

# THE TRIAL OF QUAKER PACIFISM

1747-1748

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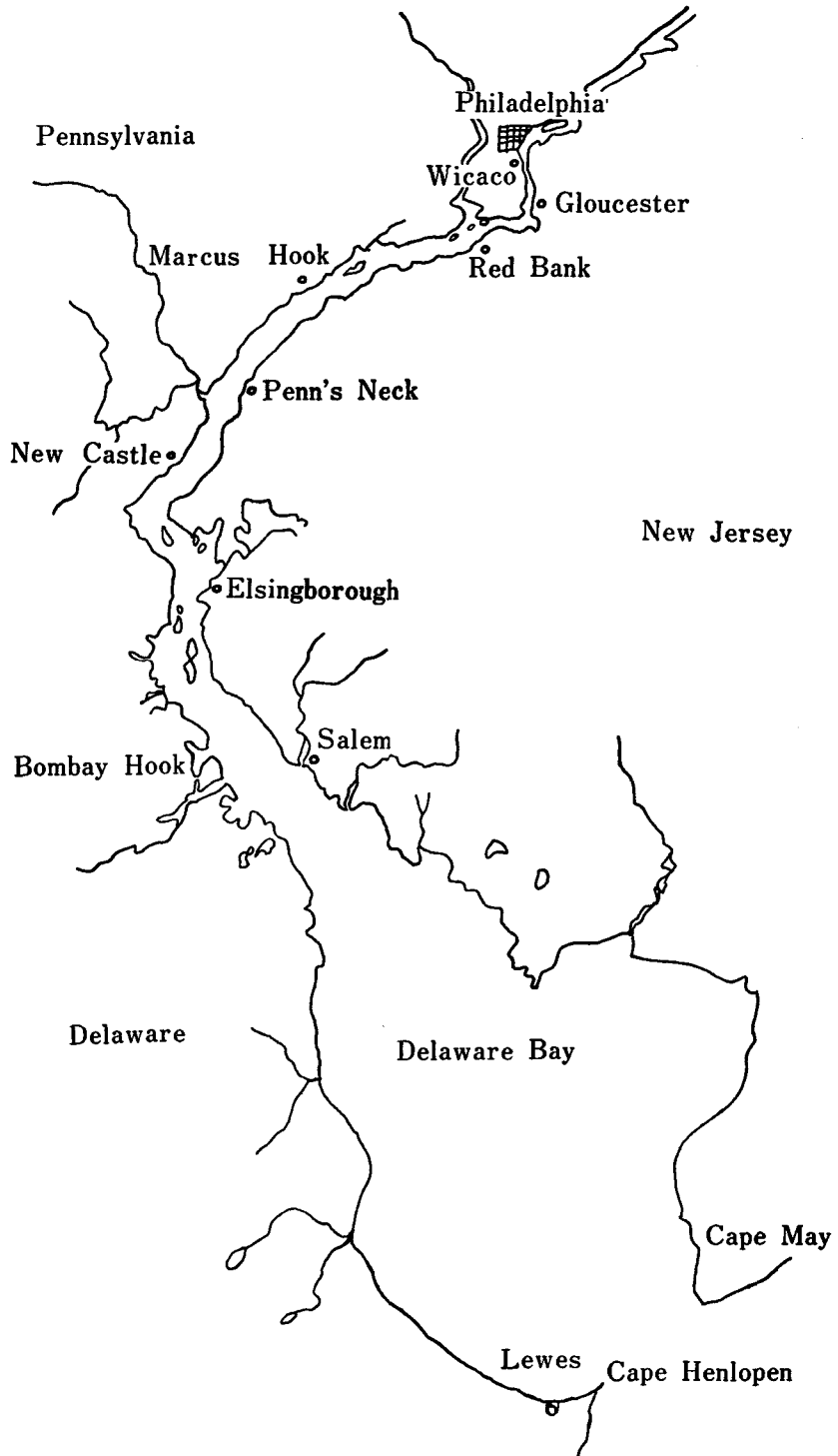
## Introduction

We the Japanese are proud of having a world famous pacifist constitution, which is regarded as an unprecedented, idealistic political experiment. Few of us know, however, that years ago in colonial Pennsylvania a religious group called Quakers experimented similar pacifist politics and struggled to carry out a disarmament policy in the midst of European colonial wars. It was William Penn, founder of the colony, who placed duty to carry out the "holy experiment" ..... a heavenly pacifist country on earth ..... upon the Pennsylvania Quakers. Hence the Quaker dilemma between power politics and religious pacifism originated. It was a holy obligation for the Quaker politicians to govern Pennsylvania on the basis of Christian love and pacifism, and they regarded disarmament as a self-evident official policy in their colony.

In 1950, during the Korean War crisis, Japan's idealistic pacifist constitution came to be, at least partly, mutilated by the creation of the Police Reserve Force which later became the Self-Defense Army. The Cold war politics and the pressure of actual fightings in Korea undermined Japanese disarmament. Likewise in the Quaker colony, their "holy experiment," as years passed, turned out to be an impossible dream. The British imperial wars against France and Spain involved Pennsylvania again and again, whether or not the Quakers wished it so. Eventually in the invasion crisis of 1747-1748, their "holy experiment" became bankrupt: Pennsylvania was finally armed. However hard the Quakers had worked for the "holy experiment," it was beyond their power to control world politics or to prevent the European colonial war from extending to Pennsylvania. During this crisis, a defensive war seemed necessary to protect life, liberty, and property of people in Pennsylvania. How could the Quakers as pacifists agree to arm the province? The result was that, while they were still holding on to the "holy experiment," the experiment itself was being undermined by non-Quaker citizens who organized themselves voluntarily into a self-defense army. Though Quakers stayed in the Assembly even after the creation of this army, the mission William Penn placed upon them failed, and the rule of pacifism ended during this crisis.

This was not the first occasion for Quakers to face the challenge to their

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pacifism. Actually in every colonial war, they had earlier aided the defense of the colony by appropriations under such pretexts as "for the king's use," "for the queen's use," and some other reasons.<sup>1</sup> According to the Quaker reasoning, it was one thing to appropriate money for the queen's (or king's) use "notwithstanding any use she might put it to, that being not our part, [their] hers"<sup>2</sup>; but it was quite another thing to bear arms by themselves. In 1747, however, when for the first time the enemy began to directly attack Pennsylvania, the Assembly faced mounting pressures to arm the province: and thus it became the first decisive trial of Quaker pacifism.

