities of the government and its supporters.¹⁶⁰ Having decided not to discuss or debate the merits of the present war, "the group felt debarred from linking up with the anti-conscription movement, though it was recognised that individual members had a right to take whatever action they thought fit".¹⁶¹ Many members did just that, Emily Dobson an early member of S.I.P., still chose to support conscription and was a delegate from South Hobart on the

159. *Ibid.*

160. D. Kruse, *A Separate Peace : perspectives of gender in women's peace organisations in Victoria during World War I* (Melbourne 1985), p.57.

161. Moore, *Quest for Peace*, p.33.

National Referendum Committee. But herein lies the answer to the question posed by Marilyn Lake : Why didn't women make it to the platform during the conscription debates? The very women who may have spoken at public meetings were prevented from speaking out by S.I.P., the group which they were most likely to have joined. "Requests for representatives of the Sisterhood to speak at anti-conscription meetings were repeatedly turned down."¹⁶² The group insisted on maintaining that its express purpose was to promote peace and not to deal with issues of the present war. S.I.P., because of its strong pacifist beliefs, appealed to the women of the Society of Friends. The first secretary was a Quaker, Mary Shoobridge, whose husband campaigned against conscription.¹⁶³

The Women's Peace Army (W.P.A.) did not exist in Tasmania as a formally established group but its founder Vida Goldstein maintained contact with the women she had met through the Women's Political Association, of which she was a Victorian founder. One of these, Alicia O'Shea Petersen, was responsible for the bringing of Vida Goldstein to Hobart to speak at rallies in support of the 'NO' campaign in 1917. Established by Vida Goldstein, Adela Pankhurst and Cecilia John, in Melbourne in 1915, the W.P.A. was a much more militant peace group than S.I.P. Its platform was the abolition of conscription and militarism; that women be given equal political rights; it called for government control of the traffic of arms and general disarmament; for trade routes to be open to ships of all nations, and for international arbitration of disputes by the International Court of Justice.¹⁶⁴ Goldstein and her friends spoke

162. Kruse, *A Separate Peace*, p.74.

163. M. and W. Oats, *op.cit.*

164. P. Gowland in E. Windshuttle, *Women, class and history* (London, 1980), pp.218-9.

at many rallies in Melbourne and these were often disrupted by soldiers and others interjecting and often the results were very ugly, violent confrontations between opposing supporters. Her Tasmanian rallies were not as violent.

Goldstein also used the press as a means of informing women of the need to support the anti-conscription debate. But her journal *Woman Voter* was subject to the official censor and issues were often all but blank. Her response to these attacks was predictable "We shall continue to publish articles that plead for love instead of hatred, for arbitration instead of bloodshed, and for the observance of the commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill'. Our civil liberty and the freedom of the press are in jeopardy, and we are prepared to fight for both."¹⁶⁵

Conscription campaigns were very concerned with the female voter. Both sides were keenly aware of the votes involved and directed their campaigns at women. Women were concerned about the issue because they stood to lose - their husbands - breadwinners and their sons. The Prime Minister, Mr. Hughes, issued a manifesto "To the Women of Australia" ¹⁶⁶ in the hope that he could influence the women voters to support his call for conscription. Public meetings for women were held to reinforce his manifesto, these meetings were addressed not by women but by The Premier and Army personnel, Mrs. Dobson did propose a vote of thanks.¹⁶⁷ Another meeting urging women to vote 'YES' was held under the auspices of the Women's Council of Church Work again addressed by

165. *Woman Voter*, 16 September 1914, quoted by K. Daniels and M. Murnane, *Uphill all the way* (St. Lucia 1980), p.289.

166. *The Mercury*, 4.10.16.

167. *Ibid.*, 17.10.16.

the Premier.¹⁶⁸ Reports of 'NO' meetings imply they were for working men only.¹⁶⁹ Perhaps the anti-conscription campaigners did not feel the need for women's only meetings or were they held but not reported?

By the second referendum the Prime Minister still felt the need to direct appeals to women and he was supported by editorials to the same effect¹⁷⁰ and once again women's meetings were held in Hobart and in Launceston.¹⁷¹ The women's 'NO' campaign was supported, not from the platform, but by letter writing; *The Daily Post* obliged by publishing these. Lucy Hunter was concerned lest Australia be ruled by militarism,¹⁷² Florence Alberry objected to the call of disloyalty made against those who opposed conscription and criticised the clergy for its militaristic stance.¹⁷³ Others to write anti-conscription letters to *The Daily Post* were Mary Cerutti, Mrs. E.E. Boon, Miss L. Paton, Mrs. C. Williams and Annie Smith.¹⁷⁴

"Women in favour of conscription also worked diligently but remained very much in the background. They were confined to an auxiliary role however, brewing tea and raising funds, while their husbands formulated the arguments and mounted platforms. Women's subordinate position in society was changed very little."¹⁷⁵

168. *Ibid.*, 20.10.16.

169. *Ibid.*, 12.10.16, 27.10.16 and 28.10.16.

170. *Ibid.*, 12.12.17 and 18.12.17.

171. *Ibid.*, 20.12.17.

172. *The Daily Post*, 6.12.17.

173. *Ibid.*, 13.12.17.

174. Mason-Cox, *The changing face of women 1916-17* (Hobart 1981), ch.1.

175. Lake. *Tasmania and the first World War*, p.230.

The key women to influence the peace movement during this period were Alicia O'Shea Petersen, Emily Dobson and a visitor, Vida Goldstein. Alicia O'Shea Petersen was born at Brighton, Tasmania in 1864 and died in 1923 aged 61. She was always politically active being Tasmania's first women candidate to a federal election in 1913. She was a committed feminist interested in political reform and to these ends was a member of the Women's Political Association and the founder and life president of the Australian Women's Association.¹⁷⁶ She most likely first made contact with Vida Goldstein through the Women's Political Association and this contact continued until Vida's visit in 1917. But Mrs. Petersen had earlier peace involvements. She had been elected unanimously to the executive committee of the Peace Society in 1907,¹⁷⁷ and remained a member until at least 1913.¹⁷⁸ As a member of the Peace Society she was active in opposition to compulsory military training contributing to a discussion on a paper on the topic presented by Francis Mather.¹⁷⁹ This opposition carried over to the conscription debate, "never afraid of unpopular issues, she organised the women's anti-conscription campaign in Tasmania, appearing with Vida Goldstein during her 1917 visit".¹⁸⁰

Mrs. Emily Dobson had a long and broken commitment to the peace movement in Tasmania. She could best be described as a pacifist, basically believing in peace, but if the nation was at war then

176. Pearce, *A few viragos*, p.159.

177. *The Mercury*, 26.6.07.

178. Pearce, *op.cit.*

179. *The Mercury*, 26.6.07.

180. H. Radi ed. *200 Australian Women* (Broadway, N.S.W., 1988), p.79.

the peace ideals were subjugated by the need to support the country in its struggle to regain peace. To her, war could be justified. Emily Dobson was born in 1843 living to a ripe old age of 91. She married Henry, future Premier, in 1868 and was responsible for establishing many of the new societies introduced into Tasmania from the 1890's.¹⁸¹ It was through her Presidency of the National Council of Women that she became involved with Charles Strong through his visit to Hobart in 1907 to set up a Peace Society.¹⁸² Mrs Dobson chaired the public meeting at which Dr. Strong spoke and she was elected to the implementing committee to establish the Peace Society.¹⁸³ Later, as Vice-President of the Society, she also spoke on the topic of compulsory military training in response to Francis Mather's paper.¹⁸⁴ How long Mrs. Dobson remained with the Peace Society is not known but as she did not leave other organisations to which she belonged it could be assumed that she remained a member until it folded late in the war. She was however associated with the Sisterhood for International Peace in its early years from 1915 onwards.¹⁸⁵ But at the same time she was involved with the Referenda campaigns in support of conscription. Having spoken out against compulsory military training it must be assumed that her support lay for the support of the war effort and not in support of compulsory service. She was elected to the South Hobart sub-committee of the National Referenda Council in 1916 and

181. Pearce, *op.cit.*, p.160.

182. National Council of Women *Minutes of Executive Meeting*, 28.1.07.

183. *The Mercury*, 2.3.07.

