

**Peace, Social and Earth Concerns Committee
Anti-Racism Subcommittee**

Minute on the Doctrine of Discovery and Quaker Indian Boarding Schools

Approved: May 2, 2021

Madison Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) has reviewed information about the Doctrine of Discovery (DoD) and its implications in providing justification for laws and practices leading to removal of Native Americans from their ancestral lands and attempts to destroy their culture. We find ourselves united with the action of Northern Yearly Meeting Fall 2020 Interim Session in renouncing the DoD, as Native American organizations have asked faith communities to do. We support consideration of further action at NYM Annual Session later this month. But while it is easy to renounce the DoD, we recognize that is not sufficient.

Further, we recognize the specific role that Quakers played in operating Indian Boarding Schools that removed Native American youth from their homes in order to separate them from their Native American culture, contributing to the loss of their cultural heritage. We understand that this loss is our loss as well; that we have deprived ourselves of the richness of what we might have learned from the Native American cultures. While our Quaker forbearers may have intended well, their actions were extremely harmful. We welcome the opportunity this provides us to engage in the process of apology, restitution and reparations.

We therefore commit ourselves to the following:

- To continue to learn about the current culture and history of Native Americans, both prior to and subsequent to the arrival of Europeans, and to support efforts to make these opportunities available to others, including in our schools. This includes exposing our children to an understanding of Native Americans, their history and their culture through our First Day School program.
- To look for opportunities to engage with the Ho-Chunk tribe, whose ancestral lands we occupy, so we may understand who they are today and how we might support their efforts to preserve their heritage.
- To support the efforts of the Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition to have Congress create a Truth and Reconciliation process so that the full story of the Indian Boarding Schools may be known and addressed.
- To support the advocacy efforts by the Friends Committee on National Legislation around Native American concerns.