It may be helpful to briefly examine the political conflict between the proprietary forces and the anti-proprietary forces in Pennsylvania for the understanding of the crisis in 1747-1748. Upon the death of William Penn in 1718, the province passed into his sons, who increasingly sympathized with Toryism and the Anglican Church. Their interests in Pennsylvania tended to be represented by the Governor, the Council, and the non-Quaker politicians. This alienated the Quakers and drove them to consolidate themselves, both radicals and conservatives, into a united "Quaker party." German and Irish settlers inclined to support the Quakers, because they represented the Wiggish principles and low taxes as well as Quaker pacifism.<sup>3</sup>

Since the outbreak of the War of Jenkins' Ear, Governor Thomas and the Council were eager to obey the demand of the British imperial government and tried to raise militia by taxes, but in vain. The Quaker Assembly refused such military legislations. Thereupon, the Governor recruited troops on his own authority, enlisting indentured servants who had not yet served out their terms. The Assembly then demanded to return the servants to the masters or to pay the masters for those servants.<sup>4</sup> The controversy between the Governor and the Assembly raged for months, earning the Quakers popularity in the population.<sup>5</sup> Then, the Governor tried to drive the Quakers out of the Assembly and wrote to the British government, recommending that all Quakers be made ineligible to official positions. When by chance the letter was exposed, it infuriated the Quakers.<sup>6</sup> The "bloody election" of 1742 was held in this tense partisan feelings. The election result was Quakers' winning greater majority in the Assembly.<sup>7</sup> Then in 1742 France joined Spain in the war against England, and the War of Jenkins' Ear became the war of the Austrian Succession. The military engagements with the Canadian French gradually increased the pressure on the Pennsylvania Assembly. And in 1747, when the enemy began to directly attack Pennsylvania, as Quakers still refused to take defensive measures, the tension between the Governor and the Assembly started to mount again.

The Cold War and the American occupation in Japan played a decisive role in pressing Japan to the direction of re-arming. Since the Korean War the Japanese government worked for creating and strengthening the Self-Defense Army, co-

operating with the American Cold War policies. And in reality Japan is no longer a disarmed country. In the case of the Quakers, too, the British Imperial policies and the pressure of the War of Austrian Succession (the King George's War) smashed the Quaker experiment. The Association for Defense was created, which consequently put an end to the disarmament of the colony. Of course the political environment of the 1740's and that of the 1950's are too different to make a parallel and comparative study, which we would not try in this paper. We will rather examine the process of the decline of the Quaker pacifism, hoping that it may give us some insights into the pacifist politics in the actual military danger, and that we may learn something from our pacifist predecessors who lived about two centuries ago.

## I

Although repeatedly the American colonies had fought colonial wars, for a long time Pennsylvania was much safer than other colonies. The defenseless condition had not been known to the enemy countries, and the length and complexity of the Delaware Bay and River made it difficult for foreign ships to reach Philadelphia. The attacks from the Canadian French were, to a great extent, defended by New York and New England colonies, while the attacks from the Spaniards were defended by the southern colonies.

In the last years of the King George's War, however, enemy ships began to directly attack Pennsylvania. During the late spring and early summer of 1747 the newspapers weekly reported some new actions of the French and Spanish privateers. The sense of danger was intensified and the rumor of enemy attack on Philadelphia spread. People believed that finally enemies had got information about the navigation of the river and the defenseless condition of the province through experiences and prisoners they had caught.

The first counter-measure was taken on July 4, 1747. In order to prevent enemies from learning more about the conditions in Pennsylvania, a proclamation was issued, by which all pilots were forbidden to bring up any foreign vessels, even those carrying flags of truce.<sup>1</sup> This measure, however, was not effective at all. Its ineffectiveness was dramatically demonstrated only a week later. On July 11, a pilot-boat was detained by a Spanish privateer sloop of about thirty men off Cape May. The Spaniards, using the captured pilot-boat, sailed up the river, landed at a plantation near Bombay Hook, and "took four Negroes and everything else that they tho't they wanted to the value of about 200 pounds." Then they forced the planter to lead the way to another plantation, plundered his house, shot his wife in the thigh, and took a Negro and properties of the value of 70 pounds. After that, they captured two more pilot-boats and robbed them.<sup>2</sup> Furthermore, three days later, the same Spaniards captured the ship Mary off Cape Henelopen. The newspaper reported their bold method and said :

The pilot-boat coming within call of her, and Captain Martin knowing the pilot, he being kept on deck with only two of the enemy, he desired them to come on board ; when they came along side..... about 30 Spaniards jump'd out of the hold, and board'd him, Captain Martin..... knock'd down two of the enemy, the rest ran up to him and cry'd out that is the captain, kill him and the ship is our own, and one fired a pistol close to him so that the powder black'd his face, but the ball only took the skin off from his throat, another ball wounded him in the arm, and the third in the side.....<sup>3</sup>

These successive events in four days frightened the people in Philadelphia, and now the defense of the colony became a political issue. At that time the Council was composed of twelve members, among whom William Logan, son of James Logan, was the only Quaker. In the Assembly, on the other hand, three-quarters majority was composed of Quakers.<sup>4</sup> Upon the news of the Spanish attacks the non-Quaker Council decided to meet those Quaker Assemblymen who were in the city at the time and asked them to help urge the Assembly to provide money for defense at the next session. The conference was broken off, however. The Assembly members declared that "the majority of the Council were not of their [pacifist] sentiments, and different conduct would be expected from them."<sup>5</sup> Thus began the battle between the Council and the Assembly, between non-Quakers and Quakers, over the necessity of armament.