184. *Ibid.*, 26.6.07.

185. Moore, *The Quest for Peace*, p.149.

again in 1917 and was on the platform at the women's meetings held by that Council.¹⁸⁶ After the war she rejoined the peace movement proper being a member of W.I.L.P.F. when it was established in 1920 from the remnants of S.I.P.¹⁸⁷ Mrs. Dobson was also a founding member and Vice-President of the League of Nations Union from 1926 until she resigned due to ill health in 1931. She died in 1934.

Vida Goldstein was an important visitor to Tasmania during the referendum campaign of 1917. Along with Frank Anstey she was the only other visitor to speak at anti-conscription rallies in Tasmania. As a women, being the only women speaker on either side was significant, what she had to say was considered worth the trip and therefore she was listened to. In contrast to her Melbourne rallies she received a fair hearing with only small amounts of interjection. At the conclusion of her talk she allowed Mr. A.J. Taylor to speak in reply, this was considered very sporting indeed, she was duly thanked for this opportunity.¹⁸⁸ Her visit was well reported in both papers,¹⁸⁹ her hour long address was concerned with the war being "in the interests of capitalism" and she said "that conscription was not wanted for military purposes but for industrial purposes".¹⁹⁰ This was well received by the predominantly trade union audience. Vida's background was in the suffrage movement so she was well used to political campaigning, she went into the Peace Movement

186. *The Mercury*, 2.10.16 and 16.10.16.

187. Moore, *op.cit.*, p.149.

188. *The Mercury*, 10.12.17.

189. *Ibid.* and *The Daily Post*, 11 and 19.12.17.

190. *The Mercury*, 10.12.17.

when she established the Women's Peace Army in 1915 after the Women's Political Association quarrelled over her increasingly pacifist stance in that body. The Women's Peace Army did not long survive the war. Vida and the other co-founders went to Europe after the war and in their absence the W.P.A. declined. When W.I.L.P.F. was established worldwide in 1920 Australia chose S.I.P. to be its branch and changed its name. The radical base of W.P.A. would not have sat comfortably in W.I.L.P.F. in any case. Vida's visit to Tasmania is important to the peace movement here in that it offered fresh ideas and new vigour to the movement. Being well received here by a male audience gave strength to the fledgling women's movement and offered local women incentive to follow in her footsteps. In the near future women would reach the platform in the peace movement in Tasmania.

Chapter 3 : Women in Tasmania between the wars : their quest for world peace and disarmament

The huge loss of life wrought by the first World War led many to join peace groups after the war in the hope that such a loss would not occur again. "Women were drawn to the peace movement for the same philosophical and religious reasons as men, but the first World War had posed a very particular challenge to them. The unprecedented scale of destruction of the human life, they had been taught it was their role to nurture, occasioned by the war produced a degree of unity between feminists and conservative, activist women. Both could agree that human life ought not to be wasted in this way."¹⁹¹ The women of Tasmania were no different from their mainland counterparts, they now joined one or more of the peace groups which were established or re-established in the years following the war. These groups included : the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (W.I.L.P.F.); the League of Nations Union (L.N.U.); the Pan-Pacific Union (P.P.U.); the International Alliance of Women (I.A.W.); the International Peace Campaign (I.P.C.) and the women's groups such as : the Women's Christian Temperance Union (W.C.T.U.) and the National Council of Women (N.C.W.) established their departments of Peace and Arbitration and International Relations to inform members on these topics.

W.I.L.P.F. was formed in 1920, its Australian branch was created from the merger of remnants of the Women's Peace Army and of the

191. C. Rasmussen, *The Lesser evil? Opposition to war and fascism in Australia* (Melbourne, 1992), p.12.

Sisterhood of International Peace. W.I.L.P.F. in Australia was different from W.I.L.P.F. in other countries because S.I.P. was "born out of the Australian Church rather than the feminist movement and it was also inspired by a prominent male clergy man, Charles Strong, rather than by one or two leading female suffragists".¹⁹² W.P.A. had much more in common with overseas W.I.L.P.F. but it had gone into a terminal decline once Vida Goldstein and the other founders went overseas at the end of the war. This left S.I.P. as Australia's main women's peace group and as such it became the W.I.L.P.F. in Australia. Australian members were accordingly more pacifist, religious and less radical than their overseas counterparts, this difference would be reflected in events of the late 1930s.

The Hobart branch of W.I.L.P.F. was the first branch established, Miss Alice Bell, a Quaker, was its first secretary and Mrs. Bayly was president, Mrs. Emily Dobson and Mrs. Edith Waterworth were notable members. Membership was not confined to Hobart, Mrs. Elizabeth Wells of Latrobe was an interested early member of W.I.L.P.F.¹⁹³ Mrs. Waterworth acted as Australian representative to the Fourth International Congress of W.I.L.P.F. in Washington in 1924 and at the Sixth Congress held in Prague in 1929.¹⁹⁴ During the twenties W.I.L.P.F. was concerned with the treatment of war victims, representation of all peoples at the

192. Saunders, 'Women fighting for peace' : Charles Strong and the women's International League for Peace and Freedom, *Victorian Historical Journal* Vol. 64, No. 1 (April 1993), p. 16.

193. M. and W. Oats, *Dictionary of Australian Quaker Biography*.

194. Moore, *The quest for peace*, p.77 and 149.

League of Nations and "the improvement of human relationships within the State and also between states".¹⁹⁵ The thirties saw a change of personnel in the Hobart branch with Mrs. Lesley Murdoch as president, Mrs. Bertha Rowntree as secretary and Mrs. H. Meggs as treasurer. Mrs. Bayly became correspondent to *Peacewards* - the W.I.L.P.F. national journal.

1931 was a busy year with W.I.L.P.F. undertaking a "world-wide canvass for signatures to a disarmament declaration, it circulated through forty countries, in eighteen different languages, and was signed by over eight million men and women", 118,000 Australians.¹⁹⁶ The Hobart branch organised the collection of signatures in Tasmania, they were successful in getting press publicity and in gaining support from many groups in Hobart - the L.N.U., World Disarmament Union, Rotary and the Peace Society. The highlight of this campaign was the visit of Eleanor Moore in August to publicise the petition and to gain as many signatures as possible. Her visit was well received, well reported and considered successful. She spoke at several meetings in Hobart and also travelled to other centres.¹⁹⁷ The exact number of Tasmanian signatures is not recorded but "each state secured a long list of well-known names as signatories".¹⁹⁸ Disarmament occupied the group for the next few years. In 1934 the new constitution of W.I.L.P.F. listed its objects as "total and

195. *Ibid.*, p.76.

196 *Ibid.*, p.89.

197. *Ibid.*, p.90, and *The Mercury*, 17, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28.8.31.

198. Moore, *Ibid.*

universal disarmament, the abolition of violent means of coercion for the settlement of all conflicts, and the substitution in every case of some form of peaceful settlement".¹⁹⁹

But in the mid and late thirties W.I.L.P.F. became concerned with the situation in Europe. The anti-fascist movement began to influence W.I.L.P.F., it wished to impose sanctions against Japan and Italy a move which W.I.L.P.F. claimed would antagonise these countries with a likely response being more aggressive action. Australian W.I.L.P.F. broke with the international body because it believed in a need for total opposition to war. By July 1937 Australian W.I.L.P.F. also withdrew from the I.P.C., making clear that it only "welcomed as members all women who oppose war of every kind, whether national, class or collective war. To W.I.L.P.F. all war was wrong; it did not matter who waged it or for what purpose".²⁰⁰ These actions caused a loss of many members from W.I.L.P.F. Some - such as Lesley Murdoch²⁰¹ - left when W.I.L.P.F. joined the I.P.C. fearing the increasing communist influence; others left when W.I.L.P.F. became increasingly pacifist refusing to approve of sanctions or other action to control the fascist aggressors. These causes as well as resignations caused by ill-health and retirements because of old age meant the Hobart group gradually fell apart. This was an Australia wide phenomena, many of the original members of the 1920's had now gone, these had not been replaced by younger women. At the time of the leader's death in 1949 there were only fifty members. With the death of Eleanor Moore, the demise of W.I.L.P.F. occurred but it reappeared as a new invigorated body in the 1960's in time to respond to a new crisis.