The issue was not simply Quakers vs. non-Quakers, however. Even among the Quakers themselves there was a diversity of opinion about defensive measures, for in those days a spirit of compromise permeated the Society of Friends. The accumulation of wealth, involvement in public affairs, and birth-right membership caused an increasing secularism in the Society. One Quaker remarked about it in his diary :

.....as such things [outward wealth and greatness] became more prevalent so the powerful overshadowings of the Holy Ghost were less manifest in the Society. <sup>6</sup>

The spiritual enthusiasm and unity of the first fifty years were passing away. There was a large and increasing minority who were only nominal Quakers. They were compromising not only in religious principles but in all other phases of life ..... business, education, social life and intellectual life ..... and Quaker way of living itself was in danger of extinction. To borrow Tolles' words, compromises "were not only proving fatal to the 'holy experiment' but were threatening the spiritual integrity of the Society of Friends itself."<sup>7</sup> The nominal Quakers, upon hearing such an event as the Spanish attack of July 12-14, moved even further away from pacifism. The Philadelphia Yearly Meeting reacted in July, exhorting

its members to be faithful to their "peaceable principles" and tried to persuade them to avoid "joining with such as [might] be for making warlike preparations, offensive or defensive."<sup>8</sup> Such efforts of the Society as these evidently show the lack of unity in the Society about the issue of defense.

Besides the spirit of compromise within the Society, there was an outside pressure on the Quakers, pushing them towards compromise, *i. e.*, the increasing population of non-Quakers. As the Quaker colony had developed and flourished, non-Quaker immigrants and migrants flocked in and overpassed the Quakers. According to Tolles, the rate was by 1750 three to one.<sup>9</sup> The Quakers as a minority group ought to learn to get along with others.

This pressure was strong on the Quaker politicians. Even though non-Quaker voters had continuously sent Quaker politicians to the Assembly, those voters would easily withdraw their support from pacifist policy and demand war preparations at the time of danger. If the Quakers, still persisting in the "holy experiment" of William Penn, determined to stay in the Assembly, they should necessarily be involved in compromises.

## II

During the summer of 1747, the pressure on the Assembly was rapidly increasing. Rumors multiplied and spread. A talk of another "design lately projected by some Spanish prisoners, Negroes, and others to run away with a ship's boat in this harbour" and to join the enemy privateer intensified the uneasiness.<sup>1</sup> The Council, being disgusted with the pacifist Assembly, wished the Proprietors to "come over [from England] and undertake the cure" and wrote :

.....the want of a proper power to pass laws must in such a critical conjuncture be look'd upon to be a very great misfortune, and such a defect in the government as [this] stands in need of the most speedy remedy, which you are sensible is not in our power to apply.<sup>2</sup>

In the midst of frustration and fear, when the Assembly met in the regular session on August 18, the Council presented upon it the necessity of defense :

The terror and confusion, the ruin of vast numbers of families, the destruction of trade, the bloodshed, cruelty, and other fatal consequences which must unavoidably attend the plundering or burning of this city, are too obvious to need a description.<sup>3</sup>

The Quaker Assembly, however, was unmoved. They returned an unchangingly cool message to the Council, denying the military provision with several reasons. First, it was only a rumor that enemies intended an invasion of the city ;

on the contrary they did not look to have enough strength to do so. Second, to talk about the possible invasion was not only of no use but rather unnecessarily increased fears among people. Then, the Council should be more sensible to the different sentiments of William Penn and the Quaker Assembly and understand the difficulties of carrying out the "holy experiment." Lastly, the expense demanded by the Council for defense would be too great a burden for the Province to bear, especially at this time "when [their] treasury [was] low."<sup>4</sup>

They still took the "holy experiment" for granted. Also the Quaker politicians believed that their pacifism had contributed greatly to the prosperity of the city and the province. As they did not appropriate a military budget, Pennsylvania had been free from war taxes and compulsory military service. "Quaker government in the eyes of the people was synonymous with good government, freedom, and low taxes,"<sup>5</sup> and at elections "even from the frontier counties mostly made up of non-Quakers from Germany it often happened that a Friend was selected to represent their views on peace or taxation."<sup>6</sup>

This time, however, the threat of invasion seemed more probable than it had ever seemed before. The economic advantage of pacifism was nothing in comparison with the total destruction of the city or blockade of trade on the sea. Some of the Councilors were furious at the Assembly's neglectful attitude and insisted in publicizing their message to raise public opinion against them.<sup>7</sup> Richard Peters, secretary and clerk of the Council, was also very critical about the Assembly and wrote to the Proprietors that "nothing but the misery attending an actual invasion [would] open men's eyes."<sup>8</sup>

The demand for defense increased even more in the fall. In mid-September, an express was dispatched from Lewes Town, reporting that two French ships were raiding near the town. And a week later, having only lamented the news, the Council was informed again that the privateers had taken several ships off the capes.<sup>9</sup> When the Assembly convened in October, the Council once more urged the Assembly to take some actions immediately to discourage the enemy, for "the knowledge they [had] gain'd of [their] bay and river [gave them] great reason to apprehend an attack on this city."<sup>10</sup>

The Quakers remained impervious to the criticism : and they were gradually losing the public support. For example the Assembly replied to the Council that the accidents in the bay were chiefly caused by "the misconduct of the pilot." All that the Council needed to do, therefore, was "to oblige these pilots to such regulations as may prevent like accident for the future."<sup>11</sup> With such an unrealistic view on the crisis, it seemed inevitable that the Quaker Assembly would gradually lose the public support. The Society of Friends, too, holding tightly to their pacifism, was losing good accord with other denominations. Especially the Quaker trial of the cruiser Warren case dramatized the difference. The "faithful" Quakers in the Society were so anxious to keep the members in concert with the pacifist princi-

ple that they persecuted the "practical" Quaker merchants who had contributed to the manning out of the cruiser in order to drive away the French and Spanish privateers.<sup>12</sup> A committee in the Monthly Meeting inquired names of all those merchants "with an intent to excommunicate all who [would] not recant."<sup>13</sup> Among those exposed, "Rovert Strettel justified his conduct, charging Friends with persecution ; and William Coleman and Reese Meredith also refused to acknowledge any error."<sup>14</sup> As a result those three were excommunicated. Richard Peters reported to the Proprietors that "not only moderate Friends were disoblig'd at these imperious measures of the Meeting, but it has rais'd an universal odium in the members of all the other congregations."<sup>15</sup>

### III

Benjamin Franklin, observing the public rapidly withdrawing their support from Quaker pacifism, began to lead them to the creation of a voluntary army called the Association for Defense. Responding to people's fear and frustration, Franklin first agitated for the necessity of defense by means of his newspaper, the Pennsylvania Gazette, and pamphlets. Though he was in good accord with Quaker leaders,<sup>1</sup> he differed from them in the matter of defense, and did not hesitate to open a controversy on the issue. His first effort was aimed at winning "practical" Quakers over to his side. He published poems in the Gazette praising Edmond Barclay, a patriotic Quaker, and his Apology.<sup>2</sup> Then, he adopted two contributions from his readers, both of which admired the famous Quaker's patriotic concerns for his country. The first one argued that Barclay was not against "war undertaken on a JUST OCCASION," and that there would be no more just war than a defensive war.<sup>3</sup> Another contribution made an example of William Edmundson who admitted "the use of outward prudential means, for the good of country, and preservation of himself, his family, and states."<sup>4</sup> Franklin's intention of printing those was, of course, to prove that leading Quakers were not necessarily absolute pacifists and to suggest that Pennsylvania Quakers, too, following those examples, might participate in a defensive war.