199. M. Saunders, *'Women fighting for peace'*, p.18.

200. *Ibid.*, p.20.

201. Murdoch, *op.cit.*, p.13.

The League of Nations Union was established in Tasmania in 1932. It appealed to women, whose organisations provided a significant source of the membership. Many of these women had strong religious affiliations and were members of other groups and societies. The Quakers were well represented with Mrs. Ruth Erskine as secretary for many years. Many branches had strong women's committees who worked hard on fund raising activities and with the education of children about the merits of peace. The L.N.U. concerned itself with the advocacy of the League of Nations as the administrator of World Peace and of the education of citizens to this role. Notable women involved with the L.N.U. included Mrs. Emily Dobson who was vice-president until forced to retire because of ill health in 1931; Mrs. Lesley Murdoch was a member of the State committee for most of the 1930's; so too was Mrs. D. McLaren; Mrs. G.O. Smith was an executive member from 1935 to 1940 and was a delegate to the 1939 National Conference in Canberra; and Mrs. Edith Waterworth was a delegate to both national and international conferences from the State branch of the L.N.U.²⁰²

The L.N.U. was one of few organisations concerned with peace to establish a branch in Launceston, even then it suffered periodic decline and rebirth throughout the 1920's and 1930's. The people of Launceston were not particularly concerned with foreign policy issues. The Launceston branch was run by Miss M. Gray as secretary, Miss M. Fox was vice-president, Miss A. Chung as treasurer and Miss A. McIntyre as a committee member. Despite the best efforts of these women the branch declined permanently in 1940.²⁰³

202. For more details see the L.N.U. Minutes of Executive Meetings and State Conference Reports 1926-1940.

203. *Ibid.*

The disarmament petition sponsored by W.I.L.P.F. received strong support from the L.N.U. who were vitally concerned with disarmament. To this end they helped with the collection of signatures and at the August 1931 luncheon meeting had Eleanor Moore as guest speaker.²⁰⁴ Disarmament was also the topic of a well reported debate between Dr. A.N. Lewis and the L.N.U. President Mr. W.F. Denis Butler.²⁰⁵ This meeting was well attended and provided a receptive climate for Miss Moore's visit. Dr. Lewis was concerned with the effectiveness of the Kellogg Pact of 1928 to maintain and enforce world peace and disarmament. History would prove his concerns justified. The L.N.U. continued to be most concerned with disarmament until the mid-thirties. By 1936 it was apparent that the League of Nations was not able to maintain the peace with acts of fascist aggression becoming more common. The L.N.U. became concerned lest the League of Nations became merely the bureau for awarding territories and premiums to aggressor nations and no longer be the guardian of peace.²⁰⁶

With the increasing concern for the fascist aggression occurring in Europe and China the L.N.U. decided to participate in the formation of the I.P.C. at a Peace Conference in Melbourne in 1937. The L.N.U. was well aware of the communist leanings of the I.P.C. but Mrs. Waterworth felt the groups of the peace movement should be harnessed together to solve the current threat to world peace,²⁰⁷ rather than be too concerned with the politics of each peace group.

204. *The Mercury*, 27.8.31.

205. *Ibid.*, 22.8.31.

206. L.N.U. Minutes of Executive Meeting, 16.12.35.

207. L.N.U. Report to General Executive, 10.2.37.

The declining international scene led the L.N.U. to become concerned about the inevitability of a war in Europe. It concentrated efforts on attempts to prevent supplies of weapons being available to Germany and Japan.²⁰⁸ It would be expected that with the outbreak of war the L.N.U. would decline, as it had obviously failed to maintain world peace, but it continued to exist hoping to have achieved a just settlement at the end of the war and that refugees were taken into consideration in post-war decisions.²⁰⁹

Also established to assist war refugees was the Friends War Victims Relief Committee established to care for victims of the first World War. This group offered Quaker women a chance to help others in a practical way. Alice Bell found this work very appealing and she not only collected funds in aid, but lectured in the different places she visited, interesting many in the cause.²¹⁰ Ruth Erskine also worked tirelessly to raise funds and obtain clothing to be distributed by the committee. Another to contribute to the monthly collection for funds for this committee was Elizabeth Metzger.²¹¹

The Pan-Pacific Women's Union was established in 1928 to establish a peaceful dialogue between the women of the Pacific region. This group had a delegate, Mrs. Edith Waterworth, on the L.N.U. executive and she was also its delegate to Mayoral reception for Eleanor Moore.²¹² Miss Moore was herself involved with the Pan-Pacific Union,

208. Letter to the Prime Minister, 16.8.39.

209. L.N.U.Minutes, 1940-1945.

210. M. and W. Oates, *A Dictionary of Australian Quaker Biography*.

211. *Ibid*.

212. *The Mercury*, 25.8.31.

having attended two of its international conferences prior to 1931. The International Alliance of Women was an international organisation which sort the electoral equality of all women and for the maintenance of world peace through the civilising influence of women. It held congresses every three years with Tasmanian women being part of the Australian delegations : in 1923 Mrs. G.F. Giblin was delegate to Rome, she was the Secretary of the Women's Non-Party League; in 1926 Miss Lillian Overell and Mrs. Eccles Snowden were delegates to Paris, Miss Overell was also a delegate to Copenhagen in 1939. She represented the National Council of Women, and in 1929 Mrs. Edith Waterworth was delegate to the Berlin Congress possibly representing the National Council of Women or the Women's Non-Party League. The Alliance Congresses included Peace Study Conferences which were well attended and produced resolutions which were sent to the League of Nations to be acted upon. These resolutions were concerned with the lack of female representative at the League of Nations, the effect war had on women and children and action for their care.

Women were very active in the Tasmanian branch of the I.P.C. Mrs. Edith Waterworth had been at the 1936 International Peace Congress in Brussels at which the I.P.C. was formed. She was also on the interim executive with Mrs. G.O. Smith and Mr. W.F. Denis Butler to establish a Hobart Branch in April 1937. Although never a large group it did attract delegates from most prominent organisations in Hobart at that time, in spite of its communist label. It was in financial difficulties by late 1937 but struggled on until finally being disbanded in April 1939. The

I.P.C. in Tasmania had never been much more than an affiliate of the L.N.U.²¹³

Why did women participate with communist groups in the cause of peace? Rasmussen says that "activist women, even in ostensibly conservative groups, such as the National Council of Women, were frequently more radical than their male contemporaries and certainly more tolerant of association with 'suspect' groups like the I.P.C. if they were sufficiently convinced of the importance of the cause".²¹⁴ And by 1937 with fascism on the rise around the world the cause was certainly an important one : world peace. The I.P.C. Australian Conference held in 1937 was well attended by Tasmanian delegates. The Women's Commission of the Conference was very successful and continued in most states longer after the I.P.C. failed. This Commission made it clear that work for peace was closely bound up with the wider campaign for women's rights, enhanced status and access to power and saw the importance of women having an increasing share in the government of the country. Without access to these positions women could not influence the decision makers, to make prevention of war a priority.²¹⁵

Other women's groups around Tasmania were concerned with the need for world peace, disarmament and as war drew near the control of the fascist aggressors. These groups : W.C.T.U. and N.C.W. had departments for Peace and International Relations and their superintendents concerned themselves with educating the women in these

213. Rasmussen, *Defending the bad ...*, pp.312-4.

214. *Ibid.*, p.131.

215. *Ibid.*, pp.334-6.

groups in the area of peace. These groups including the political and electoral groups had delegates to the L.N.U., W.I.L.P.F. and I.P.C. who kept the group informed as to what was happening in the peace movement. These groups participated in the collection of signatures for the 1931 Disarmament Petition. Any women who were members of women's organisations in Tasmania were able to be well informed about what was happening in the peace movement both locally and internationally.

The period between the wars produced four women of note in the Tasmanian peace movement and one visitor left her mark upon it. These women were Ruth Erskine, Lesley Murdoch, Mrs. G.O. Smith, Edith Waterworth and Eleanor Moore. Ruth Erskine was a Quaker and began her peace work as a member of the Quaker Peace Committee. "During the 1914-18 war she was a forceful opponent of conscription in Australia, so much so that her name appeared in history books as one of its leading antagonists."²¹⁶ She was well known overseas because of her work for refugees and others who suffered as a result of the 1914-18 war. She worked tirelessly to obtain funds and find clothing which was distributed through the Friends War Victims Relief Committee. "Though neither looking for nor expecting reward, she was decorated with the German Red Cross Medal 2nd Class in recognition of her outstanding services."²¹⁷ After the war she joined the League of Nations Union acting as its secretary from its founding until forced by ill-health to retire in 1932. She did not leave the L.N.U. but became a committee member and continued to be active, being recognised for her efforts by becoming

216. *The Australian Friend* (October 1964), p.15.

217. *Ibid.*

vice-president in 1936 finally resigning from the L.N.U. in 1945.²¹⁸ Ruth Erskine was concerned about disarmament and to this end spoke of the need for a conference on disarmament. This Conference was duly held and was very successful in enlightening the general public on the need for disarmament.²¹⁹ Mrs. Erskine was also concerned that no Tasmanian women had been delegates to the League of Nations Assembly or to the Conferences in Geneva. She proposed that Mrs. Murdoch or Mrs. McLaren be considered as suitable delegates.²²⁰ Mrs. Erskine was also a practical worker regularly speaking on 7ZL on the L.N.U. program.²²¹ Also a member of the W.C.T.U. she was the superintendent of the Peace and Arbitration department for many years, producing reports on the department for the W.C.T.U. annual convention.²²² For many years she was the W.C.T.U. delegate to the L.N.U. Mrs. Ruth Erskine was a worker for the peace movement for many years, before World War One until ill-health forced her retirement from active support in 1945. She died in July 1964.²²³

Lesley Murdoch came to the peace movement, like many other women, after the first World War. During the Referendum campaign of 1916 she had a letter published in support of the government. Her concern being that as Australia relied upon Britain for defence we had

218. L.N.U. Minutes 1922-1945.

219. L.N.U. Minutes 1933-34.

220. L.N.U. Annual Conference Report, 3.12.35.

221. *Ibid.*

222. W.C.T.U. Annual Report, 1940.

223. *The Australian Friend* (October 1964), p.15.

best support Britain with more troops.²²⁴ Her early interests were in the political arena. She was a founding member of the Women's Non-Party League being its president in 1927/8 and again in 1949.²²⁵ She was the third woman to stand for Parliament in Tasmania - she was also unsuccessful. In 1927 she was the Tasmanian delegate to the Second Triennial Conference of the Federation of Women Voters, in Sydney. She also offered her services as delegate to the League of Nations in 1930 and also to the Pan-Pacific Conference in 1931, she was not required to attend either.²²⁶ In the 1930's she became active in both the L.N.U. and W.I.L.P.F. She was a state committee member of the L.N.U. from 1933-1940 being very involved with the League's work.²²⁷ Mrs. Murdoch was particularly concerned about disarmament and at the 1934 Conference of Societies on Disarmament spoke on the need for greater effort to achieve disarmament.²²⁸ Like Mrs. Erskine, she spoke on 7ZL on the L.N.U. time slot, enlightening the listeners on the need for peace and disarmament.²²⁹ Mrs. Murdoch spoke at the 1936 State Conference - she felt that the League of Nations might be more successful "if it could be lifted clear of the military and foreign office atmosphere, she claimed that 10% of the world's armaments expenditure would give 150,000,000 pounds to the League of Nations for war prevention each year".²³⁰

224. *The Mercury*, 25.10.16.

225. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac* 1927, 1928 and 1949.

226. Murdoch, *op.cit.*, p.13.

227. L.N.U. Minutes, 1932-1940.

228. L.N.U. report of Conference, 8.3.34.

229. L.N.U. Annual Report, 3.12.35.

230. L.N.U. Annual Report, 19.12.36.

Mrs. Murdoch became President of Hobart W.I.L.P.F. in 1931 but left prior to World War Two when she felt the communist influence was too great.²³¹ As President she was very active with the disarmament petition and the visit of Eleanor Moore in 1931. She also responded to Dr. Lewis' anti-League of Nations speech with a letter to the paper.²³² In it she defended the League of Nations and its plan for disarmament, saying that nations who signed the Peace Pact, signed to reduce arms and would do so, there had been signs of this. She concluded by saying "We are prepared to run the risk that might be needed to make the world safe from the age-long scourge of war. And we agree with responsible observers throughout the world that war is merely a destructive agent, and serves no useful purpose. It is an infamous thing and a crime to humanity".²³³ Still concerned for international affairs in 1937, as W.I.L.P.F. President, she had a resolution adopted by the University of Tasmania suggesting that Chairs of International Relations be made within universities to allow for more extensive study of the Pacific region, it was not put into practice.²³⁴ She left W.I.L.P.F. not long after this, her peace work continued with her membership of the L.N.U. Mrs. Murdoch died on October 13th, 1961.

Ivy Blanch Irene Smith, known as Mrs. G.O., "devoted her life to improving the conditions of people in the community, particularly women and children, and was a founder and executive member of many welfare

231. Murdoch, *op.cit.*

232. *The Mercury*, 10.8.31.

233. *Ibid.*

234. Moore, *The Quest for Peace*, p.122.

associations".²³⁵ A long time member of the National Council of Women she was made life member in 1954 and from 1925-1951 she was first treasurer and then president of the Women's Non-Party League.²³⁶ As Mothers Club delegate to L.N.U. she became interested in the peace movement from the mid-thirties. She participated in the activities of the L.N.U. being a speaker on the L.N.U. timeslot on 7ZL during 1935.²³⁷ In 1937 she was one of three chosen to be on the Interim Executive of the I.P.C. - as Mother's Club representative and in 1939 she was the Tasmanian delegate to the L.N.U. Australian Annual Conference in Canberra. This extremely busy women received an M.B.E. for services to the community in 1970, she died in 1975 at the age of 91.

Mrs. Edith Waterworth was the most travelled peace worker of this time - she was a delegate to seven international conferences during her forty year service to the Tasmanian peace movement. Edith Alice Waterworth arrived in Tasmania in 1909, concentrating in these early years on the political role of women. She joined the Women's Non-Party League becoming vice-president in 1925, secretary in 1927 and president in 1929 remaining in this position until 1940.²³⁸ She stood unsuccessfully for the seat of Denison in the Tasmanian Parliament in 1922 and 1925 and in 1943 for the Legislative Council seat of Hobart. Through the Women's Non-Party League she became involved in the

235. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.11, 1891-1939 (Melbourne, 1990), p.649.

236. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac* 1925-1954.

237. L.N.U. Annual Report, 3.12.35.

238. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac* 1925-1940.

National Council of Women, the W.I.L.P.F. and the L.N.U. all as its delegates. During the Referenda debates she encouraged women to think for themselves about their vote and to consider - "Are the men needed, and are we going to do our duty?"²³⁹ "Each person must answer as he sees that duty" - Yes or No.²⁴⁰

Mrs. Waterworth was a columnist with *The Mercury*, writing as Hypatia, and she frequently wrote outspoken letters which earned her the title of "Mrs. 'Hot' Waterworth".²⁴¹ In 1924 she took her first overseas tour. She represented Australia at the 4th International Congress in Washington of the W.I.L.P.F., presenting a Charter of Peace to the Congress from W.I.L.P.F. (Australian Section).²⁴² She was the only Australian representative and recorded in her tour notes how impressed she was with the women she met there.²⁴³ The second conference she attended on the tour was the 4th International Peace Congress of the Democratic League held in London. The Congress awakened her to the cost of war for Europeans, she commented in the notes - "In Australia we have no idea what England, though a so called victor, is paying for the war, nor how precarious is the peace we have attained".²⁴⁴ In 1929 Mrs. Waterworth again travelled to conferences in Berlin and Prague. The

239. *The Mercury*, 27.10.16.

240. *Ibid.*

241. *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol.12, 1891-1939 (Melbourne, 1990), p.393.