Meanwhile, on November 17, Franklin published a pamphlet entitled Plain Truth.<sup>5</sup> He argued that people would no longer wait for the Assembly to move, and appealed for voluntary actions. The timing was good and the response was quick. According to Franklin's autobiography, it had a sudden and surprising effect.<sup>6</sup> Its first 2000 copies quickly sold out ; it went into a second edition ; it was translated into German ; and its extracts were reprinted in other colonies.<sup>7</sup> Richard Peters welcomed Franklin's leadership and reported to the Proprietors the effect of his propaganda :

This had its effect in dividing moderate men from bigotts, and begot open exclamations against the inquisition set up by the



Meeting from men who but just before were observ'd to stifle their disgust.<sup>8</sup>

Four days later, Franklin read to the public a draft for a voluntary army and received an immediate approval from tradesmen, merchants and other principal citizens.<sup>9</sup> The Association for Defense was signed by more than five-hundred men on the first day. In a few days the number exceeded one thousand, and eventually "the subscribers amounted at length to upward of ten thousand."<sup>10</sup> At last, for all Quaker resistance, things began to move toward arming the colony. This movement, in short, was the reflection of the fear that mounted too high to be endured by non-Quakers, and of their antipathy to Quakers who had brought the province into the dilemma.

The Assembly, though still adhering to pacifism, did not oppose this voluntary action for defense. When called into special session on Novembr 23, doing nothing, they adjourned on November 28. Why did they not demand its dissolution? The Association was a legally doubtful army, because it was organized privately by citizens' voluntary actions without public commission. It was out of control of the Proprietary or of the Government, and it might be used for a rebellion. It could be, therefore, declared illegal, if the Assembly chose to do.<sup>11</sup> The Council interpreted this silence as a kind of conspiracy :

..... their design is to see how it will work, to draw off Friends from the Association, and to sow the seeds of dissention among the chief encouragers of it if they can, or at least they may entertain hopes that as they are to sit again in January something may turn out from which they may take a handle to resist it.<sup>12</sup>

This interpretation must have been only partly true. It might also be partly true that they kept silent because the Association involved no compulsory service or taxes, and because they believed that others had no less liberty in pursuit of their conscience. It was most likely, however, that public pressure was too strong to oppose the Association. During the short special session, for example, 260 leading Philadelphia citizens petitioned in support of the Association.<sup>13</sup> If the Assembly had dared to crush the Association, they might have lost their seats in the next election. In the dilemma, they were obliged to connive at it.

Futhermore, there are evidences that many Quakers turned to support the Association. Franklin in his autobiography estimated that the ratio of absolute pacifists was only one among twenty-two Quakers, judging from his episode with the Union Fire Company.<sup>14</sup> Though this is a gross exaggeration, a considerable number of "practical" Quakers participated in the Association, among whom Richard Renshaw was elected to Lieutenant, and many others, if not actually joining, supported the Association.<sup>15</sup> About sixty Quakers were included among 260 pe-

tioners who asked the Assembly for financial aid to the Association.<sup>16</sup> When the Assembly did nothing, James Logan, a wealthy Quaker merchant, joined Benjamin Franklin and others to establish a lottery and raise money.<sup>17</sup> Many Quakers bought lotteries. James Logan wrote to Franklin :

Ever since I have had the power of thinking, I have clearly seen that government without army is an inconsistency. Our Friends spare no pains to get and accumulate estates, and are yet against defending them, though these very estates are in a great measure the sole cause of their being invaded.....<sup>18</sup>

And Logan praised the lottery as a "new excellent project" and "most heartily wish(ed) all possible success."<sup>19</sup> Thus, with many dissenters and variety of opinion within the Society, the Quaker Assembly had to face the dilemma that, had they dared to oppose the Association, it would have accelerated the disunity of the Society of Friends.

It is hard to judge what the Franklin's political purpose of creating the Association was. The proprietary forces, though at first they welcomed Franklin's attack on the Quaker party, came to be suspicious of his political purpose. William Allen, the leader of the Gentlemen's party, was unhappy about Franklin's success, for Franklin was "fast becoming a power in Pennsylvania politics, and Allen could see that the Association was gaining him great prestige throughout the province."<sup>20</sup> Allen thought that Franklin was planning to use the Association politically in the October election 1748.<sup>21</sup> Thomas Penn, who at first had been pleased with the Association, also came to perceive in Franklin a potential leader of the anti-proprietary forces. Penn wrote to Richard Peters : "He is a dangerous man and I should be glad if he inhabited any other country, as I believe him of a very uneasy spirit. However, as he is a sort of tribune of the people, he must be treated with regard."<sup>22</sup> By June, 1748, Peters also came to share Allen's suspicion about Franklin's political intentions.<sup>23</sup> The war ended in August, however, and Franklin after all neither ran a campaign nor politically used the Association in the fall election.