242. Moore, *The Quest for Peace*, p.77 and 184-5.

243. Mrs. Waterworth's World Tour of 1924 - notes, A.O.T.:N.S. 1546/3.

244. *Ibid.*

Conference of the International Alliance of Women on Suffrage and Equal citizenship was held in Berlin and she was the Australian delegate. Following this she attended as Australian representative the 6th International Congress of W.I.L.P.F. in Prague. There are no reports of these conferences.

During 1931 she was concerned with the Disarmament Petition through her membership of W.I.L.P.F. and with the Pan-Pacific Union of which she was president. In 1933 she travelled to Adelaide to attend the League of Women Voters Conference and in 1935 she was awarded an O.B.E. 1936 was an important year for Mrs. Waterworth, according to her son, "her final achievement was to be delegated by Prime Minister Lyons to represent Australian women at the League of Nations in 1936 in Geneva".²⁴⁵ While on this trip she also attended, as one of two Tasmanian delegates, the World Peace Congress in Geneva, following this the Brussels Peace Conference at which the I.P.C. was formed and she also attended the 12th British Commonwealth League Conference in Quebec in May. Mrs. Waterworth spoke twice at this Conference, as representative of the Australian Federation of Women Voters she spoke on "The British Empire and Peace" and as a Women's Non-Party League delegate she spoke on "The Status of Women".²⁴⁶ This was to be her last overseas conference.

Following the Peace Congress of 1936, the I.P.C. was formed in Australia, Mrs. Waterworth was chosen to be on the interim committee of the Hobart I.P.C. as a delegate from the Women's Non-Party League. Her

245. *Eric Waterworth : An inventive Tasmanian* (Launceston, 1990), p.3.

246. *The Mercury*, 21.8.36.

representation at the League of Nations led Mrs. Waterworth to become more involved with the L.N.U. in Hobart becoming an executive member from 1937 and being a delegate to the Australian L.N.U. in 1937 and attending the Australian Annual Conference in 1939.²⁴⁷ From 1938 after a long involvement with the W.C.T.U. she became the superintendent for the League of Nations presenting annual reports on her work and that of the Union in promoting the League of Nations to the members. She continued with this work until 1943. Mrs. Waterworth died aged 84 in 1957, she had not only reached the platform in Tasmania but also on the mainland and most importantly she had spoken at international conferences. Tasmanian women had come a long way in twenty years.

Eleanor Moore's visit to Tasmania in 1931 was an important step for women in the peace movement in Tasmania. Her visit was at the request of the World Disarmament Movement and she spoke at meetings not only of peace groups but also to respected men's groups such as Hobart Rotary and at a public meeting which was well attended.²⁴⁸ Her visit provided the stimulus for the collection of thousands of signatures for the Disarmament Declaration. Attendances at these meetings indicated that women could be listened to and had something to offer the general public not just a few peace workers, the issues of the peace movement had now become important enough for them to be listened to by the general public. Disarmament was of concern to all, it could affect everyone, Australia was no longer immune to the effects of World War, Australians had at last become concerned about foreign affairs, this concern was to reach new heights during the crisis of the Vietnam War.

247. L.N.U. Minutes 1936-1940.

248. *The Mercury*, 25, 27 and 28.8.31.

Chapter 4 : Women on the march : a response to the Vietnam War and the reintroduction of conscription

Women of the sixties were going through a period of liberation, they were being enlightened about their political role in society and were being encouraged to break free of the shackles of a conservative society. The anti-war protests of the mid to late sixties gave women a chance to practise taking these freedoms and to challenge the authority of government. But they were not yet ready to do it alone. The women most influenced by the feminist movement were those in the universities, but Tasmania a very conservative society did not produce the same radical response from its female students as did the mainland city universities. The reports of student protests do not mention the sex of the participants and only occasionally are any but the leaders and organisers named. Patti Warn became the first female Tasmanian student involved in the anti-conscription debate when she represented Tasmania University at a national union of students meeting in March 1965 at which "conscription in any form except in times of extreme national emergency" was condemned.²⁴⁹ Heather Meredith as *Togatus* editor did her best to educate students, to stir them to take an interest in the subject. This apathy was her concern when she wrote - "the majority of students think that conscription is just fine (as long as I'm not in the ballot; or thank God I'm not 20)".²⁵⁰ Coming from a Quaker family Heather had strong

249. *Togatus*, 11.3.65.

250. *Ibid.*, 15.8.65.

pacifist beliefs and attempted to influence students to this belief or at least, to have an opinion on the issue. Her editorials made a plea for peace and questioned the need for Australia to be involved in the war at all. The Perkins sisters, Frances and Margaret, are noted as being involved as students. Frances was a university representative to the Tasmanian Vietnam Moratorium Campaign in 1971 making a report on the planned Teach-In to take place at the University. Margaret being more involved than her sister was arrested in 1969 for handing out anti-conscription pamphlets in the street. No conviction was recorded on this occasion, and she remained careful not to be arrested again.²⁵¹

Away from the university women were able to participate in the peace movement at this time by joining one or more of the following groups : the Vietnam Action Group (V.A.G.) and later the Tasmanian Vietnam Moratorium Campaign (T.V.M.C.); W.I.L.P.F. or the established women's groups such as the National Council of Women (N.C.W.) and the Union of Australian Women who were concerned with peace issues as part of their organisation. Women in Launceston had a much more limited choice of the Launceston Action Group (L.A.G.) which later became the Conscience on Vietnam Committee or the N.C.W.

The V.A.G.. began in 1965 and continued until subsumed by the T.V.M.C. in 1970. From its inception women had a major role in this group though rarely as presidents and spokespersons. The women were responsible for the secretarial work, collecting and raising monies, planning vigils, producing pamphlets and leaflets and distributing them. Women it was considered obviously had more time to do these things.

251. Interview with Jean Perkins, 7.9.93.

Many women who joined V.A.G. also belonged to one or more of the women's groups which probably explains why much activity during the Vietnam War were joint efforts of the peace groups. There were some women who only joined the V.A.G. and attended with their husbands, these included Joy Shegog who was a committee member in 1968 and minute secretary in 1969; Mrs. George who was a committee member from 1967 to 1969 being responsible for organising the 1967 Hiroshima Day Vigil in August; and Marie Lamp who was invited to speak at this Vigil and also spoke at a Public Meeting held in July, 1968 entitled 'Vietnam and our children' - a women's point of view. Joining her were mainland speakers Jean McLean and Corinne Kirby. Mrs. Lamp became a committee member of V.A.G. in 1968 and was responsible for the selection for bi-monthly speakers at meetings.²⁵²

Mrs. Jean McLean was one of three women visitors to speak at meetings and rallies around the state over the period of the war. Jean McLean visited in 1968 speaking at a meeting in Burnie, a public meeting in Hobart Town Hall and at the university. Mrs. McLean was secretary of Save Our Sons in Victoria and spoke rousinglly in regard to anti-conscription as well as the wrongs of the war. The success of her visit can be measured by an invitation for a return visit in 1969, this time only to Hobart.²⁵³ Miss Glyn Thomasetti visited in 1967 she was also hosted by the V.A.G. and spoke at public meetings in Hobart and Launceston.²⁵⁴

The other female mainland visitor was Vivienne Abrahams a member of W.I.L.P.F., a mature law student and pacifist who was

252 V.A.G. Minutes, 1966-1969, A.O.T.:N.S. 683/5.

253. *Ibid.*

254. *Ibid.*, 20.7.67.

concerned about conscientious objectors. She spent much time briefing young men prior to their court appearances and was also editor of *Peacemaker*.²⁵⁵ Miss Abrahams visited to speak at the first Moratorium Rally in May 1970.

The T.V.M.C. first met in March 1970 its objective to hold the Moratorium rally on May 8th. Most of the V.A.G. joined the T.V.M.C. as well as delegates and members of the other peace groups in the state. Small moratorium committees such as the Trade Union Moratorium committee were set up by specialist groups to inform their own members of the activities of the T.V.M.C. As a special purpose mixed group women had the role of workers and organisers rather than leaders. Only two women were elected to the committee, Mrs. V. Orr and Jean Perkins. Once the type of activities for the Moratorium were chosen many women were invited to take responsibility for these activities. Mrs. Bertha Rolls was in charge of the Art exhibition; Mrs. Anne Lohrey organised the City Hall Promenade display; Mrs. Anne Batt planned the doorknock; Elizabeth Darvell the poetry reading; Jean Perkins the Literature table. The university students were responsible for the march details and contributed 90% of the personnel.²⁵⁶ The resulting Moratorium march and rally and displays in the Town Hall was very successful with up to three thousand taking part.

Within a month plans for a following Moratorium had begun. The number of women involved with planning for this and subsequent marches had declined, in spite of more women being on the committee. Jean

255. S. McHugh, *Minefields and Miniskirts* (Sydney, 1993), p.210.

256. T.V.M.C. Minutes, 8 March - 14 May, 1970. TC : SLT.

Perkins had become Treasurer and Mrs. Sowerbutts, Mrs. Shegog and Doris Beith joined the committee.²⁵⁷ The second and subsequent Moratoriums were not as elaborate as the first usually combining a march with a rally, with sub-committees being formed to organise them. The biggest task was the collection of sponsor cards, thousands of these with donations were gathered over the period of the moratoriums. The names on these cards make interesting reading : one of these was signed Marilyn Lake who wrote she was willing to help with the campaign. I found no record of what, if any, help she provided.²⁵⁸ Although the moratoriums were supposed to be a peaceful demonstration of citizens for the withdrawal of troops from Vietnam and an end to the war, the atmosphere of the marches was far from peaceful. All the women interviewed spoke of the fear they experienced while marching. The fear was for their own personal safety, the 'thugs' on the streets in opposition to the march were very threatening, used plenty of verbal abuse and inflicted physical violence on those unfortunate enough to be on the edges of the marches.²⁵⁹ The situation in the Melbourne marches where the police used horses was even more terrifying. The real fear of being trampled by horses certainly detracted from the peaceful purpose of the Moratorium.²⁶⁰ Nuns in habits were treated no better than the radical students at the march who were provoking the police, little wonder that there were fewer participants in each successive Moratorium.

257. T.V.M.C. Minutes 7.6.70 - 23.3.72. A.O.T.:N.S. 668.

258. T.V.M.C. Sponsor Cards. A.O.T.:N.S. 668/6.

259. Interviews with Fran Bladel, Jean Perkins and Bronwyn Meredith, 30 August and 7 September 1993.

260. Interview with Jill Murphy, 9.11.93.

The W.I.L.P.F. reformed in Tasmania in 1963 largely at the instigation of Mildred Thynne. She was a Quaker with a deep regard for peace and in recognition of her services to W.I.L.P.F. was awarded life membership in 1969. W.I.L.P.F. was concerned about conscription and about the war itself and set about to work for both causes. Action taken included letter writing campaigns in protest of the war, conscription, Omega stations and more; placing advertisements in the paper to conscientious objectors offering advice; the production of pamphlets and car stickers; participation in the Hiroshima Day vigils; poster and poem competitions for schools, fund raising by Art exhibition and stalls at the Village Fair all this and support of the Moratorium campaigns. At each monthly meeting reports of action being taken by members on these issues illustrate how busy this small group was. Membership in 1969 was only thirty-two. These thirty-two busy women were also active in the T.V.M.C., and other women's groups they included : Jean Perkins, Bronwen Meredith, Lynda Heaven, Eve Masterman, Doris Beith, Barbara Bound, Edith Emery and Bertha Rolls.²⁶¹

The women's groups to take an interest in the Vietnam War and conscription for it were the N.C.W. and the Union of Australian Women. The N.C.W. continued to have a department for International Relations and Peace and the convenors of this section over this time were Lynda Heaven in Hobart and May Hooper in Launceston. But many of their annual reports steer away from mentioning the Vietnam War concentrating instead on general issues of furthering international relations, giving little attention to peace.²⁶² This approach is

261. W.I.L.P.F. Minutes, 1965-1974. A.O.T.N.S. 1363.

262. N.C.W. Annual Reports, 1965-72. A.O.T.N.S. 325/14.

understandable given that the N.C.W. is a collection of delegates from many different women's groups and policies adopted have to tread a middle line to accommodate each of these groups. The U.A.W. was a communist women's group which first appeared in Tasmania in 1960. One of its objects was to safeguard peace.²⁶³ To this end it had delegates to W.I.L.P.F. and V.A.G. and T.V.M.C.; mostly in the form of Barbara Bound, who acted as its secretary. The U.A.W. also acted as a local group of the Save Our Sons group established in Melbourne by Jean McLean. This group received little publicity, choosing to work quietly in the background; to avoid the phobia of communism present in conservative societies such as Tasmania during the Vietnam War years.

The period of the Vietnam War yielded many more women who were interested in the peace movement than in either of the other two periods. Even accounting for better recording of events by these groups, more women became involved, for whatever reasons, and were involved in more groups. Five women who were involved with more than one peace group have been selected for brief study : Lynda Heaven, Eve Masterman, Doris Beith, Edith Emery and Berth Rolls; and another four were selected for interview and further study : Fran Bladel, Jean Hearn, Bronwen Meredith and Jean Perkins.

Lynda Heaven was a member of W.I.L.P.F. from 1965 when it was reformed being its president for many years and remained a member throughout the Vietnam period.²⁶⁴ She was a long time member of the N.C.W. being Treasurer from 1949 to 1954 becoming the convenor of the

263. *Walch's Tasmanian Almanac*, 1960.

264. *W.I.L.P.F. Minutes*, 1965-74.

International Relations and Peace Committee in 1965 and continuing well into the seventies. The annual reports of the committee give an insight into her views on peace. In 1966 she wrote : "war is not only mankind's most cruel and unjust activity but, in this Nuclear Age, is suicidal" and went on to suggest that "the simple way to keep peace, is to have all nations set up their own contingents of civilian police and armed forces who can respond to United Nations emergency appeals, thereby becoming a United Nations force for peace".²⁶⁵ By 1970 she had become concerned about the escalation of the war in Vietnam and made an appeal to women to do more to help. "Women, who understand the importance of the humane values in our society, and promote peace and goodwill within their families are well equipped to promote peace in the world, and promote goodwill among nations."²⁶⁶ Lynda had also been a member of the House of Assembly for Franklin from 1962 to 1964.

Eve Masterman joined W.I.L.P.F. becoming its secretary in 1968. In 1969 she was W.I.L.P.F. delegate to the Paris Conference of Non-Government Organisations an affiliate body to the League of Nations. In 1971 she toured China reporting her travels to an interested W.I.L.P.F. audience. In 1974 she became president of W.I.L.P.F.²⁶⁷ She was involved with the T.V.M.C. attending sponsors meetings and offering her services where required.²⁶⁸ In 1986 as part of the Year of Peace

265. N.C.W. Annual Report, 1966/7.

266. N.C.W. Annual Report, 1970/1.

267. W.I.L.P.F. Minutes, 1965-74.

268. T.V.M.C. Minutes, 1970-72.

celebrations Eve Masterman was awarded the Australian Peace Award for her contribution to the work of W.I.L.P.F.²⁶⁹

Doris Beith was also involved with both W.I.L.P.F. and T.V.M.C. and continuing with the setting up of A.I.C.D. (Association for International Co-operation on Disarmament) in 1972. She was a delegate from W.I.L.P.F. to the T.V.M.C. in 1971. Keeping members informed about the June Moratorium at which she also spoke. In the T.V.M.C. in 1970 she was elected to the sponsors' committee then became minute secretary in 1971. Mrs. Beith has a continuing interest in the peace movement.²⁷⁰

Dr. Edith Emery had travelled extensively in Asia and brought this knowledge to discussions concerning Vietnam and the communist influence of China there. Dr. Emery had an early association with W.I.L.P.F. from 1965. She was both a writer and artist, talents used when she produced the posters for Hiroshima Day observance in 1966. She became President of W.I.L.P.F. in 1971. Dr. Emery also became a member of V.A.G. joining in 1967. Dr. Emery also had an involvement in the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation.²⁷¹

Bertha Rolls was another very active lady. She was particularly concerned about Human Rights and accordingly organised the V.A.G. Human Rights Day activities in 1967. She was a member of W.I.L.P.F. being its delegate to Amnesty International a group in which she was

269. *The Mercury*, 21.10.86.