Theodore G. Thayer analyses Pennsylvania politics and concludes that Franklin, seeing the division within the Quaker party, intended to alienate the "extremist" pacifist faction and to promote the "moderate" faction in the Assembly. Although Franklin did not use the Association politically in the October election, Thayer speculates that :

If war had continued, it is possible that he might have done so in order to get an Assembly controlled by the moderates. But with the termination of the war in 1748 and the disappearance of the conditions which gave rise to the Association, he apparently con-

sidered it unwise to risk alienating the now reunited and powerful Quaker faction.<sup>24</sup>

It is hard to prove Thayer's speculation. It can be said, however, that if that was the Franklin's intention, he was an eventual winner. For, after 1751 when Franklin was elected Assemblyman, he took his place along with Isaac Norris and Israel Pemberton as one of the leaders of the Quaker party, and represented the moderate faction of the party.<sup>25</sup> Then after 1756, when the prominent Quaker politicians withdrew from the Assembly in order to remain loyal to their pacifism, Franklin became "the acknowledged leader of the anti-proprietay forces, which were still known as the 'Quaker party'"<sup>26</sup>

Then, did the Franklin's Association do good or harm to the Quakers' pacifist experiment? In what ways did the Association influence Quaker experiment? Historians tend to view the Pennsylvania politics from the Quakers' point of view, and also evaluate the Association as a positive force for them. "The people saved the Quaker Assembly," says Thayer, "from embarrassment by adopting Franklin's extra-legal military association."<sup>27</sup> Isaac Sharpless explains : "The effect of this course was to save their fellow-members in the Province from compulsory military services, and from direct war taxes. They thus shielded the conscience of sensitive Friends, preserved their charter from Court attacks, broke down the worst evils of proprietary pretentions, and secured large additions of liberty."<sup>28</sup> And Peter Brock says :

It provided a convenient channel to drain off the energies of the more belligerent section of the population, which might otherwise have proved dangerous to the administration ; it quieted for the time being the demand for a compulsory militia bill which, even with a conscience clause attached, was still unacceptable to the Quaker legislators .....<sup>29</sup>

Though it is true that the Association actually pacified the Pennsylvania politics for the time being, these arguments are not altogether agreeable. It should be more stressed that the Association was the half-way compromise and not the real solution of the Quaker dilemma. It only helped postpone the Quaker withdrawal from politics for another eight years, when their pacifist experiment was replaced by the conscientious objection law. In those days pacifist experiment was too idealistic and unrealistic to survive. It was inevitable that sooner or later the Quaker colony would become one of the secular thirteen colonies of British America.

#### IV

Regardless of the Quakers' will, Pennsylvania was now armed. This challenge Quakers could not pass over : and the debate on the issue of righteousness of

a defensive war began. More than ten pamphlets were published, pro and con. The debate was three dimensional ..... economic, political, and religious. As we have already noted, Quakers often used economic reasoning in order to justify pacifist policy. Their assumption was that the prosperity of Pennsylvania was due to pacifist policy, and therefore, if people further wanted prosperity pacifism was a wise choice. Otherwise, they warned :

..... taxes must be exceedingly great ; the building of a fort will certainly be of great charge ; there must be cannon as well as smaller arms for furniture for this building ; there must be a number of soldiers always maintained, and all must be done by a provincial tax. <sup>1</sup>

Benjamin Franklin answered this type of economic arguments with his own.<sup>2</sup> He said that the expense for defense would be no actual loss, because the money was to be paid to the people of this province. On the contrary, if the trade was blockaded and the city was ruined, it would be a pure loss. "Our TRADE," said he, "is in danger of being ruined in another year," because "the profit being almost certain, and the risk next to nothing" the enemy would surely visit this port next spring. Even though they had not come, Franklin prophesized, the possibility of enemy attacks would damage the trade and Philadelphia would be defeated in competition with other ports like New York. Franklin did not forget to propose possible measures other than taxes to raise money : "It [the empty treasury] may soon be filled by the outstanding public debts collected ; or at least credit might be had for such a sum, on a single vote of the Assembly."<sup>3</sup> Evidently Pennsylvania, the most prosperous colony in America, could afford to maintain militia. The Quakers' economic arguments seemed to have less persuasiveness in the impending danger.

The political aspect of the debate was important for the Quakers, for political hegemony was indispensable to the survival of the "holy experiment." Already the Council was not theirs. Therefore the Assembly should be kept in their hands. Franklin's proposal that "they might retire, relinquish their power for a season, quit the helm to freer hands during the present tempest" was unacceptable and threatening. <sup>4</sup> A bitter and antagonistic answer was returned to him in an anonymous pamphlet entitled A Treatise.<sup>5</sup> The author refused Franklin's proposal, saying that, once they left the Assembly, it might be impossible to resume power after the emergency had passed. According to the author, Franklin's proposal was a kind of conspiracy to dismiss Quakers from the Assembly. <sup>6</sup> He professed that he was threatened by the fact that many people, even Quakers, joined the Association and weakened the political stand of the Quaker party. He condemned the joiners of the Association :

..... as you appeared that [election] day bearing arms, you would also give your votes as one man in favour of those, who mightily approve of warlike preparations ; and have used those political means to inforce sic. themselves into the seats of those, who have been faithful trustees of this province, and have acted as affectionate fathers to the inhabitants thereof. <sup>8</sup>

This anonymous pamphlet show Quakers' deeply rooted anxiety of losing their political leadership. More than half a century they had taken for granted the sanctity of the "holy experiment" ; but now, its self-evidentness began to fade and be openly doubted. Some Quakers had recognized the Quaker dilemma years before. James Logan, for example, had expressed his opinion in 1741 in a letter to the Yearly Meeting that Quakers should withdraw from politics because their principles were incompatible with those of power politics. <sup>9</sup> The committee of the Yearly Meeting, however, even refused to read the letter at the meeting. And among all Quaker members only Robert Strettell insisted on reading it. <sup>10</sup> During the crisis of 1747-48, the Quaker politicians still thought that they could and should endeavor to hold the seats in the Assembly. They were too much devoted to the "holy experiment" to forsake it overnight. The most radical Quakers, like John Churchman, even insisted that non-Quakers should accept pacifism as the official policy of the province, because they had known the fact that Pennsylvania had been a Quaker settlement when they chose to come here. <sup>11</sup>

As the political system of Quaker's Pennsylvania was based on the combination of religion and politics, the accusation against Quakerism was simultaneously a partisan attack on the Quaker party. On December 24, 1747, Gilbert Tennent, leading Presbyterian minister, preached a sermon on the text "The Lord is a man of war (Exodus 15:3)," which was published as a pamphlet, The Late Association for Defence Encourag'd, or the Lawfulness of a Defensive War.<sup>12</sup> Though he said he had "no party-view in that discourse" and that he did not want to "intermiddle with party-dispute," his attack on pacifism was so extensive that Quakers could not ignore it. <sup>13</sup> A wealthy young Quaker merchant, John Smith, regarded it as a challenge and determined to fight it back. His pamphlet, The Doctrine of Christianity, approved by the Yearly Meeting was published as a semi-official answer to Tennent. <sup>14</sup> One thousand copies were delivered free and won the reputation "as an unanswerable piece."<sup>15</sup> William Currie, on hearing such a reputation, joined the debate to reinforce Tennent's side. He published two pamphlets, in which he proved the biblical lawfulness of Christians' having arms and begged the reader to "impartially examine on which side they lie."<sup>16</sup> Meanwhile, other Quakers like Samuel Smith and Benjamin Gilbert had joined the debate. Thus the pamphleteering continued.

As the debate went on, the partisan color was deepened. It was difficult for Quakers to win the battle, especially when the majority of citizens were not

pacifists and when the supreme sovereignty was in King's hands. Currie challenged Quakers with a formidable question. "If all war be unlawful under the Gospel," said he, "it must ..... be a sin in any Christian, whether magistrate or subject ..... unless it can be made appear that the magistrate is an exception from the general rule."<sup>17</sup> Could Quakers denounce the King's prerogative to make a war as a sin? No : Nobody would dare it in colonial days. And traditionally Quakers would not challenge King's authority or his government. John Smith explained it :

The people called Quakers do not undertake to condemn our superiors engaging in war ..... We rather think it probable that as they have shewn a noble and Christian disposition, in granting liberty and protection to such as are of tender conscience, it may please God to bless their arms with success, and reward them for their kindness to his people, who desire to live in obedience to the inward appearance of his spirit.<sup>18</sup>

Also many Quakers professed that they would be tolerant to "those who [had], upon mature consideration, deliverately form'd their judgment contrary-wise."<sup>19</sup> Was the voluntary military association, then, tolerable? Was it not guilty for a Quaker to follow King's war demand "upon his mature consideration"? Quakers, after all, could not deny the biblical lawfulness of individuals to join the King's war and lawfulness to arm Pennsylvania.

Not only Currie but many other clergymen of different denominations participated in the debate and supported a defensive war. As a body, they endeavored to smash the Quaker's theological principle of Christian pacifism. They searched for usable texts in the Bible and generally speaking argued for realistic and nationalistic policies. It seems proper to say that, as the controversy continued, uneasiness grew : and as uneasiness increased, the realist argument attracted more people. At the end of the debate, the Association seemed to be given religious sanctity and encouragement. And after all, this was the purpose of Tennent and his group. William Currie, for example, declared that he did not intend to persuade Quaker extremists over to his side, but rather tried to "give religious sanction to those who [were] willing to join in defence of their country, by shewing them that their undertaking [was] not only lawful, but glorious."<sup>20</sup> In his sermon, Currie agitated : "I answer : the only means that seem to be in our power at present, is to join in the ASSOCIATION of arms ..... And I earnestly exhort every one fit to bear arms, as he regards his country, his fellow subjects, himself, and his family, so to do."<sup>21</sup>

## V

During the winter the activities of privateers were on the wane, because of the freezing of the port. Taking advantage of it, people in Philadelphia moved for

defense as actively as no one could have imagined half a year before. They thought, judging from the information brought by prisoners who had escaped from French and Spanish privateers, that many privateers were planning to come to Pennsylvania in the spring.<sup>1</sup> Therefore they ought to do all they could for the defense preparation. The Council issued a proclamation of fast in order to “awaken in the minds of the inhabitants of this Province a just sense of their condition.”<sup>2</sup> The Associators started their drills, marched through city streets, elected officers, and received formal commissions from the Council.<sup>3</sup> By March, there were eighty companies of Association, not only in Philadelphia but also in Bucks, Chester, and Lancaster counties.<sup>4</sup> The Council repeatedly wrote letters asking for “a loan of cannon” to the Governors of New York and Massachusetts, the commander-in-chief at Cape Breton, and Admiral Knowles at Jamaica.<sup>5</sup> The Association also wrote a Petition to the Proprietors asking for the aid of guns and arms.<sup>6</sup> The city of Philadelphia likewise petitioned to the proprietors.<sup>7</sup> A body of merchants and traders petitioned to the Board of the Admiralty for a man-of-war to be dispatched to Pennsylvania and guard its coasts.<sup>8</sup> For all these efforts, however, the preparation was far from satisfactory. Only some cannons were loaned by the New York government. Ships and guns from London did not arrive at Pennsylvania before the spring.<sup>9</sup>

Spring came. The French and Spanish privateers around the capes regained vigor. The uneasiness multiplied. Responding to the public feelings, the Council on May 17 demanded of the Assembly “encouragement and assistance” to the Association.<sup>10</sup> Next day, before they received a reply from the Assembly, an express arrived from New Castle. It informed that three French privateer ships had come into the bay and captured the schooner Pheonix and the brigantine Tinker.<sup>11</sup> Immediately the Council sent another message to the Assembly and urged a speedy reinforcement of battaries.<sup>12</sup> This news seemed to be the coming of an expected nightmare.

On May 21, the Assembly returned a message, in which, finally, the Assembly complied with the reality. They gave recognition to the Association. They said that they would leave the Association “in the free exercise” of their conscience, and that they would not object the Council’s assisting them.<sup>13</sup> They finally abandoned the “holy experiment” as an official policy. It seems that, after six months of hardships, the Quaker Assembly came to clearly recognize their awkward position and inconsistency. On the one hand, they were charged by the King’s charter to protect the colony and they represented people who now wished to defend the colony with arms. On the other hand, they believed that their conscience, or obedience to the higher law of God, forbade them to arm themselves. In dilemma, the Quaker Assembly begged a special treatment for those “principled against the bearing of arms.”

And as we are willing to make charitable constructions on their {Associators'} conduct, we hope the like charitable sentiments will prevail with them concerning us and others like principled when we have repeatedly declared we cannot on conscience join with any preparation of this kind.<sup>14</sup>

Eventually this plea for a special treatment would be materialized in 1757 in the legislation of a famous conscientious objection law. Then, the Quaker politicians would solve the dilemma by withdrawing from the public positions, while protecting their private pacifist belief under the above law. Indeed, the pacifist policy was valid only when it did not contradict with the British imperial policy, and only when the majority of the inhabitants supported it. During the crisis of 1747-48, Quakers came to perceive that those two conditions were nearly lost.