270. W.I.L.P.F. Minutes 1971 and T.V.M.C. Minutes 1970-71.

271. W.I.L.P.F. Minutes 1965-71 and V.A.G. Minutes 1967-68.

active for many years. Annually from 1966 she was the organiser of the joint Amnesty/W.I.L.P.F. Art Exhibition which was a major fund raiser for both groups. T.V.M.C. also tapped into her expertise in this area by inviting Bertha to organise the 1970 Moratorium Art Exhibition, this was also very successful. She remained active in the T.V.M.C. after this suggesting the printing of leaflets prior to the 1971 Moratorium to inform the public of the need for another rally.²⁷²

Fran Bladel was not a member of any of the peace groups but she joined in one of the Moratorium marches as a university student. Even though she was a mature age student her feelings on the march so vividly depict how it was for students, so easy to participate with little planning involved. The Moratorium sowed the seeds in Fran and in later years she would advocate peace when a teacher at union meetings concerned with nuclear testing in the Pacific and during the 1986 Year of Peace as a M.H.A. she addressed a N.C.W. conference in Hobart on "Women and Peace". In an interview Fran spoke of her conversion to the Moratorium movement firstly by Malcolm McRae and finally by Jim Cairns when he spoke at a university debate she attended. She spoke of the fear she felt on the march, she marched with her eight year old son and a Catholic priest who had had death threats made against his life. She was intimidated by the photographers, the unfriendly crowds, the taunts of 'Commo' from bystanders, the none too gentle treatment of the police and the punching, pushing and shoving of the Young Liberals and N.C.C. supporters who manned opposite corners near Franklin Square forcing the

272. V.A.G. Minutes 1965-1970; W.I.L.P.F. Minutes 1965-74; T.V.M.C. Minutes 1970-72.

marchers to run the gauntlet to get past them. She described the march as "one of the nastiest experiences of her life".²⁷³

Many years after these experiences Fran came back to the peace movement, joining W.I.L.P.F. and the N.C.W. and becoming a politician. She says that she is called upon to speak on peace issues because "if you are a feminist there is an automatic assumption that you are also a peace activist".²⁷⁴ In Fran's case this is true. Her speech to the N.C.W. in 1986 challenged the women present to consider their role in peace. "As women we must accept that peace is not simply the absence of war on a national or global basis, but a matter of individual right and a matter of social justice, also on a national and global scale... Peace is not simply a matter of dismantling nuclear weaponry, but a matter of ensuring that social justice gives all human beings a basic equality before the law, in the workplace and in the access to food, shelter, education and medical services."²⁷⁵ Finally she challenged the N.C.W. women to take action with these words "Are we involved in the day by day, long slow march to peace - or are we dilettantes the sometimes attenders at the spectacle ... we can today decide that we are no longer prepared to be led - we have become the leaders".²⁷⁶ Fran Bladel is still a member of W.I.L.P.F. where she feels she is a 'girl' compared to the others. She is proud of the group, its work and the dedication of its members who work tirelessly for the cause of peace, "they are motivated by the highest possible ideals".²⁷⁷

273. Interview with Fran Bladel, 30.8.93.

274. *Ibid.*

275. F. Bladel 'Women and Peace' *Larrikin* Winter (1986), pp.8-9.

276. *Ibid.*

277. Interview.

Jean Perkins came to the peace movement via the Australia-China Friendship Association of which she was secretary for many years, she had also been a member of L.N.U. during the war becoming branch secretary in 1945 and when petrol rations were available she travelled to country branches as extension officer.²⁷⁸ She joined the V.A.G. in 1967 and from that time became active in the work of the group, distributing handbills and letter boxing. In 1968 she was elected vice president and to the publicity board, continuing to produce and distribute leaflets which explained the activities of V.A.G. She was elected to the position of correspondence secretary in 1969 and advocated a Teach-In on the subject of national service.²⁷⁹ With the suspension of the V.A.G. she joined the T.V.M.C. becoming involved with the finances of the group being responsible for the sponsors cards, a huge task, and she was also responsible for the literature table at the Town Hall display during the first Moratorium march in May 1970. Jean took a particular interest in the support of draft resisters and organised a rally outside the National Service building in July 1971. When the T.V.M.C. disbanded she was on the committee to investigate the setting up of A.I.C.D. in Tasmania. She became a member of this group and also the P.A.C. when it reformed in 1972. She remains an interested, if less active member of the peace movement.²⁸⁰

Mrs. Perkins is also a member of W.I.L.P.F. joining when she became involved with the Moratorium movement. While not becoming an office bearer she was involved with getting information, presenting it

278. L.N.U. Minutes 1940-1945.

279. V.A.G. Minutes 1967-69.

280. T.V.M.C. Minutes 1970-72.

to the club and being part of a deputation to the Premier on the Omega tracking station. She also sought support from the W.I.L.P.F. ladies to attend a rally in support of Fabian Hutchinson, a draft resister, at his court appearance in 1971.²⁸¹

Jean was also a member of several other organisations, some four or more at one time. These included : the N.C.W., being secretary and later vice president; the Australian Labor Party; the Kindergarten Association; Mothers' Club; Parents and Friends Association and Amnesty, to name a few. Her interests changing as her children grew older.²⁸² She liked being a busy person, liked to meet many different people and her husband was happy for her to join these groups.

Mrs. Perkins has vivid memories of the Vietnam protest era. She was scared in the marches - of the Catholics. It was a tense experience, the opposition was vocal and hostile. Bishop Cranswick was the butt of most abuse. Jean felt the marches were successful, they showed the flag, she was proud of her involvement even if it probably didn't change people's minds about Vietnam. When she marched in one of the Melbourne marches, a huge march with thousands of people she didn't feel as scared as when she had marched in Hobart. It seemed to be a peaceful march and she didn't worry about not knowing anyone, she felt proud to be part of it. There had been a good feeling of comradeship - good friends, strong idealists achieving something together. Having signed a petition protesting Australia's involvement in the war she had been visited by the Federal Police and for a time thereafter was a little worried about the outcome, but nothing further happened.

281. W.I.L.P.F. Minutes 1970-72.

282. Interview with Jean Perkins, 7.9.93.

Jean commented that the matric students seemed to be more strongly involved than the university students in the protests. She had kept friends in the different groups she had been in and had been surprised that there had been no tension amongst groups and no bickering between them, they had been united in their work. The whole period and her involvement in it is something she is proud of.²⁸³

Bronwen Meredith says she has been involved in the peace movement since birth. As a Quaker she was brought up with the "Peace Testimony" as part of her beliefs. She joined the Junior League of Nations as a Friends School girl and was the secretary in 1934. After school she joined the L.N.U. and during the second World War worked against conscription and was also against the allies insistence on the unconditional surrender. She belonged to a peace group organised by Frank Coaldrake the editor of *Peacemaker*. After the war she was concerned with nuclear disarmament and many letters were written concerning this. At this time Bronwen was involved with the United Nations Association and the Quaker Peace Committee.²⁸⁴

When W.I.L.P.F. was reformed in 1963 largely initiated by Mildred Thynne and Bronwen, she became its first secretary. Bronwen has been a member continuously, currently she is President of the Australian section. The reformed W.I.L.P.F. had barely got going when the Vietnam War began and it became involved in protests. But as Bronwen says W.I.L.P.F. is not a protest organisation it has an educative role : to study

283. Interview.

284. Interview with Bronwen Meredith, 30.8.93.

and make known and to help abolish the causes of war. To this end W.I.L.P.F. was not an instigator of the action of the anti-war movement it was more involved with writing letters and gathering information about issues concerning the war. W.I.L.P.F. did support the Moratorium movement but marched under its own banner.²⁸⁵

Individual members of W.I.L.P.F. and of the 'Friends' joined the V.A.G. and later T.V.M.C. to be more involved in protesting the war than either of these groups were. Bronwen was not very active in V.A.G. as she had young children to look after but did write many letters for the group. Her husband Richard was very involved in both these groups, being leader in most Moratorium marches. By 1970 Bronwen found more time to become involved being a committee member of T.V.M.C. and secretary of W.I.L.P.F. and clerk of the Hobart Meeting of the Friends. In these capacities she wrote letters to the paper concerning draft resisters and the National Service Act.²⁸⁶ She was also concerned about conscientious objectors, a small group often meeting in her house to discuss their options if called up. Her son later went to court to prove his status as a conscientious objector.²⁸⁷

Bronwen was also a member of Amnesty International, making her at one time member of five peace related groups. Currently she is a member of only three : W.I.L.P.F., Amnesty and the Quaker Peace Committee. The concern for Bronwen at the moment as President of W.I.L.P.F. on a national level is to head off the push for W.I.L.P.F. to

285. Interview.

286. *The Mercury*, 24.3. and 17.9.71.