The Quaker politicians, however, did not withdraw from the public positions in 1748. They were still in a dilemma, perhaps even a worse one. Now that they abandoned pacifism as their official policy, they could no longer oppose military legislations as "unlawful." When the Assembly again refused money for a guard-ship, they had great difficulty in explaining and justifying it. They could now use only economic reasons. To keep a guard-ship constantly at the capes, they said, "must be introductive of an expence too heavy as we conceive for the province to bear."<sup>15</sup> And it was especially economically unadvisable now, since they were expecting the near arrival of the British man-of-war Otter.<sup>16</sup> These reasons hardly seemed persuasive.

Soon after, the last and the biggest crisis was brought about by expresses dispatched from Salem and New Castle.<sup>17</sup> The Spanish privateer St. Michael with 200 men and 14 carriage guns came into the river on May 25, and captured the sloop Success, the sloop Burgess, the sloop Mary, and the sloop Joseph and Mary at Reedy Islands.<sup>18</sup> The newspapers reported the incident sensationally.<sup>19</sup> Just at that time, one of the captives on the St. Michael escaped and swam ashore at Salem.<sup>20</sup> He turned out to be an English captive who had been detained for several years on the Spanish privateer. He brought a precious intelligence that the St. Michael was intending to invade New Castle by disguising itself as an English ship. On the 26th, when the St. Michael had already anchored at New Castle with British colors on it, the intelligence arrived at the city. Upon hearing it, the city was put "in the utmost confusion, the poor women and children crying, and every man taking what care he could of his effects."<sup>21</sup> Fortunately, however, the English ship Rachell happened to have anchored at the port. With the help of Rachell, after exchanging fire for a while, the city was saved.<sup>22</sup>

In Philadelphia, when an express from Salem notified the danger, the Council immediately adopted emergency measures. The Associators were called up. A letter was dispatched to Virginia asking for reinforcement by the Virginia man-of-war Hector. And expresses were sent to the neighboring governors to notify the danger.



Then next day, another express arrived from New Castle, which informed that the city was almost burnt, but barely survived. The Council in great alarm closed the port during the night and evacuated ships.<sup>23</sup>

If the war had continued, the war preparation in the Quaker province would not have stopped at this point. And if the pressure from non-Quakers and the imperial mother country had increased a little more on the Quaker Assemblymen, they should have dissolved the dilemma by choosing between the two alternatives ..... either to withdraw from politics or to abandon pacifism. Their choice, however, was prolonged until the French and Indian War, for the King George's War ended without any harm on Philadelphia. June, July, and August passed rather calmly. The cessation of hostility was proclaimed in Philadelphia on August 24, and peace returned in October.

So far as the pacifist experiment was concerned, in this situation, as Brock says, "the actual outcome was confusion. Pennsylvania was living neither disarmed by the spirit that knows no evil nor strong according to the wisdom of this world."<sup>24</sup> And this situation reminds us of that of present Japan. Japan is now neither truly disarmed nor strong enough to face a real threat. And now Japan faces similar problems as the Quakers did, such as deep divisions of opinions among the population concerning the wisdom of pacifism and the legality of the Self-Defense Army and strong pressures from the U.S. and other countries to arm herself. What will happen, then, to the Japanese peace policies, when some actual danger is about to involve her?

## NOTES

### Introduction

1. Frederick Barns Tolles, Meeting House and Counting House : The Quaker Merchants of Colonial Philadelphia, 1682-1763 (The University of North Carolina Press, 1948), pp. 18-24.
2. From Isaac Norris to James Logan, 28 August 1711, cited in ibid., p. 19.
3. Tolles, ibid., pp. 20-21.
4. Ibid., p. 23.
5. Isaac Sharpless, A Quaker Experiment in Government : History of Quaker Government (Philadelphia : Ferries, 1902), p. 173.
6. Ibid., p. 169.
7. Tolles, op. cit., p. 23.

### I

1. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, from the Organization to the Termination of the Proprietary Government (Harrisburg : Theo. Fenn & Co., 1851), vol. 5, pp. 78-79, 80-81, 82.
2. The Pennsylvania Journal, #243, July 16, 1747.
3. Ibid., #244, July 23, 1747.
4. Tolles, op. cit., pp. 116-67.
5. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 90.

6. Rufus M. Jones, The Quakers in American Colonies (London : Macmillan and co., 1923), p. 525.
7. Tolles, op. cit., p. 234.
8. MS Additions to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Discipline, July 1747, cited in Peter Brock, Pacifism in the United States from the Colonial Era to the First World War (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 126.
9. Tolles, op. cit., p. 232.

## II

1. Minutes of the Provincail Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 92.
2. Ibid., pp. 93-94.
3. Ibid., p. 99.
4. Ibid., p. 103.
5. Theodore George Thayer, Pennsylvania Politics and the Growth of Democracy, 1740-1776 (Harrisburg : Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1953), p. 24.
6. Sharpless, A Quaker Experiment in Government, p. 215.
7. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 104.
8. Gertrude Mackinney and others, eds., Pennsylvania Archives, series 1, vol. 1. (Philadelphia ; B. Franklin and D. Hall, 1752), p. 769.
9. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, pp. 110-11.
10. Ibid., p. 125.
11. Ibid., p. 126.
12. Leonard W. Labaree and others, eds., The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, (New Haven ; Yale University Press, 1961), p. 215n.
13. A letter from Richard Peters to the Proprietaries, dated Nov. 29, 1747, in Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, p. 215. Peters' letter should be read in the light that he used to be an Anglican clergyman and suspected the Quakers. Ibid., p. 187.
14. Ibid., p. 215n.
15. Ibid., p. 215.