287. Interview.

include men as members. She feels very strongly against this as she is concerned that the history of W.I.L.P.F., how it grew from the suffragist movement and the sacrifice women made, particularly overseas, will be forgotten if men are allowed to join. The groups historical uniqueness will be forgotten and it may become just another of many passing peace groups.²⁸⁸

Jean Hearn became a pacifist after the death of her husband in World War Two. She became a Quaker because of their strong pacifist beliefs. Her involvement in the anti-war movement came from a Christian basis, when she and three friends in Burnie formed the "Society to uphold the Universal Human Rights" in 1964. The group were avid letter writers, to the press and governments and when they advocated a boycott of U.S. goods they were known in the U.S. as one of the most subversive groups in Australia. She finds this amusing.²⁸⁹ This Burnie group organised public rallies and one meeting at which Jean McLean was speaker the hall was full. Also while in Burnie, Jean supported conscientious objectors allowing some to take refuge in her home and gave evidence on their behalf in court hearings.

In 1969 Jean moved to Launceston where she joined the Launceston Action Group which was operating as a northern branch of the V.A.G. During the year this group distributed over 2,000 leaflets about the war and in December held their first demonstration.²⁹⁰ A new group was formed, the Conscience on Vietnam Committee, to coincide

288. Interview.

289. Interview with Jean Hearn, 2.9.93.

290. V.A.G. Minutes 1969.

with the Moratorium campaign. This group was a combination of the L.A.G. and the left wing trade unions, other women involved included : Mrs. Castle, Ruth Rowe and Kylene Cramp. The group held several successful rallies with mainland guest speakers attending; Senator Georges, Tom Uren and Tas Bull. Mrs. Hearn particularly remembers a successful art exhibition, held in conjunction with one of these rallies, in the foyer of the hall; artists were asked to portray people, one piece by Jo MacIntyre was very moving, showing one soldier standing over another, it conveyed the compassion of the soldier so well.²⁹¹

Many activities were designed to involve people who did not want to come out and march. "They did a lot of brochures and distributed these, talked to a lot of people, especially women, who when alone would agree with you about what the war meant. There was an underground swell of horror but people felt they couldn't come out and march. The establishment was against it." Speaking about the Launceston marches, Mrs. Hearn said she had great difficulty getting permission to hold the marches and being able to book halls for rallies. On marches they were made to feel like lepers. They had flour thrown at them by the rat bag fringe who, she felt, had been set up to do that. "Marching did something for ourselves, but nothing for the spectators." There were usually between fifty and a hundred marchers, if they got a hundred they felt they had done well. There was not much violence on the marches, just antagonism, but it was like an initiation because they were only a small group. The Launceston marches received little coverage on T.V. and only brief mention in the papers. Jean said she was more frightened by the

291. Interview.

death threats made against her than when she was marching. She felt the feeling of the community were much better reflected in the exchange of letters in the paper over the period of the war.²⁹²

Jean joined W.I.L.P.F. in the mid-sixties and still occasionally receives a newsletter though she is no longer a member, nor is she now a quaker. She is still a pacifist but has no active membership of any groups, there are no longer any in Launceston. As a Senator in the early eighties, she along with the other women senators celebrated International Day of Human Rights by wearing black dresses with white sashes with 'Peace' written on them. They passed out lapel ribbons to the men to wear, but few would do so. They were successful in establishing a joint House Committee on Peace. Mrs. Hearn feels that peace has now become an environmental issue, the people issue has been forgotten which she regrets, peace should be about people.²⁹³ A poem she wrote in 1970, called "Child of Vietnam" perhaps best portrays her feelings about this, it begins with :

Child of Vietnam
What agony you bear
While we live here
Blindly apathetic and unaware,
And are our hearts
Too cold to care?

it concludes with these words of hope :

We'll find the will
To bring you peace to keep,
Child of Vietnam?²⁹⁴

292. Interview.

293. Interview.

294. J. Hearn, 'Child of Vietnam', *Australian Friend* (August, 1970), p.10.

Conclusion

The peace movement has existed in Tasmania for over a century. The Quakers have maintained a continuous organisation through their peace committee since the 1880s. The only other group with a near continuous existence has been W.I.L.P.F., apart from twenty two years, 1942-1963, it has operated in this state since 1915. The longevity of both these groups can be attributed to the fact that neither group is a protest group, they are pacifist groups concerned with the elimination of wars. These groups have been barely visible to the public. The groups that have been visible have been those that have been overwhelmingly issue-centred and protest-oriented; concerned with conscription and involving mass protests. These groups have popped up in response to some crisis and then disappeared when the crisis was over. The crisis can create many groups representing various groups in the community, rarely is one well organised group created. Hence the plethora of groups to deal with the Vietnam War crisis. It took the Moratorium marches to unite these groups, and what an impact those marches had, but they were a united body for the duration of each march only. The peace movement was never one united body.

Women have been involved in the peace movement in Tasmania since the first group was formed. They have been the main stay of the peace movement, always there, even now, whereas the men have come and gone as they saw a need. Why have women been concerned with peace? Some would say it is part of women's nature to be peaceful, that it is part of her general concern for survival, she has a nurturing role to care

for her children and for humanity.²⁹⁵ Others say that women suffered from war as much if not more than men. "Through-out history women had suffered the concomitants of war : capture; enslavement; privation; death; loss of husbands, brothers, and sons, and, of course, rape."²⁹⁶ Because they can suffer from war, women need to take an interest in maintaining peace because they become powerless once war begins.

Turning to this issue of women making it to the platform in Tasmania - it is clear that as the century progressed women increasingly reached the platform. During the referenda campaigns of the first World War women rarely made it to the platform, for any reason, in Tasmania. Goldstein was an unusual case, considered an honoured mainland guest, therefore afforded special consideration. Tasmanian women most capable of speaking against the referenda were forbidden by S.I.P. from speaking at public meetings about the war. But only one woman on the pro-conscription side made it to the platform, and then only to make a vote of thanks to the male speakers. Even at the all female meetings, men were selected to speak. There was at this time no culture of women speakers, men dominated mixed groups.

By the 1930's the situation had changed considerably. The whole peace movement in the state was dominated by women, either in the all female groups or in larger numbers in the mixed groups. The women at the head of these groups were prominent, well respected women who had earned the right to take the platform and seemed to do so often. The

295. Interview with Fran Bladel.

296. M. Saunders, 'Are women more peaceful than men?' *Interdisciplinary Peace Research* (May/June, 1991), p.49.

organisation of the Disarmament petition by a women's only group reinforced this new role for women. The importance of the occasion was recognised when the men of Rotary allowed a women to address them. This period was a high point for women in Tasmania's peace movement.

The Vietnam War period saw a return to conditions somewhat akin to the first World War. Women once again became the workers in a supporting role to men. This was particularly the case in the mixed groups. Women were frightened in the marches and preferred the peaceful passive protests of the 'silent vigils' they were used to. Some men were prepared to protest in violent ways, which the women did not approve of. But women did manage to make it to the platform during this period, they were perhaps not the staunch pacifist members but they were accorded the honour of speaking from the platform with men at most rallies.

Since the success of the Vietnam days the peace movement has faded away to consist today of W.I.L.P.F. and one or two small groups concerned with nuclear arms. With recent advances in disarmament these groups will soon become superfluous. This will leave only W.I.L.P.F. and the ever present Quakers to continue the peace tradition in Tasmania as they have done for over a century. Even this future is not secure as both groups have a small aging membership and their ability to attract new members must be of concern. W.I.L.P.F. failed to meet this challenge once before hopefully this time it will succeed in ensuring a secure future for itself and the peace movement in Tasmania.

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