## III

1. Tolles, op. cit., p. 248.
2. The Pennsylvania Gazette, # 984, October 22, 1747.
3. The Pennsylvania Gazette, # 986, November 5, 1747.
4. The Pennsylvania Gazette, # 988, November 19, 1747.
5. Benjamin Franklin, Plain Truth : or, Serious Consideration on the Present State of the City of Philadelphia (Philadelphia : Franklin & Hall, 1747).
6. Benjamin Franklin, The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (New York : Pocket Books, Inc., 1940), p. 136.
7. Notes by editors, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, p. 184.
8. A letter from Peters to Proprietaries, dated November 29, 1747, in ibid., p. 216.
9. Ibid., p. 184.
10. Franklin, The Autobiography, p. 136.
11. The so-called "Gentlemen's party" led by William Allen declared that the whole plan was illegal. Thayer, op. cit., 23. Thomas Penn also wrote from England about his suspicion of the Association repeatedly. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania. vol. 5, p. 240. Notes by editors, Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, pp. 186-87.
12. Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, p. 218.
13. This petition, being considered six times in the Assembly, was eventually dropped in the negative. Samuel Hazard and others, eds., Pennsylvania Archives, series 8, vol. 4. (Philadelphia : Joseph Severns & Co., 1852), pp. 3167-68, 3175.
14. Franklin, The Autobiography, pp. 139-40.
15. Thayer, op. cit., p. 22.
16. Ibid., p. 21.

17. Ibid., p. 22. Isaac Sharpless, Political Leaders of Provincial Pennsylvania (New York : The Macmillan Company, 1919), p. 149. Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, pp. 219. 224-25, 279, 282, 285, 287. Franklin and others planned a lottery for £ 200,000, which yielded £ 300 for the Association. It was so successful that the second lottery was made. With the money the Association bought cannons and erected battaries at strategic positions on the Delaware River. Quakers had been against any kind of lottery since about 1720, but this time many Quakers bought lottery tickets. James Logan paid even £ 250 for them. Letters between Logan and Franklin show that Logan paid great attention to the Association and Franklin reported every step of its development to Logan.
18. Logan to Franklin, December 3, 1747, in Benjamin Franklin Papers, vol. 3, p. 219.
19. Ibid.
20. Thayer, op. cit., p. 22. William Allen opposed the cost of defensive measures as well as the Quaker pacifism, and so was not against the plan of the Association at the beginning. He soon came to oppose Franklin, however. He had a good reason to be jealous of Franklin. For, Franklin was to be chosen to the common council in 1748 and elected Assemblyman in 1751. Then, in 1756 Franklin became the leader of the "Quaker party" as opposed to Allen's "Gentlemen's party." Benjamin Franklin Papers, pp. 214-18. Franklin, The Autobiography, pp. 148-49.
21. Thayer, ibid., p. 22.
22. Willam R. Shephard, History of Proprietary Government in Pennsylvania, p. 222n, cited in Thayer, ibid., p. 23.
23. Thayer, ibid., p. 23.
24. Ibid.
25. Tolles, op. cit., p. 248.
26. Ibid.
27. Thayer, op. cit., p. 24.
28. Sharpless, A Quaker Experiment, pp. 212-23. It was the duty of the Government of Pennsylvania "to levy, master, and train all sort of men ..... and to make war and pursue the enemies and robbers as well by sea as by land." Jones, op. cit., p. 478.
29. Brock, op. cit., pp. 129-30.

#### IV

1. Anonym, A Treatise: Shewing the Need We Have to Rely upon God as Sole Protector of the Province (Philadelphia, 1748), p. 19.
2. Benjamin Franklin, Plain Truth, in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, pp. 195-97.
3. Ibid., pp. 199-200.
4. Ibid., p. 199.
5. Anonym, A Treatise: Shewing the Need We Have to Rely upon God as Sole Protector of the Province.
6. Ibid., p. 18.
7. Ibid., p. 20.
8. Ibid., p. 18.
9. Sharpless, Political Leaders, pp. 148-49.
10. A letter from Richard Peters to John Penn, cited in Sharpless, ibid., p. 149.
11. Brock, op. cit., p. 132.
12. Gilbert Tennent, The Late Association for Defence, Encourag'd, or The Lawfulness of a Defensive War (Philadelphia: Bradford, 1748).
13. Gilbert Tennent, The Late Association for Defence Farthur Encourag'd : or, Defensive Warfare Defended; and its Consistency with True Christianity Represented: In Reply to Some Exceptions against War (Philadelphia : Franklin & Hall, 1748), p.2.
14. John Smith, The Doctrine of Christianity, as Held by the People Called Quakers,

Vindicated : In Answer to Gilbert Tennent's Sermon on the Lawfulness of War (Philadelphia : Franklin & Hall, 1748).

15. William Currie, A Treatise on the Lawfulness of Defensive War (Philadelphia, 1848), xvi.
16. Ibid., xviii.
17. Ibid., p. 33.
18. John Smith, The Doctrine, p. 22-23.
19. Samuel Smith, Necessary Truth : or Reasonable Considerations for the Inhabitants of the City of Philadelphia, and Province of Pennsylvania : In Relation to the Pamphlet Called Plain Truth: and Two Other Writers on the News Papers (Philadelphia, 1748), p. 9.
20. Currie A Treatise, pp. 2-3.
21. William Currie, A Sermon Preached in Radnor Church (Philadelphia : Franklin & Hall, 1748), p. 18.

V

1. From Richard Peters to Proprietaries, dated Novemaer 29, 1947, in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, pp 214-15. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5., pp. 158, 172.
2. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania vol. 5, pp. 168-69.
3. Franklin's address to the Association on December 7, and articles on the activities of the Association in the Pennsylvania Gazette, all included in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, pp. 225, 238-39.
4. The Paprse of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, p. 279.
5. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, pp. 172, 204-208, 228. The Council sent letters to governors of New York and Massachusetts two times each, on December 29, 1747, and March 8, 1748.
6. From Franklin to Cadwallader Colden, dated November 27, 1747, in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, p. 213.
7. From Richard Peters to Proprietors, dated November 29, 1747, in The Papers of Benjamin Franklin, vol. 3, pp. 217-18.
8. Ibid. Also, Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, pp. 160-62.
9. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, pp. 215-216. Cannons from New York arrived in early April.
10. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 231.
11. Ibid., p 233.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid., p. 236.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 238.
16. The British man-of-war Otter at last arrived at Philadelphia on May 23. It was badly damaged, however, in the engagement with the enemy on the way. People in Pennsylvania had to wait for another two months before they could use the Otter for a cruise.
17. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 248, 252.
18. The Pennsylvania Journal, # 289, June 2, 1748.
19. Ibid.
20. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, pp. 248, and 253-54.
21. The Pennsylvania Journal, # 289.
22. Ibid.
23. Minutes of the Provincial Council of Pennsylvania, vol. 5, p. 249, 250, 252, 255-256, 258-260.
24. Brock, op. cit., p. 132.